

THE  
YORKSHIRE RAMBLERS'  
CLUB JOURNAL  
1968

Edited by HAROLD G. WATTS

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THE  
**Yorkshire Ramblers' Club Journal**

VOL. X

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**THREE-QUARTERS OF A CENTURY**

by The Presidents

THE YORKSHIRE RAMBLERS' CLUB achieved its 75th birthday on the 6th October, 1967. There is often an element of doubt about the actual day upon which an organisation such as our Club came to life, but just as Archbishop Ussher of Armagh in 1654 arrived at the unequivocal conclusion that the World had begun at 9 a.m. on the 26th of October, 4004 B.C., so did H. H. Bellhouse (*Y.R.C.J.*, Vol. I, page 4) give the 6th of October, 1892 as the date on which George T. Lowe, who had been the leading spirit in a previous discussion about forming a Club, was elected to the Chair at a meeting held in the Skyrack Inn, Headingley. Lowe thus became our first President. The actual hour is not recorded but was probably between 7.30 and 8.30 p.m.

The story of the Y.R.C. from that day until its 70th anniversary has been admirably told by Geoffrey Brook in the 1962 Journal and the next instalment of that story, covering the 30 years following, will not become due until the Centenary Journal in 1992. The President therefore ordered the Hon. Editor to rack his brains and devise some other way of recording three quarters of a century in the 1968 Journal. Always ready to pass the burden elsewhere, the Editor remarked that as there were seven Past Presidents, all vigorously active Members, why should they not each make a contribution? This idea not only met with a ready and enthusiastic response from the seven venerable members, but even from the present holder of that office. Altogether these eight Ramblers have been directing the fortunes of our Club since 1952 and their membership goes back well into the 1920's, so let them now tell about this in their own words.

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JACK HILTON, President 1952 to 1954

Like Bentley Beetham, John Hazard and Frank Smythe, I went to Almscliffe with Claude Frankland, whom I knew; there I met William Villiers Brown, Ernest Roberts and other members and so I came under the spell of the Y.R.C. Previously I had been a lone walker in the Yorkshire Dales, Wales, Scotland and Switzerland.

Frankland taught me to climb, he was the most graceful and effortless climber I ever saw and with him I did a great number of the classic climbs in the Lake District, Scotland and Wales. Usually he would go up one climb and then come down another, this was not only useful experience but added to the number of climbs you could make in a day. I still manage to get in at least one climb a year for the joy of it.

Roberts of course was my mentor in potholing and I was fortunate in being in the exploration of Lost Johns' and Ginging Hole. When the ladders were tied together for a pitch he would ask every member of the party to examine the ties and be satisfied they were all right, the same with belays. The proper use of the life-line was always to be practised and should be; too many accidents have occurred through the man paying the life-line out only through his hands. After taking his ladders home from a week-end's potholing Roberts would send a postcard full of joy: "I got the ladders dry in the garden yesterday". He acted on his maxim that a major pothole was to be treated as a mountain expedition; on the first call received by the Cave Rescue Organisation, which was to Rowten Pot, he took charge and re-rigged the pot with tackle that we took up.

To Roberts also I was indebted for my introduction to Alpine climbing; he had a happy way of finding the not so popular huts as in the Forno and Albigna areas where we had the huts to our two selves or with Beetham the three of us in the delightfully situated Coaz Hut and with Hazard and Smythe several days in the Schöbühl Hut waiting for the weather to take up; but we did have to sleep on the floor in the Marco e Rosa one night. The Lötschental was another happy introduction and Beetham said "I will show you the Fextal"; I hope they will not put up monstrous hotels in these last two for quiet beauty is I am afraid fast disappearing.

I do not think really the character of the Y.R.C. has changed much, to me when I joined there was perhaps still a Victorian atmosphere apparent; the Club was already of a certain age, stories were already being told of the early stalwarts, the Hopper Lane names were mentioned, Slingsby, Fred and Mattie Botterill and Tom Booth who was to me a good near neighbour. Other Past Presidents were not so intimately known to me, I suppose they seemed another generation but they were always very friendly and today we still have the same spirit among all our young active members.

There are no heavy sodden rope ladders now, it is all aluminium and wire; we have a Club Hut, Lowstern, for the potholers and one delightfully situated in Little Langdale, Low Hall Garth, complete with every facility, all electric, hot and cold showers, for the climbers and the hill-walkers. They travel far afield now, making new routes and first ascents of the season and moving with the times, although I believe one of our Honorary Members, turned 80 years of age, goes round corners in his sports car at sixty miles an hour on two wheels. One very welcome introduction has been the custom at Whitsuntide, or Spring Holiday as it is now called, of spending a week in camp in the Scottish Highlands where Factor and Head Gamekeeper, after we have secured the necessary permission to camp, have been most helpful to us. We have twice camped on the Island of Rhum Nature Reserve, where the Manx Shearwaters provide you with a night out in the mountains, I could have done with some of the spirit of the Island the night I was out.

I think of my many memories the one that I cherish most is when with Frankland, affectionately known to his friends as C.D., we made the second ascent of George Bower's 'Esk Buttress' to which Frankland then made a new direct route for the last pitch and as he looked at it he said "I don't think I can get up this, Jack", to which I replied "You will have to". It was about 7 p.m. after a full day's climbing. It was only later that we learnt there was an easy way off round the corner.

I think I set the fashion when I became President of attending most meets during my term of office; recently the Club has bestowed upon me the great honour of making me an



Honorary Member and, as I said on that occasion, it is still a great pleasure to look forward to meeting all my friends at the Club Meets.

The Club has always been fortunate in its officers: Secretaries who, with now so many meets in a year, get through a lot of work, arrangements for accommodation, permission to camp on private estates and so on; a Treasurer who, with a Yorkshire responsibility, very efficiently runs our financial affairs; we are of course fortunate in our Librarian as we have always been with Editors of the Journals, the Club is very much indebted to them, the Journals are always a source of information and entertainment.

#### HARRY STEMBRIDGE, President 1954 to 1956

When an active Club like the Y.R.C. has been on the go for 75 years it is inevitable that in its ranks there will be a few hoary old codgers like myself, whose only contribution to the Club is to reminisce. That's not much of a contribution anyway, but the Editor wants me to reminisce so here goes.

When Frank and I joined the Club in 1933 a period of intense activity was beginning to slow down. The great men of that day, Roberts, Davidson, the Burrows and Villiers Brown, although still active, were past their peak. Brown was President, a great climber and potholer who thought nothing of walking eighty or more miles a day. A fair amount of climbing was being done, notably by a strong Billingham section and by Hilton and the Booths, but potholing was the main activity and a very serious business it was.

Here Roberts was the mainspring and Yates, Higgins and Nelstrop notable exponents. Youngsters like ourselves were very small beer and although everyone was extremely friendly we had to go through a long apprenticeship before we were considered capable of rigging a pitch. Looking back I think a bigger proportion of members climbed and potholed regularly than does today. We climbed on gritstone or went underground almost every week-end.

I still have vivid memories of my first potholing meet, Rowten with a lot of water going down. Coming up the long pitch I started up the wrong side of the ladder, twisted my tail line round it and had a terrific struggle under the overhang. Com-

pared with that my descent of Mere Gill in 1936 was uneventful but it took us three full days to bottom it and get the heavy ladders out. Another three days' job was Juniper Gulf, like Mere Gill I think a third descent, and I shall never forget coming out as dawn was breaking over Pen-y-Ghent and someone giving me a tot of rum.

Jumping the years there was the marvellous Irish Meet of 1948 when in a week we bottomed six good virgin potholes, all around two hundred feet, a first descent every day—will it ever happen again? Certainly not in the British Isles.

1954/56 were good years in the Club. Some of the meets were first class, notably the Seven Peaks Walk and the Whit Meet of 1955 when we hired a bus in Inverness and with it camped and climbed for a week in different parts of North-West Scotland. An exacting meet was Easter 1956, a cold snowy Easter when all the Himalayan men camped on top of Ben Nevis and some great climbs were done.

But my most vivid memory, without doubt, is the organising of the Club Himalayan Expedition when I was President in 1956. The Y.R.C. was, naturally, the first British Club to send out its own Himalayan expedition and although this involved a colossal amount of organising, including raising over £4,000, the enthusiasm was so great and the response so adequate that the task was not onerous. The tragic outcome can never erase from my mind the fine spirit that pervaded the Club in those days.

Thinking back over the years it is, without doubt, the great efforts that stick in one's mind, the hard meets when we were fully stretched and, although we often came home jiggered, we felt we had achieved something. If the Club is to remain a great club, as it will and must, there should be plenty of meets of this kind and, though social meets of the Hill Inn type are pleasant and desirable, they should never be allowed to predominate.

#### STANLEY MARSDEN, President 1956 to 1958

In attempting to set down one's impressions of two years' Presidency, it quickly becomes obvious that memories of events become distorted with the passage of time and just over ten years is enough to blur recollection. One thing remains indeli-

bly clear; during his term of office the President is sustained and supported by all his friends in everything he tries to do. In any Club enterprise the officials and members respond to his lead so that individual effort produces really worthwhile results. A newly elected President hopes to be well supported but his natural apprehension is quickly dissipated by a wonderfully warm friendliness which makes the two years a memorable and richly rewarding experience.

At the same time, over the years, many things tend to be forgotten and innovations soon become commonplace. When Alum Pot was descended at the after-Dinner Meet in 1956 the last pitch before the "Sump" was laddered with the new electron wire caving ladders. This was quite new and the Committee eagerly awaited the report on the new ladders. This, *inter alia*, considered that whilst the cost involved would dismay the Treasurer, the President would certainly give the idea his blessing. It may not be out of place here to say it is not for the holder of both these offices at the same time to comment on the wisdom, or otherwise, of the President and the Treasurer being the same man, but the latter was often glad to be given advice from the former and the former frequently took advantage of the latter's financial knowledge.

Without doubt the big thing in the Club in 1957 was the Himalayan Expedition, the seeds of which had been sown at the 1955 Dinner. When the organisation got under way it was realised that an immense job had to be done and the formidable task of raising sufficient funds would need a major effort. The party left for Katmandu on the 17th of March 1957 and was seen off from London Airport by a few members of the Club. The disaster, which came as a sudden and dreadful shock to everyone, was borne with great fortitude by the party, not only at the time but later when transporting injured members back to civilisation. The simple memorial service in Little Langdale Church was a fitting tribute to Crosby Fox.

At that time the Club was in great form and the interest in and the preparations for the Expedition undoubtedly carried members along at a high level of activity. The Welsh 3000's were attacked by 27 men, perhaps with more enthusiasm than success, for it was reported that one pair, presumably thinking that they had found a hitherto unrecorded Welsh 3000, climbed

Y Garn twice, from opposite directions. Another less ambitious walk was the first recorded Club crossing of Morecambe Bay—Silverdale to Grange and back. The main shaft of G.G. was laddered and descended under very wet conditions; poor weather also hampered the descents of Lost Johns' and Juniper Gulf.

The long tradition of nearly half a century of Club Dinners at the Hotel Metropole, Leeds, was broken when in 1957 the Dinner was held for the first time in Harrogate. There was a record attendance at that Dinner and as the numbers have never since fallen below 145, the decision to move was a correct one.

Early in 1958 another big decision was made when the Club took over the tenancy of Lowstern Bungalow as a potholing base; most conveniently sited with a magnificent prospect. A tremendous amount of work was put into the preparation of the Hut by members during the fine summer which followed. It is no exaggeration to say this lifted the spirit of the Club to a fine pitch, a previously undiscovered ability to acquire things "at the right price" was a great help and much unsuspected talent as painters, carpenters, plumbers, builders, drain layers and just ordinary labourers was unearthed. It is quite impossible to dig a 10 ft. hole for a sanitary tank without getting to know the other diggers fairly intimately.

Towards the end of a most distinguished membership of the Club, Ernest Roberts declared the Hut open and this was one of the last things he did for the Club to be chronicled. Few, if any, members have done more for the Club but there is one thing, so far unrecorded, which without doubt was the finest of them all. It was the introduction, as a member, of that very remarkable Lancastrian, Ernest Clifford Downham, who did some of his best work in 1957 and 1958, and to whom the present healthy state of the Club is so largely due. Seen at close quarters in those years he worked prodigiously hard, frequently getting up before 6 a.m. to deal with correspondence which, of course, had "Cliff" written all over it. He imposed on the job of Secretary his own colourful and warm personality and his innovation of Meet Reports has been tremendously popular in enabling members to identify themselves in a personal way with the activities of the Club which they

were unable to attend. Held in great regard and affection, his personality and enthusiasm have left an indelible mark on the affairs of the Club.

So much for the past. At present the Club is in good heart, due largely to the gradual and imperceptible change of image, brought about by the influence of the personalities of individual members and which has reflected the changing times in which we live. Over a period of years the change can be seen clearly and is quite evident, but the basic spirit in the Club of friendship and good fellowship is as firm as ever. Despite what has been said earlier concerning some of the exploits and achievements of the Club, the mainspring behind all this is surely the proud feeling of belonging to the Yorkshire Ramblers' Club, a club with a history and tradition built by men of character, distinction and attainments; a club where lasting friendships are formed and are welded into a spirit of which any club may be proud.

It can modestly be claimed that in recent years this has, at least, been maintained. What is necessary for the future is the election of men of the same high quality. If this is done there is no doubt at all that, whatever changes evolve in the structure of the Club, the second 75 years will be no less illustrious than the first.

JOHN GODLEY, President 1958 to 1960

To present members of the Y.R.C. it must seem unbelievable that in the 1930's there was serious concern among members about the future of the Club owing to the low intake of young active men; it was even considered doubtful whether it could survive many more years for this reason. Happily this state of affairs has been completely reversed in recent years, partly owing to the increasing preference of younger people for outdoor activities of the kind in which the Club is interested, and also because of the many advantages that the Club has to offer. This is an excellent thing provided that the increase in membership is kept within bounds. The Y.R.C. has always been a club rather than an association, in it everyone has known everybody else and it is to be hoped that it will always retain its present character.

Ernest Roberts wrote that in the Yorkshire Ramblers' Club

he had found his spiritual home; this feeling must surely be shared by many members and it can honestly be said that being in the Club has had a profound influence on one's life. Friendships formed when walking, climbing or potholing are close friendships and often continue outside the Club's activities into other spheres of life.

Looking at the past, many of us have nostalgic memories of the Gaping Gill camps at Whitsuntide and the more recent Scottish and Irish meets as well as frequent week-ends in the Lakes, the Dales and elsewhere. Records of many Club expeditions appear in the Journal but if detailed records of all expeditions made by members at meets and at other times were available they would make fascinating reading.

To serve the Club as President is an unforgettable experience and one starts the term of office in the certain knowledge that it is impossible to give the Club as much as one gets from it. The experience also brings home the amount of work put in by the Officers of the Club; their help and co-operation makes the term of office a happy and pleasant one. With its memorable past and very active present, surely the Y.R.C. can only go from strength to strength.

FRANK STEMBRIDGE, President 1960 to 1962

For many years my brother and I enjoyed walking in the Lake District. We found it difficult to understand the pleasure some people could derive from spending the day with noses glued to a rock face. Then we read a book by Geoffrey Winthrop Young and were fired with the ambition to climb. Almscliff was half a mile away. We bought a rope and went up one Sunday morning to start. The Bird's Nest Crack looked the easiest of the face-climbs—it wasn't and we learnt slowly.

We both felt that it would be better to join some recognised climbing club. The only local one we knew of was the Yorkshire Ramblers' Club. We pictured them as a group of supermen who annually lowered themselves down Gaping Gill—we'd seen G.G. and the feat filled us with awe but with some diffidence we wrote to the Secretary whose name we got from an old climbing book. It turned out that he had been dead for a good many years, but we got a friendly letter back from Davis Burrow and an invitation to attend a probation-

ary meet.

In the thirty odd years since then my membership has given me continuous pleasure. My introduction as a member might have had the opposite effect. The first meet I attended was at Rowten Pot—it was raining—it was when Ernest Roberts was in his heyday and my instructions from Ernest came in two words, spoken in capital letters—GET DOWN. I got down and I eventually got up. I had never met a rope ladder before. I found it difficult to believe that an inanimate object could be so malevolent.

Club meets leave many happy memories. The Tower Ridge at Easter in freezing sleet, so that we walked down Ben Nevis still roped up and prized the knots open with an ice-axe at Achintee, and the subsequent sensual pleasure of sitting in a hot bath at the Imperial Hotel holding a generous hot whisky. The second post-war meet in Ireland when we bottomed a new pot every day and I said with gratitude one morning that we had actually been allowed to lie in bed until dawn. The satisfaction of squeezing through to daylight after completing Flood Exit from the Main Chamber.

To my surprise I was invited to follow John Godley as President in 1960. I did not feel that I was the man for the job. For some years I'd had trouble with a disc which prevented me from climbing or potholing and after a succession of active and able Presidents it seemed wrong to lead the regiment from behind; but I was told to have a go and began two years of outstanding enjoyment with the Club.

Amongst the senior clubs the Y.R.C. has a reputation for toughness and its representatives are apt to suffer accordingly. The day after the S.M.C. dinner I stood on my third Munro and watched the moon rise to light up the hard-frozen snow and the way down. I was politely told by Hamish McInnes that they felt that to offer only two Munros was insufficient for the Y.R.C. On the after-dinner walk of the Fell and Rock I was inveigled into the Alf Gregory and Dick Cook party on a day when Alf had left his cameras behind to see if it helped him to go up hills more quickly—it did!

I find it difficult to explain but it was only when I became President that I realised the continuity of the Club. I was President in the 70th year. For 70 years the Club's activities

had provided encouragement and fulfilment of pleasure and enjoyment to hundreds of men. I knew without any doubt that seventy years on it would be doing the same. I am proud to have served for a short period of its history.

**BOB CHADWICK, President 1962 to 1964**

The Editor asks what the Presidency of the Y.R.C. has meant to me and what I think of the future of the Club. To me the Y.R.C. means :—

Long days on the hills; sweat stinging the eyes; blisters; the day-long view of J.D.'s heels; hotel sandwiches too dry to eat; lungs burnished with panting; water down the neck; pulling on wet breeches; the wind on Ben Nevis; J.H. worming his way up Suilven by his waistcoat buttons; blue days in the Great End ice; winter stars over Scafell; mist on the Pinnacle Ridge; Blaven streaming water; F.S. bringing whisky to the bath; clattering down from the hut in the golden evening, ten feet tall, the climb done, every perception sharpened, at one with creation, fit to drink beer by the barrel; panic missing the hold; unspeakable relief finding it; the comfort of the top rope; the exhilaration of the lead; R. wringing out his socks; daylight at the end of the passage; the dank smell of moss; dawn on the glacier; sunset over the islands; rain drumming on the tent; stew; and the merging of self with others which comes from sharing these things.

And the Presidence? Why, all this but more so. And my ideas on the future of the Club? Only that it be long and be left to the younger members to mould, for the future is more theirs than mine.

**PAT STONEHOUSE, President 1964 to 1966**

The Y.R.C. attained its 75th year in 1967. The Editor has asked me as one of the Past Presidents to write a few words about the Club. I find this an extraordinary difficult thing to do. However, I have read a lot of articles in the early issues of the Journal and I believe that if the founder members could return and attend the next meet, they would find themselves completely at home, despite the new techniques and would congratulate themselves on having started the Club on the right lines from the very beginning. These early Members

were men of great enthusiasm and also men of wide interests and this is surely true of our members today.

The first tented meet that I ever attended was the Whit Meet at Loch Scavaig in 1955 when Harry Stembridge was President and I remember being amazed at the interest which members took not only in the climbs of the Black Coolins but in all the things around them from the mergansers on the islets of Loch Coruisk and the sea trout in Loch Scavaig to the granites of the Red Coolins.

However, I believe that the spirit of the Club depends above all on a feeling of mutual respect and toleration between members of differing ages, occupations and climbing capacity. I think that the working meets at Lowstern under the leadership of Stanley Marsden and Cliff Downham in 1958 did more than anything else in the post-war years to keep this spirit alive even though we did appear to suffer from a surfeit of planners and the most incompetent though enthusiastic labour force in the British Isles.

All clubs have their ups and downs and I believe that the only thing that could seriously harm the Y.R.C. would be the growth of cliques and coteries. The Y.R.C. has nothing to fear as long as it continues to select its members not only for their competence as climbers and potholers but also for their suitability for membership in this wider sense.

#### CLIFF DOWNHAM, President 1966 to 1968

Seventy-five years is a long time, whether in the life of a club or of an individual. To celebrate the 75th anniversary of the founding of the Yorkshire Ramblers' Club, the idea germinated of putting on record in the Journal some thoughts from all the living Past Presidents. That remarkable member, Harold Garfit Watts, affectionately known as 'Tim', the indefatigable Editor of the Journal for almost twenty years, in spite of being domiciled in Switzerland, willingly undertook the onerous task of getting from these seven Past Presidents their outstanding reminiscences of Y.R.C. membership and Presidential term of office. The results are to be found in the preceding pages.

When one is first approached with the intending honour, the Presidency of a Club such as ours, the oldest in the coun-

try apart from the Alpine Club, seems an appalling responsibility and is not to be lightly undertaken. The immediate reaction is to shy away from all thoughts of acceptance. However, with friendly, albeit firm pressure applied by influential members and with the certain knowledge that fellow members will give all help possible, doubts about one's ability to be in the forefront of the Club's affairs seem less daunting. When the Presidency has become a reality for the ensuing two years there comes with it a strong realisation of just what the Y.R.C. has come to mean in one's life. Memories are always with us of halcyon days spent on the hills and the crags, in the caves and potholes in the company of Y.R.C. men. I realise very strongly how much I owe to my many Y.R.C. friends and in particular to that doyen of potholers, the late Ernest Roberts; it was through him that I first became proud to call myself a Yorkshire Rambler and, through him too, I quickly came to be catapulted into Club officialdom.

A Lancastrian by birth and a Yorkshireman by adoption, simply by moving into the county for business reasons, I had, when a mere callow youth, already had the privilege of potholing with Roberts and of being placed on the straight and narrow path in the way of safety precautions. It was with him and Jack Hilton that I made the very early through route from Diccán to Alum Pot.

Many years ago I chanced to be week-ending in Clapham when Roberts was ensconced at the New Inn. He politely informed me—perhaps I should use the word 'commanded'—that I should become a member of the Y.R.C., a possibility that I had never even remotely considered. It is perhaps not so easy nowadays to realise the veneration and awe in which the Yorkshire Ramblers' Club was held; to be invited to join the Club by no less a person than E. E. Roberts, one of the outstanding potholers and mountaineers of his generation, was, to say the least of it, rather overwhelming. However, there it was and it was not very long before Roberts told me that a Meets Secretary was needed and I had better take the job on. Business commitments at that time did not seem to permit such an undertaking but Roberts was not a man one could lightly refuse, so I rather reluctantly and with some trepidation accepted. It has been suggested that this was one of the



many good things Roberts did for the Y.R.C., but the boot is really on the other foot; over the years I have come to realise how lucky I was to get inveigled into a secretarial capacity with such a great Club, the many years I spent as Secretary are counted as the happiest of my life.

Though tradition is slow to change in the Y.R.C. previous Presidents have had the courage, or the temerity, to make innovations which at first appeared startling but which have since not only been accepted but have become part of the way of life in the Club. John Godley decided we ought to return to dressing for the Annual Dinner as we had done in pre-war years, one of the very few clubs now to do so. Frank Stembridge inaugurated the 'Ladies' Evening'; the Y.R.C. is fortunately an all-male Club and long may it remain so; the idea of ladies being even remotely seen at any Y.R.C. function seemed sacrilege, but the Ladies' Evening once a year is now well established, is thoroughly enjoyed and at least allows long-suffering wives to see for themselves the sort of men with whom their husbands associate on Club Meets and, who knows, perhaps as a result they let these same husbands attend more meets than would otherwise be the case.

The Y.R.C. Himalayan Expedition of 1957, though so tragic in its outcome with the death of Crosby Fox, was an outstanding example of the vision of Harry Stembridge and it was the first Himalayan Expedition to be organised by, and to consist solely of members of, one club and to be financed entirely by that club. It is difficult to appreciate the terrific amount of work put in by the President and the Treasurer who, at the time of the Expedition were one and the same person, Stanley Marsden, and the shattering disappointment that he and Harry Stembridge and indeed all of us felt at the loss of Crosby and the two Sherpas and the end of all our fondest dreams and hopes for the success of the Expedition.

Of happy memories is the acquisition of the Lowstern Hut at Clapham, again under Stanley's presidency. Though superb in its setting, it was then a derelict and frighteningly dilapidated bungalow; Club Members showed fantastic energy and ingenuity in making the hut usable. Against all the professional advice caustically offered by the Club's architects the scheme went ahead; week-end after week-end members toiled

with the renovations until finally it was sufficiently presentable to be opened by Ernest Roberts at the After-Dinner Meet in 1958 when John Godley was President. Perhaps it was this one determined effort more than any other which so solidly knit the Club together. Even now under the enthusiastic leadership of the present Huts Secretary, Alan Linford and of the Hut Warden, Chris Renton, improvements and extensions are being made and when completed in the very near future will provide greater facilities and more comfort for the potholders. The hut is also a useful base for walking in our own Yorkshire Dales. With Lowstern and with Low Hall Garth, the cottage in Little Langdale with its admirable modern installations and the recently acquired solid oak furniture, the Yorkshire Ramblers' Club is indeed fortunate in having two such huts which must surely rank as good as, if not better than, any Club Huts in the country.

The mind can wander and look back upon a host of happy memories of time spent at Club Meets or in the company of fellow members, but what of the future? I sometimes feel that the new generation of potholders and climbers and indeed many of the young clubs which have mushroomed in recent years are apt to regard the Ramblers as a very senior Club, one relying on its traditions, a venerable Club of ageing mountaineers. But how wrong they are! We have always, and I believe quite rightly, shunned publicity in all its forms and particularly in the national press, but our present coterie of efficient and enthusiastic potholders must surely be as active as any in the country. The contents of this Journal show how they have made their own expeditions abroad and continue to do so, whilst our climbers annually pilgrimage to the Alps and other climbing grounds all over the world. Long may it be so and long may the Yorkshire Ramblers' Club remain a Club in its outlook and never become just an association of mountaineers where fellow members may be strangers, or a Club which has developed cliques within itself.

When the occasion or the necessity arises the Y.R.C. seems to have the happy knack of having the right man for the job and I am sure that this will always be so. To echo the words of Dr. Tom Patey, the Principal Guest at the 1967 Annual Dinner, in proposing the Toast to the Y.R.C. at the end of

his memorable speech—"May we all be here in 25 years' time to celebrate the centenary of this great Club".

## AN OFF-DAY WITH A PHOTOGRAPHER

by H. L. Stembridge



WETHERLAM

S. A. Goulden

I NEVER FAIL TO MARVEL at the way so many people, myself included, cling blindly to ideas which are long since out-moded. A typical example is the perennial platitude about the advantages of climbing mountains with a photographer; the theme being that, while he stops to photograph, you have a few minutes in which to recover your breath.

This originated of course several decades ago in the era when cameras were cumbersome and heavy and the business of setting up the tripod, getting under the black cloth and inserting the plate took time. Nowadays when a big proportion of 'tigers' have little cameras slung round their necks along with a welter of slings, snap links, pegs and hammers, the fact that your climbing companion wants to take a photograph, instead of being an occasion to collect your puff, is more likely to lead to a peremptory demand that you scramble quickly up some prominent pinnacle and pose precariously while he presses the button. He then sets off before you have time to get down and by the time you have caught up with him you are puffing worse than ever. In any case I should have known that Greg<sup>(1)</sup> is no ordinary photographer. Who but he could enjoy toiling with an enormous variety of cameras and lenses through the sweltering humidity of tropical jungle in order to stand for hours up to his knees in evil smelling swamp, with insects perforating all exposed parts of his anatomy, simply to photograph two or three dragonflies?

Had I realised what it involved I would have shown more caution when he suggested going to photograph the Puya Raymondii. Apparently this rare plant with its base of spiny leaves and its giant flower spike rising to over 30 feet, reputedly the tallest flowering plant in the world, grows only in three remote places in the Cordillera Negra, the Black Mountains of Northern Peru, and is in danger of becoming extinct.

We were "relaxing" in the Santa Valley after three strenuous weeks in the Cordillera Blanca and Greg had got the arrangements all cut and dried. With our friend Cesar Morales

<sup>(1)</sup> Alf. Gregory.



we would catch a truck that climbed the Negre twice a week, drop off in the area where the plants were known to grow, take the photographs and join the truck on its return journey later in the day. Fair enough, but not quite so simple as it sounds.

The truck was due to start at 3.30 a.m. from an Indian town a mile or two distant from our sleeping place and we set our alarm for two o'clock. Although it was late June the ground was frozen hard at our height of over 10,000 feet and we stumbled noisily through the darkness down the rough track, accompanied by the barking of every dog in the neighbourhood. The little town was in darkness except for a glimmer above the church porch which disclosed the shapeless bundles of sleeping Indians huddled in their ponchos on the stone cold slabs.

We shivered as we searched for our truck among the deserted streets. We knew exactly what to look for, they are all alike, the main means of transport of the common folk of the Andes, resembling nothing so much as our English sheep or cattle trucks. They have the same high sides but whereas the English vehicles have two or three storeys to prevent the layers of sheep from pressing on to each other, the Peruvian counterparts have no such refinement—people, cattle, poultry and goods are piled in with careless abandon and left to find their own level.

By 3.0 a.m. our truck seemed already crammed to capacity with Indians and their belongings. We fought our way in over the back and after much pushing and insinuating which the muffled occupants bore in stoic silence, we managed to put our feet on the floor of the truck. But not for long. More and more people came scrambling in over the sides, sacks of potatoes and grain were pushed on to our precious bit of floor space and, just as it seemed the very sides would burst, we jolted off, bumping with flattened springs over the cobbles, past the faceless houses towards the mountains that surrounded us.

I balanced uneasily on a sack of potatoes, my feet in an Indian's lap, for there was nowhere else to put them. My knees were stiff with cold. No one spoke as, for what seemed eternity, our truck toiled upwards through the darkness, rounding hairpin after hairpin of the rough dirt road. First light re-

vealed a mass of humanity which, by constant jolting, had shaken down like peas in a jar.

Most of the Indians were returning to their remote villages in the high Cordillera. To them we were Gringos and they scrutinised us with that incredulous curiosity which our appearance undeniably invited. What was our purpose in travelling on this truck? We told them. They couldn't believe it, nor could we blame them, but it was some time before they accepted us as harmless, if queer. With the naïvety of country folk they fingered our anoraks and down jackets. How much did our boots cost? Impossible! How much better and cheaper were their bare feet or sandals of old motor tyres! They joked with each other in Quecha, doubtless at our expense, but it was good to see their kindly faces light up. Women suckled their babies as though this cramming and freezing and jolting was a natural state of affairs, as to them no doubt it was.

As the sun rose we exchanged our dirt road for a track that can only be described as atrocious. Never have I seen its like. Progress was down to a snail's pace. For hour after hour our driver tugged the wheel this way and that to avoid boulders and potholes or to ease his way across the gullies that seamed the track. Like storm-tossed mariners we clung desperately to the nearest graspable object, fearful of being thrown overboard into an abyss. Our minds numb with the jolting we lost the sense of time, so when at last the truck, after a particularly violent bout, lurched to a halt in the middle of nowhere, we could hardly believe it and it needed a mental effort to make ourselves climb over the side on to the frozen puna.

A bitter wind blew across the tawny featureless waste, but we had no time to stand and shiver. We had exactly an hour and a quarter to cover the two miles to where the plants grew and the two miles back to pick up the truck on its return. If you have never tried it I can assure you it is hard work walking fast through a maze of tussocks and boulders at over 15,000 ft. A herd of cattle grazed ahead of us; casually Cesar remarked "They breed fighting bulls here." and suggested a detour. With remarkable unanimity we changed course; the idea of being chased uphill over rough ground by a fighting bull while gasping for breath at 15,000 plus seemed more like a nightmare than an imminent probability.

Clear of the bulls, other obstacles in the form of rocks or depressions called for more detours so that when at length we saw the Puya Raymondii, still some distance away, a good half of our time had expired. There were almost a hundred plants but only two bore the great flower spikes that we wanted to photograph. Although these two were not more than half a mile away, between us and them yawned a steep-sided valley several hundred feet deep.

No earthly power could have stopped Greg from crossing this valley. The fact that we should miss the truck and wait three days for the next was immaterial, the photographs were all that mattered. Cesar and I compromised. We would photograph the flowerless plants on our side of the valley, then hurry back and hold up the truck for Greg. Three-quarters of an hour later when, panting hard, we reached the track, Greg was hot on our heels.

But not so the truck. For an hour we waited and when at last it hove into sight the reason for the delay was not far to seek. If we considered it grossly overloaded on the outward journey, there were no words to describe its present state. It was hell with the lid off! Over forty men and women, all with bundles or babies, a herd of pigs, a flock of sheep, turkeys and squawking hens plus giant bales of produce were jammed like asparagus in a bundle.

I was lucky enough to get into the driver's cab, already occupied by several people. Greg and Cesar balanced precariously on the backs of pigs with nowhere to put their feet, nor had the pigs room to lie down. The truck started with some reluctance, bumping and rolling as before but in a mile or so it stopped. With horror we saw another herd of pigs and a mountain of produce waiting to be loaded. Impossible? Not a bit of it! All were pushed on, the pigs squealing blue murder. Even our gallant engine, a Ford 600, jibbed at this latest outrage and would only consent to go uphill if the twenty-seven men aboard were prised out and made to walk.

The only person unruffled was the driver who remained as merry as a lark, joking with all and sundry, obviously regarding the whole business as a perfectly normal run. Yet the physical effort required to heave the heavy wheel for thirteen hours on end and the responsibility of delivering his human

cargo unscathed from the perils of this agonising, not to say dangerous, track would have cowed any ordinary man. Small wonder that he was universally addressed as "Maestro". Occasionally we got out of first gear, but never beyond second and we did pretty well to average 7 miles in the hour, so I was not surprised when the "Maestro" told me the truck consumed a gallon of petrol every two miles.

I would like to have talked more to this remarkable man but the fumes and the heat of the cab on top of the swaying and jolting of the vehicle completely turned me over and I only survived by hanging out of the window. We endured it for six long hours more, at the end of which our destination was still miles away and thousands of feet below us. But at this stage we abandoned ship—battered and bent and nearly broken. Greg at least was happy—he had his photograph.

## ANTRO di CORCHIA, APUAN ALPS

by R. J. Arculus

BY THE END of March 1967 I had not committed myself to any plans for a summer excursion abroad; however, on April 1st, David Judson and I met David Sinclair, a Manchester member of the B.S.A., who told us that he was leading a speleological expedition to Italy at the end of July; we decided to join him.

On July 20th we set out towards Dover in David's mini, but an accident with the rear end of a lorry when I was at the wheel delayed our crossing till next day. Passing through France, Belgium, Germany and Austria we crossed into Italy by the Brenner Pass. The Dolomites attracted us and I for one was overawed by the first sight of the vast, sheer faces of these peaks. Unfortunately there was not time to do any climbing and next day, after visiting Venice, we headed for the rendezvous with the other members of the expedition.

The Antro di Corchia, the fifth deepest pothole in the world, is in the Apuan Alps, a branch of the Apennines on the west coast of Italy about 40 miles north of Pisa. We knew that the cave was near a village called Levigliani; a post office official directed us away from the Mediterranean up a twisting mountain road for about 15 miles. The village is situated at 1,500 ft. on the side of Monte Corchia, a mountain of about 5,000 ft., and is surrounded on all sides except the west by bare precipitous mountains, the lower slopes of which are thickly wooded and occasionally cultivated in small terraces.

The local industry, which obviously dominates the economy of these small villages, is marble quarrying. The methods employed are interesting and we became involved with them as soon as we arrived. About half a mile down the road from Levigliani is the lower end of a téléferique; there are two supporting wires running up the hillside to an engine house a thousand feet above. Attached to these wires, none too securely, are two metal platforms about four feet by three, with a rail at either end but no sides. The maximum number of people who could attach themselves to these trays is five and it was a pleasant experience to pass airily up the hillside about three hundred feet above the trees. The engine house

also provides the power for a second téléferique, taking men and materials a further thousand feet up Monte Corchia to the working quarries.

The entrance to the cave is halfway between this engine house and the upper quarries, at the side of a scree slope resulting from rock debris shovelled out of the quarry above. The manager of the quarry kindly allowed us to use the téléferique to take our gear up to the engine house, whence it is only four hundred yards to the cave. This man also runs an hotel in Levigliani; he was very interested in the cave and I think hopes to tap water from it as there is a great shortage of this on the surface.

As we came round the final corner of the road we saw some of our friends standing at the base of the téléferique and we pulled in to greet them. Their Land Rover was the only vehicle not to have arrived on this first Tuesday; this was serious as it was carrying most of the tackle. A Belgian team was detackling the cave as we arrived and an Italian team was just going in. We decided that a reconnaissance party of four should go down the cave next day and find a suitable camp site. David had not been well but by next morning had recovered enough to climb Monte Corchia with me and so we rid ourselves of the effects of four days' travel.

Early the following morning we set off in the shade of a ridge of Monte Corchia, up one of the quarry runs. These are steeply inclined ramps with wooden sleepers embedded transversely in them. The ramps change direction every hundred yards or so and at these points a horizontal pulley is fixed at the side of the ramp. The oblong blocks of marble, about 10 feet long by four feet square, are placed on a sledge and lowered down the run. One man hangs on to the back, countering shifts in direction with his own weight, while another walks in front of the block greasing the sleepers with soap. At the changes in direction of the ramp the block has to be swung so that the lowering cable passes round the fixed pulley, ensuring a straight course down the next section. A winch provides the power for the braking cable at the top of the ramp and the whole process, though risky, is probably a very cheap way of moving the blocks down from the quarries to the road. They are then mounted on lorries and taken down

to stone mills in the valley.

We walked up the ramp for a little way, then up a dry stream valley with limestone walls. After traversing across the face of the mountain to the engine house in the full glare of the sun, we continued up another ramp to the entrance of the cave. A cold blast of air was coming out, contrasting sharply with the scorching heat of the hillside. Fifteen miles away through the heat haze we could see the Mediterranean coast and probably at least another twenty miles out to sea. The shade of the engine house provided a welcome rest and we passed the time talking to some of the Belgian cavers and to the man in charge of the télérifique. At 5 p.m. the quarry workers went down, enabling our friends at the roadside to send up our gear and the tackle, for the Land Rover had arrived. Unfortunately its trailer had broken down and had to be left behind in France with two members of the expedition; one of these, Alan Gamble, joined us later.

When all the tackle had come up we caught the last chair down and enjoyed a pleasant evening in Levigliani. The reconnaissance team reported favourably on a potential camp site and the descent was fixed for two days later. The next evening, however, Glyn Edwards, David and I took the télérifique up to the engine house because we were tired of sleeping in the oppressive heat of the valley. We busied ourselves sorting out underground rations and moving the tackle up to a storage hut. For the first time it started to rain slightly but we had a good night's rest. The others came up in the morning and at 11 a.m. we finally entered the cave. Our carbide lamps would not stay alight in the draught of the entrance but after two hundred feet of low passage we could stand up and light them in more comfortable surroundings.

The Antro di Corchia consists initially of large winding passages and deep pitches for the first thousand feet of depth. It then becomes smaller in passage size until it joins a major subterranean river. Upstream this quickly sumps but downstream a large stream passage descends another seven hundred feet to a boulder choke. We had 22 kit bags to take down to the camp and while the rest of us struggled with these the surveyors and photographers set about their tasks. At first the going was easy along a large passage and down a couple of fit-

teen foot drops, but became more difficult when nearing the first big pitch of 140 feet. The passage developed a trench in its middle and the walls were encrusted with sharp calcite nodules. We soon became adept at jumping across the trench from wall to wall with kit bags on our backs. Those with long legs could keep one foot on either wall and did not have to indulge in such antics.

The 140 ft. pitch was divided by two ledges, 80 ft. and 100 ft. down and had a slight twist overall; the ladder was awkward to climb. Here two members of the expedition decided that they were not up to it and left the cave; I was stationed on the first ledge to guide the bags on their way down. This pitch was followed by a short drop which opened out into a huge chamber about 200 feet across. On the left was a black void down which stones rumbled and boomed for 400 feet. On the right was a small inlet which provided a welcome drink, the cave had been dry down to this point. To avoid the 400 ft. loose pitch we used a long chute which followed the dip of the rock downwards at 40 degrees for some 500 feet. This ended over another drop but a convenient belay allowed us to ladder a 60 ft. pitch into a parallel rift on our left. A short drop from this opened into another rift which continued downwards at the same angle as the first for a few feet. The Italians had laddered a 120 ft. pitch in the floor and we climbed down this. The first few feet were cramped and the walls again covered with calcite nodules, but it soon developed into a fine free hanging pitch. We camped fifty feet from the bottom of the ladder in full view of it. In effect it hung down through the roof of a 100 ft. high gallery, the largest passage in the cave and up to 30 feet wide. Fifty feet from the ladder on the other side a small stream entered from above and flowed past our camp site, providing us with water for drinking and washing. The camp was at a depth of 1,000 feet and a horizontal distance of two thirds of a mile from the entrance. A couple of pullovers and long underwear kept the body at a comfortable temperature while active in camp, but a warm sleeping bag was essential. We turned in at 10 p.m. after a good meal, just as the surveyors arrived; they had only managed to survey to the 140 ft. pitch because of the twisting nature of the passage.

Up at six next morning and after a rapid breakfast, the assault party was soon on its way. We took a dinghy because it was rumoured that there was a deep pool in the river passage. The gallery continued for three hundred yards, well decorated in parts, with a 20 ft. pitch fairly near our camp. The Italians were still in bed as we passed by and we exchanged greetings. They insisted we took another rope for the 'Grande Cascata'. They were striking camp that day and we arranged to detackle the pot for them. The gallery closed down and ended in a wet 70 ft. pitch; by traversing above it could be laddered dry, though adding 20 feet to its length. This was another fine free hanging pitch after the first few feet. Three short pitches in a constricted passage followed but a fourth ended on a ledge above a wet 200 ft. drop. To the left, however, a dry passage led to a similarly dry 180 ft. pitch which rejoined the stream at the bottom. This was the finest pitch in the cave, a free hang all the way from the belay point. Its acoustics were such that a person at the top could talk in an almost normal voice to another at the bottom.

The subsequent stream passage was the smallest part of the cave and continued for 1,000 feet with a couple of short pitches along its length. Near the end was what an earlier exploring Italian team had called a 'sifone'; this was a knee deep pool occupying a sharp left turn in the passage and could become a sump in wet weather. Now we could hear a larger stream ahead and suddenly we joined it. The river passage was anything up to 50 ft. high and 10 ft. wide and allowed quick progress downstream. There were eight 25 ft. pitches in its length and all of them were laddered dry by traversing above the falls. We waded round the pool and found that the Grande Cascata was an easy free climb, its total height was about 100 feet but split up by many ledges and the intervening drops had convenient holds.

All too quickly we arrived at the terminal boulder choke at a depth of 2,700 feet, two miles from the entrance. Determined to proceed further, David and I followed the stream into the boulders where it divided. We went as far as we could and started to dig; there looked to be a space beyond the blockage but it would need explosives to reach it. Strangely there were boulders composed of mica schist in the

choke. I was surprised to find metamorphic rocks in what appeared to be an unaltered limestone cave; when I examined some of these more closely I found that they did not continue far upstream, so I started to climb above the floor level. Meanwhile David and Glyn had been climbing in the roof and David had found an old streamway overpassing the boulder choke. He came back down and shouted for me to join them and so we entered this new passage. It was extremely well decorated with many pure white formations which several times threatened to block our way. After 1,000 feet it closed down to a low crawl which Glyn squeezed through after some manipulation with boulders. Disappointingly it ended in a still pool twenty feet on; more explosives would be needed to continue. We returned to the main stream to find that the photographers had arrived and they went on along the new passage to record the formations. Before we started back we had a look at a strange chamber also lying above the choke, about 60 ft. high with a mud and sand floor; its interesting feature was an inclined left wall composed entirely of mica schist. This probably means that the limestone has also been slightly metamorphosed, which is hardly surprising when deposits of marble are so near.

We made our way back upstream from the choke in rapid time; when we came to the junction with the smaller stream we went on with the main river to the sump. This was a deep blue colour, quite still and I thought at least 30 feet deep, ten feet beneath the surface were large calcite encrustations on the walls; obviously an ideal site for a dive. After some route finding difficulty beneath the gallery, we eventually arrived back in camp at 8 p.m., well satisfied with our day.

The pot had been detackled to the 180 ft. pitch and the next day (Sunday) was spent detackling up to the camp and taking as much tackle as possible up the three pitches above the camp. Dave Sinclair and Rod Mumford explored 1,000 feet of new passage near the Italian camp site. On Monday we struck camp and started out for the surface. It took eight hours to haul and carry all the bags out of the cave and into the sunshine. A welcome cup of tea was provided by the men at the engine house and then most of us walked down the ramp to the base camp. Due to the unfortunate loss of the

trailer in France, we did not carry out as complete a programme of exploration underground as we had intended, but in spite of this we all enjoyed a very fine cave. Next day, after a joint meal with the Italian cavers in the Levigliani Hotel, the team split up. David, Glyn and I left Italy in the mini to enjoy the cooler climate of Grindelwald, where we met up again with three other members of the party, Mumford, Johnson and Kirkby before finally making for home.

#### MEMBERS OF THE EXPEDITION:

D. Sinclair	B.S.A. Manchester	Leader
E. Johnson	North West Pothole Club	Deputy Leader
R. Mumford	North West Pothole Club	Explorer
G. Edwards	B.S.A. Manchester	Explorer
A. Gamble	B.S.A. Manchester	Quartermaster
D. Roberts	B.S.A. Manchester	Tackle Officer
H. Lomas	B.S.A. Manchester	Surveyor
B. Lewis	B.S.A. Manchester	Photographer
N. Harper	B.S.A. Manchester and Chelsea Speleological Society	Photographer
J. Kirkby	B.S.A. Manchester	Explorer
D. Judson	Yorkshire Ramblers' Club	Explorer
R. J. Arculus	Yorkshire Ramblers' Club	Explorer

## SOME CLIMBS ON LIMESTONE IN THE CLAPHAM AREA

by J. Richards

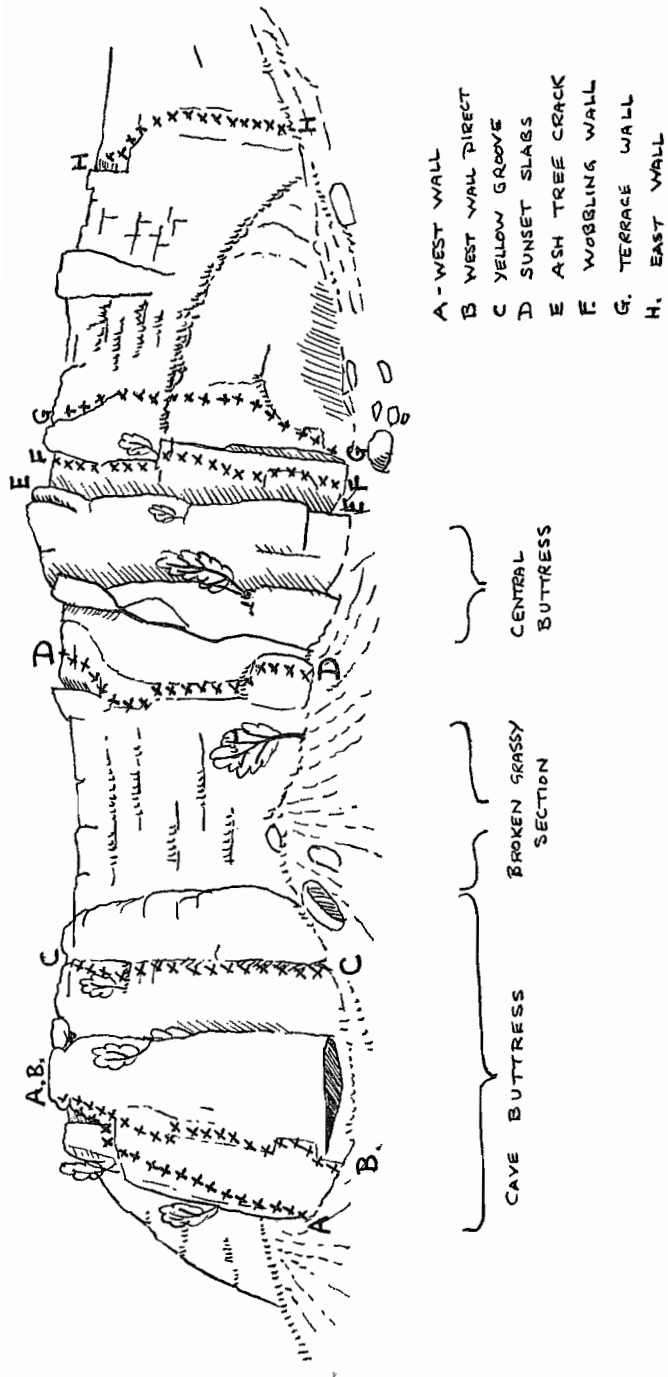
FREE CLIMBING on the limestone outcrops has been a recognised part of the climbing scene for the past few years. It all started rather earlier when English climbers, anxious to practise their technique in preparation for artificial climbs on the Continent, realised that they could drive their pitons into the limestone without being accused of desecrating the crags of a classical climbing area. They quickly discovered that these steep, overhanging walls yielded first class artificial routes and that, more surprisingly, free climbing of a high order was also possible. It had hitherto been assumed that limestone was unreliable, as indeed much of it is, but in certain areas the rock is reasonably sound.

Exploration continued and the number of routes multiplied. The standard is very high; *New Climbs—West Yorkshire Area* by J. A. Austin, published about two years ago by the Yorkshire Mountaineering Club, lists forty-four new climbs on limestone of which thirty-nine are 'Very Severe' and the remaining five 'Severe'. This state of affairs may be admirable for the tiger but is apt to discourage the climber who expects to find holds on his 'Very Difficults', and who likes his 'Severes' mild, from investigating those steep little grey crags in the Yorkshire Dales.

There are in fact within easy reach of Lowstern several climbs of a non-terrifying nature, on pleasantly sound limestone. In describing the rock as sound it does not follow that there are absolutely no loose holds, but you certainly will not bring the whole crag cascading about your ears in the form of five-hundredweight blocks. All doubtful looking holds must be tested and loose holds must occasionally be used, but this tends to improve technique rather than the reverse. The exponent of 'grabbing hopefully' will either improve or find himself contemplating his hold on his way back to the start of the climb.

The Yorkshire Ramblers played their pioneering part in the area when in 1948 Arthur Tallon climbed the Central Groove on Robin Proctor's Scar, the smooth wall overlooking the





ASH TREE CRAG - AUSTWICK drawn by J. Richards

Clapham-Austwick lane. The first of the easy climbs followed in 1950/51 by the ascent of a few obvious chimneys and broken buttresses, then in 1953 two routes (Ash Tree Crack and Wobbling Wall) were made on a small steep crag where the Norber ridge bends round to form the right flank of the valley containing Clapham Cave. 'Wobbling Wall' is a complete misnomer. This was a first attempt on a worth-while route on limestone and, after the absolute reliability of Lake District rock, the presence of one or two loose holds on the ledge halfway up the climb resulted in its rather unfortunate name. In fact it is doubtful if there is a more reliable 40 feet of limestone in the area. Other routes followed at rare intervals over the next ten years, mainly in the form of flank attacks on other outcrops. Occasionally, however, a good climb was discovered but there still remains much to be done.

The average climber will find a lot of enjoyment in being able to climb from the Club hut in a pleasant secluded area; once he has developed his technique to enable him successfully to overcome the rather different problems found on limestone, he too will be able to look around and make climbs of his own. For the novice I should add that limestone when damp is very greasy and is best avoided.

The climbs on each drag are described from left to right.

#### A.—ASH TREE CRAG

Approach from Clapham by the lane to Austwick, through the tunnels. Take the left fork (Long Lane) and then through the third gate on the right and up the steep field. On the left there is a long line of scars parallel to the lane in the centre of a small outcrop with a disused lime kiln; on the right behind a large ash tree is Ash Tree Crag.

- (a) *West Wall. 30 ft. V. Diff.* Starts from a grassy bay and runs up the steep left-hand side of the undercut buttress. Climb to a narrow rock ledge, reached from the left with the aid of a fine incut hold. Then up and diagonally rightwards over a series of ledges to an exposed finish on excellent holds.
- (b) *West Wall Direct. 40 ft. Severe.* Starts on the left of the low cave. Climb the undercut and doubtful looking blocks by a semi-layback movement, then up the crack in the

shallow corner. Make a two step traverse left and mantleshelf up on to the handholds, avoiding a loose block on left. Straight up to the finish of West Wall on improving holds.

- (c) *Yellow Groove. 40 ft. Mild severe.* About 6 yards right of last climb, up the second groove, containing a small ash tree. The start is rather awkward but a good left hand jam in the crack is useful. Ledges are reached below an open corner (running belay on ash tree). Climb left wall of corner, stepping right to finish.
- (d) *Sunset Slabs. 40 ft. V. Diff.* An interesting climb; better than it looks. Starts at the right hand end of the broken grassy section in the centre of the crag, below a series of little walls ending in a 'V' chimney. Climb the first little wall by a crack on its right, move left, then up the steep corner. Step left and up to the foot of the chimney and a doubtful spike. Step right on to perfect rock and so up to the top of the crag.
- (e) *Ash Tree Crack. 40 ft. Severe.* The start is immediately right of the clean 'central buttress' of the crag. Climb the crack using holds on the right wall. After a narrow section there is a small spike on the left for a running belay. Straight up to the overhang then traverse right using an excellent incut hand hold and small ledges for the feet. When both hands are grasping the good hold make a strenuous pull over the overhang on to easier ground.
- (f) *Wobbling Wall. 40 ft. V. Diff.* Starts six feet to the right of Ash Tree Crack.
1. 25 ft.: Climb the wall on good holds to a stance and belay by a withered elder tree.
  2. 15 ft.: Climb above belay up an awkward groove to the top.
- (g) *Terrace Wall. 40 ft. Diff.* Starts a few feet to the right of the last climb.
1. 25 ft.: Leaving the ground is rather awkward; after attaining a standing position on an overhanging block, easier climbing leads slightly right to the terrace and a small spike belay. (The large flake by your feet is loose).



*GAPING GILL. 75th ANNIVERSARY*

*D. P. Penfold*



2. 15 ft.: Climb above the belay to a gangway slanting up to the left, huge holds lead to the top of the crag.
- (h) *East Wall. 30 ft. V. Diff.* The terrace halfway up Climb (g) runs across the crag to descend at the foot of a large detached tower. Further right is a miniature tower on the skyline, this climb follows an incipient rib a few feet to right.
1. 20 ft.: Climb the poorly defined rib (a small incut hold for the right hand is very useful) to a stance and belay on a grassy ledge.
  2. 10 ft.: Move left and up a little crack in the corner.
- (i) *Rib and Chimney. 45 ft. Diff.* The scars running parallel to Long Lane are rather broken and loose; the only climb so far lies just to the left of a large detached mass of rock approximately half way along the crag. Climb the rib from its lowest point, then up broken rocks and grass. Traverse left to a nice little chimney which leads to the top of the crag.

On the left of the above chimney is a large block bounded on its left by an oblique chimney. This has been climbed by continuing the traverse on the last climb, the rocks below being too loose and broken to give an independent start.

Some twenty yards further left is a prominent nose, on its immediate right is a fine crack; this has been approached from below by means of a loose scramble, the crack itself appears sound but has not yet been climbed.

#### B.—ROBIN PROCTOR'S SCAR

This large cliff is to the right of and lower than Ash Tree Crag. The only weakness is a groove which runs up the centre of the crag to the right of a 'V' shaped growth of ivy.

*Central Groove. 90 ft. Severe.* Awkward rocks lead to the foot of a steep crack which is climbed until it widens into a grassy gully. Climb the back wall of the gully to the top. Several running belays are available.

#### C.—CRUMMACKDALE

From the farm follow the track above Austwick Beck Head to where it swings left to run in front of the cliffs at the head

of the valley, then up the scree to the first steep outcrop, a few yards to the right from where a broken wall has been built on the scars. There are two routes, one either side of an overhanging block on the upper half of the cliff; both are rather artificial in that the line can be varied somewhat.

- (a) *Wall and Corner. 40 ft. V. Diff.* Up a steep wall via a thin crack to a grass ledge, then up the square cut corner stepping on to the right wall to finish.
- (b) *Cranesbill Crack. 40 ft. V. Diff.* A nice climb. A few yards to the right of the last climb, below an obvious zig-zag crack in the upper half of the cliff. Up steep little walls to an overhung ledge. From the ledge climb the overhang and follow the crack which gives good holds to the top.

Further to the right above the centre of the valley the cliffs become much larger; a rusty peg and wooden wedges are evidence that some work had been done here. The wall with the rusty peg has been climbed. Start at the left, climb to the peg (runner), traverse right and up steep corner to the top. (About V. Diff.).

#### D.—FEIZOR NICK

Feizor Nick is the gap in the hills behind the hamlet of Feizor (M.R. 789682 O.S. Sheet 90). Follow the road through the second gate where parking is available on the right. The rocks have been quarried on the extreme left and there is more loose material lying on the ledges than there is on the rocks previously described.

- (a) *Ivy Buttress. 50 ft. V. Diff.* Starts above the ruined lime kiln, between a hawthorn and a rowan, up a wall with ivy growing on the left.
1. 30 ft.: Climb up to a flake in a corner, then from the flake make a delicate step leftwards up the steep wall to a square stance and a flake belay.
  2. 20 ft.: Climb above the belay to a large ledge which unfortunately breaks the continuity; a choice of routes then leads to the top. A more direct finish up a groove, reached by traversing right from the belay, has been investigated but needs extensive clearing of loose rock before it would be safe.

- (b) *Crackstone Wall. 30 ft. V. Diff.* A nice little route, about 20 yards to the right of the last climb, in a grassy bay near a big ash tree. Takes the obvious cracked wall forming the left hand side of a steep corner. Start at the bottom left hand side of the wall, climb diagonally right to a small hawthorn (running belay), then step back left to finish. There are several loose rocks on the ledges at the top of this climb.

#### E.—TWISTLETON SCAR (near Ingleton)

Twistleton Scar is covered by an article in *The Climber* (July 1964) which contains an excellent diagram of the crag. This is one of the better limestone outcrops and is well worth a visit. The grading of the climbs is sensible and (an important point) consistent.

In the next field, towards the Hill Inn, from the existing Twistleton routes are four more climbs. A prominent cairn on the skyline is a good landmark and the place to make for. On the crag itself is an obvious narrow pillar bounded left and right by wide cracks. To the left of the pillar is a smooth wall and the first climb runs up the extreme left edge.

- (a) *Shelob. 30 ft. Severe.* Climb on to the pedestal blocks then move diagonally rightwards up the wall to easier ledges, then straight up to the top.
- (b) *Rowan Tree Wall. 30 ft. V. Diff.* A few yards further right, just to the right of where a thin crack runs down the blank wall. Straight up the wall to the small tree (runner), then slightly left to the top. Immediately right is an easy chimney behind the pillar, a useful easy way down.
- (c) *Central Pillar. 30 ft. V. Diff.* The obvious pillar between two smooth cracks. Start using the left hand crack, then the right hand one about half way up. Finish directly up the front of the pillar.
- (d) *Pillar Ridge. 30 ft. V. Diff.* A ridge comes down to the right of the Central Pillar and is reached via a shallow scoop round to the right. This is rather awkward but moving back left on to the ridge leads to easier rocks which are followed to the top.

## A FIONN LOCH DIARY

by H. Stirling

IN 1955 I visited Skye for the first time. A hot sun shone from dawn till dusk. It was to have been a holiday for exploring the Cuillin and not for ticking off routes. We were to cross the ridge from time to time and camp in various places, one of which would be Coruisk. However, this was not to be. I found myself in Glen Brittle with a different set of companions who did not think much of my previous plans and were positive that camping at Coruisk was almost impossible.

One day we took Tex Geddes' boat to this wild, inaccessible and unencampable place. It would have been very difficult to pitch a tent, but not because of ground conditions. The Y.R.C. had taken over. An adventurous crowd this, I thought. I will return. I did. In 1961, at Whit, with the Y.R.C.

It may not be as enterprising now to go to Coruisk, nor to Rhum since it has been Nationalised. The adventure of getting there has gone although the fascination of these places remains—in the off season. It is galling for us in the northern part of Southern Britain to know that the Lowland Scot can have a week-end in Glen Brittle returning by the Summer Sunday ferries, and that Coruisk, Rhum and Knoydart can be 'done' in a three day week-end. Ben More, Mull, has been achieved in a day with a 3 a.m. start from Ayrshire. The motor car is the greatest artificial aid to mountaineering. Nevertheless our Committee still try to find somewhere that is new for us, or is that little bit different. Suggestions have to be very ridiculous to be rejected. Seemingly impossible ones are considered and if desirable actually come to pass.

Fionn Loch was very similar to the latter. Arthur Leese started it off at the Annual Dinner and Stirling added momentum with enthusiasm. Both had been there. So had Francis Falkingham of the Gritstone Club and he added a few words more. Fionn Loch got itself on the drawing board. No sooner was the preliminary list of meets issued than a circular came out asking us to book provisionally for the meet with a view to using the night car sleeper service of British Railways. Then at the Hill Inn we saw pictures of our goal and discussed with our Gritstone friend Falkingham how to get there. More im-

portant, how to get our gear there. This was the big obstacle.

It was obvious that our camp should be at the head of the Loch. This could be approached from several directions depending on one's ability to walk and to carry gear. Of these routes only two came close to our idea of practicability. One would be to cross Loch Maree to Letterewe by boat and then carry over the Bealach Mheinnidh to Carnmore House near the head of Fionn Loch. This involved an ascent of 1600 feet and a descent of 1000 feet over a distance of five miles. The alternative approach would be to drive up the private road from Poolewe to Kernsary and carry from there to Carnmore eight miles away, but only 600 feet up and down.

Naturally we would require ponies and boats, from either the Letterewe or Kernsary Estates, depending on which route we decided on. Naturally the respective proprietors would be pleased to let us have them. Naturally we would offer to pay for their use. Thus, presumptuously, went our discussions at the Hill Inn.

Fortunately the Club's Officers presented a more respectful approach to Colonel Whitbread, the proprietor of both estates. A contact was sought, and our man with a man in Whitbread's was found. An arrangement was evolved and in April we were presented with the details. Colonel Whitbread had done us extremely well. Land Rovers from Kernsary to Fionn Loch jetty and thence by boat to Carnmore. Simple, labourless and perfect for us. Snags did crop up but were resolved a week before the meet.

Saturday, May 27th arrived and perfect weather with it. A few of the early arrivals, in spite of the explicit circular, began to have doubts about the arrangements. A resident of Poolewe was astonished at the facilities at our disposal and was certain we would not get them nor even be allowed to camp. Depressed by this these early arrivals collected themselves together for a commiseration session in a quiet hotel. This was of no help. The picture of the entire Meet gently cruising up Fionn Loch in a vessel that, basically at least, could be described as The Estate Launch, dissolved completely. For here they had been informed that the craft on the Loch consisted of rudimentary rowing boats; and that was not all, some of them leaked.

Of these early birds, Spray and Stirling were fairly lightly laden and could carry themselves and their gear all the way. Everyone else could break their backs rowing as far as they were concerned. The others, who were to be guests at what would become known as the Carnmore Hilton (Proprietor: M. Church) looked worried. When this establishment erected itself at Carnmore one could see why. Nevertheless and notwithstanding, the arrangements went as sweet as the weather. Our cars were not even allowed to carry gear from Poolewe to Kernsary. This was undertaken by a National Trust for Scotland Land Rover handled by a very capable and charming lady driver.

The cars were parked at Kernsary and soon a convoy set sail from the jetty. This consisted of two rowing boats with outboard motors, each towing another rowing boat. These were crewed by Stanley Marsden, naturally, and Jack Hilton to one pair of vessels, and Mr. Anderson, the keeper at Kernsary, and young Woodward (who was apparently not fit enough to walk) to the other pair.

The rest walked. A quarter of a mile from Kernsary the Carnmore path starts at a small cairn and follows the burn to its watershed. The path is not always prominent and at the watershed one tends to lose it. However, once under the cliffs of Beinn Airidh Charr it becomes excellent and provides a fast trot all the way to the head of Fionn Loch, across the causeway separating it from Dubh Loch and round to Carnmore.

It is when one stands on the causeway that this place first makes its great impact. Fionn Loch stretches out, smooth and spacious, as if to the sea. In contrast Dubh Loch, round and dark, is walled in by sweeping slabs, beetling cliffs and steep hillsides. From there you come round to Carnmore, a white house in a green field, and overhanging it is Carnmore Crag, a soaring, leaning presence.

Awaiting the arrival of the boats we heard voices and then, high above us on Carnmore Crag we heard the ding ding of a wee hammer. Inspection of an old stable confirmed that we were not to have the place to ourselves. The fleet arrived with the baggage and soon tents were up, including the Carnmore Hilton, a large pneumatic igloo. The occupants of the

barn turned out to be two members of the Creag Dubh Mountaineering Club and they soon came amongst us, swapping tales and information.

Sunday was a sun day. Many trekked off to the high hills of Sgurr Bàn, Mullach Coire Mhic Fhearchair, and Beinn Tarsuinn. The last mentioned is one of the doubtful Munros.<sup>(1)</sup> The Munro list compilers maintain that it is approximately 3080 feet but the Ordnance Survey refuse to recognise this. Whether this height was correct or not we may never know, such things now depend on the sea level at Newlyn, Cornwall, not at Liverpool as heretofore.

Five other members in two separate parties and by different routes went to Beinn Lair. Initially they had intended doing the same route but pretended to be unaware of each other's intention. However, to avoid being beaten to the start, Spray and Stirling changed their minds and tackled the Tooth. This was an easy, interesting and pleasantly steep route which soon had them on the summit, a plum of a viewpoint. Loch Maree lay below, forest fringed and isleted, providing a gentle foreground to the massed peaks of Torridon and the Beinn Damph range. Further away, to the East, rolled the Fannichs. Then nearer were A'Mhaighdean, Tarsuinn and Mullach Coire Mhic Fhearchair. Beyond that the great comb of An Teallach, ". . . the last blue snow barred mountain." It was the edge of sight and reality, beyond that, mystery and Samarkand. Today we had come a little further. It was this year's Tir nan Og. Sick Heart River ran among these hills.<sup>(2)</sup>

Colour, subtly shaded by a slight haze, seduced the eye. The islands on a blue Loch Maree were a fresh early summer green. The purple of Torridonian sandstone was all around but interrupted here and there by the pale pink of gneiss. From this rose peaks capped in milky quartz. The first view of the country on the first day gave an added lustre. Unfamiliarity sharpened the senses.

<sup>(1)</sup> See *Munro's Tables*, 1953 Edition, page 42.

<sup>(2)</sup> NOTE: Those who don't know about ". . . the last blue snow barred mountain.", Samarkand and a little further should read *Hassan* by James Elroy Flecker. For information regarding Sick Heart River consult *Sick Heart River* by John Buchan.

Suddenly the panorama shimmered, shook and disintegrated: the great poetic vision destroyed by the uncultivated Yorkshire voices of Woodward, Church and Barker. They had selected the wrong buttress and found themselves committed to long stretches of heather and short pitches of rock. However, after a truce was called in the recriminations, they took time to absorb the scene about them. A refreshing plunge in Fionn Loch completed the day and also restored goodwill.

This bathe in the Loch became a pre-breakfast ritual on these sunny mornings. No matter how much energy had been expended the day before, it would have been shameful to lie in bed. Everything added up to total perfection; the warm sun and the sparkling loch; the rugged scenery and the good company; the early morning swim and the alfresco breakfast. Yes, the alfresco breakfast was very good, lingering as it did into the morning coffee hour. Why rush off? Daylight would last until 23.00. Relax, enjoy the sunshine, and soon it would be lunchtime. Anyway, if you wait till after that you don't need to take so much food on the hill.

Thus Spray and Stirling set off to climb A'Mhaighdean, selecting Pillar Buttress as their route of ascent. They struggled up from the head of Loch Duhb and through the rocky bealach to Gorm Loch Mor, being grilled by the heat radiating from the rock. Seven or eight hundred feet of scrambling brought them to the foot of the climb proper. The route gave some very nice situations, with a sufficient sense of exposure on all sides. The rock was sound and rough although perhaps a little too hot for tender fingertips.

On a parallel ridge another party, two males, two females and a juvenile basked in the sun and made witty comments on the efforts of the Y.R.C. party. Their remarks were quite unintelligible, but when Stirling changed into lightweight rock boots, one of these characters is thought to have said, "Look at him changing his hooves". Unfortunately their method of climbing was rather different and consequently no useful information was obtained regarding the continuation of the climb. They were an impressive clan of goats.

The top of the climb was within one hundred feet of the summit and there the unroping took place. At this moment Arthur Leese came striding into view, hence achieving one

of his targets and reason for his enthusiastic promotion of this meet. Soon the rest of his party arrived, having just been on Roadh-Stac Mòr. Comments could have been made on the condition of the party now assembled on Scotland's geographical maiden but weren't. Everyone descended by the North-west ridge. On this ridge, seemingly perched on the gneiss, are some large towers of Torridonian sandstone giving some scrambling interest.

At Fuar Loch Bheag the party met up with Woodward and Company who had been amusing themselves scrambling on an outcrop and sunbathing. They had also been swimming. Church had ventured a plunge into Fuar Loch Mhor and complained bitterly of its icy waters. Sometimes these Gaelic names mean what they say, but Church had no Gaelic.

An outsider arrived and camped at the causeway; an angler seeking solitude and fish. What with late evening, chattering strollers and the early morning bathing party, it was just as well he did his fishing around 04.30 hrs., gladly leaving for London shortly afterwards.

On Tuesday no-one, as usual, was in a hurry to go anywhere. In the afternoon Church, Barker, Swindells and Woodward set off for Shenavall bothy, eight miles away, whence they could do An Teallach the next day. Spray and Stirling made for Carnan Bàn and by taking a circuitous route inadvertently arrived at the top of the crag. However, they soon remedied this and roped up for "Dishonour" on the South face. It proved to be a very good route and considerably more exciting than the others. Standing on top of a rocking flake in a very exposed position is exciting. Gneiss tends to be slabby and occasionally a natural belay is not to be found, even on comparatively easy climbs, and it is as well to be prepared for this.

The heat wave ended. On Wednesday the mist was down and the rain fell steadily. Shapeless unidentifiable figures in plastic raincoats and oilskins moved back and forth. One of the Creag Dubh was however identifiable by his monkish garb of faded red ankle length cagoule. Seen alone, crossing the causeway in the mist, he looked supernatural. Spenceley and Handley disappeared and returned soaked; they claimed to have climbed Slioch.

On another wet day Dossor and Spenceley went off, conning Spray into accompanying them. Apparently the object of this excursion was to collect a stone for Dossor's garden. This stone lay a good way up A'Mhaighdean. It was heavy. They took it in turns to carry it and hence the necessity of having Spray with them. Unusual and interesting this stone may be but it would be commonplace in a graveyard. No doubt its intrinsic beauty is seen to better advantage in Jack's garden.

Geoff Bates kept people in a good humour on these damp days and all tents welcomed his contributions. The An Tealach party returned with tales of happy nights before blazing log fires in Shenavall and cold wet gales on the mountain.

Friday was a busy day. We had been warned that if a strong westerly wind arose, the boats might not be able to return for the gear and we would have to shift for ourselves. Various plans were discussed but some had their own ideas and put them into operation. Thus Spenceley, Handley, Dossor and Arthur Leese left on unscheduled sailings. The Carnmore Hilton bunch deflated their hostel and decamped on foot under enormous loads. They didn't quite manage it all on their own as Stirling, as a means of passing the time, carried a large rucksack of tinned food for them. Pat Stonehouse also carried out some of his gear and returned to Carnmore. Everyone got soaked. Thus, should the boats fail to come for us, those now in Poolewe could help the others to move out on Saturday.

The weather did not worsen. The boats arrived, were loaded and crewed. The rest of us walked to Kernsary. After getting the cars down to Poolewe, they were loaded and everyone took their various routes homeward.

It is to be hoped that our conduct at Fionn Loch has left no blemishes and that, in some future year, we shall be permitted to return. We are very grateful for all that was done for us by Colonel Whitbread, his Factors and Mr. Anderson. The arrangements were not only a great aid to us, but also added their own mark of distinction to, for us, a meet of great distinction.

Can we go further next time?

## SOME CLIMBS IN TURKEY

by G. B. Spenceley

NEXT TO LAPLAND, and I had already been there, Turkey seemed the nearest spot where a holiday would have something of the flavour of an expedition. There are mountains still unclimbed in Turkey and I calculated that with a full car we could be at their foot at a travel cost of £20 per head. We may not, in fact, have made first ascents but there was quite enough remoteness, strange atmosphere and lack of knowledge to satisfy any budding explorer/mountaineer; and the estimate of costs was not far out.

I wanted to go to Turkey anyway for more than mountains. All that I had heard and read about the country indicated its interest and diversity and my intention was to devote two or three summers to its study, to travel and photograph widely and if possible to climb. It was a chance meeting with Pat and Peter Shorter that made this last a reality. They were eager to join me and besides tremendous enthusiasm for climbing, they shared between them a useful range of other skills. Pat had much medical and surgical knowledge, Peter knew all about cars and they were both superb cooks who could effortlessly rustle up the most exquisite and exotic dishes. Washing up was the only culinary task I was ever permitted.

Anatolia is ringed with mountains but at only five places do they thrust themselves up to a height sufficient to bear snow in summer and offer a real challenge to the mountaineer. Highest of all and giving a view over three countries is Noah's mountain, Mount Ararat, rising in solitary splendour from the heart of old Armenia to over 17,000 ft. It is an ice-capped cone of lava and only good lungs and limbs are needed for its ascent so that it has been climbed more often by athletic intellectuals than by skilled alpinists. South of Ararat, beyond Lake Van, in that wedge of Turkey which separates the frontiers of Iraq and Iran, are the rugged mountains of the Hak-kari, the last stronghold in Turkey of the semi-feudal Kurds. Freya Stark had travelled there and more recently Tom Weir, but from 1960 this had become a totally restricted area, for it was Government policy to insulate these unassimilated and troublesome people from contact with the foreigner. Officially,



the ban has now been lifted but, as for anywhere else east of the Euphrates, permission may still be withheld.

North of Ararat, following the coastline of the Black Sea, are the Pontic Alps, crowned at their eastern end by the rocky peaks of the Kaçkar group. But here, where the climber may look into Soviet Russia—and the Caucasus—across Turkey's most vital military frontier, again the foreigner was not encouraged. In 1964 Robin Fedden led the first British party to these mountains but they were restricted to the northern watershed. It seemed that we could go to none of the best mountain ranges in Turkey. There was Erciyas Dag of course, the ancient Mount Argaeus which makes a noble background to the old Cappadocian town of Kayseri; one could travel there unhindered, but like Ararat it is only an isolated volcanic cone.

All that was left for us was the Ala Dag, a 25 mile range of mountains lying between Erciyas and the Cilician Gates; these were certainly high enough, reaching 13,000 feet in places, reasonably accessible and still satisfyingly little known. They were not quite so enticing as the Hakkari perhaps but they seemed the best choice for our expedition. Expedition is a word I should hardly use; if I do so it is only because it adds flavour to a journey that might otherwise suffer the indignity of being called a trip. After all we had no pretensions to anything more serious than climbing where few had been before.

The first of the few were Germans and Austrians who between the wars made three visits (D.u O.A.V. Zeitschrift, 1934 :1939); they climbed Demirkazik, 13,000 feet, the highest peak, and some 30 others. Then came the British, wartime residents in Turkey, notably E. H. Peck and R. A. Hodgkin, who again climbed Demirkazik, this time by a couloir on its west face (A.J. 268:270). More recently S. E. P. Nowill, an English business man living in Istanbul, to whom we were much indebted for information, had made three visits and more ascents; a few weeks before our arrival an expedition from Northern Ireland had been in the area carrying out a detailed survey. We had to admit there had been quite a few visitors before us and it is possible that now the mountains still unclimbed are to the south east around Torasan Dag.

But Turkish mountains were to be only part of our plan and purpose for there was much else to interest and delay us on the 7,000 mile round journey upon which in the middle of July 1964 we set out. With determination and stamina one can motor to Istanbul in five days but in Austria we took time off for a training exercise on the Gross Venediger and again we were nearly tempted to delay our progress when, crossing into Yugoslavia by the Wurtzen Pass, we saw before us the magnificent grey limestone peaks of the Julian Alps. Through Bulgaria we lingered not at all, except to taste its food and wine, but hurried on, rattling along cobbled roads all through the night, halted once by armed soldiers, muddled by endless form filling at the frontier, to stretch out exhausted on Thracian sand for a few hours' sleep before rushing on, now on earth roads in a cloud of dust, to our first swim in the Marmara Sea. It had taken us nine days to reach Turkey.

However dedicated, no mountaineer should hurry without pause through Istanbul and to stop there for a few days was part of our plan. That in the congested and chaotic turmoil of traffic in that city we survived those days without damage to the car can only be accounted for by brilliant driving—our driving that is—or was it just good luck? But we were even more alarmed on the busy Ankara road where hundreds of tottering, disintegrating buses compete with each other to offer the fastest inter-city schedule. Turkish drivers seem to believe they have some divine right of way and anyway whatever happens is the will of Allah. The many shattered wrecks on the side of the road tell their own story.

From Ankara we drove south-east by the great salt lake of Tuz Golu. From its southern shores we turned off along dusty rugged tracks to follow in the footsteps of a certain wandering French scholar who some time in the late 18th century accidentally rediscovered one of the greatest wonders of Asia.

Here, where the land falls away from the plateau to a wide valley below, one is suddenly transported into some lunar landscape of fabulous shapes. Where once in some prehistoric upheaval a layer of volcanic debris was scattered, eroding forces have carved from the soft volcanic tufa an infinite variety of cones, columns and towers, gigantic in size, grotesque in shape. This is Göreme where man and nature have

combined to create the wholly fantastic, for in this volcanic landscape, in a setting so favourable to ascetism and mysticism, dwelt hermits and monks aspiring to 'a better world'. Over an area of 48 square miles hundreds of these rock spires and valley slopes have been hollowed out to form cells, chapels, churches and monasteries. Almost unrecorded by history, over a period extending from St. Paul's converts to the early 15th century, dwelt hermits and communities of early Christians, refugees seeking solitude and security from Roman, Iconoclast, Arab, Turkish or Mongol threat. And here hidden in their hewn out homes is a lost province of Byzantine art, for their walls and ceilings contain the world's most complete collection of Christian frescoes. In such a wonderland no apology is needed for a further delay and we ourselves happily became troglodytes, taking up residence in a convenient cave—the coolest camp we were ever to enjoy.

But mountains came in mind at last and we pushed on, going south-east again, two days journey over the arid plateau. Near Nigde we turned off to the village of Camardi on the outskirts of which, in a primitive mud and wattle hut, we found Ibrahim Saffak—poor and ragged, simple and illiterate but one of Nature's greatest gentlemen. His name had been given us by Sydney Nowill as the best muleteer for the job. We arrived and Ibrahim, his wife, colourfully dressed in the local costume, and the whole family made us welcome and honoured guests with a cordiality which was no less for being inarticulate. Removing our shoes we sat cross-legged on mats spread out on the earthen floor of their simple home, eating with our fingers in folds of unleavened bread, food from the communal dish. We were not allowed to cook for ourselves and five times we were fed and refreshed by these good people but they would take no payment. Later when we tried to settle up for the hire of donkeys, at the mention of money there came into Ibrahim's face a look of utter distaste. We pressed him to accept but only the exact figure would he take—not a fraction more. But this is typical of Turkey where one often finds oneself doing inverse bargaining for goods or services that seem to be too lightly valued.

That night we faced the most striking scene of our Turkish travels. Enhanced by dispersing thunder clouds the whole wes-

tern range of the Ala Dag was spread before us, glowing rich orange in the evening light; giant jagged limestone peaks, they were fully Dolomitic in size and shape. Dominating all others was Demirkazik, the only peak with a history of several ascents but its height and isolation made it the greatest challenge. And here in our too early estimation of these mountains we made an error. Snow on the northern faces we had seen as we approached the range; here, viewed from the west, the hot evening sun seemingly warming every gully and crack of that face, not one tiny vestige of it could be seen. This was the face by which we should ascend and the south and east sides of the mountain must be equally free. It seemed unnecessary to add ice axes to our load and we left them behind. It was a decision we were much to regret.

The heat of the Anatolian sun makes no start too early. We rose before dawn following Ibrahim, his son and our two overloaded donkeys. At about 7000 feet on the upper pastures we found the camels and black tents of the 'yuruks'. These are simple nomadic herdsmen, possibly the descendants of the Seljuks, those Turkish tribes who had preceded the Ottomans out of the steppes of central Asia. We were to have friendly contact with them for they needed medical care and they came with gifts of sheep's milk yogourt. A thousand feet higher, through the steep defile of the Narpiz Gorge, we entered the great cirque of Yalacik. Amid a meadow rich with alpine flowers, a green oasis in a stony waste, flowed a stream. It bubbled out among the rocks but in a dozen yards was lost again, evaporated on the hot stones. A little below stood a boulder offering the only possible shade in these parts. We had brought no tents, nor indeed had need of them; we slept in the open beside the boulder and on our off days rotated round it in opposition to the sun which was now, together with thirst, to be our greatest foe.

The next day we continued up the valley through the Upper Narpiz Gorge skirting the foot of Demirkazik which rises steeply up a 5,000 foot confusion of buttresses, ribs, gullies and towers. A climber here might be defeated by the very intricacy of this disordered face. If we were to traverse the mountain, which we hoped to do, it might well be down this face that we should have to find a route, but so complex were



the crags and gullies that we could make no order of them or pick an obvious line. From above it would be even more difficult but perhaps further to the east we should find an easier alternative. We satisfied ourselves that day by simply reaching the col by which time the hot sun and the torments of thirst did not induce further exertion. It had been a useful reconnaissance and we had gained some knowledge; if altitude had reduced the temperature this was not apparent, we were as much grilled here by the high sun as at the lower levels; water, away from the green haven around our base camp boulder, was not to be found and finally the peaks were steeper, more complex and uncompromising than we had earlier judged. If there are easier ascents few were to be found in this watershed.

One peak that we considered less difficult than others we selected for a training exercise. We needed some training, not only for muscles softened by weeks of motoring but for acclimatisation to heat and dehydration. What name the mountain possessed, if indeed any, we did not know for the only available maps are on a scale of 1:800,000 and contain no detail or accurate information. All we had was the Esso road map for Turkey which did at least mark Demirgazik. After three hours of scree we roped up by a patch of old snow and took to the rocks following an obvious line of weakness, a dried up watercourse, which seemed to rise unbroken to the crest of the ridge. The rock was delightfully sound, but so smooth and rounded that when the angle steepened we were forced out on to the gully wall. This was steeper still but easy and we could have made rapid upward progress had we not found ourselves now on rock bountiful indeed in holds but utterly loose. The whole mountainside was unstable, nothing could be trusted. Thus we learnt a further lesson; where easy the rock was dangerous, where safe it was impossible.

We failed to return to the watercourse so we followed this new line up the tottering face, moving one at a time, painfully slowly and with the utmost caution. A dozen alternative routes presented themselves up chimney, groove, gully or buttress but the rocks swept up to such a height that for the first time we were beginning to wonder if all the daylight hours of one day were sufficient, at least at such a pace as



B. E. Nicholson

DOLLYWAGGON. HILL INN MEET, 1968

ours, to trace through this rock complexity a route to the summit, and return. We were even more doubtful of any justification for continuing at all on this dangerous rock and when Peter swung on the rope, the whole ledge on which he had been standing having collapsed beneath him, we knew that we must retreat.

This chastening experience might have made the attainment of Demirkazik seem remote but at least there we should not be treading new ground and earlier climbers had written of no great trial or terror. Furthermore we knew the way; Sydney Nowill had briefed us well and a copy of Hodgkin's account we had brought with us. We were to ascend by what should be known as the Hodgkin-Peck Couloir which for almost 3,000 feet cuts deep into the west face. Peter had already reconnoitered the route almost to its foot. Our only doubt was the descent.

We set off in the dark stumbling over block scree, our rucksacks heavy with water containers. We knew that we were as likely to be defeated by dehydration and heat exhaustion as by length and difficulty. After three hours or so of murderous scree we gained the foot of the couloir—the same one we thought we had seen from Camardi glowing red in the evening sun. Surprised and horrified we found it to be a long ribbon of snow which, when we came to it, was hard and consolidated, if not at that hour and level frozen. With ice-axe and crampons this would have made a speedy line of ascent and we cursed our imprudence in leaving them behind in the village. But all was not lost for like a Scottish gully in advanced spring there was a gap, a sort of chimney, between snow and bounding wall. To force our way up this would be slow and perhaps difficult but it tempted us forward at any rate to see how far we could get.

For eight hours we were in that gully squirming up between ice and rock, kicking steps at intervals where the gap narrowed, climbing cave pitches or escaping up the bounding wall to find for a time an easier route on the face. Where we could safely do so we moved together but our progress was more often one at a time. For some hours we were in blissful shade, then as the day advanced the sun struck mercilessly down. But we were not too ill prepared; we had a small petrol

stove and we halted to make soup and melt snow for our flasks.

The couloir mounted to a deep notch on the summit ridge; somewhere before that we knew we must leave it and take to the face. The wrong exit and we should be defeated, lost in a confusion of buttresses and towers. Among several possibilities we fortunately found the right one and only 500 feet now separated us from the top. On iced rocks Sydney Nowill's party had taken four hours on this section, but although the climbing was now more serious, we completed the ascent in half that time. At 5.00 p.m., exactly 13 hours from our camp departure, we stood on the summit and on the brink of the longest steepest wall in the whole of Asia Minor. As if cut by a giant knife the north face fell away in an unbroken drop of almost 3,000 feet, smooth and absolutely perpendicular.

It had been obvious for some hours that nightfall would halt us still high on our mountain. Although this was not part of our plan and we were ill prepared for it, a forced bivouac in these latitudes has few terrors. Dehydration rather than cold would be our greatest danger and discomfort but now, a little flushed with success, it seemed a small price to pay. We had no hope of finding water or, on this side, even a patch of snow, but we must get off the steeper rocks in the few remaining hours of daylight.

Nowill's party, who had made the only previous traverse and had likewise been forced to bivouac, had started their descent by a long abseil down the south face. What we had already seen of this side was not encouraging and it seemed to us that the east ridge would follow an easier line. We followed a series of massive smooth boiler-plate slabs inclined at a fairly gentle angle, keeping the frightful edge of the north wall on our left. When the slabs steepened in a convex slope we escaped to the right into a tempting gully which lured us down for a couple of hundred feet until suddenly it changed direction and plunged into unfathomable depths. Painfully we returned to our slabs. In truth they were not too steep, a bold man could have walked down them with his hands in his pockets, but we were not bold and the slabs were littered with loose pebbles so that an unwary step would have caused a fall which, with no natural belays—and imprudently we

wasted no time making artificial ones—would have been disastrous to the whole party. Gaining only moral support from the rope we descended, now too tired and anxious fully to appreciate the majesty of a hundred peaks bathed in the golden light of the setting sun. Just before nightfall we reached a ledge sufficient in size to accommodate us all and here we composed ourselves for the long wait for dawn, our only comfort a brew of rum punch made with our last water and fuel.

We lay close together and shivered for ten hours, suffering now from cold as earlier we had done from heat. When at last sun and circulation returned we roped up and continued our descent. Soon we were out of difficulties and we could hurry down with little need for caution, the torments of thirst urging us to speed. But there was still a long way to go and it was nearly 11.00 a.m. before we were at camp blissfully soaking up gallons of water. We had been on the mountain almost 31 hours. That evening Ali came up with a donkey ready for an early descent the next day.

My 1965 trip to Turkey has no place in this Journal for there were no mountains except those we could climb in a car. I went with a friend who was collecting material for a B.B.C. programme. But if my earlier visits to Turkey were trips, my 1966 journey really was a *bona fide* expedition with all that goes with it—a proper name, headed writing paper, suitably lettered vehicles, a press write-up and, much more important, the support of the Royal Geographical Society; all combined to add status to an otherwise very modest enterprise. I had been asked by the Yorkshire Schools Exploring Society to lead an expedition and since this could give me an opportunity of visiting the now de-restricted area of the Kaçkar Mountains of Lazistan, I was glad to accept. We would be the first British expedition to the southern watershed.

We were a party of seven; my very knowledgeable deputy was Alastair Allen, recently returned from his second Northern Afghanistan Expedition. Alan Radermacher was the highly qualified geologist and botanist and the surveyor was a civil engineer from Leeds, Ian Salkeld. In addition we had three 18 year old boys, Richard Leckenby, Andrew Chirn-

side and Bryan Holliday, all selected from the VIth forms of Yorkshire schools. From Ankara we hoped to have the services of a Turkish mountaineer to act as liaison officer. The Vauxhall Motor Company lent us two Bedford vehicles and we managed to obtain 500 man-day rations at a cost to us of less than £10. We did very well out of this because we sold our surplus food to the British Embassy in Ankara for £40, so that on our return we were able to dine and wine at the best restaurants in half the capitals of Eastern Europe.

To travel as an expedition is rarely as much fun as to travel as an individual, nevertheless our enjoyment was enhanced by avoiding tourist centres and organised camp sites. Actually we never camped in the sense that we put up tents for, as on all my other Turkish trips, we simply slept in the open beside the vehicles. Our policy was to drive off into the country away from the main road, seeking some sanctuary close to a village. Of course in Communist countries such behaviour is forbidden to western travellers but we considered it worth the risk and indeed it never failed to be rewarding, particularly in Eastern Europe where contact with the west is eagerly sought. No officials ever disturbed us and our friendly relations with the simple people of many lands gave us some of our most lasting and pleasant memories. We made good progress and seven days out from Dunkirk we were swimming in the Sea of Marmara; two days later we were in Ankara.

In spite of doubts in high official places no hindrance was put in the way of our access to the mountains of the Soviet border. Officially all eastern provinces are now de-restricted but we had been able to obtain no written confirmation of this, only vague assurance. Actually some other parties travelling to frontier areas were not so favoured and we wondered afterwards if our good fortune was perhaps due to the addition to our party of Gürol Tan. He purported to be a Turkish mountaineer but in fact, as we later discovered, he was an officer in the Secret Police. He always slept with a loaded automatic under his pillow, whether to defend himself against us or brigands we could not decide.

Now grossly overloaded we trundled east for another four days to Erzerum and through the highly spectacular Tor-tem Gorges to Yusufeli and the last town of any importance.

The arrival of seven strange Englishmen caused a stir among the population of this remote mountain stronghold and we were no doubt the topic of conversation in the coffee houses for many days. The 'Vali' or Principal Governor entertained us, we registered with the police, the military offered us an escort, but our greatest claim to fame or notoriety was the purchase of the town's entire stock of 'Raki', a national drink which could be correctly described as instant intoxication. The report of our remarkable alcoholic excesses crossed the mountains to the north coast long before we did.

Beyond Yusufeli we drove on tortuous roads up the bed of a gorge too confined for habitation but after a dozen miles and just short of the last village of Barhal we could go no further. A gang of road workers were still drilling and blasting. A long term plan is to take the road round the Kaçkar massif to the Black Sea, piercing the Pontic barrier, which will permit the upland valley dwellers to market their fruit and vegetables and profit from the great timber resources of the lower slopes. Turkey is short of forest yet here an enormous unexploited wealth decays into the ground.

Our horsemen came the next morning; they were handsome swarthy Georgians, the Islamised descendants of a Caucasian Christian people. It was a long and tiresome task sorting out a mountain of equipment and loading the six horses, so the sun was high before we set out; as yet unfit and unacclimatised to exertion in the heat, we were to suffer for this delay.

We climbed up well watered slopes rich with grapes, cherries, apples, pears and plums all in fruit. On the upper outskirts of the village of Barhal we came to Tamara Church, its gabled roof protruding above the foliage. It is a beautiful basilica of smooth grey stone built by Georgian Christians a thousand years ago. For several hours we walked through orchards and forest, and even above the tree line it was lush and green and in remarkable contrast to the arid slopes of the Ala Dag. On the upper pastures we found no tents and camels of nomads but sturdy stone or timbered 'yalas' occupied during the summer months. Great herds of sheep and goats grazed on the mountain slopes. Above the last of the 'yalas' at a height of 7,260 feet we made a camp on a pleasant green spur. It had taken seven hours to ascend from Barhal

which was more a measure of our unfitness than of height or distance.

Our purpose here was to work, to make a map and to make some small contribution of knowledge to an area which we were the first to study seriously. To justify the support we had received we must fully utilise our limited time in the field so that we were to have little relaxation; climbing mountains just for the fun of it would be secondary to other tasks. Early every morning Salkeld led his party off, first to measure a Base Line, later to the summit of vital peaks, while under the skilled direction of Radermacher, others collected and pressed rare flowers and geologised over a wide area.

Our camp lay at the foot of the Kaçkar Peak, 11,750 feet, too close for us to admire its full majesty, but we could see something of the steep wall that formed its eastern face. To the north lay the great cwm of Hansaret Dere entirely bounded by steep rock peaks of considerable distinction. Most imposing perhaps was Büyük Kapi at the head of its northern branch. This was a great rock monolith rising in a vertical wall a full 2,000 feet from the scree. A mile of lesser peaks separated this summit from the six rock needles of the Altiparmak (the Six Finger Group), not unlike Chamonix Aiguilles, and the complete traverse of them would give the mountaineer his greatest challenge in these parts. According to the leading Turkish authority none of them had yet been climbed. This was partly confirmed when Allen with Gürol Tan climbed the most easterly of the Altiparmak which they did by tracing a route directly up one of the long buttresses of the south-east face. They saw no cairn or other evidence of earlier ascent. This was a useful reconnaissance for they found the rock, which was metamorphic, excellent climbing material and basically sound; it also indicated that Gürol Tan was no mountaineer and he returned a little shaken from this excursion, never to climb again.

While the survey party were still occupied on the Base Line, Radermacher and I made a reconnaissance up the Hansaret Dere to the col bounding its eastern edge and from there to the crest of the main ridge. The monolith of Büyük Kapi whose formidable and vertical cliffs we had skirted on the ascent, appeared not now as one summit at all but as a

complex group of four, all steep and rocky and of similar height. Along the ridge to the east was a prominent peak, whose name we could never learn, which tempted us forward. We roped up but could move together and only the last few feet to the summit, on shattered rock of a different kind, caused some caution. We felt certain that this must be a first ascent but we found a small cairn and the card of a German-Austrian party of the previous year.

Where elsewhere we had an unrestricted view across a complex pattern of lesser foothills to the yellow parched plateau of Anatolia, to the north we looked down on a sea of cloud which extended unbroken far out over the Black Sea. This is a curious climatic feature of the Pontic Alps. In marked contrast to the rest of Turkey, here Black Sea breezes bring an almost perpetual bank of cloud with humid and frequent summer rain, but the dry air of the Anatolian hinterland dominates the southern watershed of the range and holds at bay the humid mass limiting it to 8,000 feet and rarely allowing it to cross the ridge. Below those clouds lay lush wet forests, almost tropical in density, descending to the coastal tea plantations. It must be discouraging for those who choose to explore these mountains from the north; Robin Fedden reports returning each day from the sun-drenched upper pastures to the Scotch drizzle and sodden tents at their Base Camp. Except for two short thunderstorms we had no rain at all.

Work on the Base Line completed, mountains had now to be selected for survey stations. When a heavy theodolite and tripod had to be lugged up, as well as plane table, we wished to avoid serious rock climbing and sometimes an earlier reconnaissance was advisable. All these peaks had steep intimidating crags but most possessed an easy route if it could be found. It was so for instance with the Kaçkar Peak which from camp appeared so frightening, but we ascended by way of Karagol where, close to a glacial lake, in a rough stone shelter hidden among the crags, dwelt a turbaned shepherd and his wife. Long boulder slopes led upwards to the ridge and the final rocks of the summit pyramid presented few problems. In a book below the cairn we found a record of earlier ascents, the German Austrian party again and two Turkish parties; all we could claim, for what it was worth,



was a first British ascent.

But one peak more difficult and rewarding than the others which we were certainly the first to climb was a further summit of the Altiparmak group ascended by Salkeld and two of the boy surveyors. While they were on this ridge Allen and I were engaged on the monolith like peak of Büyük Kapi which offered us at least the most dramatic challenge. Gürol Tan firmly declared it impossible. The evening before this climb we had carried a bivouac up the Hansaret Dere almost to its foot. We slept in the open by a patch of melting snow, disturbed only by the passing of some heavy-footed beast, probably a bear, up the scree beside us. We looked at the eastern end of the wall, where except by artificial means no route seemed possible and walked back to the middle where the angle relented. At first diagonally left and then directly up a series of cracks and chimneys, we climbed for 1,000 feet on good sound rock, quite steep but so amply furnished with holds that there was no great difficulty. We had so far made good progress but the final tower seemed less promising for it was a great upthrust of steeper and smoother rock possessing few stances or any natural line of weakness. To commit ourselves to such an unbroken stretch of virgin rock, without knowing of an easier line of descent, was however a challenge we were not called upon to accept, for having reached a shoulder we were able to see round the back of the monolith.

Here lay the key to the problem for we found a gully into which we could easily descend. If it were climbable it would give us half our height. It seemed like cheating to leave this exposed and exhilarating face but we consoled ourselves with the knowledge that after all we were mountaineers seeking the easiest line up what we certainly believed was a virgin peak. Like all gullies it was loose and when we were able to we escaped on to the wall now climbing up a series of awkward scoops directly for the summit.

This, the most improbable of all the Kaçkar peaks, was ours and as we stood together on its confined top we hoped the others, now occupying our bivouac site a vertical 2,000 feet below, would see us and be suitably impressed; they were not to know that we had cheated and gone round the back. But alas we had again been forestalled for on the topmost

rock stood a cairn, small as if in apology, but undoubtedly of human origin. The bold line of Büyük Kapi must have been as compelling an attraction to our German-Austrian predecessors as to us. Anyway they had left an imbedded piton which gave us a line for our first abseil.

There remained now only one major peak for the surveyors to ascend and the map would be complete, that is within the limits we had set ourselves. Much more remains to be done; to the east a little and to the west for another 15 miles, but our watershed, containing perhaps a third of the major peaks, was fixed with sufficient detail and we hope a reasonable degree of accuracy. No doubt the Turks themselves will come along some day with unlimited time to survey the whole range with a thoroughness that we could not hope to match, but at least it had been interesting and creative activity and for the boys an admirable exercise. Time was now running out and all that could now be done was to return to a lower level by the most interesting possible route. With this in mind Allen and I were to return to Barhal with the heavy equipment while the remainder of the party made a three days' trek over the mountains to the village of Ayder to which we would take the vehicles. It was understood a good road connected this place with the coastal town of Pazar.

Allen and I, suffering delays from two landslides (the catastrophic Erzerum earthquake had occurred less than a week earlier) and three punctures drove round the eastern end of the range to Hopa and the humid heat of a sunless Black Sea. From the coastal tea plantations we returned through a curtain of perpetual clouds to the mountains, on the worst roads of the whole expedition where a ten mile section took half a day. Through well watered slopes dense with forests of beech, hornbeam, alder, Spanish chestnut and spruce we drove, following the steep side valley of the Firtina, a torrent fed by the melting snows and glaciers of the Kaçkar Dag and crossed here and there in its lower reaches by beautifully proportioned Genoese bridges. It seemed impossible that this fearful steep and stony track could lead to anything more than a few hovels but suddenly we emerged from the forest into the busy little community of Ayder. In almost perpetual cloud and drizzle flourishes here a spartan holiday spa, incredibly

ramshackle but offering the therapy of natural hot springs and relief from the coastal heat.

The two parties joined, we returned to the Black Sea which we were to follow for the first two days of the long haul back to England, this time travelling through Rumania and Hungary. Twelve days later and nearly home we saw the snow of the Alps. They may be more majestic than the Turkish mountains but I felt no regret at having forsaken their crowded huts and well trodden routes to seek the unspoiled simplicity of lesser known peaks. Soon more and more mountaineers will discover the delights of Turkey and whether they go as a simple climbing trip or for more serious study they will have all the fun of an expedition, where they will need to organise, have few books and no maps to guide them, but where they will have the reward of new routes in plenty, strange and exotic scenes and a friendly, unsophisticated if uncomprehending people to welcome them. It will be many many years before an onslaught of tourists will destroy the charm of the simple peasants of Anatolia.

## THE BRITISH SPELEOLOGICAL EXPEDITION TO TURKEY, 1966

by J. R. Middleton

TO THE SPELEOLOGIST Turkey is a tremendous challenge with its great masses of unexplored cave-forming limestone. This, combined with the fact that it is somewhere different, encouraged Tony Dunford and Tim Gilbert to get in touch with Dr. Temuçin Aygen, the President of the Turkish Speleological Society, and to ask if he could recommend any particular area should they visit his country. Dr. Aygen's reply was most helpful: if they could come towards the end of July 1966 he would himself join the party and show them round. Possibilities now seemed so promising that it was decided to arrange an Expedition, of which I was privileged to be a member.

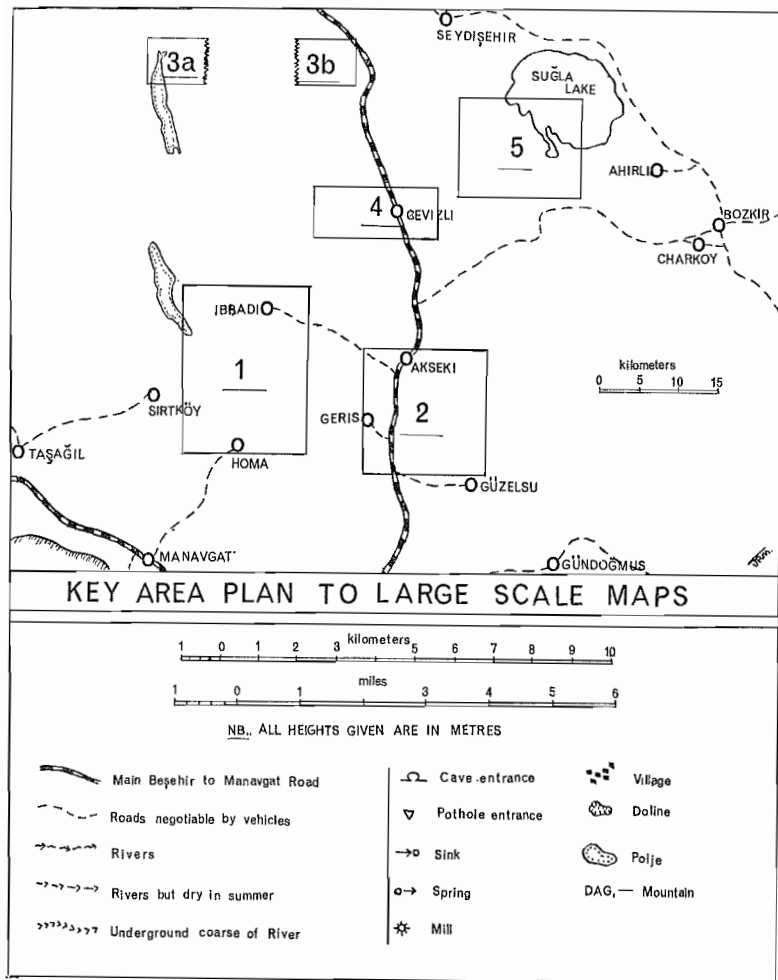
The area suggested was to the east of Antalya in the Western Taurus mountains. Exploration proved more difficult than expected, not because of the terrain, which was difficult anyway, but because of the intense heat which could beat down at anything up to 130°F. Snakes and scorpions provided an



Sketch Map of TURKEY

additional hazard and although we did not see many we were always aware that they were about.

Our main objective was the resurgence of Dumanli about 20 miles up the River Manavgat from the Mediterranean coast. Our base was at the camp of the Turkish Electricity Company, who were building a dam there as part of a hydro-electric scheme. The resurgence was two miles further upstream, some 200 yards into a large gorge. Here, with tremen-



dous vigour, spews out about one third of the water making up the River Manavgat. This water is thought by Turkish geologists to come from Beyşehir Golu, over 50 miles in a straight line northwards, but this is still a very debatable point.

The T.E.C. wanted us to explore Dumanli and so, through Dr. Aygen who is also their chief geologist, they gave us all the help we needed. Because the gorge was impenetrable they were blasting a tunnel to a small beach opposite the resurgence, but this had not been finished when we first arrived at our base camp so Dr. Aygen took us for a few days into the mountains around Akseki, about 35 miles further north.

#### CAVES OF THE AKSEKI REGION

Around Akseki and in particular at Güselsu and Dikman, with the help of the villagers and on occasion of their donkeys, we found and explored many large shafts and two deep cave systems. In the mountains above Dikman was a hole formed along a fault line, 400 yards long, 100 yards wide and 450 feet deep; two of our members descended this but could find no extensions.

#### *Kelebekli—The Cave of the Butterfly.* (Map 2)

On the way we stopped for refreshment in the small village of Topraktepe where we were told of a cave entrance barely 50 yards from the main road several miles further on. We found it easily, the entrance by English cave standards was quite large, measuring 8 feet high and 6 feet wide. Still wearing shorts and thin shirts and carrying our lamps and helmets, we jumped out of the back of the expedition lorry and raced for the dark coolness.

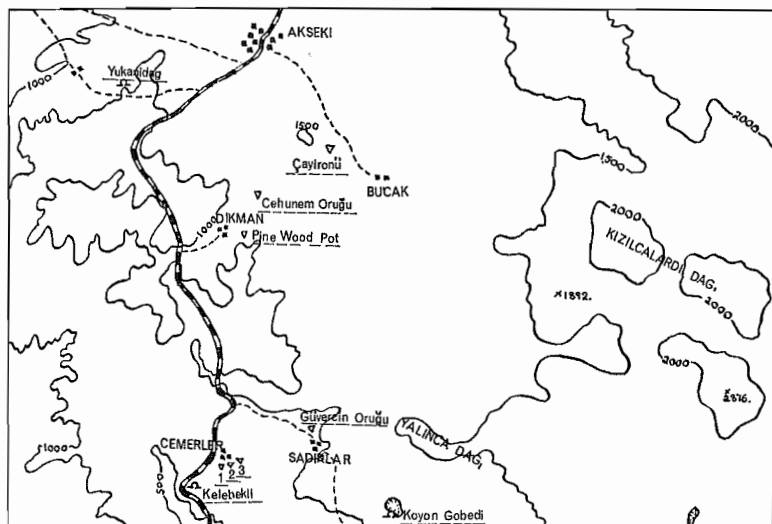
Twenty feet inside the cave the walls narrowed and the floor rose, making stooping inevitable for a short distance. Then the floor fell away steeply for 20 feet to a low but fairly wide and waterworn passage which soon rose into an aven about 30 feet high with several higher level passages leading off. As we wanted to be at our camping place by nightfall these possibilities were not explored and we continued on downwards, through a wondrously cool knee-deep pool, along a passage with razor-sharp edges and on to the top of a 15 foot pitch which we found climbable. At the bottom was a small high chamber, then a further 20 foot pitch, also climbable and



finishing in a high chamber with a passage leading to what can well be described as a typical English sump which defied all attempts to dive it.

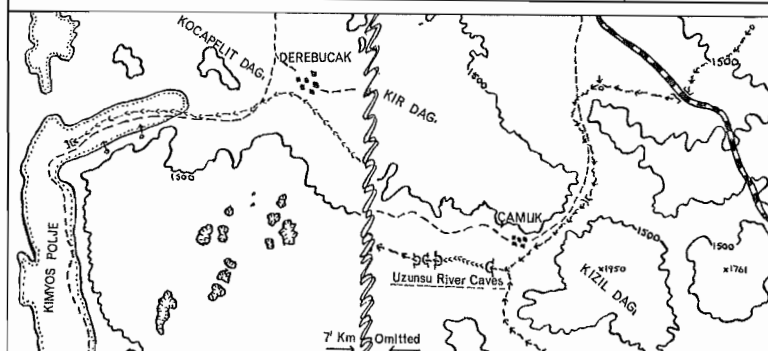
*Güversin Orogu—The Cave of the Pigeon.* (Map 2)

Our base was beside a well, a quarter of a mile from the village of Sadıklar on the road to Güzelsu. Our primary objective was the descent of a deep shaft noted by the French cavers from Orsay University who joined us for the first week



MAP 2 AKSEKI - SADIKLAR REGION

1 - Ors  
2 - Şinekil  
3 - Örmcekli



MAP 3a NORTH KIMYOS

MAP 3b ÇAMLIK AREA

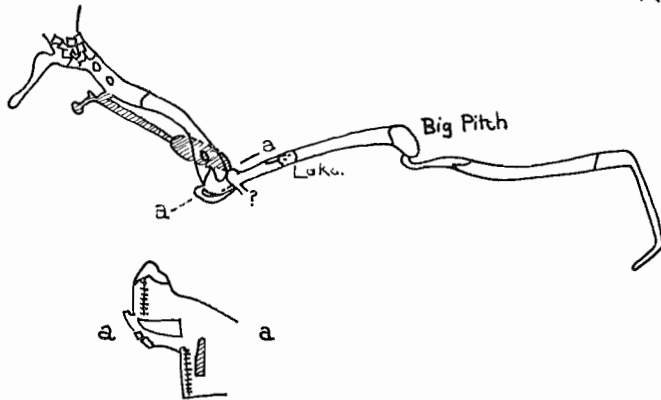
of our stay.

The entrance was on a ledge almost at the bottom of a hill only 100 yards from the camp; it was 15 feet in diameter and roughly circular in shape. Down the first pitch stones seemed to fall for a horrifyingly long way, so after putting 300 feet of ladder down we suggested that one of the French descend first as it was they who had found it. Jean-Pierre was the willing volunteer and started down taking one of our Transceivers with him. This new method of communication proved far better than any telephone system I have seen tried before, and with only a tenth of the trouble. At the bottom of the ladder Jean-Pierre tuned in to say that a solid floor was not yet in sight but that it was a very fine climb and that the walls were now in places covered with calcite. We lowered him two more ladders, sixty feet in all, and after fastening these on he continued placing foot beneath foot until he touched sloping ground at a depth of 350 feet. He was now in a fair sized chamber with quite a few large stalagmites. Tony Dunford went down only to learn on arrival at the bottom that all extensions were choked and he might as well go back up. It was as well that the climb proved to be comparatively easy. *Koyon Göbedi—The Cave of the Lake of the Sheep* (Map 2 and Survey)

The day after our descent of Güversin Orugu the villagers told us of a further hole, this time a large cave up in the hills. The French and two of our party went off to explore another hole found by Dr. Aygen near Akseki and whilst the others were tidying up the camp Tim Gilbert, a Turk, Christine and I followed a villager for an hour's climbing walk to a valley about one mile across completely enclosed by mountains and with the valley floor sloping towards one big cave entrance. I should perhaps explain that Christine was one of the French party from Orsay and perhaps the most beautiful and proficient female speleologist I have ever caved with.

We quickly donned swimming trunks and boiler suits outside the opening and only 100 feet into the cave we found a 15 ft. pitch with a pool at the bottom. However, instead of using one of our three ladders we searched around for another way down and eventually found a chimney leading to a ledge which took us to the new passage level of even more abundant

KOYON GÖBEDI  
(Güzelsu Village)

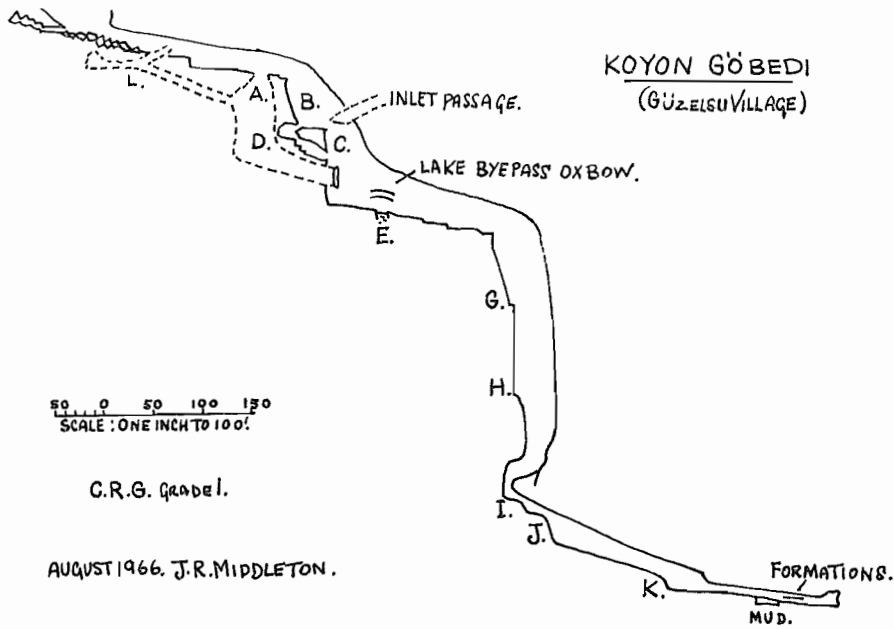


50 0 50 100 150  
 SCALE: ONE INCH TO 100'  
 C.R.G. GRADEL

AUGUST 1966 J.R.MIDDLETON.

ENTRANCE.

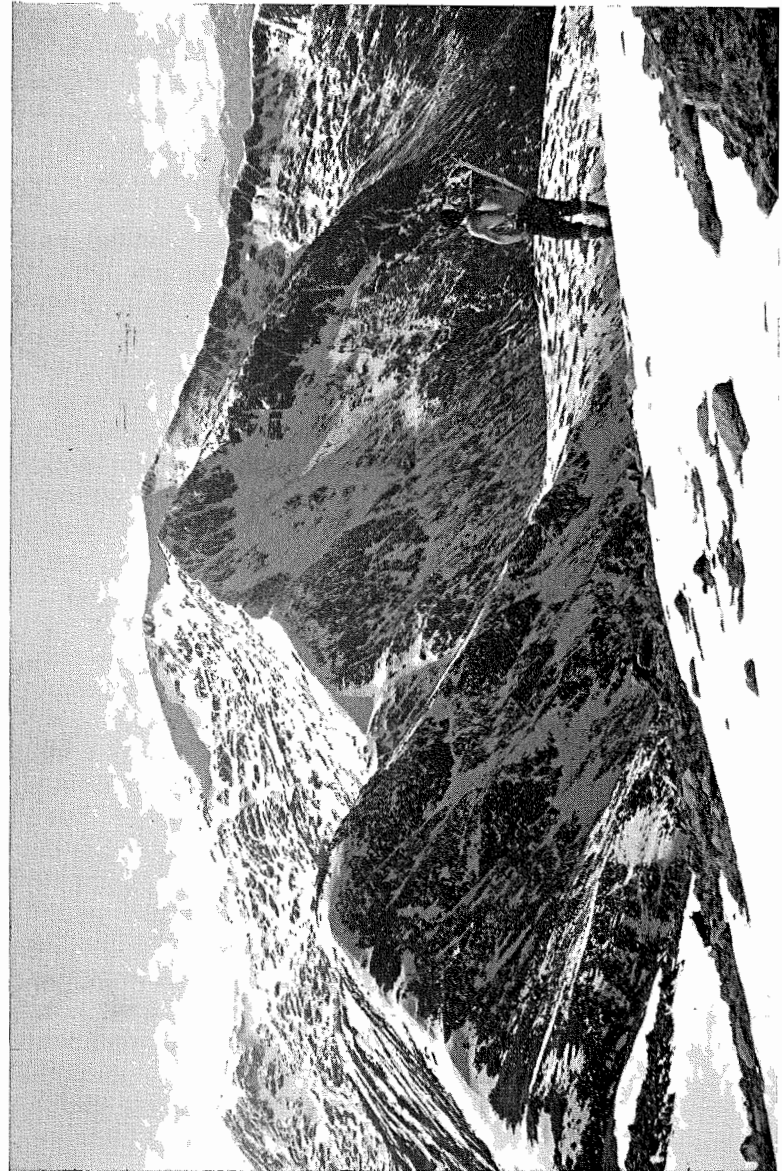
KOYON GÖBEDI  
(GÜZELSU VILLAGE)



50 0 50 100 150  
 SCALE: ONE INCH TO 100'

C.R.G. Gradel.

AUGUST 1966. J.R.MIDDLETON.



S. A. Goulden

BEN STARAV. EASTER MEET, 1968

proportions than the entrance. We hurried on round a corner to find a large chamber with a steeply sloping drop. Looking back for an easy way down we found another pitch (A), but this was even deeper than the one which we first faced (B), so down this one we went using a 30 ft. ladder, a 15 ft. hand-line down an easy bit and then climbing the last ten feet. The passage now turned left and fifty feet further on, to our dismay, was a pitch of at least 80 ft. (C). By doing a short but airy traverse we moved into a wide inlet passage which we followed upwards for a short distance until we realised that it was taking us up instead of down. We again doubled back and found a 4 ft. high by 18 inch wide hole (D) leading from the bottom of pitch (A) and to one side of it. Immediately through the hole was a 15 ft. drop, but by traversing along we reached a small boulder chamber and climbed down the rocks; then back under the pitch and on down two small drops until we came out halfway down pitch (C). Our two ladders would now reach the bottom as it was only 45 ft. deep. Fifteen feet down this and to one side a high wide passage from pitch (A) came in.

From the bottom a 15 ft. wide and very high avenue continued to a 4 ft. vertical drop into a pool of unknown depth (E). We gradually lowered our sweating bodies into the 50°F water, enjoying the sensation as it slowly soaked into boots, crept over ankles, knees, thighs, stomach and eventually chest as we landed on a protruding rock. All around us was deeper water but by doing a hand traverse round the wall we reached the opposite side, 20 feet away, keeping head and shoulders dry. We later found a dry way round but it was very tight and rather muddy. Climbing out, by now cold and rather bedraggled, we found ourselves in a fairyland of a gallery, 15 ft. wide with its walls very smooth and of a light coloured limestone, occasionally calcite flowstone would cascade from the roof 30 ft. above our heads. The floor was one complete sheet of yellowish white flowstone vanishing into the distance. We went on through crystal clear pools, slid down calcite slides and finally arrived at the top of another pitch some 40 ft. across. This, apart from the top 20 ft., appeared to be in the form of a steeply descending calcite slope down which the stones we threw fell for an estimated 250 ft.

We hastened back to camp arriving in next to no time and hardly noticing the sun which beat down on us at around 125°F, to rouse the others into action. With a party now consisting of seven we renewed our attack by dropping a 30 ft. ladder down a gully to a ledge, then belaying a rope to the bottom, going down an 80° slope until it became vertical and finally swinging across to a convenient ledge (G), about 60 ft. below the ladder bottom. At the end of this ledge was a perfect belay point so here we hung 90 ft. more of ladder; the shaft was still large, some 30 ft. wide and 25 ft. across. Onwards down this fascinating flowstone pitch the ladder just reached a ledge (H), where a 15 ft. handline scramble took us to the edge of a further continuation of the shaft, this time a drop of 60 ft., the latter half of which was free hanging. The final section went off at right angles to the rest of this mammoth pitch down a final one of 12 ft. into a high but only 4 ft. wide passage (I). Through a pool and round a bend a much wider section fell away down a steep slope making another slide.

After a further 40 feet of walking came another pitch (J), which might have been climbed as a chimney but was easier on 30 ft. of electron. A gentle slope in the large passage at the bottom gradually became steeper until it finished in a 10 ft. vertical and unclimbable section (K). This dropped us into a rather forbidding passage containing mud, jammed tree trunks and other debris signifying a sump or impassable constriction at any moment. Suddenly a wall showed up in front of us—this must surely be the end—but no, a 10 ft. high and 8 ft. wide mud covered passage went off at right angles. This gradually became narrower until at a further 90° bend it was only 2 feet wide. Then came a muddy pool, climbing up to a ledge we traversed over it and into an upper passage where we found our first formations, mud-covered stalactites and stalagmites. This became too narrow so, dropping back to the floor of the main passage, we reached a small chamber where the shingle stretched up to the roof.

On the way out I crawled into a small passage near to the entrance (L), which led to a larger cross passage. Downwards this emerged at a point halfway down pitch (A); upwards was another short crawl into a small but well decorated chamber whose floor was littered with beetle cases, moth and butterfly

wings and numerous other parts of insects. In several places were clusters of  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch diameter clear eggs. My mind raced. Do scorpions lay eggs? Are snakes' eggs like this? What about giant spiders? I beat a hasty and undignified retreat. Later, in camp, one of the French suggested that they might have been lizard eggs.

#### *Pine Wood Pot.* (Map 2)

From Günselü we moved to another hamlet, Dikman, where the villagers enthusiastically pointed out literally dozens of holes. We investigated several of these and found them to be all between 30 ft. and 80 ft. deep and usually choked at the bottom, but often with fine incrustations.

One worthy of mention was a shaft in a pine copse about half a mile from the village. The entrance was covered, possibly by the villagers, with large boulders but with just enough room for John Higgs to squeeze through. The climb was down a shaft of 120 ft. on to the top of a boulder slope at the bottom of which were two passages, but both were choked after a short distance. Just as John reached the top on his return he knocked off his carbide lamp, so Tim Gilbert volunteered to go and fetch it. On arriving at the bottom he found something that John had missed, a rather large and violently hissing snake: needless to say his ascent of the ladder was done in record time.

#### *Ceheunem Orugu.—Hell Hole.* (Map 2)

Next day five of us headed off into the mountains with pack donkey and village guide, arriving at the hole an hour and a half later practically shrivelled up by the sun. After refreshing ourselves from a well infested with live and dead beetles we summoned up the energy to drop 260 ft. of ladder over the edge of a very impressive hole some 20 ft. long and 8 ft. wide. The ladder hung free after the first 20 ft. and just touched bottom in an immense chamber. As usual there were some passages leading off but all proved choked; the few formations were very fine. An owl which had made the hole its home objected to our visit and dive bombed us most of the time.

We were in the Akseki area for five days; if the expedition had spent the whole of its time there I believe we would still

have found plenty to do. As it was, apart from our own discoveries, the French made several others including one of over 500 feet in depth.

#### THE SIEGE OF DUMANLI

As soon as the tunnel was finished a team of cavers consisting of 8 British, 4 French, 2 Turks and Dr. Aygen, with a dozen porters, attacked Dumanli for two weeks, gradually wresting from the mountain several maybe small but none the less impressive secrets.

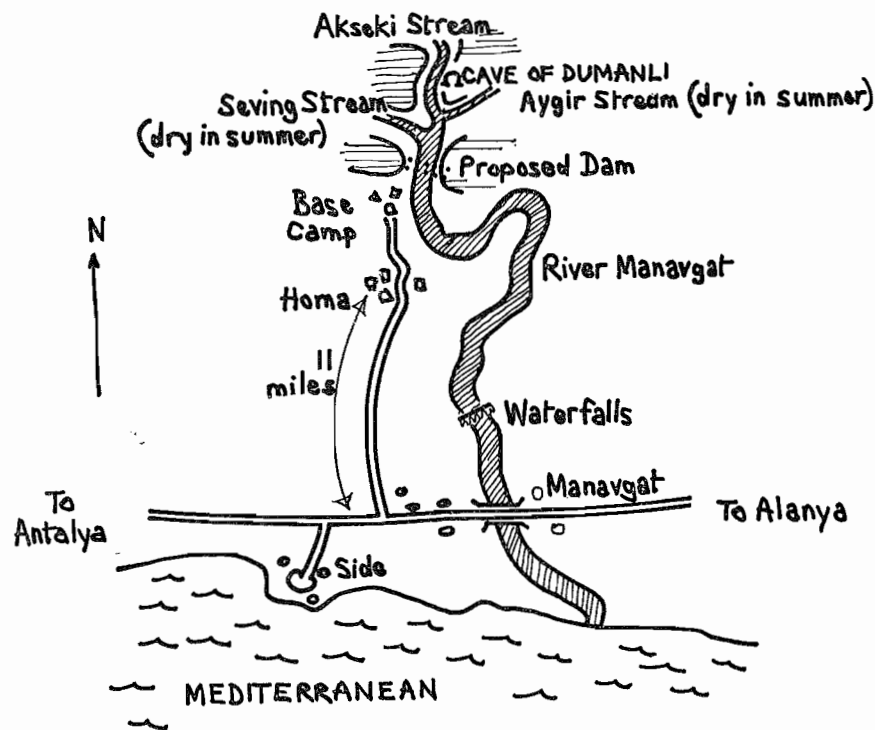
The tunnel debouched upon a beach opposite the resurgence but owing to rapids we could not cross at this point, we had to go 20 yards upstream to where the river was wider and more or less 'unfoaming', though still moving swiftly. It took us two days' work to get over and to find an effective method of getting men and equipment across. Eventually we devised an endless rope system with a 6-man dinghy fastened in the middle; even with this we could only send one man over at a time, two-man dinghies upset when about three yards out.

Once across we made our way over small boulder-covered resurgences to Dumanli; there was not one of the party who did not have his breath taken away by the magnificence of this impressive but somewhat frightening flow of violently bubbling water. The entrance is 20 ft. wide and 15 ft. high with the roof arching down to meet the water 20 feet into the cave. The river filled the whole entrance and was of unplumbable depth, but it did foam over a lip, at which point it was three feet deep; it then plunged over several more ledges to the main river 15 ft. below. For anyone to have fallen in here would have meant almost certain death.

Our first task was to see if the dominating fossil entrance 100 ft. above the stream did actually go in and, if so, would it lead down to the Dumanli river? This job we left to the Speleological Society of Paris, who joined us for the last two weeks of our stay: they were better equipped for pegging a route up the cave entrance and on upwards to the fossil mouth. We crossed our fingers as the French gradually moved out of sight and into the shadow of the entrance, but it was of no avail, the floor quickly met the roof with no possible extensions.

#### Dumanli I. (Map 1)

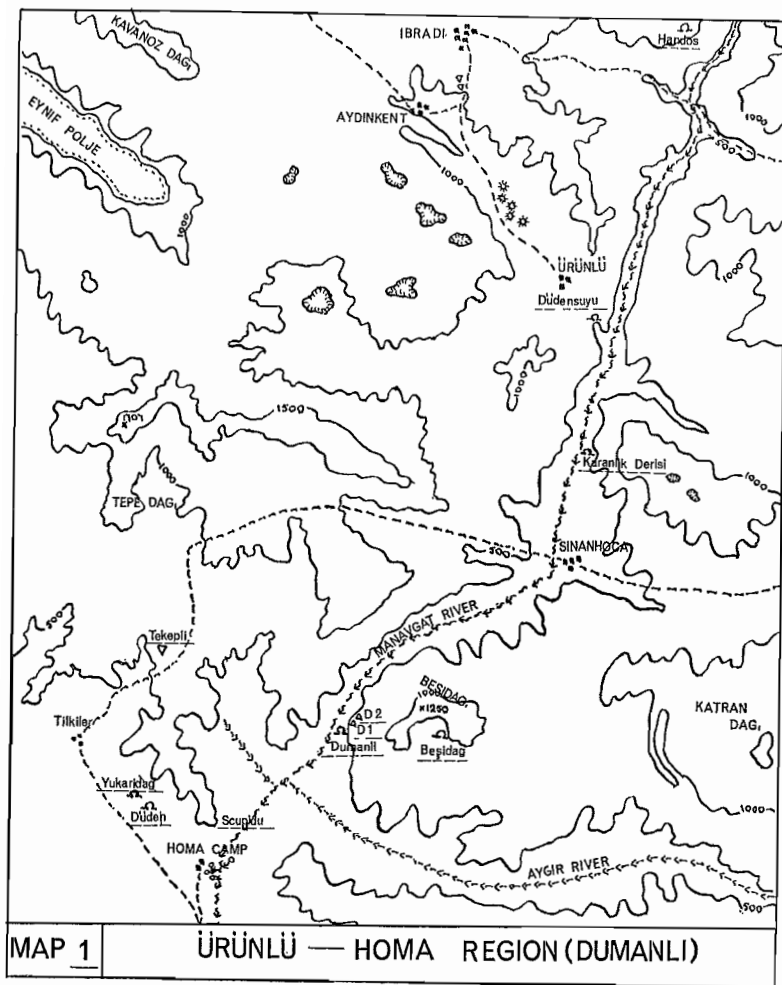
The following day we split into twos and began to search for another entrance. Mike Clark and I hacked our way through undergrowth for an energetic twenty minutes up a narrow, steep and jungle-clad cleft about 50 yards upstream from Dumanli. At a point some 100 ft. above the river we were suddenly spurred into even more energetic action by the feel of a cold draught. Sure enough, 30 ft. higher up was an entrance 8 ft. high and 5 ft. wide with the thundering sound of water coming from inside. The floor immediately dropped down a short slope and then fell free for about 70 feet. By going half way down the slope and traversing we got to a broad recessed ledge from which we could look out into an enormous chamber. Having no ladder with us we searched



DUMANLI IN RELATION TO MANAVGAT

for a way to climb down and found a low passage leading to an equally low chamber, one side of which looked out on the pitch while from the opposite wall a narrow crawl led us between beautifully calcified walls until after 30 feet it became too tight. As we could find no alternative to the pitch we returned to where the ladders had been left by the dinghy.

We hung the ladders, went down into a great chamber and on downwards to where the sound of water came from. To our



disappointment, for we had no more ladder, we found a further 20 ft. pitch so we set about looking for another way down. We went first into an encrusted rift which became too narrow, then, on the opposite side behind a rock projection we found a 45° shingle slope the bottom 10 feet of which was a chimney climb, this landed us on a wide ridge between two rivers. The left hand one, looking forward, was 6 ft. wide, very deep and vanished into the distance round a bend—no good without a boat. The one on the right, about 15 feet away, was at a lower level, roaring and foaming its way into a siphon. So fast and wild was this river that at first we found it difficult to decide which way it flowed. It came out of a 5 ft. wide rift, later found to be over 100 ft. high, whose sides dropped sheer into the water. Several hand and foot holds appeared around the water level but as we had never met anything like this before we went back to explore the other river first. We tried a high level traverse but it did not go.

Just as we got back down again the French arrived with a dinghy, a remarkable affair, ideal for cave exploration, long and thin with a built-in air pump which was very effective. With two men in it, the dinghy proceeded down the left hand passage for 40 feet to a junction which we on the ledge could not see. A very fast flow of water came from under the rock wall to the left, crossed our stream and went down another high rift passage. Mostly by the water flow and partly by choice they went down here to a jammed boulder across the passage. Climbing on to this they found a higher level route leading off, this proved quite extensive but not of great importance. They managed to get back to the junction and then went further upstream but soon the walls came together bringing this section to a dead end. As it was getting late we welcomed the opportunity to leave the traverse along the right hand river until the morrow.

Five of us as explorers, with three surveyors, returned next day. We immediately began the traverse with Tim leading and laying a handline, unnecessary in actual fact as there were ample holds, though with the wild river constantly licking at our feet it was of psychological help. After the first 30 feet we could bridge the river for the next 40 feet which took us to the main Dumanlı stream, about a quarter of which flowed



down our passage. At this junction we were checked as the rock was all worn under and it was of course impossible to get into the river. Eventually we pegged a way up and along the left hand wall and dropped a ladder down to a boulder which spanned the upstream passage. As I was lifeliner I had to stay on a rather precarious ledge at the junction whilst Tony, Tim and John Ives made their way across. From the boulder they first tried upstream but once again after only 40 feet the walls came together. After a further two hours of downstream exploration we could find no more extensions so we had to go back to scouring the hills.

*Dumanli 2.* (Map 1)

Twelve hours later Tony and I again started up a densely wooded slope in the hope of finding another way in. When about 100 feet up we cut across horizontally and within five minutes we came upon a big boulder with a 30 ft. pitch behind it and the feel of a cold draught. We later found that this hole had been noted by two others but dismissed as not interesting. As we had no ladder we went on at the same level to see if we could find any more holes. We explored three small caves then, after a blank three hours, we found ourselves in a large cave entrance well up a 700 ft. cliff. The cave, which had fine formations, only went in for 50 feet, but the view from the entrance was really something. Imagine being 600 feet above a narrow gorge filled with rapids down which one could look to its end perhaps a mile away, then across a shrub-covered plain to another gorge of equally impressive proportions; all this through a thin lace curtain of hanging creepers and ferns.

Anyway, we then collected 30 feet of ladder, went back to the first hole and descended into the most welcome cool. The passage sloped down rapidly to a rift in the floor 6 ft. long and 18 inches wide. To the right of this was a magnificent calcite flow with a 12 ft. stalactite and stalagmite joined together. Across the rift a loose slope went upwards for 20 ft. into a massive and apparently bottomless chamber about 100 ft. in diameter with a high wide rift going away to the right. We rolled stones down the very loose slope in front of us and 50 ft. below us they suddenly dropped clear into water about 100 ft. below that. Excitedly we again dashed back to fetch

ladder but found that time was getting on so we left exploration until next day.

On the following morning, which was my last, four of us, amply armed with ropes and ladders, cursed and sweated our way to the entrance, climbed quickly down the pitch, up the loose slope, and took stock of our surroundings. We were on the top of a pile of very loose rubble and dirt which, if we could find a way round, it would be best not to descend. Our first idea was to go down the fissure near the entrance pitch; we laddered the 20 ft. pitch and went down a steep calcite flow to several small but beautiful chambers with no outlet; so back to the top of the scree slope. We then traversed across and down to the right of the slope to the wall and found a small chamber amply decorated in black, red and white formations, well out of the way of loose rocks which we could not help knocking into the depths when crossing the slope.

From the chamber was a 10 ft. hand-line pitch to a ledge overlooking the big shaft. However it was still not advisable to go down here because of all the loose stuff above, so looking behind us we found a passage going back underneath to a 20 ft. climb down calcite flows using stumpy stalagmites as footholds. This landed us on a flowstone covered bridge with a 15 ft. glistening white column at one end; using this as a belay point we dropped three thirty foot ladders down a calcited wall: it really was a fantastically beautiful place. The ladders just reached the bottom, so John Ives and I descended to the edge of a further 20 ft. drop: we would need another ladder and dinghy. While one man went back for these John and I explored a gour filled passage to what we both thought was the most beautiful grotto we had either of us seen. We were awakened from our reverie by somebody shouting "Below!"; our equipment was being lowered down the wall. We inflated the dinghy, clipped the ladder on to the others and went down to find that the last 10 feet hung free into the water and we should have to get directly off the ladder into the boat. This was made all the more difficult by the current which, although it hardly made any noise was none the less powerful.

Upstream from the ladder was a most magnificent siphon, half-moon shaped, perhaps 30 feet round. Fifty feet downstream a projection of rock necessitated our getting out and

re-launching but after a further 20 feet the passage narrowed; we had to fasten the dinghy up and continue by traversing, delicate in places, for 80 feet till the walls became too close to allow any more progress: beaten again but not disappointed. Dumanli was certainly very reluctant to give up her secrets but when she did they were well worth fighting for.

I now had to fly back to England as my time was up but the others still had ten days to go. Until their last two days no more big discoveries were made, then a large resurgence cave, Düdensuyu, was found further up the gorge, reached by a six hour road drive. This consisted of boating across tremendous lakes, climbing up the sides of giant gours, then boating across more lakes in vast passages. Progress was made for about half a mile but lack of time meant that many possibilities were left unexplored; enough to generate enthusiasm for another visit in the near future.

#### MEMBERS OF THE EXPEDITION:

A. Dunford (Leader)	Nottingham University Caving Club
M. Clark (Chief Surveyor)	British Speleological Association
M. Jeanmaire	Cave Diving Group
C. Wilkinson	Nottingham University Caving Club
J. Higgs	Nottingham University Caving Club
J. Ives	Nottingham University Caving Club
T. Gilbert	Wessex Cave Club
M. Holland	Wessex Cave Club
R. Gannicot	Wessex Cave Club
J. R. Middleton	Yorkshire Ramblers' Club

## TURKEY AGAIN. 1967

by J. R. Middleton

AFTER OUR RETURN from Turkey in 1966 we at once decided to organise a further expedition, but this time with not quite such a large party. All went well until June 1967 when for various reasons our six-strong party was suddenly reduced to two, just Tony Dunford and myself. However, as most of the arrangements had already been made and as we knew that for at least half of our stay of three weeks we should be with Dr. Aygen, we decided to go it alone. Both of us were flying out so the amount of equipment we could take with us was seriously reduced, but as things turned out we did not need all that we did take.

We arrived only a few days before the Spéléo Club de Paris were due to return to France. They had carried on with the exploration of Düdensuyu, the resurgence cave further up the Manavgat Gorge from Dumanli, about 1½ miles from the village of Urünlü (Map 1) and briefly mentioned as having been found in the last two days of the 1966 expedition. Here they had discovered over a mile of very large passage with sporting climbs, deep lakes and many incrustations. During their last few days they had found a very deep pot, Düdenjik, and when we arrived they invited us to join them; it proved to be the deepest pot-hole yet discovered in Turkey.

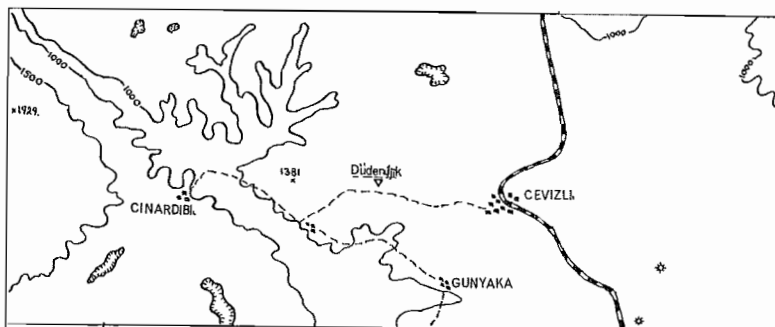
Apart from Düdenjik we ourselves discovered and explored a total of 9,900 feet of passage, including one river cave of almost 6,000 feet which went completely through the mountain. That there were only two of us proved no great disadvantage except that we were not able to descend deep holes; an advantage was that we were obliged to live with and rely much upon the local village people, we thus got a valuable insight into their way of life.

*Düdenjik* (Depth 1089 ft., Length 2475 ft. Map 4 and Survey)

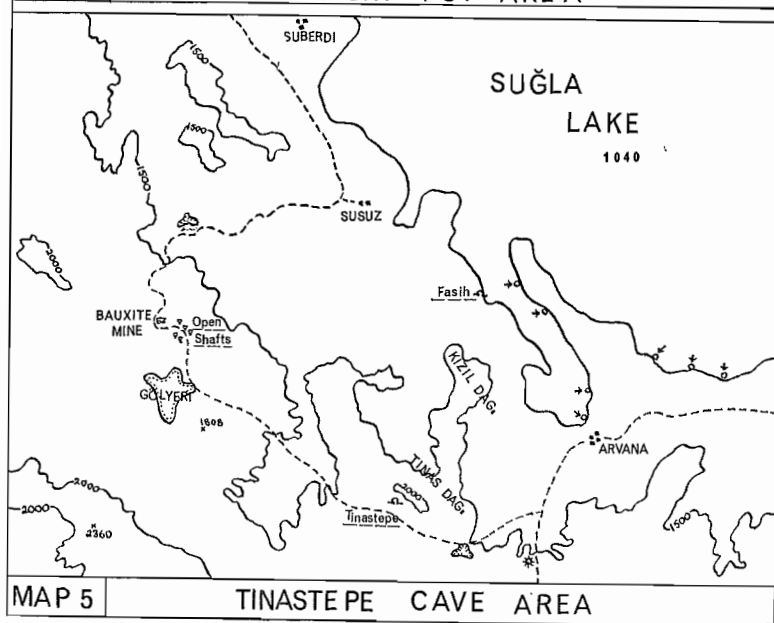
No sooner had we touched down at Antalya airport than we were whisked away by Ali, Dr. Aygen's chauffeur. Some four hours and many reminiscences later we passed through Akseki, the northern limit of our 1966 explorations, and continued on up the Beysehir road until after about 15 miles we reached the village of Cevizli. Here, before continuing our journey,

we had time to renew our acquaintance with the heat, dust and smells so typical of this part of the world. Three more miles westward along the Cinardibi dirt road and we reached the French camp site in the midst of tall pine trees. Down one side of the camp ran a dry stream bed which went a further hundred yards into a small rock outcrop at the base of which was a 20 ft. diameter shaft.

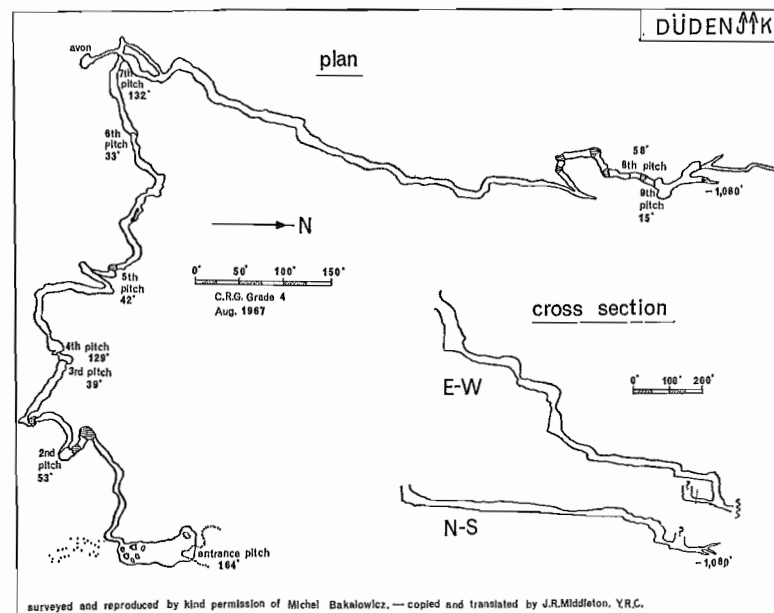
Tony and I, with six French, started down early next morn-



MAP 4 DÜDENDİJK POT AREA

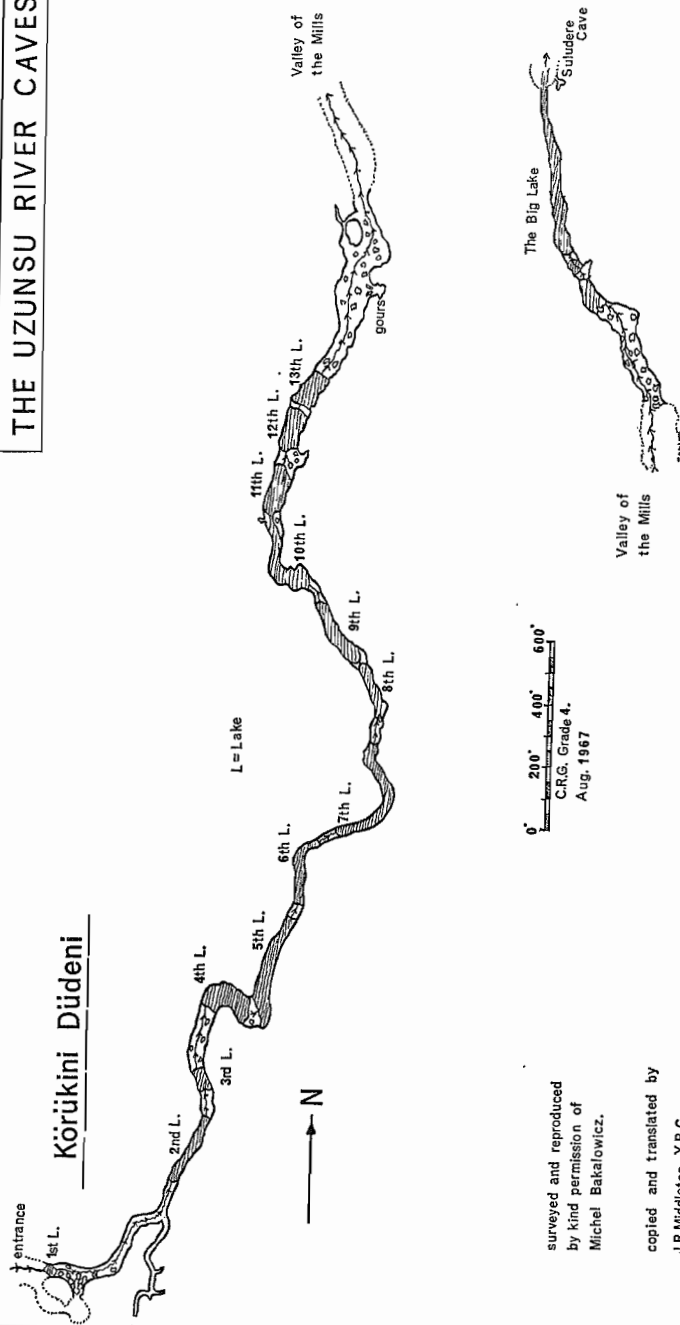


MAP 5 TINASTEPE CAVE AREA



ing after a large breakfast. The descent for the top 40 ft. of the shaft is at an angle of about  $80^\circ$  over a layer of calcite, the next 134 ft. is practically vertical and finishes in a very fine chamber. At the end opposite the ladder a steep boulder slope leads to a high passage finishing at the head of a 53 ft. pitch covered with flowstone. The gallery at the bottom is again large but soon comes to an abrupt stop six feet above a deep lake. Here the French used a dinghy but to get into it needed an unusually acrobatic movement—the descent of a deep shoot with no holds and a delicate drop of two feet into the boat. It was not uncommon to overshoot the dinghy and land in the water, this meant having to swim across the 20 ft. wide lake.

A gently meandering passage led to an easy 39 ft. drop on to a large ledge with a deep pool. Then came a pitch of 129 ft. which I consider to be the finest pitch that I have ever descended. It is perhaps 30 ft. across and the walls are of a light coloured limestone partly covered with calcite. About 60 ft. down one suddenly goes down under the bottom of a flowstone cascade and hangs free in a 40 ft. diameter shaft.



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J.R. Middleton, Y.R.C.

### Değirmeni Düdeni

As one continues to pendulum down, giant wall stalagmites reach up like grotesque fingers fifty or more feet high; to look back up as someone else is coming down is an unforgettable sight.

Between this fourth pitch and the next big one are two smaller pitches, the fifth of 42 ft. and the sixth of 33 ft. The seventh is 132 ft. and at the top of it the French had made a little camp with stocks of food and stoves; as might be expected we stopped for a quick snack. The shaft is again a fine one with a gully type ledge about 60 ft. down; from there to the bottom the ladder hangs just away from the wall. The only side passage now enters the system, dividing after a few feet, the left branch going to a large aven while the right hand one returns as an oxbow to the main passage. At this point also the first running water enters the pot, only a few drips but very conspicuous in that it leaves a black precipitate on the yellow flowstone. The next section, the longest between pitches, was the most sporting—jumps and traverses over pools, good climbs down short drops and a winding razor-edged passage leading to the eighth pitch of 58 ft.

This proved a rather awkward pitch as the ladder persisted in hanging at an angle different from that of the walls, in addition to which one had to get off on to a narrow ledge above a deep crystal pool. A short passage led to the final pitch of 15 ft. into a chamber with just one low crawl leading off. We followed this to another chamber but this time with no exit except a high level fissure; the French climbed up to this but it could only be followed for a few feet. A disappointing finish, but a tremendously sporting pot, much deeper than anyone ever expected.

### THE UZUNSU RIVER CAVES

The village of Camlik (pronounced Chamlik), near to the caves, is perhaps one of the most beautifully situated of all the villages that we visited on our expedition. On three sides it was surrounded by the bright yellow stubble of freshly cut wheat and in the two nearest fields the wheat itself was being threshed by the women in their brightly coloured baggy trousers. Behind the fields and on the fourth side of the village are mountains, the startling barrenness of the limestone

contrasting magnificently with the isolated patches of dark green scrub. Immediately upon our arrival the very friendly villagers insisted that we use their school as our base—the children have the four hottest months as a holiday—so beneath the many watchful eyes of Ataturk we accepted their hospitality. They were very interested to learn of our proposed visit to the caves, no exploration by them had ever been undertaken, though the entrance was used as a shelter for their goats.

*Körükini Düdeni.* (Map 3b, Survey, Length 5,850 ft.)

On the south side of Camlik a track follows the edge of the mountains for almost a mile into a small gorge carrying the Uzunsu River. This twists and turns its way past two small and unexplored caves until it reaches the entrance of the first river cave. The size of the actual opening completely took us by surprise; a conservative estimate would put it at 80 ft. high and nearly 40 ft. wide. That this place had never been explored before seemed almost incomprehensible to us. Immediately inside the entrance is a deep pool the width of the passage; to avoid this our village guides pointed to a smaller opening up to the right. This led us down on to a big boulder slope at the other side of the pool. The cave inside is just as big as the entrance and we felt at once that there was a very good chance that it was negotiable right through the mountain, as shown on our survey.

Our party consisted of Dr. Aygen, a meteorologist friend of his, a very fit Turk from the village, Tony and myself. Exploration began at once; we moved down the giant boulder strewn passage only to find that our English carbide lamps were about as much good as a number 12 hook is to a shark fisher. Within 100 yards we were up to our knees in water and at an abrupt left hand turn we were out of our depth. At this point an inlet comes in from the right, we did not explore it but Michel and Claude did so when they surveyed the system next day, it was not very long. At the lake we blew up our two-man and one-man dinghies and found that it was about 150 feet to a shingle bank, then a smaller lake led to a long section of easy walking on pebbles and small rocks. Just before we reached another bend in the passage a series of gours cascaded down from the right. We climbed up them but

found that they reached the roof about 50 feet back; near to the edge the gours were often 5 ft. deep, though not now containing any water. This was one of the only two sections of formations that we found in the entire system, which is very unusual for Turkish caves.

The next obstacle was another lake, in fact from here to the end we boated across ten flooded sections. The passage was not now so large, though still big enough to drive a couple of buses through; at the lakes the roof in some places came down as low as five or six feet. As we went deeper into the cave the floor began to change from pleasant shingle to rocks, then from rocks to large, smooth and slippery boulders; on more than one occasion we had narrow escapes from broken bones. Every now and again a large tree trunk would be jammed across the passage or stuck up in the roof, a reminder that the river as we now saw it was quite a different one at other times of the year.

After four hours of this same kind of passage we came to a big oxbow about 15 ft. above the level of the river, where we found many old but very fine stalactites and flowstone cascades. From here to the end is a 450 ft. through passage that gets steadily bigger until the exit is almost as large as the entrance. Our excitement at being the first people through was lessened slightly by finding that it was now dark and we could see nothing of our surroundings. On top of that there was quite a breeze which blew our lamps out every few paces.

*Degirmenini Düdeni.* (Map 3b, Survey, Length 1,070 ft.)

Early the following morning we set off to explore the second of the River Caves, situated about 600 yards from the exit of Körükini. The entrance, though big, is not so impressive, many large boulders blocking the bottom half, but once inside it is equally fine. At the first lake, about 250 feet in, the walls narrow to 15 feet apart; the lake can be by-passed by making a high level traverse along the left wall, then an easy descent to a shingle bank separating the first from the second lake. Dinghies are necessary here and we set off down this 70 ft. high passage to the distant corner, round a bend and into a large flooded chamber, through more passages, round more bends into a very wide section. Then suddenly after another bend we could see a green valley silhouetted in a black exit

about 150 feet on, a magnificent sight. It was a tremendous finish to come out of these fine River Caves in a boat.

About 60 feet above and to one side of the exit we came across a small cave, "Suludere Cave", which had been a Christian chapel of the fifth or sixth century A.D. On the walls were many coloured religious figures resembling those of the Göreme churches, but most of them had unfortunately been deliberately disfigured at a later date.

#### KIMYOS POLJE

From Degirmenini the water flows towards the Kimyos (pronounced Kimbos) polje, but in summer and autumn the river sinks into its bed about 2 miles away. During winter and spring it flows directly into the polje, filling it about two thirds full. We knew from the French that it contained two short caves but the area had only been very briefly explored and the dolines behind the polje not investigated at all. We camped at the south end of the polje on the verandah of a forester's one roomed hut.

The sublime beauty and wildness of the surrounding country is almost impossible to describe. The light brown of the long narrow polje contrasts sharply with the dark green pine forests and the glaring white limestone of the encircling mountains, the whole topped by the deep blue of a cloudless sky. On our second night at this camp we learnt also of the wildness of its animals; early in the morning, before daylight, a shepherd, cloaked in his enormous sheepskin rug, brought to the forester a sheep which had been horribly gashed on its rump. He told us that wolves had killed and savaged some ten of his flock on the polje—and this not more than a mile from us.

*Feyzullahin Düdeni.* (Length 700 ft.)

This cave was one of the two discovered by the French in 1966. It is situated on the west side of Kimyos about half a mile from its southern end. The entrance is obvious, it stands out black against the white rock just below the winter water mark, about 8 ft. high. Inside, a large boulder strewn passage heads straight into the mountain and there is a liberal coating of mud on everything. Neither the character of the passage, which is depressing, nor its direction varies throughout its

length; it finishes with a large impenetrable boulder choke beneath a doline. With all the mud and organic debris about the floor and on the walls it could almost be described as one heaving mass of insects, fungi and toads, in fact a haven for any Biospeleologist. The toads were green (*Bufo Viridis*) and we often found them very deep in the dark zones of caves, they did not seem to suffer any ill effect.

*Büyük Düdeni.* (Length 400 ft.)

This cave is the second of the French discoveries. It is on the same side of the polje as Feyzullahin, but a mile further north. A passage about 50 ft. long leads to a pool which can be by-passed by wading knee deep in mud. At the other side is a large chamber from the western corner of which a descending passage leads to another chamber filled with water and no way on. From the first chamber another passage opposite the pool leads, via a muddy crawl, back to a sink in the surface of the polje.

After this we made a tour round the 22 mile perimeter of the polje in Michel's car, but without success. We did however pass a tribe of nomad Yürüks complete with dromedaries and shaggy dogs. Michel told us that only five days before a similar tribe in the Eynif Polje not far away had an argument with some villagers and finished by attacking the village, killing several people and injuring many more, eventually the army had to be called in to restore order.

The dolines were next on our list and we spent a day investigating all those behind an area lying between Feyzullahin and Büyük but again with no success.

#### SUGLA LAKE AREA

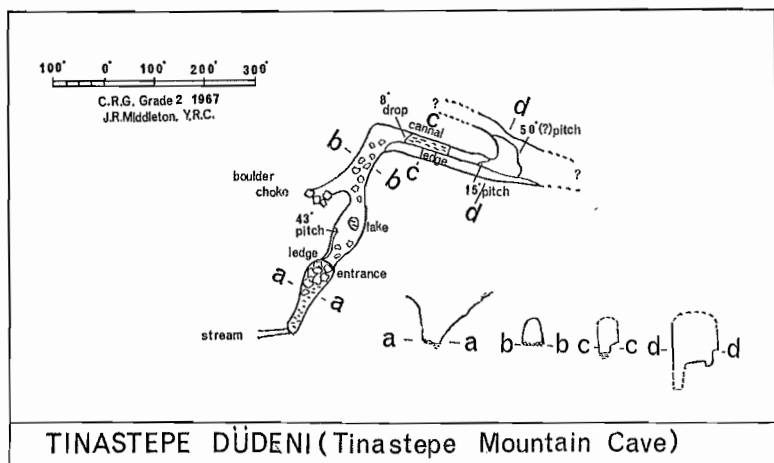
*Tinastepe Düdeni.* (Map 5, Survey).

The mountains in which this cave lies can actually be seen from the village of Cevizli, about 15 miles away, but to get there it is necessary to make a 70 mile detour via Beysehir and Seydisehir. The track into the mountains is a dirt one and leads to the Mortas Bauxite Mine, a new mine which has the largest potential for bauxite yet discovered in the world. The dam at Homa is being built primarily to provide electricity for this mine. About a mile from Mortas the road passes through an area of fantastic Lapiez containing many open and



unexplored shafts going down into the hundreds of feet.

About four miles on, at the end of the Tinastepe Polje is what must be one of the most impressive cave entrances in the world. It is at the base of a 500 ft. cliff and the river from the polje has cut a broad path in the limestone and under a 30 ft. wide rock bridge into a large amphitheatre where the water drops fifteen feet into a lake. The way down for us was by traversing round under the cliff, past two smaller caves which showed signs of occupation, and into the amphitheatre. At the entrance to the cave, which is 25 ft. wide and 40 ft. high, the water drops down a 50 ft. pitch but we found

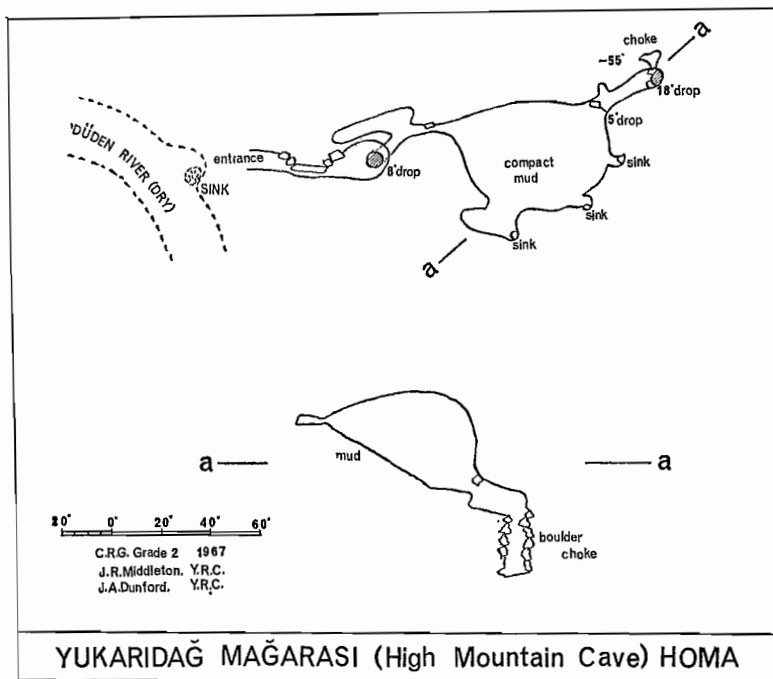


that our best way was to traverse round a ledge on the left hand side until we could make an easy 43 ft. descent. Continuing into the cave past a lake a passage comes in from the left which finishes in a boulder choke; the main passage then makes an abrupt turn right and splits into two levels. The right half is a 4 ft. climb on to a ledge which starts flat and then slopes alarmingly as it gets above a drop estimated at 70 ft.; eventually it peters out. The left half drops 8 ft. into a canal which is not long but a dinghy was needed. This leads to a 15 ft. pitch on to a ledge with an estimated 50 ft. pitch. To the left of the ledge another large passage joins the main one.

Due to lack of time this was the limit of our exploration. There are two schools of thought as to where the water goes, one says into Sugla Lake, making a drop of 1,680 ft., while the other thinks that it resurges in the sea, a drop of 5,100 ft. Either way the big passage promises a fine system.

#### BACK TO DUMANLI

For our last week we decided to revisit Dumanli. Whilst we only found one cave worthy of mention we did absolutely convince ourselves that there is not, at the Homa end, anyway, another entrance to Dumanli.



#### Yukaridağ Magarasi. (Map 1, Survey)

This cave entrance had been seen and noted the previous year by one of the Turkish geologists. It is about two thirds of a mile upstream from Düden Cave on a bend shortly after a smaller river joins the Düden River. The entrance porch is about 8 ft. square and is 6 ft. above the present choked sink

in the stream bed. After the entrance there is a squeeze past a fallen block into a low chamber in the centre of which is an 8 ft. climbable drop into a short passage joining another from the direction of the stream. This main passage goes on down to a small boulder choke, easily passed into a chamber some 40 ft. across and 25 ft. high with a mud floor ascending steeply to the right. Following the downward trend there is a 5 ft. drop over a boulder, a short passage and a further choke but it is possible to go down through the boulders for 18 feet to a mud sink. A squeeze back through the rocks at the bottom leads to some fine mud formations. In the main chamber we climbed up the mud slope and investigated two small sinks which dropped about 4 ft. At the top of the chamber is another sink in a low section but the mud here is very hard and dry, obviously it never floods as high as this.

#### OTHER KNOWN CAVES OF INTEREST

##### *Düden Cave.* (Map 1)

This cave was explored by the French in 1966. It is about two miles up the Düden Creek from the village of Homa. At this point the river runs along the boundary between the impermeable Miocene marls and the Mesozoic (Tertiary) limestone. The cave is on the limestone edge of the dry river bed, it appears as a 12 ft. climb down between boulders and a rock wall. Its hydrology is particularly interesting: in late summer and autumn it is a dry pot; in winter it is the finish of the stream, for the water of which it acts as a sink; in spring it is a flooded pot with the water flowing to the village of Homa; in early summer it is the start of a stream since it continues to be fed underground from the snow melting up into the mountains.

##### *Scupidu.* (Map 1)

This cave was discovered by the English party of 1966 and was broken into by an exploratory adit (R.A.3) on the left hand side of the first gorge, where the dam is to be built. Entry is made half way along the adit down a steeply descending fissure, well encrusted with flowstone and occasional formations. The descent is for about 35 ft. to a medium sized chamber containing a deep pool and upstream siphon. This was dived by Jeanmaire and Gilbert into a narrow passage and

chamber leading to a further, impenetrable, siphon.  
*Tekepli.* (Map 1)

A pothole discovered by the Turks in 1966. In a series of pitches a depth of 300 ft. was reached. The pot still goes down a pitch estimated at 100 ft.

##### *Besidag Cave.* (Map 1)

An old abandoned resurgence cave of no great length. Important because of its presumed past connection with the Dumanli underground river.

##### *Karanlik Derisi Cave.* (Map 1)

Small well encrusted cave near to the River Manavgat.

##### *Handos Cave.* (Map 1)

Vauclusian spring which brings much water to the Manavgat River in spring. In late summer it can be descended for 50 ft. to a siphon.

##### *Cayronü Pot.* (Map 2)

Discovered by the French in 1966 and explored to a depth of 410 ft. in a very fine and sporting system. Also visited by the English party.

#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I cannot finish this account without expressing my most sincere thanks to Dr. Aygen, without whose help and advice in both years our success with new finds would not have been possible. Our thanks are also due to the entomologists Michel and Année Bakalowicz, who were our constant companions both above and below ground.

#### NOTES ON THE AREA PLANS

(1) The basic outlines of the maps were taken from the following sheets—1:500,000 1963 Geological Map (Konya) 1:100,000 1946 Map (Beysehir 107-4, Antalya 124-2, Konya 108-3, Alanya 125-1). These are the largest scale maps available to the general public.

(2) The names of the villages on the 1:100,000 map are usually the old Arabic names, which are now rarely used. All the villages that we actually passed through and certainly all those near to the caves and potholes are correct, as amended to their modern usage by me.

(3) The only tracks which are marked on my plans are

ones that we actually traversed or have been corrected by Dr. Aygen. The 1:100,000 edition cannot be relied upon for any of its tracks.

(4) All caves and potholes have been positioned accurately after reference to Dr. Aygen's work, to the British Speleological Expedition to Turkey, 1966 report and to my own notes. It is essential to take into consideration that for actual field location these maps are on a small scale and are therefore intended for use primarily with my notes.

#### REFERENCES TO THE AREA

As Turkey is only a speleological playground in the making, there is as yet very little literature on the subject. The Turkish Speleological Society intends to bring out its first publication sometime in 1968 but until this appears the references listed below are all that I could find in an extensive search of Belgian, French, Turkish and English books and journals.

- Aygen, T. An invitation to French Cavers, Spelunca No. 1, 1966, page 77. *Bulletin de la Fédération Française de Spéléologie*.
- Aygen, T. The Geological, Hydrogeological and Karstic Studies made in Manavgat—Oymapinar (Homa) Arch Dam Site, Beysehir—Sugla Lake and in Manavgat River Basin. Personal Publication, 1967.
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- Chabert, C. Turkish Speleological Expedition, *Grottes et Gouffres*, No. 36, 1965. (Bulletin. Spéléo Club de Paris).
- Chabert, C. Turkish Speleological Expedition, *Grottes et Gouffres* No. 38, 1966.
- Chabert, C. Turkish Letter (account of 1967 exploration) *Grottes et Gouffres*, No. 40, 1967.

- Dunford, A. J. & Gilbert, T. The British Speleological Expedition to Turkey. *Exploration '66*, 1966 (Journal of Nottingham University)
- Walker, M. Turkish Cave References, 1965. Journal of the Oxford University Cave Club.

In addition to the above there are many geological reports and papers on the area; the most important seem to be those written by a Frenchman, Monsieur Blumenthal, and by Dr. Aygen.

## KARPUSCAY KAPIZ

*or*

## THE FIRST DESCENT OF THE MELON RIVER GORGE

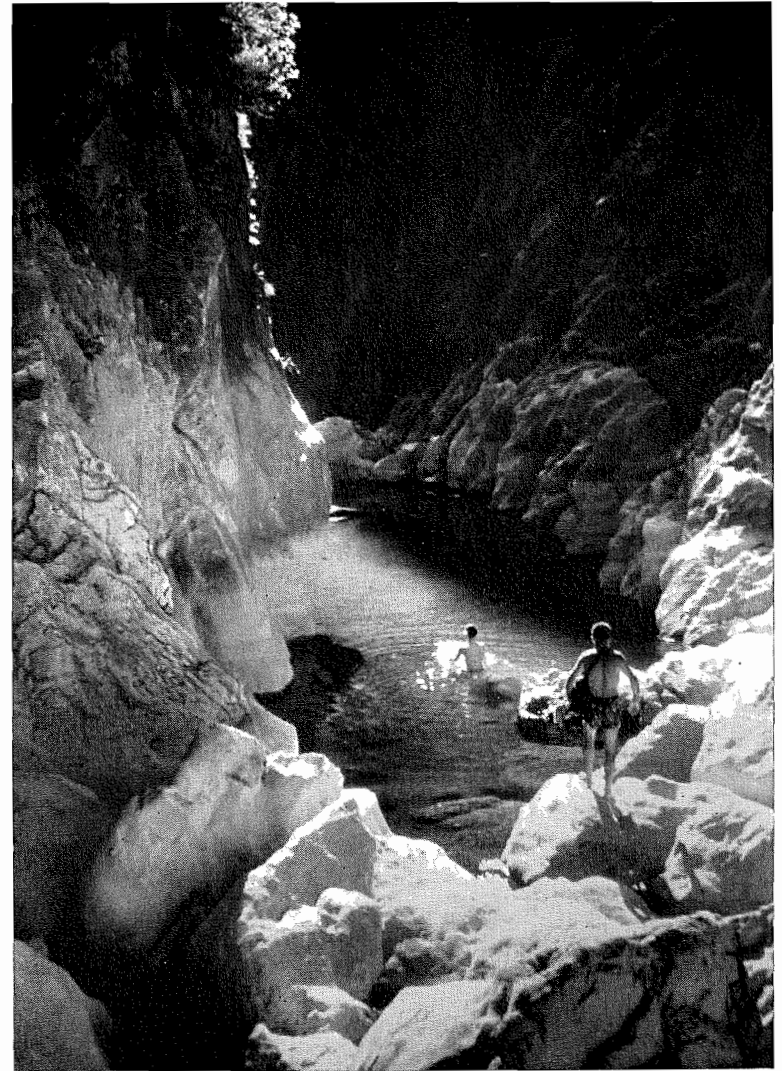
by J. R. Middleton

EVER SINCE I was old enough to go to cowboy films I have always been sceptical about the reality of those narrow but very deep gorges that the cowboy's horse could just manage to jump but that the Indians could not. However, after our experience in the Melon River Gorge I am a firm believer in such marvels of Nature.

The Turks have two names for 'gorge'; one is "Bogaz" and means the usual type of gorge, much wider at the top than at the bottom; the other is 'Kapiz' meaning one that is almost the same width at the top as at the bottom. The Karpusçay Kapiz is most decidedly of the latter kind and is one of the longest and deepest in Turkey. According to the 1:25,000 map of the area the deepest point is 825 feet and the average depth throughout its four mile length 680 feet, but on sight it seems much deeper. The width at the bottom varies between 15 feet and 18 inches, except where joined by a smaller gorge; at the top it varies between 30 and 100 feet. There is a vertical drop throughout its length of just over 300 feet.

The top end of the gorge is not far from the village of Fersinköy, about three miles from the main Manavgat/Akseki road. It can be seen from about 20 miles away as a great gash slicing the mountains in two, it is indeed an impressive sight even at this distance. We had noticed it from afar many times so when our cave searching activities took us into the region we welcomed the opportunity of visiting it. We mentioned our interest to the local villagers, who said immediately that a descent was impossible and had never been done because of waterfalls and vertical drops. This, of course, had the opposite effect on us that the villagers expected and we arranged a "gorging" expedition for the following morning.

At 10 a.m. Tony and I, accompanied by a tough Turk called Cevat, duly said 'Goodbye, see you in a couple of hours' to Dr Aygen and headed down through the pine forest to the Melon River and into the gorge. The size of the river at that time of year (August) was perhaps equivalent to the volume



MELON RIVER GORGE, TURKEY

J. R. Middleton

of water emerging from Clapham Cave under average conditions, though judging from the high-water marks it was obviously quite a different river from late winter until early summer.

The first obstacle, practically at the start, was what presumably had stopped previous would-be explorers—a 20 foot drop over a couple of house-size boulders. This was fairly easily overcome by chimneying down one corner, unfortunately under the fall of water but wonderfully refreshing in Turkey's almost unbearable heat. Alternate paddling and boulder scrambling led to a second obstacle at the narrowing down of the gorge to about 6 feet, a deep emerald green lake vanishing round a distant corner. So blowing up our Lilo and loading it with ladder, rope, camera and the rest of the tackle we set off on our first swim, the first in fact of a total of nearly two miles that we did eventually have to swim. From there until we came to the first pitch was a series of strenuous boulder scrambles, swims and climbs. The pitch was short, only 18 ft., but overhanging and definitely unclimbable. At the bottom we shook the ladder so that the belay came off, rolled it up and crossed our fingers that there would be no pitches of over 35 ft., that was all the ladder we had.

By 2.30 p.m. we had reached the half way point at the junction of the main gorge and a smaller one. Here we ate our lunch of squashed fruit, soaked bread and gritty cheese and we marvelled at the profusion and size of the trout in the pools between each boulder dam; many must have been almost 2 lbs. We now had a breathing space to investigate the largest fresh water crabs that we had seen, with shells a good 6 inches across, presumably they reached this size because of the abundance of food. I could not help wondering next time I swam across a bottomless lake, just how big were the crabs in the misty recesses: were they watching me hoping that a succulent toe would come their way?

We had to be quick over lunch as we were behind schedule and it was essential that we were out before dark; progress would have been impossible at night. So moving into top gear we sped off down an easy half mile of gorge until it again became narrow and consequently awkward, with swimming to jammed boulders and tree trunks, hauling ourselves up over

the obstacles and dropping down again into the water which seemed to get progressively colder as we got more and more tired. The sides began to close in and the walls and ledges became fantastically eroded with rock pinnacles sticking up for no reason at all and potholes 4 or 5 feet across up to 8 feet deep. Eventually we came to another pitch, much more awkward than the first in that it dropped 25 feet directly into the water, thus making it exceedingly difficult to load the lilo. The walls continued to close in and soon we were squeezing through sections only 18 inches wide and thinking that 5 ft. was like the open sea. In this very narrow section, which must have lasted for almost a mile, it was often like night and we could hardly see a thing. Perhaps this was as well, we were now encountering a particularly large kind of spider that seemed to spin webs everywhere and to be on the top of every rock as we scrambled up on to it.

By now we were beginning to get tired and the constant repetition of swim, climb, swim, climb, swim became an automatic, almost zombie movement. At every corner we could look up at the thin strip of light many hundreds of feet above us that was becoming less like daylight and more like dusk. We started to move faster but the gorge began to take on the proportions of one of those nightmares where you run like mad to get away but when you stop it looks exactly the same and in fact you may not have moved at all.

Rounding a bend we heard a shout and recognised Dr. Aygen's voice, a voice which encouraged us to make a final burst under a fallen tree trunk which served as a bridge at the end of the gorge. We just managed the last hundred yards to the car, to feast on water melons and figs; then it was dark and we were asleep.

We were all near the limits of endurance after the nine hours' trip, but all agreed that the tremendous satisfaction and sense of achievement we felt afterwards made the effort well worth while.

## HADRIAN'S MAGIC STONES

by A. N. Patchett

"I have seen the tract of it over the high pitches and steep descents of hills, wonderfully rising and falling. It has many towers and fortresses about a mile distant from one another which they call 'castle-steeds', and more within little fenced towns termed in those days Chesters, the plots or ground-works whereof are to be seen in some places four square, also turrets standing between these."

SO WROTE WILLIAM CAMDEN, the famous headmaster of Westminster School in the time of Elizabeth I. He was followed by one historian after another. I am neither historian nor archaeologist, but simply a traveller with a desire to enjoy the wind-swept uplands and wooded valleys with the added interest of an outstanding monument of history—a desire to lie on my back, listen to the peewits' call and wonder what it must have felt like to be a Roman officer getting his first view of Housesteads from Stane Street nearly 2,000 years ago, following his 2,000 mile journey from the Mediterranean.

My first view of Housesteads was from a huge modern lay-by; there were few motor cars there, but there was one from Canada and one from South Africa. I made haste, map in hand, through a little gate, down a track and up again to a museum to the left of the fort. The museum contains just enough relics—unlike so many others which contain far too many. The exhibits are of great interest and a little time spent here adds much to one's enthusiasm. There is a plan of the whole wall from Wallsend-on-Tyne to Bowness-on-Solway, a distance of  $73\frac{1}{2}$  miles. It shows every fort, milecastle and turret as well as military ways and outposts, crossings and gateways through the Wall. You will learn that the Wall between Newcastle and Wallsend was added as an afterthought—hence Wallsend, where a four acre fort was built. The Wall which only took five years to build, was planned to be ten Roman feet wide, but after the first 20 miles from Newcastle the foundations only of this width were laid between Chollerford and the River Irthing at Willowford, the Wall itself between these two points being only eight Roman feet wide. A Roman foot—11·7 inches. At first the Cumberland section was



built of turf due to the absence of limestone; what the Wall lacked in stone was made up for in turf, for it was no less than 20 feet wide. Eventually the turf was replaced by stone and for good measure the width was then nine feet.

The Wall with its Legions lasted 300 years. During this time it suffered several attacks from the Scots, but 300 years is a long span and there must have been years of inactivity when idle hands turned to gambling, drinking and the like; indeed there is plenty of evidence of this. Long periods of this kind of life inevitably end in one way only: Gibbon will tell you all about that.

Housesteads Fort was incorrectly called *Borcovicium* for many years. It is Housesteads please, or if you wish to be thought an authority on Romano-British history, *Vercovicium*. The fort is built according to a master plan with slight amendments here and there. The North Granary should not be missed, neither should the latrine. The latter displays, to my mind, the most interesting sanitary work imaginable. To the immediate north east of the latrine is a very large tank made of huge sheets of stone, once lined with lead. There is no need to wonder what has happened to the lead. It is difficult to see how a good water supply was obtained, though it has been established that the Romans used pumps. The inclination of the stone channel to ensure a constant flow of water for sponging purposes and finally to wash the soil away is ingenious to say the least. It seems incredible that 1,500 years should elapse before the common use of water for this purpose should catch on again.

As I walked up the *Via Principalis* from the south gate to the north, I saw, to the left, the Commandant's quarters which had their private bathroom. At the top of the *Via Principalis* is the North Gate—walk through it without looking and you drop down a cliff. The blue print in Rome showed a North Gate and so a north gate there had to be. It is said that a steeply inclined road once led up to the gate from without; there are remains of this, perhaps built later to justify the gate.

Following the north wall of the fort in a westerly direction you arrive at the wall itself, six to eight feet high, and walking on its broad top you pass through that famous well-photo-

graphed plantation. Ahead, almost without a break, the Wall follows the edge of an escarpment, rising and falling to the first Housesteads milecastle. Here again it seems that the blue-print from Rome was slavishly followed because the milecastle's north gate looks out over the edge of a precipice. It was built by A. Platorius Nepos, Hadrian's Lieutenant.

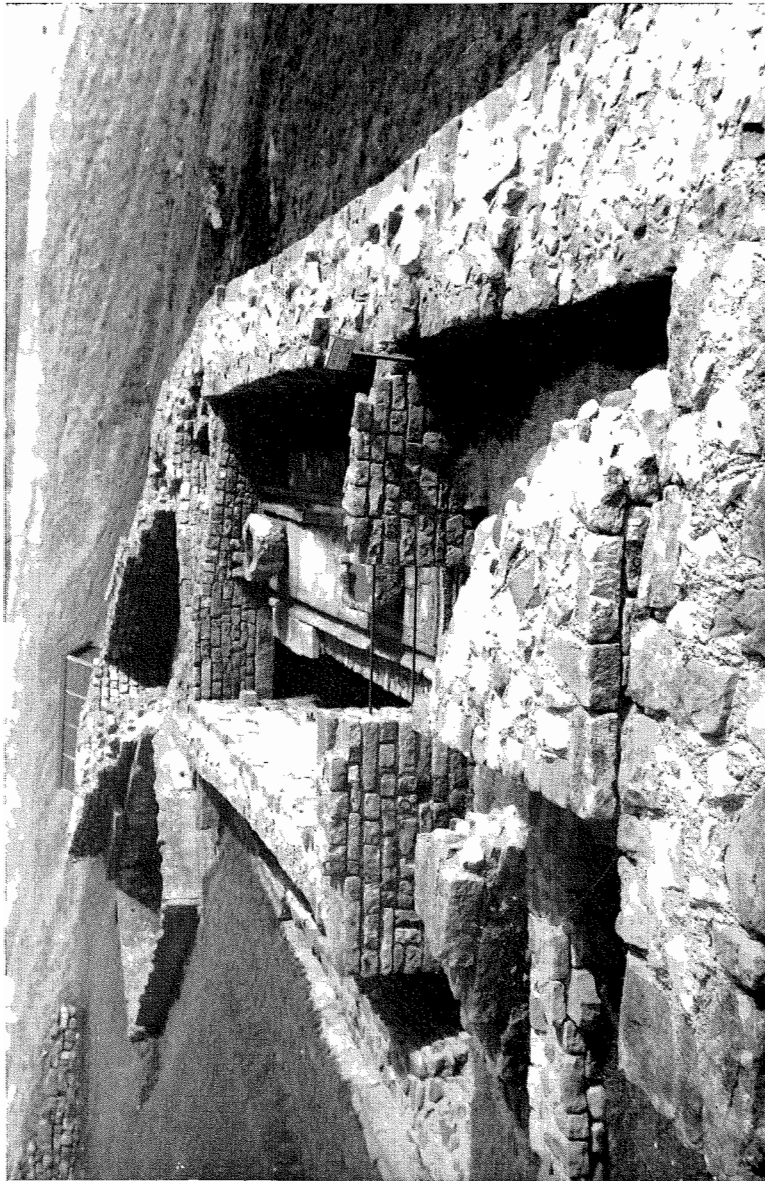
Further on one is soon climbing Cuddy's Crag, either on the Wall itself or on the path at its south side. Halfway up the crag you turn round and see the most famous view of all. It is one of the best sections and culminates with the Housesteads Plantation perched on top of the bluff. Beyond the Plantation the crests of Sewingshields form the background. From the top of Cuddy's (St. Cuthbert's) Crag you can rest awhile with views in all directions including the Northumberland lakes of Greenlee Lough, Bromlee Lough and also Grindon Lough. The Wall then descends and ascends to Hotbank Crag. At the highest point here the Wall is unrecognisable from an ordinary stone wall; in fact, as I approached, a sturdy 'Roman' was carefully placing a large stone, which was squared up on five sides, on top of the wall. Taking the opportunity of yet another rest after a breathless climb, I stopped to have a chat with the waller. He explained that he was no Roman but nevertheless was doing some maintenance just as the wallers did nearly 2,000 years ago. Leaning over the Wall at this point the view over the 'northern wastes' is surely identical with that which must have depressed our Roman officer from the Bay of Naples. How could the present day waller be sure he was no Roman? No native of an area so steeped in Roman history could be sure. However, he told me that if I carried on for a few hundred yards I would come to the original Wall again and see one of the prettiest picture-postcard views in England . . . and so I did.

The Wall hereabouts is eight feet wide and sails down the slope to Hotbank Farm and Milking Gap. Beyond this the Whin Sill escarpment rises steeply and at the foot of the well-wooded slope lay Crag Lough with two swans. It is the most attractive of the Northumberland Lakes and the best time to see it is in the morning sunshine. Just beyond the Crag Lough plantation the Wall is seen again but it descends so steeply that the courses are laid horizontally instead of following the

contours. Up again, I came to Milecastle No. 39; incidentally the milecastles are one Roman mile apart, 1614/1760ths of an English mile. There are two equidistant turrets in between each, referred to as A and B. Thus, leaving milecastle No. 39 in a westerly direction you come first to turret No. 39A and then to No. 39B.

The Wall appears again twice before Milecastle 40 is reached. A good stretch is that which gives the fine view eastward of Peel Crag, with Crag Lough on the left of the picture a mile away. I had a surprise on leaving this section of the Wall for, after passing through a stile, a large car-park with stainless amenities confronted me. What would Aulus Platorius Nepos have thought about this? It is almost on the site of Turret No. 39B and the views are such that no photographer can resist them. This car park is smack in the middle of the longest and best preserved section and it is approached from the main highway by a road to the North near the "Twice Brewed". If you take this road to the North, turn right after leaving the car park and follow it westward and you will come to a 'T' junction. Take the road to the right and presently you will see a Roman aqueduct at Edge Green. This carries water from Greenlee Lough by devious routes, because it follows the 700 ft. contour, on its way to Great Chesters Fort. The various tiny roads at Edge Green obliterate part of the aqueduct but a little distance away the channel which carried the water can be clearly seen.

Back to the car park and turning west I followed the grass-covered jumble of stones and shortly came to Milecastle 40 and another good section of Wall which runs along the top of Whinshields Crag, 1,230 ft. above sea level. On and on it goes, crossing a little road, to arrive at Cawfields Milecastle which is one of the best preserved; after this there is a vast quarry which brings us back with a jerk to the 20th century. You then cross Haltwhistle Burn which drains the two loughs, Greenlee and Brownlee—the water from Crag Lough sneaks through Milking Gap and back towards the east. Having crossed the burn, climb up the hill and you arrive at Great Chesters Fort (Aesica). It is not as impressive as Housesteads, but if you are bent on following the Wall westwards you take Great Chesters in your stride to the Nine Nicks of Thirlwall (now only seven)



A. N. Patchett

HOUSESTEADS, ROMAN WALL

and so to Greenhead and Gilsland.

At Gilsland one is spoilt for choice, there is a section of Wall in the Old Vicarage garden, approached by a stile and there you see a giant sycamore in the middle of the foundations; the Old Vicarage is now called 'Roman Way Guest House'. Almost opposite the stile is the start of a long and attractive stretch of Wall, broken only in a few places. At first it skirts the top of a very steep and high bank of the River Irthing. In one place it appears to have fallen into the river, due to washing away of the steep bank. There are two turrets along this section, one of which is at the entrance to Willowford Farm where you pay your sixpence to follow the six feet high Wall down to and through the lush meadow to Willowford Bridge Abutment, now well back from the river. Across the river is a cliff about 100 feet high; over the centuries the river has evidently washed away the bank so much that the slope that once existed is now virtually a cliff. It is possible to wade across the river and scramble up the other side by devious routes to Harrow's Scar Milecastle which overlooks the bridge abutment and the Wall in its way eastward to Gilsland. The easier way is to walk back to the Old Vicarage where you may well have left your motor car. Motor back to the main road through Gilsland, turn left and make for Birdoswald and its two stretches of Wall, one on the roadside and one through the fields eastward to Harrow's Scar Milecastle. Admission to the fort is gained through a farm built within the fort itself. Walk through the South Gate out of the fort and you get a breathtaking view of the River Irthing and its steeply wooded slopes. Here I suggest you have your picnic lunch and relax in the sunshine if you have timed your excursion properly. After lunch walk through the East Gate, the best preserved, and follow the Wall (up to eight feet high) to Harrow's Scar Milecastle. There, far below, stands the Willowford Bridge Abutment.

Westward there are still many interesting features such as Banks East Turret, sections of the Turf Wall and the very scant remains of the forts at Castlesteads, Carlisle and beyond. But so many fascinating features demanded attention east of Housesteads that I motored as fast as I could to Benwell, a suburb of Newcastle-on-Tyne, resisting all temptations to

stop and look at the fortlet at Gilsland and the forts at Carvoran and Vindolanda.

Once at Benwell I could start out west with all extant remains in front of me, and what a start! Sandwiched in between two modest houses lie the remains of an exquisite little Roman Temple and its address is 48A Broomridge Avenue, Newcastle, 5. The 'A' is mine because you enter the well kept plot of sacred ground from the garden of No. 48; there is no charge for admission. It is only 18 ft. by 10½ ft. and it is called the Temple of Antenociticus; I cannot think of a more surprising find. What suburb of any other English industrial city can boast of such a wonderful little gem of history?

Making my way back to the main road via Westholme Gardens and Weidner Road, I stopped the one and only person I saw. She was coming out of a garden gate and judging by her manner I decided that the lady was no stranger. Enquiring as to the whereabouts of other Roman remains I was told: "Well, there's Denhill Park Vallum Crossing just off the main road and then there's a Roman fountain across the West Road, but you'll have to swim for it because it is under the water in the reservoir. You cannot go wrong, once back on the West Road you'll see a large modern building called 'Condercum House'. Immediately beyond it is Denhill Park, a small estate of fairly modern houses. You go down the left hand crescent: at the bottom is the staggering sight of a Vallum Crossing". Reluctantly taking leave of my charming informant and wondering for a moment whether I was really interested in Vallum Crossings, I was soon thrilled at what I saw at the bottom of Denhill Park Estate. The Vallum, as distinct from the ditch on the north side of the Wall, is really a ditch ten feet deep, twenty feet wide with a flat bottom eight feet wide. It is not a defence, as is *the* ditch, because it is on the south side of the Wall, but a boundary between the military and the civil areas. Crossings occurred at the forts of which Condercum is the first from Newcastle westward, they consisted of a causeway carrying a road and a large gateway. The Condercum fort is partly destroyed and buried under modern buildings, yet the Crossing here is the only good example of its kind along the whole length of the Wall. You can see it all through the railings, but you can get the key at No. 65 Denhill

Park should a very close inspection be desired.

Once back on the main road I carried on down to the big roundabout and just before the dual carriageway starts is the very first section of Wall. It was looking a trifle desolate when I saw it, standing in a small plot of ground on the south side of the road. The grass was long and on one side there was a huge hoarding extolling the virtues of a certain brand of beer—on another were a motor engineer's premises and on the third side a track leading into the little park. I thought the so-called guardians might take better care of this unique little section, which to me was far more thrilling to see than the overwhelming display of relics in glass cases at Corbridge Roman Station, which was the 'Head Office', some miles south of the Wall.

To the west and nearly at the top of the hill stands Denton Hall Turret with its east and west flanking sections of Wall adjacent to the side walk. It is the first visible turret and promises great things to come. Just a little further on is West Denton and its stretch of Wall. This and Denton Hall Turret stand in trim plots of grass.

Now comes the search for the remains of Milecastle No. 9 which is reputed to be just past the end of the dual carriage-way. A very helpful young man answered the door at Chapel House, came out in the drenching rain and sat in the car with us to study the map. There were piles of stones in the farm garden adjoining the main road but the owners, he said, were reconstructing a rockery and, although there were a few Wall stones present, there was no milecastle. The farm house and buildings obviously contained many wall stones in the fabric. We looked in a potato field opposite, again without success. Even if there had been a stone or two in the hedge bottom somewhere down the road, we decided to give them a miss and find Milecastle No. 10.

Over the mineral line crossing we went and at the top of the hill where the main road bends slightly south at Dene House we expected to see it. Again we found no trace, but just before we decided to leave I looked over a garden wall where it juts out and saw it. I could not have been more excited if Pompeii in all its glory had appeared over that wall. There were some massive stones, some chamfered, and others bore

the mark of masons employed by Hadrian's lieutenant. (see Y.R.C.J. Vol. VI, No. 21, page 204, line 27). After having seen many stones worked and faced up by them, you begin to recognise their work immediately on sight. Here then, tucked away in the corner of a quiet garden were the scant remains of the once mighty Milecastle No. 10.

The West road then crosses the little wooded valley of Dewley Burn and passes through Throckley; soon after leaving it, on the left hand side of the road is the Wall, five hundred yards of it several feet high, for you to gaze upon, to photograph, to examine or simply to walk at its side until you reach Towne Gate at Heddon-on-the-Wall. After leaving Heddon, there is little to attract the attention of the ordinary traveller except to notice mile after mile of ditch on the north side of the road which rests on the foundations of the Wall itself. On the south side of the road the Vallum is clearly seen for several miles also. It is interesting to note that just past Halton is Portgate where the well-known Dere Street once passed through the Wall; hence the name. Here the road, and Wall beneath it, is at a fairly high altitude but soon, some 20 miles from Newcastle, the ground falls away and a wide open prospect of the Tyne valley and the heights beyond Chesters come into full view. The modern road now turns slightly north and it has hardly done so, when a very fine stretch of Wall appears in a field to the left. It is the first to be seen since leaving Heddon. Access is through a stile below Planetrees Farm to a neatly kept enclosure.

Continuing down the steep road the North Tyne is seen, but before crossing the famous Chollerford Bridge and calling at the 'George', one must deviate a few hundred yards to the left on the Hexham road. Just past the wood is a high stile leading into a pasture; once over the stile you walk up the path and presently on your left is Brunton Turret (No. 26 B) and the fine stretch of Wall on each flank. The turret is eight feet high on the north side. Looking down in a westerly direction you can just discern Chesters Fort through the trees across the river. Before going on to Chesters you must go back to the cross roads, turn left, and before actually crossing the bridge go through a gate on the left and along a very long fenced path which runs between the old railway track and the river.

It is a very rewarding detour because it leads to the famous Bridge Abutment, the largest and most substantial piece of Roman stonework I have seen in England. Photographs do not do it justice. The huge and magnificently chamfered stones which crown the base have to be seen to be believed. The abutment was built round a tower about 20 ft. square and of course ended the Wall east of the river. Despite views to the contrary I think it has been firmly established that wood was used actually to span the river to the west abutment; the remains of which lie in the river bed, as the Tyne has moved its course over to the west during the past 1,500 years. At low water the remains of the west abutment can be seen and waded to, but the pebbles are slippery and there are some deepish pools even when the river is low; it is better to return to Chollerford Bridge, there is always the 'George Inn' as compensation.

You take the West road and before long there is a turning to the left: the entrance to Chesters Fort and a short section of the Wall. Chesters is situated in beautiful parkland sloping down to the river, it is under the care of the Ministry of Works. Unlike Housesteads, Chesters' outer walls are far from intact and the various parts of the fort which remain are in detached groups. Unlike Housesteads too, about three eighths of the fort extended to the north of the Wall and there were therefore six gateways. There are so many fascinating aspects of Chesters that it is impossible to deal with them all on a short visit. Unless one is already aware of the ways of life of the men who garrisoned the fort, the whole place can be an almost meaningless mass of ruins.

To me the fascinating thing about Chesters is the abundance of well preserved bathing facilities. There is the central heating system by means of hot air ducts so modern and fashionable today. Whoever thinks that Sauna baths originated in Finland must think again, even though pretty blondes with birch twigs were undoubtedly absent from Chesters, or were they? When we talk of Roman Baths, most of us just think of getting washed; my advice is to visit Chesters and get up to date. The bather first entered the dressing room, easily recognised by the seven arched niches where they hung their togas. After stripping he went first to the tepidarium (warm room)



and then the calidarium (hot room) where he did a great deal of sweating. This was followed by a hot bath (alveus) beyond which was the unctorium (a room where the bather was rubbed in oil). The course was completed by a visit to the cold room (frigidarium) to close the pores before the refreshed giant went out into the chill northern climate on his way to an enormous lunch of corn products, a little gravy and a bottle of wine. The Romans ate little meat nor did they want much; it was only the legions from Germany who really missed their meat. Charcoal was used to provide the heat without smoke.

The Carlisle road led to the Mithraean Temple, down a sign-posted path to the left a few miles beyond Chesters; it is interesting but lacks the exquisite simplicity of Benwell. A little further on where the road dips down and turns slightly south you will find a small well-made gate on the right. Here the Ditch, Wall and Vallum suddenly appear on the right, because of the sudden slight bend in the road, which for several miles has been on top of the Wall foundations with the Ditch on the north and the Vallum on the south of it. Leave the road then and follow the Wall foundations up the slope and soon you will reach Sewingshields Farm. Follow the Wall westwards from here in its spectacular course along the top of the very high ground and presently you reach Housesteads again. You can complete the course by finishing the last stretch of Wall along its broad top and step off it on to the outer perimeter wall of Housesteads fort itself.

If by now you are not tired of the Wall and its Forts, Mile-castles and Turrets, you never will be. You will visit it again and again, each time finding something new and taking the opportunity of having another peep at the Temple at Benwell or at Housesteads Plantation from Cuddy's Crag.

## PROGRESS IN MOUNTAINEERING

by D. J. Farrant

I HOPE THAT Dr. Bell may forgive me for appropriating his title but I felt that no other phrase so succinctly conveyed the feelings of an English mountaineer who has eventually been introduced to the mountain world of Scotland. It was in April 1965 that I made my first visit to Scotland, for the Club's Easter Meet in Glen Nevis. I was immediately struck by the vastness of this wild land and by its awesome beauty. Who could drive up from Tyndrum for the first time and not stop to gaze across the barren expanse of the Moor of Rannoch? Every time I pass this spot I have to put from my mind the thought of being lost out there in a winter blizzard.

That Good Friday I set out to climb my first Scottish mountain. As we made our way up the western slope of the Mamores I was instructed in the art of collecting Munros and was kindly but sensibly warned that the mere pursuit of these was an unworthy pastime if followed to the exclusion of genuine mountaineering. Thus, in contemplative mood, I climbed to the top of Mullach nan Coirean, technically rather an uninteresting peak but one for which, as my first Munro, I shall always have a tinge of affection.

There must be many people who climb Ben Nevis merely for its pre-eminence among British peaks and, although I did know a little more about the mountain than this, I must admit that it was high on my list of souvenirs from my first visit to Scotland. Thus, on a very dubious Easter Sunday morning, Kenneth Coote and I set off from Polldubh. Conditions were poor with a high wind and even at the col between Carn Mòr Dearg and the Aonachs it was obvious that at 4,000 ft. life was going to have its problems. Donning every vestige of clothing we possessed, we set off into the cloud and snow of Carn Mòr Dearg which in the very brief clearances looked more like Nanga Parbat than any British mountain. We were determinedly cutting steps for what seemed an age until, like two rather more famous mountaineers, we suddenly realised that the ground dropped away on every side and that we were on our summit.

Now a quick council of war—advance or retreat? The teeth



of the Carn Mòr Dearg Arête swirled out of the mist, jagged and threatening, but screwing our courage to the sticking place we decided to press on. I have little real memory of that traverse—it is a blurred reminiscence of whirling snow, ice-covered rocks and stumbling feet, but I do recall being thankful that the exposure of our route was veiled in cloud. Eventually we reached the top of Coire Leis and struck out in conditions of mounting severity for the summit of the Ben. At last we made it and congratulated each other as best we could. This was difficult for we could hardly see one another—great balls of ice had formed on our hoods and anorak strings, our hair was frozen to our scalps, our trousers were in flat, stiff folds. I pondered that our survival time up there would be about a couple of hours. Never had I known that such polar conditions could exist on British mountains.

Visibility was now almost non-existent and we tried in vain in the white-out to find the tourist route off the mountain. This was quite impracticable and after half an hour's wandering on the summit we peered at each other—each knowing well what thoughts were in the other's mind. We decided that some form of descent was imperative so we carefully retraced our steps to the abseil posts at the top of Coire Leis with the object of getting down into the Allt a'Mhuillin. This line of posts at fifty foot intervals proved a godsend; Ken belayed to the top one and signalled to me to launch myself into space. I sat for a moment on the cornice gazing into the icy void, bewildered by the spindrift and gripped with fear; Ken suddenly swore violently at me (a thing he never does) and his therapy had the desired effect.

I was away, slipping and clutching, biting with my axe, held firmly by the tight life line round my waist. I got to the first post and belayed; Ken descended rapidly and skilfully to join me. We continued this in sections until the last post (a significant term) and by now my teeth were chattering and my whole skin felt cold about me. My train of thought wandered on: "Must belay . . . Hard to get the axe in . . . knot won't tie . . . can't do it with gloves on . . . take gloves off get frostbite . . . half belay will do. Ken won't fall . . ." I looked up; leaning out comfortably, cutting dexterous steps, Ken was descending like an expert. Suddenly I could not believe it—there was a

swirl and a scuffle and he was shooting down past me on his back with his axe high in the air. My numbed mind churned over slowly as the rope snaked out. I had just realised that unless I drove my axe in with all my might and stood firm, I should be on my way also when, before realisation could be translated into action, I was plucked from my stance and spun down the mountainside. I rolled over and desperately tried to jam my axe in but I could not get a good grip, the wrist strap broke and my last aid was wrenched from my grasp. I looked up and watched my axe disappearing as I sped downwards. Bereft of hope, I now wondered rather calmly what was going to happen. Suddenly my stomach was constricted in a vice-like grip and I discovered to my amazement that I had stopped and that a grim-looking Ken was staring down at me from above with his axe magnificently scudded into the ice. We exchanged a few gasped words of enquiry and discovered that we were quite unharmed. We gradually pieced ourselves together and took stock of the situation—a lost ice-axe (which was soon retrieved) and three hundred feet of descent fortuitously but rapidly gained.

As we worked our way down to the Allt a'Mhuillin and thankfully unroped, the Olympian anger dissipated, the cloud caps blew away and the whole glory of the north face of the mountain was miraculously flecked with evening sunlight. The ridges stood out like spears against the white threads of the gullies. We moved thoughtfully down into Glen Nevis and made a quiet way back to the camp. It was Oscar Wilde who said: "Experience is the name everybody gives to his mistakes". Thus was my first experience on Scottish hills a very chastening one.

\* \* \* \*

It was 4.30 a.m. on a June morning when my companion rolled over in his sleeping bag, dug me in the ribs from the depths of untroubled sleep and said "What about it?" What other answer could I give? The Etive chuckled past over the stones, the pink fingers of the early light were flickering over the huge buttresses of the Buchaille, the sparkling dew rainbowed at our feet. Having driven to the Meeting of Three Waters we set off up the track into the Lost Valley to do the Bidean Horseshoe. I had been told of this lovely spot before,

I had looked down into it from the Aonach Eagach, but never had I actually set foot in it. We worked our way through the tangled mass of tree roots and huge boulders and suddenly emerged from the rocky defile on to the broad grassy plateau. Here Scotland is beautiful beyond all the laws of beauty: the perfect symmetry of the valley with its huge fairway rising up in front of us into the steep gorge; the towering cliffs of Beinn Fhada and Garr Aonach on either side; in the centre the mighty peak of Bidean with its clefts and gullies still deeply sown with snow.

\* \* \* \*

In the Lakes or North Wales it is possible to go out in the hills for an afternoon and do quite a lot. Once in Cumberland I remember not getting away until 6.00 p.m., but half an hour later we were climbing on the crags of Bowness Knott in Ennerdale. Two and a half hours for the eight pitches of Black Crack and still time to get to the Fox and Hounds—a fair day's work. But in Scotland one needs rather longer; never is this more apparent than in the Cairngorms. Here one soon realises that enormous distances have to be covered if anything is to be accomplished. Roads are few and those that do appear on the map are often unnavigable; one must start at the end of the road and walk miles to the mountain and even more miles over it. One glorious April morning a group of us set out from the northern end of the Lairig Ghru to climb Braeriach. This was in the middle of a marvellous spell of sunny weather that had enabled us to walk on summit ridges without shirts on, had forced us to wear goggles incessantly because of the intense dazzle off the snow and had given us suntans that the uninitiated ascribed to the Mediterranean.

What a beautiful path the Lairig is! It winds gently up through the pine trees, the scent of which is almost Grecian in its intensity, imperceptibly gaining height all the way and giving glimpses through the trees of the tumbling cataracts of the burn far below. Eventually we arrived at the Sinclair Bothy and paused to watch a temerarious snow bunting pecking whatever crumbs we cared to throw. Then came the long trek up on to Sròn na Lairig and the final ascent of the Braeriach plateau. Here we saw the famous circle of crags sweeping round in a corniced amphitheatre to the pyramid of the Angels'

Peak and the table of Cairn Toul. Could we possibly walk round to Cairn Toul as well? Two of us were prepared to try so we bade farewell to our companions and trudged off across the wastes.

As we passed across the Wells of Dee we suddenly found the tiny fluttered body of a goldcrest; it was a vivid flash of scarlet and gold against the snow, but even in death this poor victim of the storm looked strangely peaceful. The ascents and descents were becoming very tiring now, as was the soft snow, but at last we found ourselves beneath our objective. My companion, who had climbed Cairn Toul before, reckoned that this was the ideal place to build a snow hole, so I left him to his construction and set out up the last slopes of the mountain. I made the summit's cairn without too much difficulty and was rewarded with a superb panorama of Deeside and the eastern Cairngorms.

When I descended to the col I managed to persuade 'Nansen' from his task—he had already produced a shelter of which any Eskimo would have been proud—and we began the long return journey. The slopes up to the Braeriach plateau were not as arduous as we had feared and we were soon plunging down to Glen Einich. We were lucky enough to find a long snow shoot which enabled us to make rapid, effortless and, this time, safe downward progress. We lay down and abandoned ourselves to the slope, capturing all the joys of motion until we emerged in a damp, tangled and laughing heap in Glen Einich. There now remained six long miles to be walked, which took almost two hours. When at last the car really was round the next bend our day had taken nearly ten hours and we had walked some twenty-two miles. We were both very tired, but a tiredness invested with a glow of happiness and achievement.

\* \* \* \*

If it is necessary to go to the Cairngorms to learn the lateral magnitude of Scotland, surely it must be to Glencoe that one goes to appreciate the vertical dimension. One of the most exciting things I have ever done is to climb the Crowberry Ridge on the Buchaille; not that the route is all that difficult, but the sense of height and depth is thrilling. The culmination of the climb is an unforgettable experience; you climb up the

last few rocks on large and comforting holds and arrive on the exposed pinnacle of the Crowberry Tower. The white ribbon of the Glencoe road lies far below, in front of you everything drops completely away and again you can see the forbidding stretch of Rannoch Moor with the distant sentinel of Shiehallion rising darkly into the distance. A progress in mountaineering indeed. Much may have been done in the past three years, but this has only revealed how much more remains. "Some work of noble note may yet be done . . .".

## FURTHER RAMBLINGS IN JAPAN

by R. Gowing

DURING my 1965/66 stay in Japan I had the feeling that I was on a once-in-a-lifetime trip, so I crammed as much sightseeing as I could into my week ends and leaves. It may sound like heresy from a mountaineer to admit that a country has more interesting things than mountains but I felt that the unique features of Japan were its people, its architecture and its art rather than its mountains, however attractive they might be. Besides visiting practically all the places of interest within week end range of Tokai, I had spent a week touring down the Inland Sea to Kyushu and I had concluded my stay with a week in the cultural heart of Japan, the old capitals of Kyoto and Nara, strolling around age-old temples and gardens and observing the far-famed geisha. When I went back in 1967 I had seen most of the sights so I spent many Sundays exploring the hills within a day's trip from Tokai.

### YAMIZOYAMA

Yamizoyama, 3353 ft., is the highest hill in Ibaraki-ken, it rises in the north-west corner of the county, near the triple point of Ibaraki and its neighbouring counties of Fukushima-ken to the north and Tochigi-ken to the west; it had long appealed to me as an objective for a Sunday trip. Accordingly, one Sunday in May, I set out armed with the road map and a few words of description from the Official Guide to Japan. I drove along the main coast road through Itachi and turned inland past the copper works to enjoy a pleasant sunny drive west through the hills to Daigo. By now azaleas and wisteria were out and carp banners were streaming in honour of the recent celebration of Boys' Day.

From Daigo I followed the main road north for a few miles, then turned north-west up a very pretty valley with some lovely houses and masses of wisteria, the blossoms hanging in cascades from the trees. I followed the sign-posts as best I could and soon found myself on a rough but well graded road that climbed winding up the hillside. It soon became apparent that this was no ordinary road as the countryside began to fall away below me. I stopped to rest and to allow the car to cool a little before continuing to the top of the road, where a car

park had been bull-dozed out. I put my boots on and after a brief search found a path leading gently upwards, which in about ten minutes took me to a point crowned by a shinto shrine and a signboard. This was the summit I had come to climb! To my regret the view was shut out by the heat haze; on a clear day it would extend from Bandai-san to the Nikko hills.

#### NANTAI-SAN

My next trip was to Nantai-san, otherwise Futara-san, the sacred mountain of Nikko. So sacred was it in the seventeenth century to Iemitsu, third Tokugawa Shogun, that he built at Nikko, at the foot of the Futara-san, the fantastically elaborate Toshogu Shrine in honour of his grandfather Ieyasu, unifier of Japan and founder of the rigid feudalistic system that ruled Japan until the Imperial Restoration a hundred years ago. Close by the Toshogu is the quieter, much older shrine, the Lower Futara-san shrine.

I left Tokai at 6 o'clock on the morning of the first Sunday in June and drove west through Kasama to Utsunoyima, the bustling capital of Tochigi-ken. From here a good road leads to Nikko, through avenues of cryptomerias which are in many ways the finest part of the Toshogu Shrine. From Nikko the road continues up the valley of the Daiya to the foot of the 1500 ft. rise to Lake Chuzenji. This is achieved by a one-way toll road system, the way up climbing in well-graded sweeps and zigzags to rejoin the downhill road in Chuzenji village. The resort of Chuzenji lies at the outfall of the lake of that name, just above the famous Kegon Falls; by the side of the lake is the vermilion painted Middle Futarasan Shrine; here, after 3 hours' drive from Tokai, I parked the car and started the ascent of Nantai-san.

At the back of the Shrine compound a gate under a stone torii marks the start of the ascent. The path climbs more or less straight up through the woods, which were brightened at this time of the year by lovely white azaleas. After a while the path joins a road which zigzags up part of the way and here I fell in with a young man who turned out to be a geologist from Tokio University. He and his colleagues, whom we met at the top of the road, told me a little of the geology and identified

some of the rocks visible at the roadside. Nantai, it seems, last erupted a few thousand years ago and blocked the valley, damming it to form Lake Chuzenji.

I left the geologists to their survey work and continued up the rough path, clambering over fallen trees; the path had seen better days. When I set off it had been sunny but by now Nantai was clouded over. I went on, past a little woodland shrine and was soon in cloud which thickened into rain. I came out of the trees as the path began to level out a little and after a few minutes of walking on red cinder arrived at the rough wooden Upper Futarasan Shrine. This marks the 8150 ft. summit, about 4000 feet of ascent from Chuzenji. It is apparently the highest point of a rather lop-sided crater, but of this and the renowned view of the Nikko National Park area I could see nothing.

I descended by the same route; it was pleasant to come out of the clouds and enjoy the view of Chuzenji far below, with the comfortable Lakeside Hotel and the summer residences of the ambassadors. The Lakeside Hotel was formerly the British Ambassador's residence, but times have changed. Once out of the clouds I dried out and it was not until I was safely back in the car that the rain once more set in as I drove down the hairpins of the Irohazaka highway to Nikko.

#### SHIRANE-SAN

Three weeks later and well into the Japanese summer, hot and muggy in the plain, I set off soon after 5 o'clock on a lightly overcast Sunday morning. I drove the usual way to Chuzenji, then along the lakeside, up past the Ryuzu-no-taki or Dragon's Head waterfall and across the Sanjogahara plain, a pretty sight with wild iris and red azalea, past the little lake of Yunoko to the steaming hot-spring resort of Yumoto. I left the car beside the National Park Centre and followed the old road up through the woods of the Konsei valley. I soon spotted my path which wound through the forest and up left on to the Nakatsuzone ridge, through chest-high bamboo-grass, much of it in flower. On the ridge the trees thinned out and after some two hours of ascent I reached Kokuyobunki, a 7381 ft. subsidiary peak on the prefectural boundary ridge running down from Shirane towards the Konsei-toge Pass.

From Kokuyobunki the ridge led in about 20 minutes to Goshikiyama, 7743 ft., a peak on the north-east corner of the crater rim of Shirane-san. Shirane is a long extinct volcano, all overgrown and with a beautiful crater lake. From Goshiki I had a fine view of this lake, the Goshikinuma, and of 8458 ft. Shirane-san, my objective, opposite, partially obscured in mist. I stopped and chatted with some walkers and joined them in the popular Japanese pastime of photographing one another. Now I followed a gentle path along the north side of the crater. There were many attractive flowers, including a variety of soldanella; I photographed some of them but so far I have not been able to determine their proper names, the soldanella is named "Koiwa Kagami". After about half a mile the path descends to a gap in the crater, where the little tarn Yadanoike makes a pretty sight amidst the greenery. Here I found a sort of Grass of Parnassus and masses of a large-flowered purple anemone, "Kikuzaki ichirinsou". From Yadanoike I climbed steeply up to the main peak, Okushirane, through forest, then scrub, along a bit of a shoulder, then more steeply up rough scree towards broken rocks. The path led steeply scrambling through a gully to the well populated summit of Shirane-san, highest of the Nikko hills. Like most Japanese mountain tops it was thoroughly disfigured with litter, great heaps of beer and juice cans. I sat a little aside from the actual summit to enjoy my lunch.

There was scarcely any view and as I finished my lunch the mist thickened and it started to rain. Luckily the path was well marked and easy to find as I made my way down the south-east side of the mountain to the Okushirane hut. There I rested before making the short climb on to the crater rim which soon led me to Maeshirane, 7776 ft. While there were views from the rim, Maeshirane was clouded.

I had now completed seven-eighths of the crater circuit and planned to descend by the south-east ridge. The mist presented no difficulty, a well marked path led off down the ridge and soon swung off to the north, to zigzag steeply down through the forest, a long way so it seemed, then down a stream bed and eventually down its right bank to the ski-ing grounds whence a good track led to Yumoto and the car. A day disappointing in its weather but nonetheless enjoyable in its con-



*HILL INN, 1951*

*H. G. Watts*

tact with the beautiful hill country of Japan.

## FUJI

Following my ascent in November 1965 of a Fuji encased in snow and ice (page 1 of this volume) I felt that it would be interesting to repeat the trip during the July/August summer season, to see the huts and shrines open and the thousands of people making the ascent. The opportunity escaped me before I left Japan in July 1966 but when I had the good fortune to return the following March I knew that whatever else I did, I would climb Fuji that summer.

July had come and Fuji had been duly opened with festivals of fire and invocations to the spirits of the great mountain, highest and holiest of Japan. At ten o'clock on the morning of the last Saturday in July I set out with Don French, a colleague at Tokai, and drove down the busy road to Tokyo. The traffic was heavy and crawling and it was not until we were through Hachioji, some 25 miles the other side of Tokyo, that we were really able to move. We carried on, feeling rather hungry, and at 4 p.m. we spotted an attractive looking restaurant, so stopped for a late lunch. This consisted of barbecued small birds and vegetables eaten from skewers, very tasty, with rice and soup.

While we fed it started to rain heavily, so we abandoned the idea of climbing Fuji in the traditional way, going up in the evening to one of the higher huts and continuing in the early morning to see the dawn from the summit. Instead we headed for Kawaguchi, one of the string of lakes that surrounds the northern side of Fuji, and the Fuji View Hotel on its shore. Though there were no western style rooms available there was a tatami room vacant which we gladly took. The Fuji View is one of several attractive hotels built about the turn of the century, spacious rooms, wood panelling and in winter big log fires. We strolled in the garden down to the lake, then returned for a Japanese bath and so to the dining room for a splendid dinner, probably the best western style meal I had in Japan. Before going to bed we looked out at Fuji which rose clear into the night, the route picked out by a string of lights.

After a rather uncomfortable night—with the thick futons we were too hot with one on and not warm enough without



it—we rose at 5 and were away by 6. We were soon out of the mist and had a lovely run up the toll road through the forest with Fuji rising clear ahead; the only trace of snow visible was in the gully used on my previous ascent. However, as we drove up the wide sweeps of the splendid road, the clouds descended and shut off Fuji from view. As we came near the Fifth Station we saw hordes of coaches and cars parked at the roadside and were duly turned back by the police at the main car park, but we were lucky in finding a vacant if rather awkward spot two hundred yards down the road. We sorted our gear and went to the Fifth Station, which comprises an assemblage of souvenir shops and tea-rooms; here we bought our Fuji staffs and I a cheap straw sun-hat. A Fuji staff or Kongo-zue is five feet long, octagonal in section and is usually adorned with little bells and often a flag. It serves as a support, especially during the downhill cinder run; also as a substrate for collecting brand marks at the various huts, stations and shrines on the way and at the summit.

Thus equipped we set off along the “Ochudo” or horizontal path which links the Fifth Stations, or half-way houses of the various routes, and which here consists of a cinder surfaced road, joined by a rough, free road up which it is possible to drive for nothing from Fujiyoshida. Already we were passing people descending and, as we trudged on through the mist, we regretted having been deterred by the weather from what had obviously been a fine night and a dawn with good views. Twenty minutes after setting off we reached the Sixth Station where we paid a few yen to have our staffs branded. We now left the descending throngs, for here the uphill and downhill paths divide; the descent directly follows the great north-east cinder scoop, while the upward route zigzags to the east of it, to join it again at the Eighth Station, a little below the point at which Tom Gerrard and I had joined the scoop on our earlier ascent.

Don and I plodded up the path and at 9 o'clock reached the Seventh Station, at 9810 ft. where we stopped for a drink and 20 minutes rest. Each of the lower stations comprises a few huts at short intervals; these include the usual Japanese style sleeping accommodation of straw-matting covered floors with quilted futons for bedding and one can buy meals, drinks

and chocolate at each. Consequently one need only carry one's basic food and the necessary yen.

The next station was the “Torii” Station, marked by a torii or Shinto shrine gateway at the head of a flight of steps. A little way above this we came out of the mist into bright sunshine, though there was cloud all around Fuji, as though the upper part were a pudding in a basin of cloud. We could now see the cindery slope to either side, the descent route in the scoop and the track wending its way above us from hut to hut. Our route lay largely on a ridge bounding the east side of the scoop and gave good views of it.

Shortly before the Eighth Station we joined the descent route, resuming two-way traffic, and at 10.15 we were at the Eighth Station 10,170 ft., where we had 15 minutes' rest and which we left in bright sunshine. I was glad of my straw hat and was later to regret having my stockings rolled down; one tends to associate sunburn with the high altitude snow but that night my calves demonstrated painfully that altitude alone is enough. My companion was now feeling the height; He had dropped behind when at 12.30 I reached the Ninth Station. Here there is a sort of combined shop and shrine and inside I found three American service men so I stopped for a drink with them. I left after a quarter of an hour's rest and at 1.30 arrived at the stone torii flanked by two guardian stone lions which mark the entrance to Kusushi, the shrine village on the crater rim—five hours ascent inclusive of numerous stops. There was a great throng here, including a large party of high school children and a small group of university people with whom I chatted. Don soon arrived and after taking a few photographs we went into the street of souvenir shops for a welcome beer. Looking at the busy crowds I recalled how, alone, I had sheltered here from the icy wind on that cold November day in 1965.

We visited the crater's edge and then at 2.20 I set off, leaving Don to rest while I toured the crater. I by-passed the first two summits on the left, stopping to look at a fine volcanic ‘bomb’, and went round to Gimmeisui, “Silver Sparkling Water”. This was rather tatty, with the spring or well in a fenced enclosure and a hut without much sign of life; away from Kusushi there were not many people, most being content

to regard that as the summit. I climbed up the other side of the col in which Gimmeisui nestles and continued to the main Sengen Shrine on the south side of the crater, where I had my staff stamped by one of the Shinto priests. I went on round and climbed up to Kengamine, the 12,388 ft. summit of Fuji-san, crowned by a weather radar which can detect typhoons up to 500 miles away in the Pacific and thus give ample warning to people to prepare for these violent storms. There was a party of workmen sunning themselves, presumably up there to maintain the observatory.

I went along the ridge a few yards, descended a little using a fixed ladder and looked at the big hut by the crater's edge which seemed to belong to the observatory. About 500 feet below, the crater floor was covered with old snow, with stones arranged in Kenji characters on it. I continued on the 'inner circuit', reaching Kimmeisui, "Gold Sparkling Water", at 2.45. This comprises a little stone hut in a dry stone enclosure and showed no sign of life.

I was soon back at Kusushi to rejoin Don. Here we met our American friends and agreed that we should descend together and take them back to their base at Hachioji on the western outskirts of Tokio. I decided to go ahead since Don was in good company; the descent path was splendid; one ran in long strides, the fine cinders cushioning each footfall, more like coarse sand than scree. Near the bottom it became vegetated—I noted Rock Knotweed—and the path stabilised. At the Sixth Station, half an hour on the descent route, I was in mist again; I had my staff branded with the descent stamp and carried on, now passing parties going up to spend the night in the huts; a quarter of an hour later I was at the Fifth Station, in just over an hour from the top.

My friends arrived an hour and a half later and we set off down, a lovely long, gentle descent to near Kawaguchi and so to Fujiyoshida. We drove out to Otsuki and then were in heavy traffic most of the way to Tokyo. For me the most tiring part of the trip was not so much the ascent of Fuji but the drive there and back. Tokyo late on Sunday night was relatively easy and we reached Tokai around 1 a.m. after a tiring but most enjoyable week end, a fitting conclusion to my rambles amongst the mountains of Japan.

## CAVE EXPLORATION IN SOUTH WALES

by D. M. Judson

### (1) DAN-YR-OGOF

THE SPRING of 1966 heralded the beginning of a new era in South Wales caving; our knowledge of the caves of the Swansea Valley and of the Upper Neath has been increased enormously and continues to increase almost weekly. The impetus given by the dramatic discoveries at Dan-yr-Ogof on Sunday, 20th March, 1966, has continued ever since. So much is happening, and at such a pace, that this report is likely to be quite out of date by the time it appears in print. However, I will attempt to relate the recent happenings and to precede them with a short history of the cave prior to 1966.

### Exploration: 1912 to 1940

"Careful map study showed that beside the Mellte-Heppste-Upper Nedd region, there was a big rising at Dan-yr-Ogof near the head of the Tawe, the Swansea river, . . . <sup>(1)</sup>

Dan-yr-Ogof was first systematically explored in June 1912 by a party of local men, T. Ashwell Morgan, Jeffrey L. Morgan, Edwin Morgan and Morgan R. Williams (keeper)<sup>(2)</sup>. They explored the entrance series and traversed three lakes in a coracle but were turned back at the start of "a watery passage".

No further exploration seems to have been made for almost 24 years. It was in September 1936 that our own Ernest E. Roberts came to be walking over the Vans; he noted the major stream sink at Sink-y-Giedd and eventually came down the steep dry valley to the rising at Dan-yr-Ogof. He called at the Gwyn Arms and learnt of the 1912 exploits. He had been fired with enthusiasm!

The first assault came in May 1937; Roberts contacted Gerard Platten and G. S. Gowing and quite soon they were able to reactivate T. A. Morgan. After several trips throughout

<sup>(1)</sup> Roberts, E. E. Dan-yr-Ogof and the Welsh Caves. Y.R.C. Journal, Vol. VII, No. 23, page 52.

<sup>(2)</sup> Roberts, E. E. *ibid.* page 85.

the summer of 1937, a fourth lake was found and crossed and a whole series of passages discovered beyond. Morgan, with Roberts, reached Shower Aven in September and on the final trip in October a party led by Platten penetrated a considerable way into the "Long Crawl". They could hear a distant waterfall but found the going too tight to continue further.

Shortly after these exploits a new entrance was made above the river exit and the upper passages as far as Bridge Chamber were opened as a public show cave in the summer of 1939. The cave was closed at the outbreak of war and, due to a series of prolonged legal squabbles, was not opened again until June 1964.

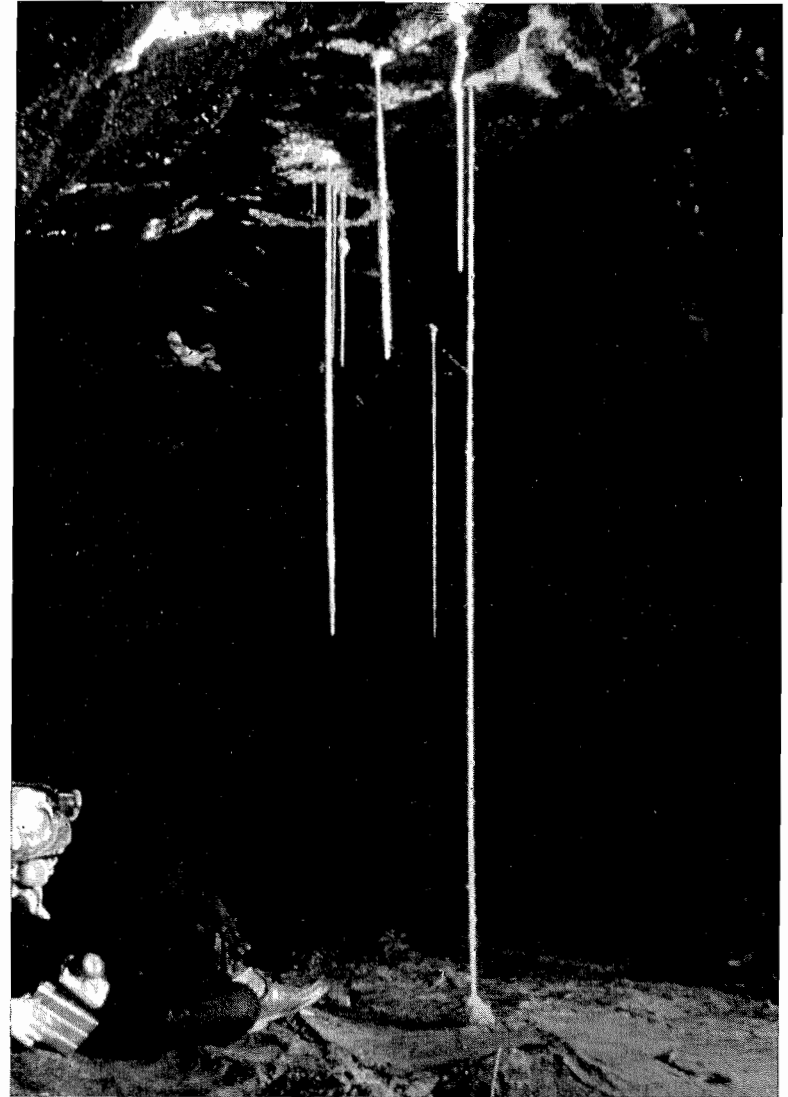
#### The Present Phase of Exploration

An agreement was made between the South Wales Caving Club and the cave management shortly after the re-opening of the show cave. Thus began the present phase of exploration. Efforts were first concentrated on the river passages; siphons were passed in a side passage just prior to Lake 4 and access was gained to a fifth and to a sixth lake. A forty foot dive led to Lake 7, to date the farthest known point of the total Dan-yr-Ogof River.

A fair amount of scaling pole work and small-time boulder choke prodding was done in the summer of 1965, but it was not until October that Platten's Long Crawl again became a source of interest. The distant sound of falling water and the amazing strength of the outgoing winds made it a talking point in the Gwyn Arms throughout the winter.

It was on Sunday, 20th March, 1966, after a long wet winter had precluded entry to the system, that Eileen Davies came to push the Long Crawl. Drawn through a series of sinuosities by the distant roar, she arrived at the head of a short pitch opening through the roof of a large sand-floored chamber. A small trickle of water fell down a tiny parallel shaft. The party possessed no ladders and were compelled to turn back. It was not until 12th April, Easter Tuesday, that the weather again permitted entry.

Miss Davies led a party of five through the crawl. An 18 ft. ladder descent brought them on to a sand bank at the side of a very spacious passage. Although they did not know it at that



*DAN YR OGOF*

*D. M. Judson*

instant, over  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles of virgin cave lay ahead of them, just to be walked into! The first part of this passage became known as Gerard Platten Hall, after the man who had done much to inspire its discovery. Going left from the foot of the ladder they passed a great hole leading to a lower series of passages, and turned left at a beautiful crystal pool ten feet across, almost the width of the passage. Beyond a sandy section the roof lifted to over 30 feet and they followed the Grand Canyon, a meandering keyhole section passage about 150 yards in length. After a short bedding plane of stooping height they burst out into the Red Monk Hall. This was even larger than anything before it, superbly decorated with groups of pure white straws scattered at random across its arched roof. There were straws up to 10 feet in length.

More thrills were to come; a large boulder fall on the left and on the right a lofty aven containing a thundering cascade. A 15 ft. climb at the side of the boulder fall and they set eyes on a clear green pool; it disappeared round a corner, the walls severely undercut beneath the water line. It was said to be 40 feet deep but a recent survey showed the deepest point to be 8 ft. 3 ins. to a soft mud floor. They halted at this Green Canal, but investigated a hole through boulders to the left. Here was an enormous dull void, larger even than the Monk Hall. "The Hangar" was a great muddy cavern, 30 ft. wide and equally high, almost straight and finishing abruptly after 250 feet in an avalanche of clay and boulders. Taking the other passage at the Crystal Pool they entered Flabbergasm Chasm, a high level oxbow with breathtaking straw formations. They went on to have a quick look down the great hole, where they found a lower phreatic and very complex zone, before going out with the glad tidings.

Progress continued feverishly throughout the summer, when the weather allowed. The Green Canal was crossed, and a series of high passages led back to a river passage again, but this was a much smaller river with only a fraction of the flow seen in the Lakes. The river passage headed north, upstream, but after only 250 feet turned abruptly south west and finished in a sump. Above this 'Rising' the passage was at least 80 feet high, but no easy climb presented itself. A lower loop was found, with extensive ramifications; this formed a by-pass to

the Green Canal. This was a region of relatively small streams and stagnant sumps and gave no clue as to the whereabouts of the main river.

Eventually, by combined operations on the week-end of 24th/25th September, 1966, the wall above the Rising was scaled. Once up the first 25 feet of open wall an easier rift climb was followed until entry was gained to a small windy crawl, 'Windy Way', at about 60 feet above the Rising. The winds here were stronger even than those previously encountered in the Long Crawl, a sure sign of further large passages. Down a rather tricky chimney, the party set out along a narrow rift passage, obstructed in places with large slabs of calcite, fallen from the vein along which the passage had been formed, and decorated almost continuously with myriads of tiny tortured helictites. The passage ended in a pitch. Through a narrow slit in the floor they peered down over 40 feet to where a stream flowed placidly in a large river gallery. This must be one of the most rewarding pitches in British Caving.

Downstream a large silent sump presented itself; upstream lay a river passage of majestic proportions. It continued for just short of half a mile, on an almost constant bearing of 11° North. This, the Great North Road, is a most remarkable passage, it is formed for most of its length along a number of mineralised fault planes. In two instances there are high caverns where fault planes are exposed for the full length of both walls.

There were many climbs made over or through mounds of boulders, often of dubious stability, followed in each case by a section of fine lofty river passage. After the last and largest of these boulder falls, which forms the termination of the cyclopean 'Pinnacle Cavern', the river passage leaves the fault line and takes off westwards. Two superb 180° meanders follow, before the passage again turns northwards and heads into its final catastrophic boulder fall.

On their way back the explorers entered a large high level oxbow to the east of the main passage. This turned out to be a calcite wonderland, 'The Mostest', with crystal pools and a continuous flowstone floor.

Over six months elapsed after the discovery of the Great North Road; the boulders were toyed with but did not yield.

On 8th April, 1967, the writer traversed the Great North Road with a large party of visitors, mainly Northerners. After several hours in the boulder fall attempting to push the choked stream course, and later attempting to make a route through the boulders above it, I concluded, along with Edwards and Arculus, that the situation was pretty hopeless. We decided to have a second look at The Mostest on our way out. At precisely the point where everyone started to gaze down at the beautiful crystal floor, Edwards chanced to look up at the roof. He saw a spacious aven, previously unnoticed.

Within minutes the whole party had climbed 40 feet to the top of the aven and were making rapid steps along the high passage which lay at its head. We climbed over boulders and crossed deeply crevassed expanses of white sand before descending once more to the stream, now on the far side of the great boulder fall. Clambering over more rocks we suddenly burst out through the side of a large square passage. But here there was confusion amongst the pack; the passage looked equally promising left as right. Both directions were upstream! The party split; the right hand passage was followed as a low stream passage with some interesting high avens, but became impenetrable after 500 to 600 feet. It was the left hand passage that really produced the bonus.

Starting as a 20 ft. square stream passage, it became larger and larger until we were standing at the foot of an enormous boulder pile in a cavern 60 to 70 feet in width. The roof was just one bed of limestone, dipping slightly to the south-west. This was surely the largest expanse of cavern to be found in any of the South Wales caves, Agen Allwedd included. We pressed on over the boulder pile and across the deeply crevassed sands which overlaid it, into another boulder strewn passage. All the while the stream had been gradually fragmenting, with small inlet passages and showery avens. Whilst the passage size became larger, the stream became less. Clearly the passage must predate the stream which now makes use of it. Another 200 feet and we were halted by a great avalanche of mud and boulders spilling out from the roof. A more final end to our explorations one could hardly have conceived.

We looked more closely at a number of large avens on our return to the Great North Road. They all possessed great

promise but none were free-climb material. All had heaps of rock at the foot, mainly sandstone containing large quartz pebbles. Some were several feet across, seemingly larger than the avens down which they had apparently fallen. These avens present a challenge, which at the time of writing still remains. Here perhaps is the opportunity to discover another overpass to an apparently final boulder fall; time will tell! The passages above and beyond the North Aven, discovered on 8th April, 1967, have now become known as "The Far North". Because of their comparative remoteness they still remain very little visited.

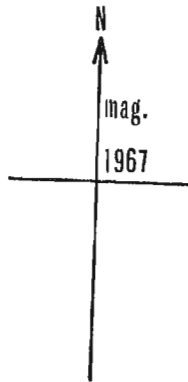
A sketch survey is in existence of all the known passages, but this is for the most part only to C.R.G. Grade II or III, with distances paced out and rough compass bearings taken. In September 1967 the writer began the laborious task of producing a Grade 6D survey of the whole system. This work was started at Boulder Chamber in the 1937 section of the cave; an acceptable survey already existed of the earlier passages, from the entrance. By March 1968 the survey had progressed through the Long Crawl, across the Green Canal and had reached the Rising, the end of Dan-yr-Ogof II.

At this stage it was considered that, rather than flog in and out daily through the Lakes, the Long Crawl and the Green Canal, a better way to expedite the completion of the survey through III and the Far North would be to set up a camp at Bat Chamber, just before the Rising. This was optimistically planned for Easter. Through some strange miracle the weather co-operated perfectly and allowed the event to take place in full. The survey party spent five nights below and spent  $4\frac{1}{2}$  working days on the survey. The work through and over the boulders up the Great North Road proved to be a very slow and tedious task. While trying to draw accurate cross-sections, new avens and roof passages were found and entered and of course the survey halted while these were explored.

The most significant find was the "Pinnacle Spout Series". A series of passages at various levels from 50 to 150 feet above the main stream level was first entered on 16th April, 1968, from an aven above Pinnacle Cavern. This linked with a large passage discovered next day which is really a continuation of The Mostest, leaving the main passage just above 'The Spout'

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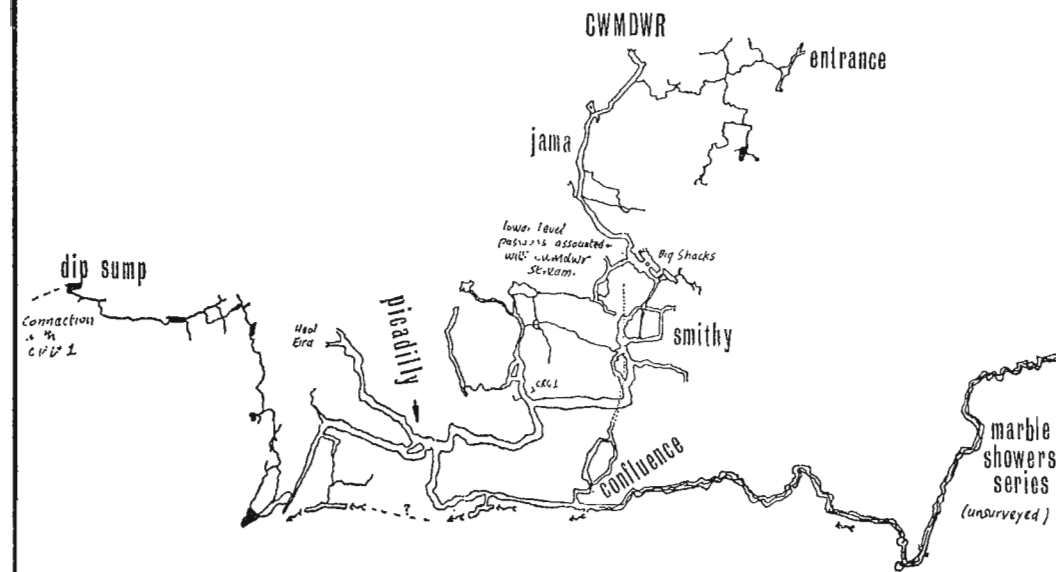


OGOF FFYNNON DDU II & III

preliminary survey

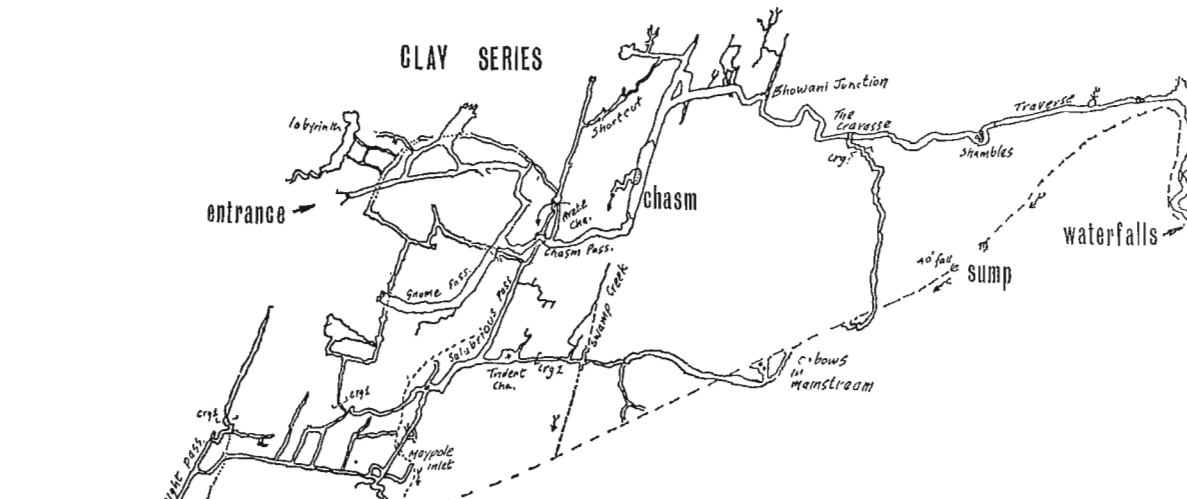
CRG Grades 1-4

scale: 1:2500  
(approx. 25 ins. to 1 mile.)



OGOF II

**MAINSTREAM PASSAGE**



CLAY SERIES

OGOF III



smith's armoury

NB: This is a preliminary survey only. Many passages are unsurveyed (dotted), and several are from memory (indicated). The rest is CRG grades 3-4.



and running first east, then south and eventually running into the north end of Pinnacle Cavern at a high level. The survey reached the top of North Aven, the start of the Far North, and that is still the limit to date (26th April, 1968).

In all, the Easter camp proved to be a great success. Thirty-three man-nights were spent below and, in addition to the survey and exploration, valuable water tracing and water analysis work was carried out, as well as Alan Coase's photographic work. We had a telephone link with a strong and very valuable surface party and were greatly assisted by many members, and also non-members of the South Wales Caving Club.

The more that we find out about Dan-yr-Ogof, the more fascinating does the study become!

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#### (2) OGOF FFYNNON DDU—*Britain's Deepest Cave System*

After many years of speculation and effort by members of the South Wales Caving Club, Ogof Ffynnon Ddu II was entered from Hush Sump on 24th July, 1966, by a party of four divers. A complicated series of passages, shafts and boulder chambers was traversed before rejoining the main stream. Several long and gruelling dives were made subsequently, in which the stream passage was followed for over 2700 yards to a 20 ft. cascade and eventually a constricted bedding plane sump.

Magnetic location checks were made in a large boulder cavern, the Smithy, in the new series. This established a hori-

zontal distance of only 130 feet between the Smithy and the great boulder fall at the end of the Cwm Dwr Quarry Cave.

A dry connection was briefly established with Coronation Series in Ogof Ffynnon Ddu I, but after several untimely collapses and some very near misses on personnel it was thought best to leave this alone.

In April 1967 the predicted connection with Cwm Dwr (Jama) was made and tourists trips up the new stream passage became a regular thing. A few weeks later, after several may-pole attempts towards the top end of the stream passage, a small tributary stream passage was entered at about 80 feet above the main stream. This was the start of the discovery of an extensive maze of high level passages, now known as the Clay Series. In order to make further progress in the Clay Series trips of 16 hours and more were becoming necessary, and arduous trips at that.

After concentrated efforts in May and June 1967 (particularly a 38-hour camping trip), clues were picked up in one of the larger passages in the Clay Series, in the form of snails and flies. Action with the magnetic device followed swiftly and produced the astounding result of 15 to 20 ft. cave to surface! A very exciting day's digging and the new entrance became a reality.

With the new entrance in use, exploration of the Clay Series could be carried out in comfort and leisure; the first priority being to re-discover the stream beyond the top sump. In the autumn of 1967 a way was pioneered north-eastwards, up boulder slopes, down boulder slopes and along some interesting traverses, to reach the stream once more; O.F.D. III. After a couple of cascades had been traversed at the outset, the route became a large meandering river passage mostly 80 to 100 feet high. The old dream of a connection with the Bifre looked like becoming a reality. However, after following this fine stream passage for about 600 yards, a large boulder cavern was found. The stream issued quietly from the base of the boulders. The cavern contained great quantities of silica sand and large sandstone pebbles. Is this cavern directly beneath the Bifre? At the time of writing nobody knows the answer to this question; attempts with the magnetic location device have so far proved negative.

The connection between O.F.D. I and O.F.D. II in the Coronation Series has collapsed again of its own free will. Trips have been made from Clay Series Entrance, up to the final boulder chamber in II, down the stream in II and out at the original entrance to I, by Grithig Farm, a vertical traverse of over 800 feet.

Little did Ernest Roberts or Gerard Platten realise with their meagre discoveries at Cwm Dwr Quarry Cave in 1937 and 1938 that they were sitting on the key to Britain's deepest cave system.

### (3) LITTLE NEATH RIVER CAVE (*Bridge Cave*)

Dismissed in two lines by Roberts after his visit there in May 1937; "At the Pwll-y-Rhyd bridge we were disgusted by the quick finish of the Bridge Cave, in which we heard water loudly."<sup>(1)</sup> From a shake-hole on the east bank of the Upper Neath, within a few yards of the bridge, 50 yards of passage ended in a sump. In normal weather the River Nedd disappears in its bed a few yards below the bridge and in dry weather a good way above the bridge. This was all that was known up to January 1967.

On 28th January, 1967, three members of the University of Bristol Speleological Society dived the terminal sump in Bridge Cave. After 150 feet they emerged into a large stream passage, which they followed for almost a mile to another sump. Subsequently an inlet passage to the east was followed for about 1000 feet to tree roots and then daylight. The new entrance, now known as Flood Entrance, is a few inches above the normal river level, on the east bank about 200 yards above the bridge.

In all 12,000 feet of passage have now been surveyed, Sump 2 has been dived, 150 feet, followed quickly by Sump 3, 240 feet, with 150 feet of large river passage before a fourth sump.

This is now a very fine example of an active river cave and is easily accessible to non-divers in reasonable weather conditions. It seems to have much in common with parts of Goyden Pot and New Goyden Pot in Nidderdale.

<sup>(1)</sup> Roberts, E. E. Dan-yr-Ogof and the Welsh Caves. Y.R.C. Journal, Vol. VII, No. 23, page 60.

## ON THE HILLS

1966

Richard Gowing, in Japan in May, visited the Chichibu Alps, some 50 miles north west of Tokio. In soft snow and mist he climbed Kimposan (8505 ft.) and Kokushigadaké (8493 ft.) and, further west, Yatsugataké (9505 ft.) by the south east ridge. Returning to Europe, he was in the Paradiso area of the Graian Alps in August and ascended the Gran Paradiso (13,324 ft.) by the ordinary route; the wild life included chamois, ibex and superb flowers.

Paul Roberts in May had a fortnight's ski touring in the Upper Engadine with the Grindelwald Eagle Ski Club. From Maloja they climbed Monte Sissone, returning to Maloja in a snowstorm; then, taking the Corvatsch lift, they climbed Piz Morteratsch from the Tschierva Hut, Piz Palü from the Boval Hut and, two days later, Piz Bernina from the Boval. The tour ended by crossing into Italy by the Fuorcla Bellavista and back to the Coaz Hut and Pontresina over the Fuorcla da Sella.

Harry Stembridge was with Alf Gregory in Czechoslovakia and Poland in the early summer. They camped above Stary Smokovec, at the foot of the High Tatra, in rain, snow, sleet and gale-force winds. An occasional glimpse of magnificent mountains convinced them that this was the best area for superb rock climbing but after five frustrating days they crossed into Poland only to find 5 feet of new snow in the Tatra and one foot in Zakopane. After several crossings of high passes and climbing some minor peaks they abandoned the mountains to explore the Polish countryside. Here, in better weather, they found charming villages and foothills, and Polish mountaineers who were kindness itself and who delighted in showing them the beauties of their country and first class climbing of all grades. They told them that autumn was the best time of year for weather and that camping was advisable as hotels were infrequent and expensive. In October Stembridge and Gregory were happy to be able to welcome some of these Polish climbers in Britain and to give them the opportunity to climb in the Lake District and elsewhere.

John Middleton took part in a British Speleological Expedition to the limestone district east of Antalya in Southern

Turkey. The area is very rich in caves and pot-holes, many of them totally unexplored. After spending five days in the Taurus Mountains around Akseki, some 35 miles north of Antalya, where, in collaboration with a French party from Orsay University, they explored and surveyed five important caves, they carried out, again with the French, an attack on the great Dumanli resurgence, about 20 miles up the Manavgat River.

Moorhouse was in the Dolomites, working on a film as a porter. After this with an American friend, he climbed the French Diretissima on the Cima Ovest di Lavaredo (Grade VI+), with one bivouac, the second ascent by an Anglo-Saxon party. With an Englishman, George Homer, he did the Super Direct on the Cima Grande (Grade VI+) in bad weather conditions. Then they climbed the North East Arête of the Cima Ovest, known as the "Squirrel's Arête" after a group of Cortina guides who made the first ascent in 1959; the route takes a magnificent line up a very overhanging arête, it is a Grade VI+; Moorhouse and Homer made the tenth ascent in all and the first British. In August he climbed, alone, the Maestri Route on the Rotwand in the Catinaccio Group, it took him 8½ hours, the second solo ascent and the first without bivouac; it is a Grade VI+, artificial, 1300 foot climb. In September, with two companions, he made the fourth ascent of the Direct North Face of the Sassolungo, again a Grade VI+ route and 3500 feet; the first ascent was in 1937 and the main difficulty hard, loose, free climbing with little protection. To finish the year he climbed, with one companion, the classic Pilastro di Rozes in the Tofana Group (Grade VI) and the seventh, or eighth, ascent of a beautiful new route on Mugoni Spitz South East Wall in the Catinaccio Group, known as "Grande Dièdre".

George Spenceley was again in Turkey, this time leading an expedition organised by the Yorkshire Schools Exploration Society. By adding to their number a mountaineering member of the Turkish Secret Police they had no difficulty in penetrating the mountains lying close to the Soviet border. They made the first British ascents of Kaçkar Dag and Büyük Kapi and the first ascents of two of the six needles of the Altıparmak. Handley and Kinder took another group of young people, sponsored by the same Society, for three weeks to Andorra,

where they were engaged mostly on field work in geography, geology and botany but where they were also able to fit in four days of climbing.

1967

Paul Roberts was ski-ing at Zermatt early in the season and in the summer he found Samoëns, in the valley north of Chamonix, an excellent place for mountain walking away from the Chamonix crowds. In a hectic week at Chamonix he climbed the Dent du Géant, Rochefort Arête, Aiguille de Rochefort, the traverse of the Périades, Requin, Grepon, and Aiguille du Midi by the Arête Cosmique. The last he finished to the true summit by pushing through crowds on the lower observation platform, climbing from the roof of a building over the rocks, the final belay being the fence-post at the upper platform, on to which he emerged to a film star's welcome from delirious American tourists. Watts, in February, with the Grindelwald Eagle Ski Club, spent a fortnight at Affeier in the Vorderrheintal, a quiet and remote district where there are no artificial aids to ski-ing. Each day the party climbed on skins one of the half dozen 8,000 to 8,500 ft. peaks of the Obersaxen, lunched in glorious weather on the summits and ran down in perfect powder snow in the afternoon.

Geoffrey Brooke walked in the Alps in the summer; starting from Aigle, in the Rhone Valley, he crossed the Col de la Croix and Col de Pillon, passed through Gsteig and on to Lauenen by way of Krinnen, over the Trüttlisberg Pass to Lenk, the Hanenmoos to Adelboden, then by Bonderkrinnen above Kandersteg and the Gemmi Pass back into the Rhone Valley and so to Zermatt.

Richard Gowing was again in Japan and walked upon various extinct or dormant volcanoes, including Nantai-san, 8144 ft., and Shirane-san, 8453 ft., in the Nikko National Park. He also made a summer ascent of Fuji-san with several thousand other people. On his way home over the Pole he saw the top of Mount McKinley above the clouds and got good views of northern Greenland under the midnight sun. In the autumn he was walking at Zermatt in perfect weather and found that Paula Biner carries on the old traditions at the Bahnhof Hotel.

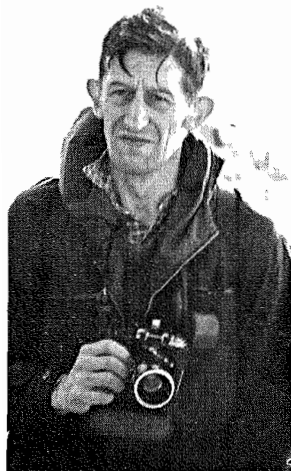
In May, while touring in the South of France, Watts visited



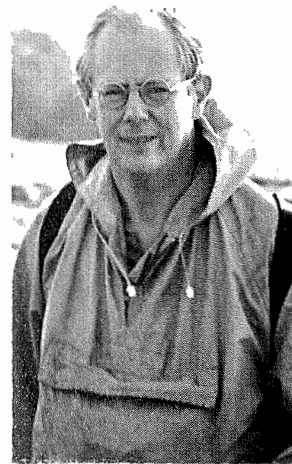
*R. de Joly and H. G. Watts*



*Cliff Downham  
President 1966-68*



*B. E. Nicholson*



*W. P. B. Stonehouse*



*J. Hemingway*

the Club's Honorary Member, Monsieur Robert de Joly, at Orgnac l'Aven, who took him down three of the most impressive caves in the Ardèche. La Grotte d'Orgnac was discovered and explored by de Joly in 1933, about one fifth of the known passages are now open to the public and contain many magnificent stalagmites. La Grotte de la Caucaillère, about 25 Km. from Orgnac, had only that month been opened to the public by means of an access tunnel drilled into the passages about 5Km. from the natural entrance; the formations are still active and the most remarkable are calcite discs, almost detached from the roof, many with fine draperies growing from them. The Gouffre de Marzal, so-named after a man who was murdered and thrown into it with his dog, is 48 Km. from Orgnac along the beautiful valley of the River Ardèche; it is a genuine pot-hole and is now equipped with narrow iron stairways winding down the fissures to a total depth of about 500 ft. The formations are very fine, especially curtains of many different colours; it was worthy of note that no expense has been spared in protecting with wire netting any formations within reach of the stairways.

At Whitsuntide Hilton, with six of the less youthful Members of the Club—average age calculated at 62½ years—and one Guest, camped at Lone Bothy, Loch Stack, Sutherland, by kind permission of the Agent of the Duchess of Westminster and by the friendly good offices of Mr. Scobie, the Head Stalker. On a day of superb weather they traversed Ben Arkle and on an equally superb day, by leaving a car on the Rhiconich/Durness road, they traversed the 3½ miles of Foinaven's splendid ridge from west to east, returning to their camp by a stalkers' track. Some of the party also climbed Ben Stack. On an off-day they visited Handa Island, the local bird warden took them in his boat round the island and under the 300/400 foot western cliffs where they were able to see at close range the huge nesting colonies of guillemots, razorbills and fulmars on the narrow ledges; they also saw puffins, kittiwakes, the Great Skua and an albino oyster-catcher. Later in the year Hilton was in south-west Ireland where he explored the Dingle peninsula and the Reeks of MacGillicuddy. Craven was in the Highlands in August—Loch Hourn, Torridon, Coigach and Drumbeg—rain, mist and midges. David Smith and Alan



Linford were in Arran.

John Middleton returned to the caves and potholes of the Antalya district in Turkey, where he not only explored and surveyed a number of new discoveries, but made the difficult 9-hour passage of the Kapuşay Kapiz, the Gorge of the Melon River, one of the longest and deepest in Turkey.

Tim Smith spent December in the Himalayas; from a base camp where he could look up the South Cwm to the full majesty of Mount Everest he did a month's trekking in perfect weather and ascended three peaks around 19,000 feet.

Judson and Arculus, with a party consisting mainly of Manchester members of the British Speleological Association, explored and bottomed Antro di Corchia, in the Apuan Alps near Pisa, the fifth deepest pothole in the world, 805 metres.

1968

Smithson, while helping to build a steel works at Witbank in South Africa, did a 3000-mile caravan trip down the east and south coast to Cape Town, returning through the Karroo. While in Cape Province he visited the Cango Caves, near Oudtshoorn, discovered in 1780 and open to the public since 1881. The explored section extends for 2 miles. Despite model cave-men, artificial fires and electronically controlled lights in the first two chambers (there is no evidence that the caves were ever inhabited), there are many fine formations of many different shades. At Cape Town he ascended Table Mountain by Skeleton Gorge. Between Cape Town and Worcester he drove over the Dutoitskloof Pass and on the right hand side noted, for closer investigation at some future date, a magnificent ridge of the Skye type, 20 miles long.

Tim Smith skied at Zermatt in March in perfect weather. Watts in Spain in May, visited the caves at Altamira and Puente Viesgo, near Santander, where he found that the late palaeolithic paintings were much less beautiful and less skilfully executed than those at Lascaux. Passing through the Dordogne on the way home, he was told at Les Eyzies that there was hope of Lascaux being again opened to the public in 1969; it was thought that means had been found of preserving the pictures.

Stock, in the New Hebrides to teach Milanese children,

was taken by one of his pupils to Siviri Cave, on the island of Efaté. He was told by his guide that no torches were needed, all that was necessary was a coconut frond; if the floor of the cave was beaten with this, the darkness would roll away. After the entrance was a large chamber and beyond this a lake of clear still water rambling along a narrow high-roofed passage. At this point lack of equipment—and of coconut fronds—cut short the exploration.

John Middleton, Trevor Salmon, Tony Dunford and Bill Woodward were exploring caves in the Lebanon in July and August. With Members of the Spèlèo Club de Liban they bottomed the country's deepest pothole, Fouar Dara (2,100 ft.), and discovered 1,000 metres of new passage. The Spèlèo Club granted them the use of their headquarters in Beirut as a base, provided them with equipment and transport to the main caving areas and nursed them through a two-day attack of food poisoning. At a banquet given in their honour before they left, the President, Monsieur Ahmed Malek pronounced them Honorary Members of the Club. The Y.R.C. is deeply grateful to Monsieur Malek and to the Spèlèo Club de Liban for all the kindness and hospitality which so much helped to make this expedition such an outstanding success.

## CHIPPINGS

THE ERNEST ROBERTS MEMORIAL. When Ernest Roberts died in June 1960, the question naturally arose as to how his memory could best be kept alive in the Club. A memorial fund was started to which Members generously contributed and it was ultimately agreed that the memorial should take the shape of furniture for the Club Cottage at Low Hall Garth. On February 4th, 1967, the President brought to L.H.G. a settle and four forms which had been made for the Club by their old friend Tom Pettit of the Craven Pothole Club. To use our President's own words in a letter to the Hon. Editor:—

“Incidentally, the memorial is quite something—four forms, beautifully carved and a settle which fits in the alcove of the fireplace. The settle is simply carved with the White Rose and the inscription ‘Ernest E. Roberts, Yorkshire Ramblers’ Club, 1908 to 1960’. They are really magnificent pieces of furniture, beautifully made of really solid English oak, waxed and with not a nail, all pegged. It really seems a pity to have such marvellous pieces in a Club Hut!”

The Y.R.C.'s most sincere thanks are due to Tom Pettit for the care and craftsmanship that he has devoted to this work.

H.G.W.

THE ALEXANDER RULE LEGACY. When Rule (President 1934—36) died in 1960, he left a legacy of £50 to the Club. This has now been devoted to the completion of the Low Hall Garth furniture by the addition of two oak tables, also made by Tom Pettit.

H.G.W.

MORE HYDRO-VANDALS. (*Les Alpes*, Monthly Bulletin, August 1967, page 183). Only a few hundred yards below the bridge at Rossinière in the Canton of Vaud, the River Sarine divides into three streams running between gravel shoals. This is “Les Vernex” and is a treasury of botanical and ornithological life. Here are found five varieties of the Alpine Orchid, The Columbine, the Martagon Lily, two types of Helebores, Trollius, Housewort, Toadflax, Balsamine, Clematis and several high

Alpines such as Gentians and Aconites whose seeds have been brought down by the current. Among the birds are Chiff-chaff, Willow Warbler, Blackcap, Garden Warbler, Stonechat, Dipper, Mallard, Goosander, Sandpiper, Heron, Great Sedgewarbler, Water Rail and Corncrake. Of the predators there are Kestrel, Sparrow Hawk and Buzzard.

But, alas! not for long. To the hydro-electric vandals Les Vernex means a barrage, an artificial lake with bare sides, spreading its damp mist over the countryside. Already the evil omens of survey have appeared. Why, in these days of Nuclear Energy, must the few remaining refuges of what is rare and beautiful be wantonly destroyed?

H.G.W.

NAMES FROM THE PAST. In *The Climber* for July 1967, page 315, Walt Unsworth gives, under the above heading, an interesting and delightful biography of William Cecil Slingsby, President of the Y.R.C. from 1893 to 1903, and pioneer of countless climbs in Norway, the Alps and the Lake District.

J.H.

A NEW ROCK IN ANGLESEY. The *Sunday Times* for 22nd January, 1967, in an article entitled “A Dinosaur in Wales” by Peter Gillman, describes how Joe Brown and Peter Crew teamed up in June 1966 to conquer ‘extreme’ climbs on Craig Gogarth, a 500 ft. sea cliff in Anglesey. Much of the rock, as well as being vertical or overhanging, is very loose; new techniques are needed to avoid pulling on handholds, in fact it is nearly a reversion to the classical principle of moving up in balance on footholds. The partnership set a high ethical standard by keeping pitons to a minimum. The first climb they did together they called ‘Dinosaur’ (needing few brains but a long neck), they took 8 hours for the 400 ft. climb. The next they called ‘The Rat Race’ (much competition for the first ascent); by the end of the year they had put another five new routes, all in the ‘highest extreme’ category.

A.J.R.

THE ULTRASONIC ‘VOICES’ OF BATS. In *New Scientist*, 24th February, 1966, John Hooper describes an apparatus, “quite

a small box", whereby the ultrasonic sounds made by bats can be translated down to audible frequencies. Such an instrument is now produced by the electronics firm Holgates of Totton and is known as the Holgate Ultrasonic Receiver, Mark IV. By tuning it can be made to produce a 'bleep' which may be used as an aid to the identification of a particular species. For example the frequency at which the Greater Horseshoe Bat emits is about 85 Kc/s, for the Lesser Horseshoe it is about 115 Kc/s whereas for the 'Vespertilionid' bats, those other than the Horseshoe, the frequencies start at perhaps 80 Kc/s and sweep down through an octave or more to 30Kc/s. Hunting Noctules and Pipistrelles can be identified with fair certainty, the former in the 20 to 30 Kc/s range and the latter around 45 Kc/s, but work with such detectors is still very much in its infancy. The instrument is a definite step forward in that it enables bats to be studied at a distance of up to 30 feet, thus the observer is less likely to disturb them. The Editor thanks Mr. Hooper for sending him a reprint of the *New Scientist* paper.

H.G.W.

A GLOSSARY FOR MOUNTAINEERING. The Swiss Alpine Club has produced a handy pocket glossary of mountaineering terms in four languages. A cardboard folder contains four booklets in which: I German, II French, III Italian and IV English terms are set against their equivalents in the three other languages. The object is to help mountaineers in making use of guide books and reports on climbs written in languages other than their own. There is also a full list of S.A.C. publications to August 1967. The price is SFrs. 4.25 to members, SFrs. 5 (10/-) to non-members. The only criticism one might make is that the folder is not very robust when one realises that it will normally be used in a rucksack or the pocket of an anorak. There is a copy in the Y.R.C. Library.

H.G.W.

THE WOLDS WAY. Arthur Gaunt, in *Country Life*, 2nd May, 1968, page 1104, describes the proposed 66 miles walkers' route through the chalk Wolds of the East Riding. Starting at North Ferriby on the Humber and finishing at Filey Brig, this

route runs along the escarpment which forms a crescent shaped link between them. Following mostly along ancient rights of way or minor roads it passes through the Millington Dale and Thixendale valleys and the mediaeval village of Wharram Percy, deserted since the Black Death, to Settrington, which affords splendid views over the Vale of Pickering. The highest point reached is just over 700 feet, there are many delightful villages and a wealth of fine churches. The Ramblers' Association has put forward the idea as a basis for discussion and it has the support of the National Parks Commission and of the East Riding County Council who are now making studies of the route.

H.G.W.

## CAVE ABSTRACTS

## UNITED KINGDOM

*Lancaster Hole and Easegill Caverns.* *The Transactions of the Cave Research Group of Great Britain*, Vol. IX, No. 2, pages 61 to 123. 15 photographs, 2 maps, 25/- to non-members; by J. Eyre and P. Ashmead. March 1967.

The C.R.G. is to be congratulated on this really excellent production. When one considers the complexity of the whole Easegill system, comprising more than 10 miles of passage, much of it still actively undergoing change, it is not surprising that over 20 years elapsed between the discovery of Lancaster Hole in 1946 and the publication in 1967 of the results of exploration and survey. The description makes interesting reading throughout, not an easy achievement when writing about so vast a succession of passages, chambers, rifts, potholes and sinks.

The report finishes with an account of the geology of the area and of the origin and development of the caverns. The gridded map on a scale of 133 feet to the inch gives a very good picture of the extent of the caverns; it is evident that much still remains to be done. It is a shameful factor that in describing the many beautiful formations it has been necessary on several occasions to mention irreparable losses due to the carelessness of some cavers and in certain cases to outright vandalism.

*Eastwater, near Priddy, Somerset.* *The Daily Telegraph* for 23rd August, 1967, describes how aerial photographs led students from Bridgwater Technical College, led by J. Cornwell of the Wessex Cave Club, to the discovery of an important new cave at Eastwater on a site known as Sludge Pit Hole. They had three days' hard digging before they got into a fissure opening into a series of chambers and rifts linked by passages which now are already known to extend to 2,500 feet.

*Cave Psychology and All That.* R. D. Leaky in the Autumn 1967 number of *The Speleologist*, tries to explain why we pothole. In an amusing 4,000 word essay he does not really succeed in bringing us very much nearer to the answer, except perhaps that women go potholing largely in pursuit of men, but that it does not take long for the more sensible ones to

realise that of all sports potholing shows them in the worst light—in more senses than one.

*British Caving Expedition to Morocco, 1966.* J. A. Cunningham, Bulletin No. 75, July 1967, of the British Speleological Association, gives an account of the work of this expedition whose object was to connect two large cave systems, the Chikker and the Friquato near Taza. This was as nearly achieved as was possible without extensive digging and blasting through a boulder choke estimated as being 1,200 feet long.

*Keeping in Step—Away from It All.* Professor J. N. Mills, *New Scientist*, 9th February, 1967, tries to use the prolonged sojourn, alone, in caves, of various people in recent years to draw conclusions about the circadian rhythm, or “biological clock” in man. He only quotes the results obtained in one case, that of Lafferty, and the results are by no means conclusive. To potholers the main interest of the article is the list of persons who have submitted themselves to this peculiar form of masochism.

M. Siffre	1962	62 days	Scarasson, Italy.
G. Workman	1963	105 days	Stump Cross, England,
T. Senni	1964/65	125 days	Ardon, Jura, France.
D. Lafferty	1966	127 days	Boulder Cavern, Cheddar, England.
J. Mairetet	1966	153 days	Montagne de l'Audibergue, Grasse, France.

*Swinsto Hole, Kingsdale.* In November 1965 a member of the Leeds University Union Speleological Society removed a few rocks from where the stream sinks in the terminal chamber of Swinsto and gained access to a small stream passage. This was not then pushed to its limit, but in June 1966 a Leeds University party went on and discovered the New Kingsdale Master Cave. Since then passages in the new system have been penetrated to a total length of nearly two miles and cave divers have joined Rowten Pot and Yordas Cave to the system. Undoubtedly the finest find in North Yorkshire this decade.

*Tatham Wife Hole, Chapel-le-Dale.* Brandon, Lyon and Hoole, in the Summer, 1967, edition of *The Speleologist*, describe the discovery and exploration by members of the Earby Pothole Club and Club y Ddraig Goch of an extensive new hole on Tatham Wife Moss above the old Ingleton granite

quarries. Much excavation was necessary to effect an entrance from the original shake-hole; the main passage length is now about 2,000 feet. The end is a sump where prospects for diving seem good.

*South Wales Caving Club's 21st Anniversary.* To celebrate its coming of age this Club has produced a fine 260-page Volume describing some of its more important activities since its formation in 1946. There is a detailed account of the work done in Ogof Ffynnon Ddu, including sensational digs in unstable boulder chokes, not without narrow escapes from serious trouble. A section on the discovery and exploration of Dan-yr-Ogof quotes at length from Ernest Roberts' article in Y.R.C.J., Vol. VII, No. 23, 1938, and carries right on to the discovery of Dan-yr-Ogof III and "The Far North" in 1967. There is an interesting description of the Early and Middle Bronze Age finds in Tooth Cave, Gower.

The last 150 pages are devoted to the Club's 1964 and 1966 expeditions to Balinka Pit, near Plaski in Croatia, 75 Km. south of Karlovac. An immense amount of engineering work was necessary to bottom this 720 foot pot; the members of the expeditions have made lively and entertaining contributions to the story of the difficulties met and successfully overcome. There is a valuable report on the biospeleological work. By no means the least important result was the deep friendship formed between the Club and the members of the Croatia Speleological Club.

*Photography in Caves.* In the Spring, 1967, issue of *The Speleologist* J. M. Woolley gives a description of the work done by the 22-man photographic unit which accompanied the British 1964 Expedition to the Gouffre Berger. Dr. Woolley was in charge of still photography; he outlines the many difficult problems, most of them caused by water vapour in various forms, and how they were tackled. There are some excellent examples of his photographs.

*Northern Biospeleological Research Station.* Newsletter No. 9 of the Pengelly Cave Studies Association announces the installation of this research station in an old mine level near Skipton. More information can be obtained by those interested by getting in touch with D. T. Richardson, 5 Carleton Terrace, Skipton.

*Gaping Gill.* The *Daily Telegraph* for 5th June, 1968, reports the discovery by seven members of the Bradford Pothole Club of a mile long passage in Gaping Gill. It was found by chiselling through a wall and crawling through liquid mud with only six inches of air space.

#### BELGIUM

*Rabies.* Bulletin No. 30 of the Equipe Spéléo de Bruxelles quotes a French journal as stating that certain caves in America, Yugoslavia and Turkey have been closed to cavers who have not been vaccinated against rabies on account of the possibility of being bitten by the Pipistrelle bat, a newly discovered carrier of this disease. *New Scientist*, 13th June, 1968, asks whether it is likely that the belfries, barns and bat caves of Britain will become radiation centres. The reply from Dr. Radovanovic, Regional Officer for Communicable Diseases of the World Health Organisation, was "Certainly not—at the moment".

*A New Peg.* A description is given in No. 33 of the same Bulletin of the "Spit-roc" peg for cave walls where natural belays are not to be found. This is a cylindrical peg with serrated teeth which is first used with a mandrel to make a hole; the peg is then withdrawn, removed from the mandrel and replaced in the hole with a cone inserted into the forward end. When this is again hammered into the hole the cone makes the teeth expand and grip the rock. An eye or a plate can be screwed into the outer end of the peg to hold a ladder or étrier.

#### SWITZERLAND

*Das Hölloch (The Hell Hole), von 1961 bis 1967.* *Die Alpen*, 3rd Quarter, 1967, page 139, 5 photographs and plan, by Dr. Alfred Bögli.

This cave is situated in the Muotatal, Canton Schwyz. Exploration and survey were started in 1949 by Hugo Nünlist of the Pilatus Section of the S.A.C.; by 1959 it was thought that major discoveries in the cave had come to an end, there were about 70 Km. of known passages and the overall depth was about 400 metres. Since 1960 exploration has been carried on under the leadership of Dr. A. Bögli. Work can only be

done in winter because the cave has a tendency to flood during the warmer months of the year; even in winter a careful watch has to be kept on the meteorological reports.

By the end of the 1964/65 season the total length of passages had risen to 80,927 metres and the depth to 450 metres; in the following season the depth, at 565 metres had surpassed by 61 metres that of the hitherto deepest Swiss cave, the Gouffre de Chevrier, near Leysin, and had placed the Hölloch among the 15 deepest holes in the world. By mid-March 1967 measured passages had reached a total of 93,336 metres and the difference in level inside the cave 577 metres, thus placing it 13th in the world order of depth. Innumerable problems remain still to be solved; little is known of the fauna of the cave, though 38 species have been counted, two of which are peculiar to the Hölloch.

*The Karst Region of Mayen-Famelon.* In *Stalactite*, the Journal of the Société Suisse de Spéléologie, for September 1966, Maurice Audetat gives a general review of this region which is near Leystin in the Canton of Vaud. A list is given of the known caves under 7 distinct zones, one of which, Combe de Bryon, contains the Gouffre Chevrier, now the second deepest pothole in Switzerland. There is still much to be done in this region.

*Longest and Deepest.* *Stalactite*, September 1966, publishes a list, prepared by the Union Internationale de Spéléologie, of the longest and deepest caves in the world; a shorter list, bringing the information up to date as far as possible and giving in addition lists of the longest vertical drops and of the highest caves, in altitude, is given in the December 1967 issue of the same journal. The longest is the Hölloch, 93,336 metres (58 miles) and the deepest is Gouffre de la Pierre St. Martin in the Pyrenees, 1152 metres. The longest vertical drop, 326 metres, is in the Sotano de Las Golondrinas (Sierra Madre), Mexico, and the highest cave is at 6660 metres on Nanga Parbat. The only British caves mentioned are Agen Allwedd, 14,400 metres and Easegill Caverns, 14,100 metres, which occupy 19th and 20th places in the length table.

*Conventional Signs for Use by Speleologists.* The December 1966 issue of *Stalactite* is devoted entirely to the Conventional Signs agreed at the IVth International Congress of Speleology

held at Ljubljana, Yugoslavia in September 1965. A full list of the signs is given, divided into three groups:—

- (1) Signs for surface use.
- (2) Signs for large systems on a small scale.
- (3) Signs for small cavities on a larger scale.

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## REVIEWS

STUDIES IN SPELEOLOGY, Vol. I, Part 4, 1966; Part 5, 1967.

Part 4, 1966

*A Review of Cave Diving Techniques and Apparatus in Britain*, by David P. Drew.

An account of cave diving from the early attempts by Balcombe at Swildon's Hole in 1934 to the present day "Nymphargus" air breathing set.

*Bats under Stress*, by R. E. Stebbings.

Describes how difficult it is to observe bats without seriously disturbing their colonies. A plea is made for special care by speleologists.

*The Cave Salamander, Proteus, and its Development*, by Albert Vandel

This cave dwelling vertebrate, which at present is only found in the underground rivers of the Dalmatian Karst, has been successfully reared in captivity at Moulis.

*A New Graphical Resistivity Technique for Detecting Air-filled Cavities*, by C. Bristow.

A method has been developed using a single electrode probe technique. Surveys made at Gallowgate, near Torquay, and at Buckfastleigh are described. The latter survey indicated an unknown series of cavities west of the existing known caves.

Part 5, 1967

*Dean William Buckland, 1784—1856*, by Patrick J. Boylan.

A biography of William Buckland, Fellow of Corpus Christi College and Professor of Geology at Oxford and, towards the end of his life, Dean of Westminster. A description is given of the work of this pioneer of cave science, especially on the origin of caves where he changed from the diluvian to the glacial theory, and on bone deposits in caves.

*Blind Cave Fishes*, by P. Humphrey Greenwood.

Thirty-two cave dwelling species are known; Europe is exceptional in being without fishes which spend their entire lives in caves. Most of the species occur in the tropics. A comprehensive and well illustrated article.

*Cave Studies in Nordland, Norway*, by Shirley St. Pierre.

A discussion of the origin and development of the caves, including a map showing the major caving areas and a list of the more important caves with their length and depth.

*A Survey of British Caving Periodicals*, by Ray Mansfield.

An attempt to bring some order to the chaos caused by the increasing flow of new caving periodicals and a plea for increased interest in the bibliography of caving. A list is appended of present publications.

## THE BRITISH SKI YEARBOOK

No. 47, 1966.

*Oslo Ski-ing*, by W. D. M. Raeburn.

Describes some of the surprises that await downhill-only skiers when they first arrive in Norway and... "It is such a pleasant change from icy bumps, ski-lift queues and après-ski".

*Mountains do not change*, by J. Howkins.

A nostalgic picture of Leukerbad in 1919.

*Salute to a Friend*, by Margaret Stephen Crawford.

A memory of Hilti von Allmen.

*Land of the Wild Iris*, by Pauline Sitwell-Stebbing.

A ski touring expedition to the High Atlas by the Grindelwald Eagle Ski Club; "A few days' training at Oukaïmeden...; and then a change of valley to the Neltner Hut (There can be few huts so close to so many four-thousanders!) and as many four-thousanders as well as the highest peak in the range, Djebel Toubkal (4,165 m.), as possible.

*Ski-ing on Bamboo*, by John Willmot

A mid-January holiday at Shiga Heights, Japan.

*Hope for Non-ski-ing Fathers*, by R. O. Murray.

The delights of ski-cycling on the Parsenn.

*Confessions of an Alpine Skier in Norway*, by M. F. Heller.

Eastern Norway—the heartland of Norwegian ski-ing—a vast territory of open forest and rolling upland, culminating in the grandiose ski-mountaineering territory of Jotunheim, first skied by Slingsby.

"What a wonderful country this is for a skier. Here we had been queueing and pushing ourselves through the interminable crowds of Alpine resorts for years and no one had ever hinted at what we would find in this magnificent panorama of wild country".

*Eagles in the Pyrenees*, by Jane Reid.

Fifteen Grindelwald Eagles on tour in the Pyrenees in March.

Pas de la Casa, Cauterets, Arribet Hut, Oulettes Hut, Superbagères.

No. 48, 1967

*On Winklepickers in the Jura*, by Neil Hogg.

A langlauf tour on Norwegian ski along the ridges of the Jura between Balstal and Neuchâtel.

*Piz Palù*, by Bob Tillard.

Robbed of the summit by wind and frostbite within 250 feet of it. *Seventy Years of Ski-ing. Parts 1 to 4*, by Arnold Lunn.

Sir Arnold started ski-ing at Chamonix in 1898; he has been an editor of ski-ing publications, including all 48 issues of the British Ski Yearbook, for 60 years, but he does not claim that this is a record. Here he describes the early development of Alpine ski-ing and especially of ski mountaineering.

*Not All Sunshine and Powder Snow*, by David H. Baker.

Ski-touring in the Upper Engadine, finishing with an ascent of Piz Palù on a perfect morning with new snow.

H.G.W.

#### THE HIMALAYAN JOURNAL, Volume XXVI. 1965.

*The Himalayan Mountains: Their Age, Origin and Sub-crustal Relations*, by D. N. Wadia.

The formation, in very recent geological time, of the chain; its geography, meteorology, vegetation and geodesy.

*Cambridge Expedition to Swat Kohistan, 1964*, by M. W. H. Day.

A long vacation spent by four members of the C.U.M.C. climbing the 18,000 to 19,000 ft. mountains of the Siri Dara in West Pakistan. *Mountains of the Kaghan, 1965*, by Trevor Braham.

A fortnight's walking and climbing in June in this attractive valley north west of Abbottabad.

*Gauri Sankar, 1964*, by Ian Clough.

How Sankar (23,440 ft.), the Hindu God of Destruction, in the Rolwaling Himalaya, defeated Clough, Don Whillans and four other members of the Alpine Climbing Group; Clough and Whillans had to give up at 22,000 feet.

*Trekking in the Nepal Himalayas*, by Mrs. L. H. Dayal.

Walking tours in the foothills, with occasional peaks up to 22,770 ft., in the spring, the summer, the autumn and the winter of 1963.

*Kulu Notes, 1964—1965*, by Robert Pettigrew.

Contains some sound advice on the preparatory procedure for exploratory mountaineering so as to avoid false claims.

#### KINDRED CLUB JOURNALS

The Librarian also gratefully acknowledges the following journals:

Alpine Journal, 1966, 1967.

Appalachia, 1966, 1967.

Appalachia Bulletins, 1966, 1967.

Bristol University Speleological Society Proceedings, 1965-66, 1966-67.

Cambridge Mountaineering, 1967, 1968.

Climbers' Club Proceedings, 1965, 1966, 1967.

Craven Pothole Club, 1967.

Deutschen Alpenvereins, Jugend am Berg, 1966, 1967.

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B. E. Nicholson

ROBERTS MEMORIAL FURNITURE, LOW HALL GARTH

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## IN MEMORIAM

Since the publication of the last Journal the following members have died: J. F. Seaman, G. A. Potter-Kirby, C. Chubb.

## CLIFFORD CHUBB

The sudden death of Clifford Chubb on 7th June, 1967 at the age of 82 robbed the Y.R.C. of one of the very few remaining members who joined before the 1914/18 war; he will always be remembered especially for his untiring efforts as President in holding the Club together during the years of the second world war.

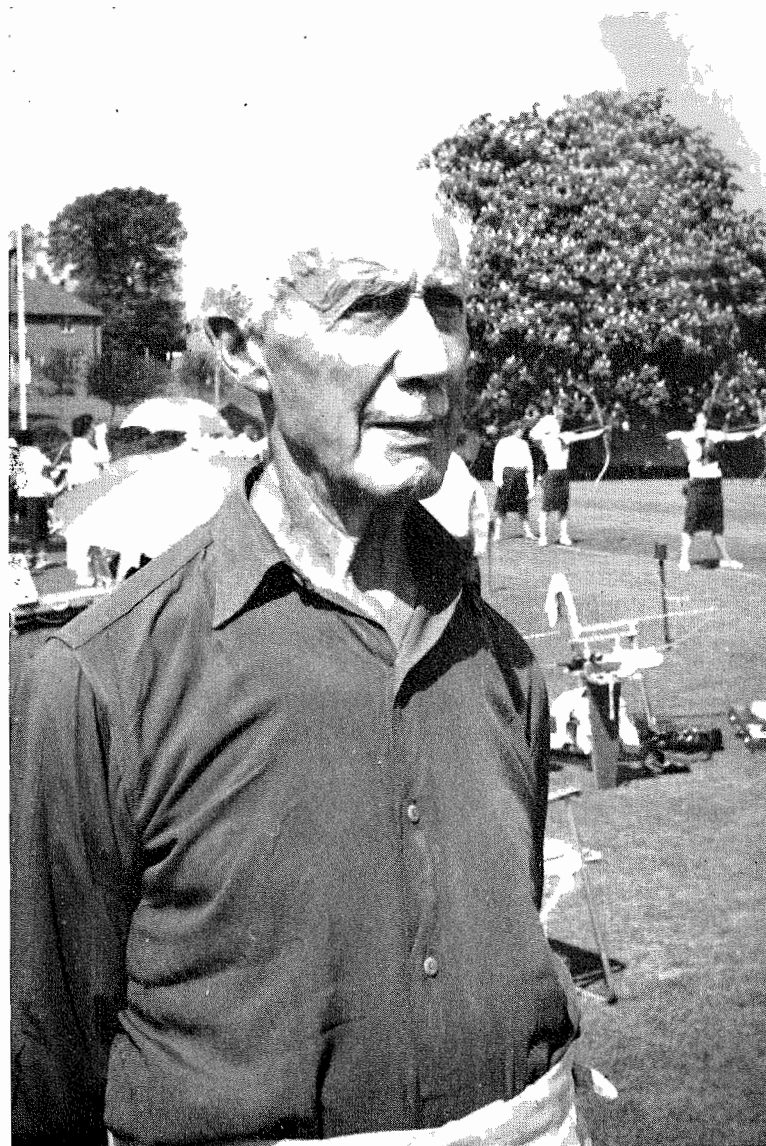
Clifford Chubb was born in 1885 at Chislehurst, Kent. He was educated at Rugby, where he represented the school at gymnastics, and at Emmanuel College, Cambridge, where he took a degree in Engineering. After spending some years in the Argentine he returned in 1915 to join the Royal Army Service Corps; he served on the Western Front as Workshop and Instructional Officer and rose to the rank of Captain. After the war he set up his home first at Ilkley and later at Ben Rhydding, where he lived until he moved to Sussex in 1954 after the death of his wife. He was at one time the representative in Leeds of the Broughton Copper Company and when that company was taken over by Imperial Chemical Industries in the early 1930's, Chubb joined the I.C.I. Bradford Sales Office where later he became Sales Manager of the Non-Ferrous Metals Department. He retired in July, 1947.

Clifford joined the Yorkshire Ramblers in 1911 and was a regular attendant at Meets all the time that he lived in Yorkshire. His main interest was walking and he was especially fond of walking the high Alpine country between Chamonix and Zermatt, his favourite part of Switzerland was probably the Val d'Hérens. He served on the Committee of the Club in 1920/21 and again in 1935/36 and was Honorary Treasurer from 1921 to 1934, Vice-President in 1931/32. He was elected President for the year 1938/39, little thinking that his period of office would last through the difficult years until the Club was once more fully active in November 1946.

In November 1965 the Club, at its Annual General Meeting, bestowed upon Clifford its greatest honour: he was unanimously elected an Honorary Life Member. Although unable to be present at the time, he came to Harrogate for the 1966 A.G.M. and Dinner; Members were indeed glad of the opportunity to acclaim him then.

It was in February 1946, while he was still President, that he was made an Honorary Member of the Société Spéléologique de France, at the same time as their Founder-President, Monsieur Robert de Joly, became an Honorary Member of the Y.R.C.

In addition to his love of climbing and walking, Clifford was a man of many and varied interests and hobbies. As a young man he excelled at long distance running and rifle shooting; when in the



CLIFFORD CHUBB

Argentine he was Captain of the Buenos Aires Rugby Football Team—for the sole reason, so he used to say, that he was the only member of the side who could be relied upon to come on to the field sober! When he could no longer climb he took up archery which became, with nursing his roses and lovingly tending his tomatoes, the main outdoor occupations of his later years. A lifelong indoor hobby was stamps and postal history and over many years he amassed what is probably an almost unique collection of two-handed loving cups.

Perhaps the affection and respect that all Yorkshire Ramblers who knew him felt for Clifford is best expressed by quoting directly from letters written by three senior members:

“When I think back to the Whitsun Meets at G.G. or to the Hill Inn week ends, Chubb was always there and as I got to know him I know I always tried to join up with him on a walk to Dent or on a trip below. He was a delightful companion and our uphill speeds matched reasonably well. No party that included Chubb could ever be dull or downhearted—he had such a splendid quiet sense of humour. I remember that at G.G. when one was doing nothing special one would find Chubb in the tent near the Main Shaft cleaning or filling all the Club’s acetylene lamps, that is if he wasn’t doing duty on the ledge shepherding members or visitors into or out of the bosun’s chair suspended over the hole. If a party emerged from a pot drenched and shivering into pouring rain it was probably Chubb who thrust mugs of 50/50 hot tea and rum into their hands”. E.H.S.

“He was one of the greatest Presidents, jovial always yet punctilious, the dignity of the Club being his constant thought. Some years ago at a Club Dinner, word got around that Chubb was leaving us and after all the ceremonies we went in search of him, but he had quietly fled. He could not face the ordeal. Yes, that was Chubb, he had charm, if that word can be used for a man”. A.H.

“His interest in the Club remained as keen as ever until the end and we corresponded at irregular intervals. My last postcard was sent to him from Scotland where you may know a few of us spent a week at Loch Stack in Sutherland at Whitsuntide. I well remember his cooking at Killesher in 1947, amid the rigours of food rationing; his great dish of stewed rhubarb sweetened with dates, at least one quarter of which was eaten by Roberts, was the highlight”. S.M.

After his death Clifford’s son wrote to the President:

“I know for a fact that many of his happiest hours were spent on the Yorkshire Moors with the Ramblers and that many of his best friends he met with the Club”.

A good friend and a great Rambler, in every sense of the word.

## CLUB MEETS

1965/66. There were 15 Club Meets during the year and the average attendance was 23, not counting the Dinner and the Ladies' Evening; this latter is now one of the Club's most popular and successful 'non-technical' events.

The 52nd Annual Dinner was held on 20th November 1965 and for the second time in its 73 years' history the Club sought new ground for this function. The Hotel St. George at Harrogate provided an excellent dinner and good facilities for both pre- and post-prandial activities. The President, Dr. W. P. B. Stonehouse, was in the Chair and it was a pleasure once again to welcome Sir John Hunt as Principal Guest. The Menu Card commemorated the centenary of the first ascent of the Matterhorn by Edward Whymper, who joined the Y.R.C. as its first Honorary Member very soon after its foundation in 1892. The attendance was 157 and of these about 80 turned out next day at the Hart's Head at Giggleswick, now owned by the Kilburn family who for so many years were landlords at the Hill Inn.

The Club Year starts with the first Meet after the Dinner so, early in December, the President and 19 men struggled over ice-bound roads and backed out of snowdrifts to arrive at the Punch Bowl Hotel in Low Row, Swaledale and to herald the approach of Christmas. On Saturday all Y.R.C. precedents were abandoned and the entire Meet trusted itself to its President's leadership. He, with the security of his ice-axe, led them up the west side of Gunnerside Gill by a sporting snow wall of some 100 feet on to the moor and into a white-out. Nothing daunted and compass in hand he soon afterwards announced that they were on Rogan's Seat where frosty sandwiches were eaten and questions asked about who was Rogan and why did he sit there. Presidential directions dropped the party back into the valley and glorious sunshine below Keld where the impossibility of getting any tea (the Cat Hole closed years ago) led to macabre thoughts and a split into two groups, each determined to follow what it thought was the 'corpse road'. One asserted that the coffins were carried over the top of Kisdon and went that way, the other took the more reasonable and easier route along the valley. All joined up for a splendid tea in Muker, then back to Gunnerside for Christmas fare, Presidential punch and seasonable cheer. Sixty-three Members and Guests were at the Hill Inn Meet in January. The frosty weather of the previous week broke to thaw on the Friday, so preventing the planned descent of Mere Gill, but Rift Pot provided an interesting second choice. Skiers had to hunt far and wide, though one party found good snow and thick mist between Cross Fell and Dun Fell. An active few disturbed the slumbering majority by making an early start on the Three Peaks. All returned to enjoy the traditional Saturday Dinner provided by Captain and Mrs. Flint, followed by the projection of an amusing ciné film taken during the previous Whit Meet at

Knoydart and a selection of Members' colour slides.

The President and most of an eventual 36 Members and Guests arrived at Low Hall Garth on a Friday night in mid-February to eat a fine hot pie-and-peas supper and to plan climbs in snow gullies and ski tours on the fells. Morning light on Saturday showed no snow for ski-ing; the President's party furiously assaulted but failed to surmount a gully on Helvellyn, what snow it contained was too soft and powdery and the sides were verglas. There was walking on Dollywaggon Pike and Scafell and a party did several climbs on Castle Rock. Steadily falling snow on Sunday spelt work on the cottage and, among the High Officials, discussion of budgets for further improvements to Club Huts. The March Meet at Lowstern was a success from the word go. Both stoves worked and water, both hot and cold, was to be had in abundance, a credit to recent working parties. A glorious Saturday with spring in the air saw a general exodus to the high hills, no mention of a pothole. The President's day was made for him by the discovery of two burial grounds. The prodding, at 6.45 a.m. on Sunday, of sleeping laggards resulted in six men reaching the last cave pitch in Lost Johns' and three of them going on to the Master Cave via Centipede Pitch. Walkers enjoyed excellent views from the summit of Pen-y-Ghent. The Easter Meet was at Ardgour where the President and ten men set up camp on the right bank of the stream in Coire an Iubhair. If climbers' reports can be accepted an epic ascent was made of Pinnacle Ridge on Garbh Bheinn. Two parties met unexpectedly while traversing Creach Bheinn by different routes and exchanged highly embellished reports of the large number of summits ascended on the way. A party reached the top of Sgùrr Dhomhnuill, 2,915 ft., the highest point in the area, and a traverse was made of the ridge surrounding Coire an Iubhair along an interesting route made difficult by cloud and new snow.

There were six Members and five Guests at the South Wales pot-holing Meet early in May. The main objective was the Southern Stream Passage in Agen Allwedd, the longest cave system in the United Kingdom. The underground trip took ten hours and was found to be sporting and very arduous; the party reached their objective, though a guest was unlucky enough to have three ribs cracked by a falling boulder. Other bruises, aches and pains meant that Sunday was spent walking the surrounding hills. For the Whitsun week the President and 15 men assembled at Poolewe on the Saturday morning in brilliant weather. The camping and other equipment was taken by Land Rover along the private track to the jetty on Fionn Loch and then by outboard down the loch to Carnmore. Cars were left at Kernsary and the party walked 3½ hours, to pitch camp 600 yards from the Carnmore landing stage, a superb situation with the Carnmore crags as background and mountains stretching into the distance as far as the eye could see. For the first half of the week the weather was perfect, parties completed the round trip of Sgùrr Bàn,



Mullach Coire Mhic Fhearchair and Beinn Tarsuinn, and on succeeding days of Ruadh-stac Mòr and A'Mhaighdean. Eagles, ptarmigan, wild goats and deer were seen. There was enjoyable climbing on the cliffs of Ben Làir, A'Mhaighdean (Bell's Route), Carnan Ban and Carnmore Crag; it was very evident that the area had been scarcely touched for rock climbing and that there were boundless possibilities with routes of as much as 1,000 feet. Although the weather deteriorated in the second half of the week a party climbed An Teallach in wind and low cloud while another got very wet climbing Slioch. The Club's thanks go to the owner, Colonel Whitbread, for permission to camp on his estate and for the generous loan of his transport. The Club was again in Scotland at the Midsummer weekend for "The Long Walk" which covered a distance of 30 miles from Glack, near Peebles, to Craigieburn on the A 708 just outside Moffat. The route was mainly along ridges and included some 20 peaks of which 12 were over 2,500 ft. The start was rather grey as Members walked up the ridge joining the Scrape and Pykestone Hill with Dollar Law and Broad Law (2,723 ft.). The walking was easy but the views elusive. A support party was waiting in the valley below Broad Law with soup and hot dogs; the walkers climbed back to the ridge near Loch Skeen but mist descended on them at White Coomb and deterioration in the weather after Rotten Bottom meant finding the way off the ridge with the help of compasses, streams and steep ravines. The support party was miraculously at hand to provide transport to the ready hospitality of the Balmoral Hotel at Moffat.

The High Level Camp was pitched at Pillar in mid-July; a party composed of the President, 12 Members and a Guest somewhat reluctantly left the shelter of the Wasdale Head Hotel at 9.30 on the Friday evening in a drizzle; enthusiasm waned as they ascended into cloud until a welcome decision was made to camp on the approach to Black Sail and to leave for Pillar in the morning. Saturday dawned fine and by 1 p.m. seven tents had been pitched west of Robinson's Cairn and people were soon climbing on Pillar and the nearby outcrops. The President's party left at 4 p.m. to walk the tops: when they had not come back by dusk, around 10 o'clock, the presidential tent was searched for possible clues and a bottle impounded. Toasts having been drunk to their safety they materialised at 11, once again from the direction of the Wasdale Head Hotel, while there was still enough in the bottle for the sacrilege to be overlooked. A glorious Sunday was spent climbing and walking and enjoying a notable absence of any other climbers or walkers. Thirteen men attended the Lowstern Meet at the end of July but owing to last minute changes the potholing party was not strong enough for the planned Swinsto/Simpson's through trip. They did succeed in bottoming Simpson's but were embarrassed to find on their way out that, in spite of their having booked the pot, the B.S.A. were on their way in. As a result there was a ladder mix-up. The President and 12 Members arrived

from far and wide for the Camping Meet on Cader Idris early in September. Camp was pitched in the field of a farmer friend of a Past President and he was the Club's guest on the Saturday. Cader Idris was found to be a most interesting mountain and the whole Meet climbed it by various routes. A party climbed the Wrekin on the way home.

There were 26 Y.R.C. representatives at the annual Joint Meet with the Rucksack and Wayfarers' Clubs at the Robertson Lamb Hut at the end of September. As usual some stayed at R.L.H., some at L.H.G., with a sprinkling at Raw Head; but all were reunited with Members of the Kindred Clubs at the Old Dungeon Ghyll on Saturday evening. There was climbing on White Ghyll, Gimmer and Raven and one of the Y.R.C.'s sprightly older Members filled in a blank in his own record by adding a classic severe on Raven before doing a round of the tops, most of which were trodden by Y.R.C. boots before their wearers returned to the admirable culinary efforts of Harry Spilsbury at R.L.H. and the Huts Secretary at L.H.G. The Club made a welcome return to the Tees Valley in October and 26 Members stayed at the High Force Hotel. On Saturday parties walked to Cauldron Snout, High Cup Nick and Mickle Fell and the peat bogs were found to be as bottomless as ever. On Sunday under a blue sky with the sun shining and the birds singing, some climbed rock pinnacles a mile or two upstream, some waded up the bed of the lovely Tees, while others were surprised by a Warden/Naturalist who told them that a permit was now required to wander the desolate moors of Mickle Fell.

1966/67. The Club's 75th Anniversary Year was a highly successful one; there were altogether 16 Meets, five primarily potholing, five primarily climbing, three walking and three social. There was a record high attendance of 73 at the Hill Inn, but a disappointingly low one of 8 at the usually popular High Level Camp; average was 28 not counting the Hill Inn and the Annual Dinner. The total membership was 192 and over 90 of these were actively attending Meets. The Ladies' Evening was more popular than ever, over 120 Members and their Ladies enjoyed a wonderful evening at the Craigland Hotel, Ilkley.

The 53rd Annual Dinner took place on 19th November 1966, again at the Hotel St. George, Harrogate. The retiring President, Dr. W. P. B. Stonehouse, was in the Chair and the Guest of Honour was Eric Shipton. Nine Kindred Clubs were represented and the total number of Members and Guests was 145. A settle and one of four benches, beautifully made in English oak, were on display at the hotel before being installed at Low Hall Garth as a memorial to Ernest Roberts. The After-Dinner Meet was again at the Hart's Head at Giggleswick.

The year started with a most enjoyable Meet at the Milburn Arms, Rosedale Abbey, in December. The weather was fine, frosty and calm as the first party set off on Saturday morning to Rosedale Moor. One of its members had taken an active part in excavating the burial ground at Loose Howe in the 1930's and told how wooden canoes had been found in excellent condition—they perished in the hands of the British Museum who allowed the wood to dry out and fall to powder (cf. *The Vaasa* at Stockholm. Hon. Ed.). At White Cross some Members made a detour to inspect Ralph Crosses, recently repaired after hooligan damage. The second party also started by Loose Howe, turned east for Cock Heads and Shunner Howe and came back to the valley down the ridge. Eventually 43 sat down to dinner and a Committee Member, who was going to be married the following week end, was honourably toasted on his great feats, the scaling of many Alpine summits and the bottoming of many pots. A Past President then asked all to stand and toast "The Potting of the first Bottom". There was an all time record attendance at the Hill Inn in January, 73 sat down to dinner on Saturday—an excellent dinner upon which Captain and Mrs. Flint are to be congratulated. Low cloud and frequent heavy rain did not deter the potholers, who ended up the driest; they had planned for Pool Sink but this was flooded so they braved something of a traffic jam in County Pot, also in the Easegill system, and succeeded in reaching Easter Grotto and Montagu Cavern. Barn Pot was weirdly and wonderfully laddered and the elegant antics of the more hilarious were accompanied by the skirling of the pipes. Meanwhile the more sedate enjoyed a slide show of Richard Gowing's stay in Japan and of Trevor Salmon's in Nigeria. New Members were inaugurated over the beam in No. 4 bedroom and the bar finally became reasonably accessible as people began somehow to settle somewhere for the night—the Gritstone Club kindly lent the Gearstones Hut and it was rumoured that at Lowstern a wine and cheese party lasted far into the night. The newly installed central heating at the Hill Inn was put to good use drying wet gear. On Sunday there were Ramblers on each of the Three Peaks and a party visited Thorns Ghyll Bridge over the Ribble, said to be 13th or 14th century. This bridge, for which the local council is not responsible, had got into a poor state of repair, but the Gritstone Club and the Y.R.C. are jointly preparing to do something about its restoration. The potholers went down Little Hull Pot.

The February Meet at Low Hall Garth was also well attended, the total was 32 of whom 22 turned up on Friday evening to eat the Hon. Hut Warden's home made pies. On Saturday the elements had, as so often happens, to be braved. A party on Pavay Ark ascended Crescent Route in wet snow, traversed the Langdale Pikes to Rossett Pike and reached the O.D.G. by way of Rossett Ghyll. Another party climbed Rossett Ghyll, got to the top of Great End and decided not to go up Scafell, by mid-afternoon they were on Esk

Hause and thought that Bowfell would make an interesting route back to Langdale; but the fittest man had the worst sense of direction and a gap in the mist revealed after a long slog that he had led them to the summit of Hanging Knotts. On Sunday parties went to Tarn Hows, Pike o' Blisco, Tilberthwaite and Birk Howe; some (to keep dry) made a passage through the "Halls of Silence" and Hodge Close Main Drain. High winds, a low tariff and a mixed reception greeted the President, 23 Members and 4 Guests at the Blue Bell Inn, Alston in March. Cross Fell had retained enough snow for ski-ing and excitement ran high when it was learned that there are still potholers who can walk 20 miles in a day; three Members camped by a windswept Cumbrian road. On Sunday skiers perfected their parallel turns and sections of the Pennine Way were investigated. One important and consoling point was that when Wales and the Lakes have reached saturation there are still vast areas of the Northern Pennines where solitude can be sought and found. The Head Stalker greeted early arrivals for the Easter Meet in Glen Affric with the news that it had rained daily since 13th February and he offered a dry comfortable gardener's cottage and free run of cut timber lying around. One hardy soul pitched a tent. Water arrived during the night, Loch Affric rose 7 feet, the cottage was surrounded by new streams but the Hardy Soul's tent survived. On Saturday a party got soaked by sunny showers on Sgùrr na Làpaich and amateur lumberjacks made sure of enough fuel for two merrily blazing fires in the evening. On Sunday two Members made a determined carry-up of camping gear to the top of Mam Sodhail (3,862 ft.), a large party prudently turned back before reaching the summit while a third marched up the Glen, sheltered from a blizzard at the Youth Hostel and then climbed Sgùrr nan Ceathreamhnan (3,771 ft.) in blizzard and snow-drift, proceeding by compass and torch only.

To commemorate the Club's 75th Anniversary the Meet at the week end of 5th to 7th May was at Gaping Gill, almost to the day 71 years after the Y.R.C. made the second descent on 9th May 1896, eight months after the first descent by A. E. Martel. The sky on Saturday was heavy and the moor waterlogged, making transport most difficult. The engine and gantry, kindly lent by the Craven Pothole Club, had been rigged the previous week end but it was some time before a successful form of damming was devised to divert the very considerable flow of the Fell Beck down the Rat Hole, so it was after 5 p.m. when the first man went down; only six people were down and up on Saturday. An anniversary bonfire nearly went amissing when all the combustible materials were left behind but two pyromaniac Members succeeded in firing a stack of motor tyres; flames were twenty feet high and a dark plume of smoke drifted over Ingleborough. Despite drizzle on Sunday the little petrol engine worked flat out for six hours lowering people down the 360 ft. shaft. Some tigers descended and ascended by electron ladder and many

made the traverse through Bar Pot and out. Much of the success of the Meet was due to Edgar Smith and his small band of C.P.C. Members who did sterling work in erecting the gantry and winch and in operating the engine, all without ever seeing the bottom. The Y.R.C. is indeed grateful to the Craven Pothole Club for their co-operation and loan of gear and to the farmer for the use of his tractor and trailer to carry all the very heavy equipment over the moor. All in all a happy return by the Ramblers to the scene of their early triumphs in pot-holing.

Fourteen Members and four Guests assembled in Glen Brittle for the Spring Holiday Meet; the main body were at the spacious and well-appointed B.M.C. Hut, some camped on the beach and came into the Hut in the evenings to avoid crowds—rumour has it that they lived off a mussel bed below the camp lavatory, eked out with Loch Alsh Scampi and Hock. The hard men were at Cuillin Cottage and were little seen. From Sunday until Thursday night it was all blue skies, the moors dried out, the burns grew more inviting and conditions for climbing and for the ridge became steadily more perfect. Members took full advantage, putting in strenuous days on Sròn na Ciche and on various parts of the ridge. Four parties tackled the whole ridge with and without bivouacs. The prospect of taking part in the best day's hill walking south of Scotland drew 30 Members and Guests to North Wales for the Midsummer Long Walk over the Welsh 3,000 ft. summits. To be awakened before dawn on a misty mid-summer morning by somebody offering a cup of tea is only appreciated in retrospect but by 4 a.m. walkers were being ferried to Pen-y-Pass whence they started on a dark ascent of Crib Goch (3,023 ft.) followed by Crib-y-Ddysgl, they reached Yr Wyddfa (3,560 ft.) at 6 o'clock. A steep drop to Clogwyn Station led out of the clouds to Bewdy Mawr, kindly lent by the Rucksack Club as the first feeding point—7 a.m. Then came the hard section, the ascent of 2,700 feet to the top of Elidir Fawr (3,029 ft.)—9.30 a.m. After this the going was easier though the visibility remained poor, round Foel Goch to Y Garn (3,104 ft.). Another stop was made in Llyn Cwm, then Glyder Fawr (3,279 ft.) at 12.05 and Glyder Fach (3,262 ft.) at 12.30 were followed by some wandering about amidst a mass of near vertical broken rock and the loss of about an hour so that Tryfan was only climbed at 2.30. The indefatigable support party were ready with food and drink at Glan Dana, the M.A.M. Hut. Six Members and two Guests were strong enough to leave Glan Dana at 4 o'clock, climb to Penyrole Wen, reach Black Ladders at 6 p.m. and the summit of Carnedd Llewellyn (3,484 ft.) at 7 o'clock. They were then soaked by a thunderstorm and a Member was struck by lightning—not hurt. The final summit, Foel Fras (3,091 ft.) was reached at 8.45 p.m. and the awaiting cars picked them up at Bontnewydd at 9.45.

The July High Level Camp in Upper Eskdale was attended only

by the President, 7 Members and a Guest. Another party was apparently lured aside by greater comfort and fewer midges at Low Hall Garth. The camp site had been selected beforehand as free from bovine occupation—despite much evidence to the contrary—and was found by several people after dark by torchlight. On Saturday two Members climbed Woodhead's on the Pinnacle and Moss Ghyll Grooves, others walked the skyline. Crowding into one tent for the traditional evening wine party gave some protection from midges and clegs. On Sunday two men climbed on Pikes Crag, two on Esk Buttress and others took a dip in the beck in glorious weather. In contrast bad weather for the third year in succession reduced attendance to only 12 at the Lowstern August Meet. Sword dances were performed and the bagpipes skirled far into the night; luckily the Hut is far enough from human habitation and the ceilidh did not disturb local residents. On Saturday a lone Member went climbing on Twistleton Scars and the rest laddered three pitches in Bull Pot of the Witches and bottomed the pot. Their enthusiasm was such that on getting back to the Hut they inspired two late arrivals, who went off in rain of monsoon proportions and repeated the route. On Sunday the President organised a work party in the Hut, another section climbed on Attermire Scar and a third got wet going up Wild Boar Fell and Swarth Fell.

The Meet at the Golden Lion Hotel, Horton-in-Ribblesdale, at the beginning of September was healthy and blustery for the walkers, moist for the potholers. One of the latter wanted to photograph another on a ladder pitch, his flash apparatus was found to be out of order so it had to be a daylight pitch; after a somewhat prolonged discussion the party ended up in Bull Pot-of-the-Witches. A third member wanted to find an exceedingly beautiful cavern that he remembered having visited in this pot eight years before. Several muddy hours later the phantom cavern was still eluding them all, though they did visit the downstream sump. Meanwhile a party of adventurous walkers had set out early from the Golden Lion and battled over Blea Moor and Widdale Fell to arrive hopefully at the Moorcock Inn—and to find it closed. Defeated, they took the next train back to Horton. Two men did the Three Peaks. The Golden Lion provided a most enjoyable and satisfying dinner to 30 Members and Guests, after which David Handley laid on some entertaining films of the Matterhorn and Jungfrau.

The outstanding features of the Joint Meet at the Robertson Lamb Hut with the Wayfarers' and Rucksack Clubs were first and foremost Harry Spilsbury's superb meals and, at other times, the wet. Parties climbed on Gimmer and were driven off by heavy rain. The walkers after traversing the valley of Langstrath, found various routes back difficult to follow owing to low cloud and heavy rain. The President's party did the Bowfell round in record longest time and saw somebody do a spectacular fall off Bowfell Buttress without

hurting himself. A Member who catered at Low Hall Garth for a party most of which did not turn up was justifiably incensed and it took most of the R.L.H. contingent of Y.R.C. Members most of Sunday to soothe him, they walked over to do so and got wet on the way back. The President and 27 men were back in the Lake District in October, at Mungrisedale. On Saturday parties climbed Blencathra by Sharp Edge, some of the older Members were succoured with tea by a lady in Scales who owned 8 cats, 2 dogs, a budgerigar, and a turtle which stimulated unworthy thoughts in the mind of the Oldest Member about soup that evening. For those who climbed Skiddaw the view was spoilt by cloud above 2,000 ft. On Sunday some returned to Sharp Edge, others visited the old wolfram mines and the Roman Fort in the Carrock Area. The thanks of the Club are due to Mrs. Robley of Mosedale House Farm for most ably looking after the Meet at short notice owing to the illness of the proprietors of the Mill Inn, where accommodation had originally been arranged.

And so ends yet another, this time the 75th, of the Club's many happy and successful years.

## CLUB PROCEEDINGS

1966—The week-end meets were: January 21st—23rd, The Hill Inn, Chapel-le-Dale; February 11—13th, Low Hall Garth; March 11th—13th, Lowstern Hut; Easter, April 8th—12th, Ardgour; May 6th—8th, South Wales, Agen Allwed; Whitsun, May 27th—June 5th, Fionn Loch, Ross and Cromarty; June 24th—26th, The Long Walk, Peebles to Moffat; July 15th—17th, High Level Camp, Pillar; July 29th—31st, Lowstern Hut; August 21st, Crookrise; September 2nd—4th, Cader Idris; September 23rd—25th, The Robertson Lamb Hut, Joint Meet with Wayfarers' and Rucksack Clubs; October 21st—23rd, The High Force Hotel, Teesdale; December 9th—11th, The Milburn Arms Hotel, Rosedale. Average attendance at meets was 23 and total membership 194, including 167 ordinary, 3 junior, 18 life and 6 honorary members. The death was recorded of J. F. Seaman, who joined the Club in 1914, was a Committee member from 1919 to 1929 and a Vice-President 1923 to 1925.

The 74th Annual General Meeting was held at the Hotel St. George, Harrogate on November 19th, 1966. The following were elected as Officers of the Club for the year 1966/67: President: E. C. DOWNHAM; Vice-Presidents: F. D. SMITH, M. D. BONE; Hon. Treasurer: S. MARSDEN; Hon. Secretary: F. D. SMITH; Hon. Asst. Secretary: W. C. I. CROWTHER; Hon. Editor: H. G. WATTS; Hon. Asst. Editor and Librarian: A. B. CRAVEN; Hon. Huts Secretary: A. R. CHAPMAN; Hon. Hut Wardens: Low Hall Garth, J. D. DRISCOLL, Lowstern, J. RICHARDS; Hon. Auditor: G. R. TURNER; Committee: E. M. TREGONING, G. B. SPENCELEY, R. GOWING, J. R. MIDDLETON, W. WOODWARD, A. LINFORD.

The meeting was followed by a Special General Meeting, convened for the purpose of increasing the Annual Subscription. The proposal was unanimously carried that the first sentence of Rule X should be altered to read:

"The subscription shall be Three Guineas per annum, payable in advance on 1st November".

and that Rule XIX be altered to read:

"Junior Members may be admitted to the Club who are between 17 and 20 years of age, on the same conditions (except Rule IV) which apply to ordinary members, except that the amount of the subscription shall be One Guinea per annum".

The 53rd Annual Dinner followed the meetings and was also at the Hotel St. George. The Principal Guest was Eric Shipton. The Menu Card showed the twin peaks of Nanda Devi, "The Blessed Goddess", it was in 1934 that Shipton, with Tilman, solved the secret of the approach to the mountain, thus making possible its conquest by Odell and Tilman in 1936. The retiring President, W. P. B. Stonehouse,

was in the Chair and Kindred Clubs were represented by Colin Taylor, Alpine Club; R. J. C. Robb, Scottish Mountaineering Club; A. B. Hargreaves, Climbers' Club; C. Douglas Milner, Wayfarers' Club; Neil Mather, Rucksack Club; M. Hopkins, Gritstone Club; E. Hambly, Midland Association of Mountaineers; L. B. Cook, President, Craven Pothole Club; J. C. Ackroyd, President, Bradford Pothole Club. Members and Guests present numbered 145. The after-dinner Meet was at the Hart's Head, Giggleswick.

1967—Week-end Meets were: January 20th—22nd, The Hill Inn, Chapel-le-Dale; February 17th—19th, Low Hall Garth; March 3rd—5th, The Blue Bell Inn, Alston; Easter, March 24—27th, Glen Affric; April 14th—16th, Lowstern Hut; May 5th—7th, Gaping Gill; Spring Holiday, May 26th—June 2nd, Glen Brittle, Isle of Skye; June 23rd—25th, The Long Walk, Nant Gwynant, The Welsh 3,000's; July 21st—23rd, High Level Camp, Upper Eskdale; August 11th—13th, Lowstern Hut; September 1st—3rd, The Golden Lion Hotel, Horton-in-Ribblesdale; September 22nd—24th, The Robertson Lamb Hut, Joint Meet with Wayfarers' and Rucksack Clubs; October 20th—22nd, Mungrisdale. The Meet arranged for the week-end of December 8th—10th at Cray, Buckden, had to be cancelled owing to foot-and-mouth disease. Average attendance reached the record figure of 28, the total membership was 192. The deaths were recorded in 1967 of G. A. Potter-Kirby, who joined the Club in 1910 and who was a Vice-President in 1933—1935; and of Clifford Chubb, President 1938—1946, who joined in 1911.

The 75th Annual General Meeting was held at the Cairn Hotel, Harrogate on November 18th, 1967. The Officers elected for the year 1967/68 were: President: E. C. DOWNHAM; Vice-Presidents. M. D. BONE, A. R. CHAPMAN; Hon. Treasurer: S. MARSDEN; Hon. Secretary: F. D. SMITH; Hon. Asst. Secretary: W. C. I. CROWTHER; Hon. Editor: H. G. WATTS; Hon. Asst. Editor and Librarian: A. B. CRAVEN; Hon. Huts Secretary: W. A. LINFORD; Hon. Hut Wardens: Low Hall Garth, J. D. DRISCOLL, Lowstern, C. G. RENTON; Hon. Auditor: G. R. TURNER; Committee: E. M. TREGONING, W. WOODWARD, J. R. MIDDLETON, B. E. NICHOLSON, M. CHURCH, P. C. SWINDELLS.

The 54th Annual and 75th Anniversary Dinner was also held at the Cairn Hotel immediately after the Meeting. The Principal Guest was Dr. Tom Patey and the President, E. C. Downham, was in the Chair. Kindred Clubs were represented by Eric Shipton, President, Alpine Club, also representing the Climbers' Club; Alex. Harrison, Past President, Scottish Mountaineering Club; J. R. Files, President, Fell and Rock Climbing Club; J. Goldsworthy, President, Wayfarers' Club; J. Walmsley, President, Rucksack Club; J. G. Brown, President, Midland Association of Mountaineers; J. C. Ackroyd, President, Bradford Pothole Club; R. Hainsworth, President Gritstone Club;

S. A. Craven, Craven Pothole Club. It was a great pleasure to the Club to welcome also Dr. J. A. Farrer, Lord of the Manor of Ingleborough. Members and Guests numbered 157. Unfortunately it was necessary at the last moment to cancel the after-dinner Meet, arranged in the Malham area, owing to foot-and-mouth disease.

On January 6th, 1967 Alistair Allen of the Wayfarers' Club gave an illustrated lecture to the Club on the North Afghanistan Expedition of 1965 to the Hindu Kush, telling the story of the discovery of and attempt on the 23,000 ft. Koh-i-Bandaka, including the overland journeys to and from the mountain and an insight into the lives of the people who inhabit these remote regions.

## NEW MEMBERS SINCE JOURNAL No. 33

1966

- Handley, David J. Milton Mews, Gargrave, Skipton.  
 Pomfret, Roy E. 8 Mardale Avenue, West Hartlepool, County Durham.  
 Spray, Douglas C. 34 Fullarton Crescent, Troon, Ayrshire.  
 Stock, John A. T. Gouldings Cottage, Colwall Green, Malvern, Worcestershire.

1967

- Arculus, Richard J. 49 Somerville Road, Sutton Coldfield, Warwickshire.  
 Clayton, W. Derek 5 Demmings Road, Cheadle, Cheshire.  
 Dunford, J. Anthony 13 Pine Grove, Prestwich, Manchester.  
 Goodwin, Ronald 20 The Grove, Hutton Gate, Guisborough.  
 Gott, John Moor View, 28 Bent Lane, Colne, Lancashire.  
 Kay, Jeremy A. Swingletrees, Hawkshead, Ambleside, Lancashire.  
 Woodman, Henry E. 26 Ellens Glen Road, Edinburgh.

1968

- Bush, C. Derek 2 Arnside Crescent, Feniscowles, Blackburn, Lancs.  
 Edwards, Glyn 37 Paulden Drive, Failsworth, Manchester.  
 Errington, R. Douglas St. Mary's Hospital Medical School, Norfolk Place, Paddington, London, W.2.  
 Hatfield, John 124 Meadow Lane, Coalville, Leics.  
 Hobson, Michael P. Skeabrae, Ackenthwaite, Milmthorpe, Westmorland.  
 Rowlands, Clive 50 Sackville Road, Crooks, Sheffield, 10.

## RESIGNATIONS

1966

J. Hatfield. J. M. Selby. W. Stoney.

1967

J. M. Barr. P. M. Hurrell. P. A. Bell. D. Clark.  
R. L. Holmes.

1968

D. I. Stansfield.

## DEATHS

1966

J. F. Seaman.

1967

G. A. Potter-Kirby. C. Chubb.