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1973

Edited by
A. B. CRAVEN

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THE YORKSHIRE RAMBLERS' CLUB JOURNAL Vol. XI No 36

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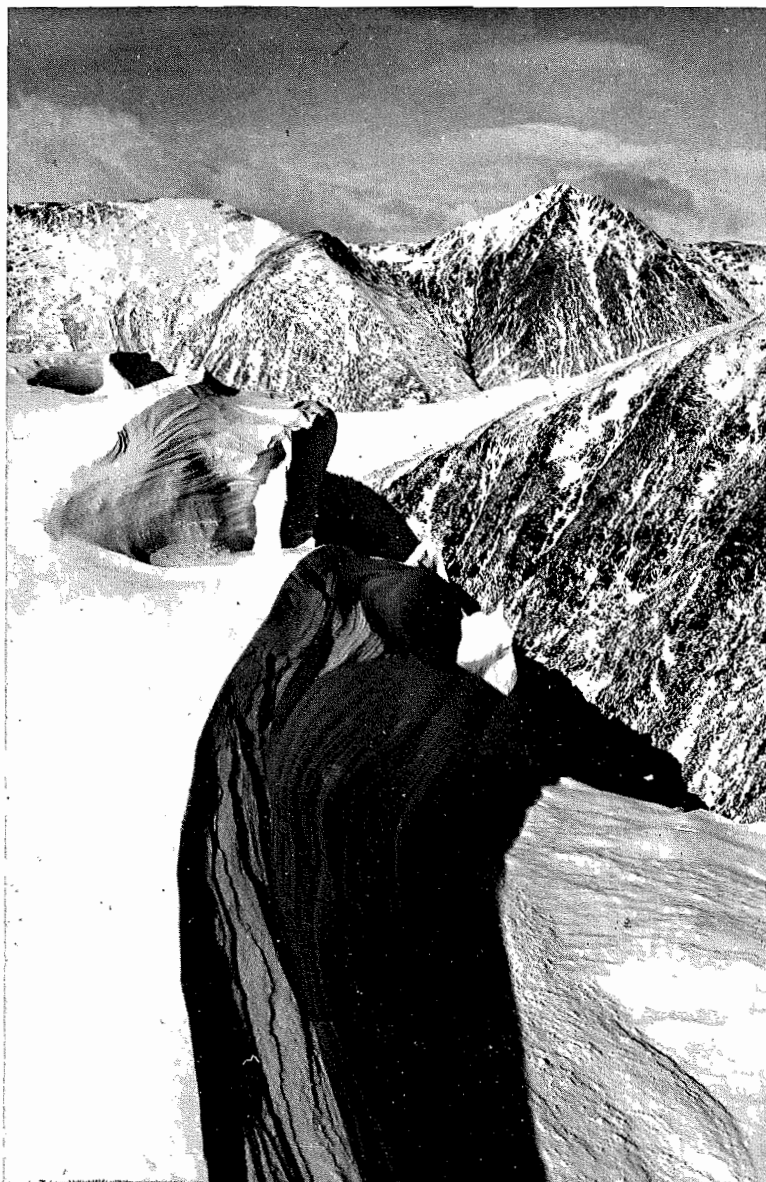
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CORNICES ON STOB GHABAR: FEBRUARY MEET 1973

J. C. Whalley

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IRAN: A CAVING ADVENTURE EXTRAORDINARY

by J. R. Middleton

THE OBJECT was to reconnoitre the virgin limestone mountains of the North Zagros in Western Iran as a potential caving region. The added bonus was to motor over nine European countries, across the intoxicating highlands of Eastern Turkey and then down through the expansive beauty that is Iran.

It is not easy knowing exactly where to start recounting an adventure with so many experiences. From the jumble of life in Istanbul, from the spellbinding views of a sterile salt lake, or perhaps the problems of "Farsi" road signs or then again maybe to start with the end—the discovery of Ghar Parau, 2,383 ft. deep, still going and already the deepest cave in Asia. Best to save that until last and start at the beginning.

THE IDEA

The concept of caving in Iran originated as an extension of my previous activities in Turkey and the Lebanon. I knew that parties were already planned for the Himalayas but as far as I could find out none had been for Iran, and none was projected. Why, I do not know, as very little research was needed to find one range of mountains almost 800 miles long composed almost wholly of various limestones.

Further questing with the help of geological maps published by the "British Petroleum Company" helped to pinpoint an area almost 60 miles long stretching from Kermanshah westwards to the Iraq border. The mountains were of the middle and lower Cretaceous ages and the maps showed our area as being particularly massively bedded and exhibiting karst features. The idea was then put into action and within a few months an eleven man caving team was organised including

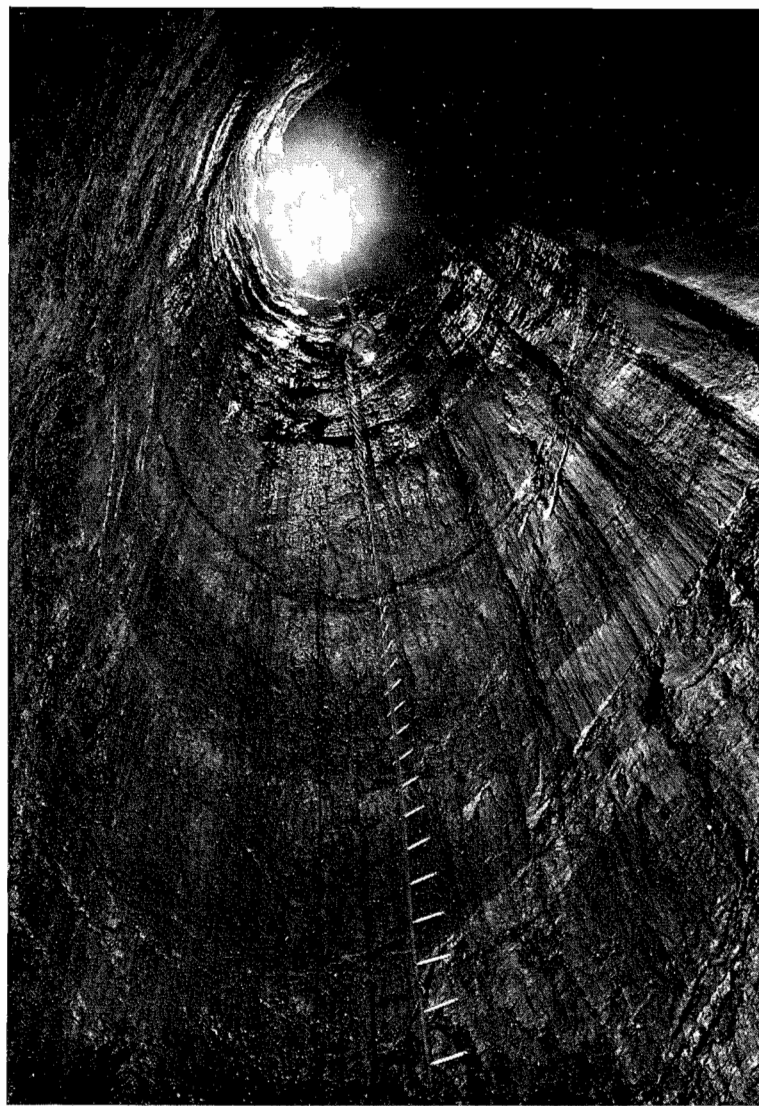
Glyn Edwards and David Judson of the Yorkshire Ramblers' Club.

THE JOURNEY

For transport we used a short wheelbase Land Rover and a hired 30 cwt. Commer van. The 1,800 mile journey to Turkey took us just 52 hours of almost non-stop driving and my only recollections of this section of our trip was of a breaking dawn in the mountains of Austria, of a monotonous day crossing Yugoslavia's vast plain and of a magnificent daybreak as we descended from the mountains into Bulgaria. After a swim in the Sea of Marmara we headed for the early morning rush hour of Istanbul. Rush it was, we were jostled along at 50 m.p.h. through narrow winding streets, down wide boulevards, past mosques, exotic bazaars, crowded shops and finally into a street teeming with life, leading to the ferry. The crossing was uneventful but extremely interesting as we had to wind our way between submarines, destroyers and high speed launches.

The distance to the Iranian border from Istanbul is about 1,300 miles and it is in the last half of this that one first begins to realise that home is far away. Everything is so different. The roads become narrower and in some places just dirt tracks. Cars are a rarity and oncoming lorries threaten dangerously. The distance between towns lengthens and we could sometimes travel an hour or more without seeing a soul. The mountains grow bigger and the passes higher. Nature's marvels go by in increasing frequency—dazzling white salt lakes, oppressive gorges, incredible rock formations, spectacular vistas and burnt up plains. Turkey's farewell is an hour long view of the snow-capped Mount Ararat guarded by the mounds of seemingly impassable badlands.

If we thought that Eastern Turkey was thousands of miles from home then the moment we crossed into Iran we might have been a million miles away. The people had different features, they were more inquisitive but much friendlier. All the signs were now in "Farsi", written in a form of Arabic which defied our attempt at translation but added considerably to the sport of "navigation". Everything seemed to be on a much grander scale—we entered a wide but precipitously sided gorge just after Basorgan which occasionally revealed ex-



GHAR PARAU: THIRD PITCH—THE EROICA

J. C. Whalley

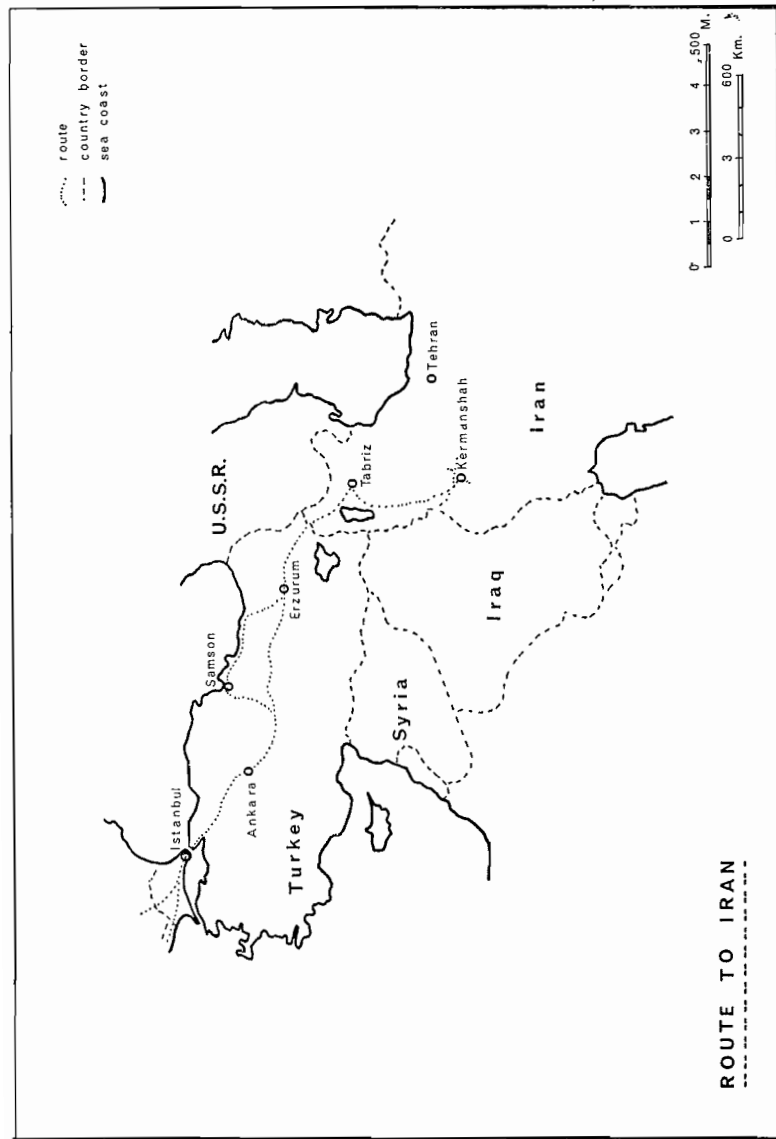
pansive views of mystic mountains. This valley we followed almost to Shahabad where the scenery gave way to extensive lowlands before descending onto the flatlands leading to Tabriz.

We now turned off the main Tehran road and headed south past the tantalising but unreachable Lake Reza'iyeh. Tantalising because although the heat was unbearable the water was just too far away to reach. At one point long fingers of salt did stretch to the road but the actual water remained as far away as ever. The next town of Miyandoab saw us make our first mistake when we took the road towards the Turkish frontier instead of the one to Saqqez. We were stopped by an English speaking Iranian about one hour out who, after surveying our dispirited state (at least an inch of dust on all of us) invited us back to Miyandoab to clean up and spend the night at his house. An incredibly hospitable gesture which was appreciated by all of us and proved to be typical of the majority of Iranian people we met.

The next day saw us revitalised and on our final stretch. Through more hot, dusty and inquisitive towns, down to the fine Gonbad River gorge and then we had our first views of the impressive massif at the far end of which our objective, Kuh i Parau, was situated.

PROBLEMS

We had originally intended, by deductions made from our maps, to camp in the large valley behind Taq i Bustan but, in spite of there being several small villages, water was non-existent save for an odd very sluggish and muddy spring. We searched along the base of the mountains towards the bas-relief of Darius at Bisutan but without success. That first night and the second we spent behind the Highway Patrol post on the main road camping on two inches of dust. On the third day in desperation we decided to ask for help from the Governor of Kermanshahan Province. Our first visit in our best but rather battered clothes found him at lunch, at our second we were requested to return the following day but the third brought unbelievable success. The Governor showed considerable interest in our project and offered us the use of one of his private estates at Kezrezendeh, some 15 miles



north of Kermanshah. He also offered us all the assistance we might require through Mr. Abrahamiy, the Director of Radio and Information who acted as our interpreter at the interview.

THE CAMP, THE PEOPLE

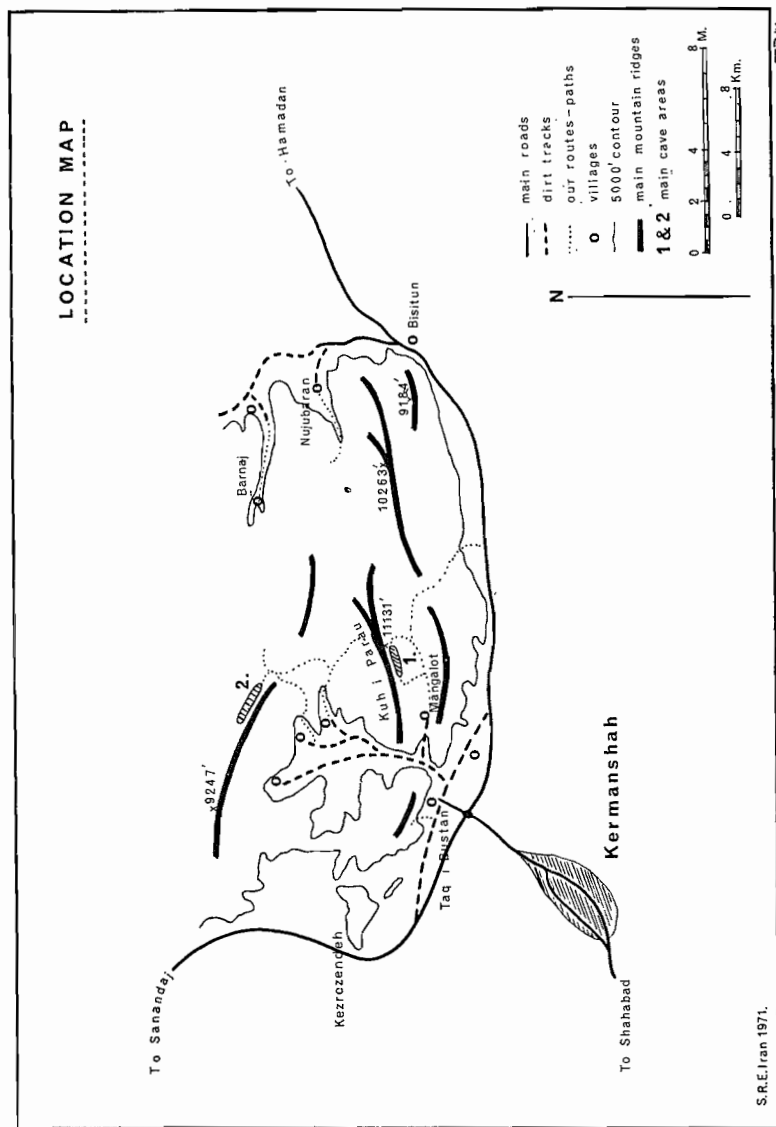
Kezrezendeh was Paradise; it consisted of a deep resurgence pool some 100 yards by 50 situated at the base of a 6,000 ft. high craggy hill. The pool was surrounded on its other sides by lush level green fields edged in the distance by the subsidiary peaks of Parau.

We really met and came to know the local villagers and tribesmen on our first Friday when we learned that the place where we had pitched our tents was also the place where they held a weekly dance. At 8 a.m. (four hours after eight of us had left for the mountains) a steady stream of Kurdish people began to investigate the camp and the remaining slumbering trio. By 8.30 nothing could be seen of the camp except a heaving mass of brightly dressed women and inquisitive men. At 9 a.m. amid excited drumming and frantic fluting, traditional Kurdish dancing got under way some fifty yards from our tents continuing unabated until dusk.

The Kurds we found the most interesting people we had come across. The women were extremely pretty and showed themselves off in glittering dresses and decorated hair. They never wore veils, unlike the peoples just south of Kermanshah or those 100 miles further north. The men, whilst not so brightly clothed, wore a very distinctive and individual dress. All, without exception, were immensely friendly and would always give but never accept.

EXPLORATION

Each day we would split into two groups, one to explore around the base of Parau whilst the other attempted to cover as much of the mountain as possible. The very high temperatures (it was often up to 100° F. by 10 a.m.) necessitated starting our day well before dawn so that the mountain party could gain coolness with height. The valley party were only able to explore in the early hours before being compelled to seek shelter from the sun.



All the same, the valley team were the first to report any form of success when it added to the Kezrezendeh resurgence four more major springs. Moving eastwards round the mountain these were at Taq i Bustan, Bisutan, Barnaj, and Nujubarin, all sites of small villages around the 4,000 ft. to 4,500 ft. level. Unfortunately in all cases the water rose from depth and never came out of actual caves. No entrances of any sort were in fact found at or near valley level.

The uphill parties, whilst slower in first making any discoveries, were eventually much more successful when two plateaux were found each with numerous shakeholes. The first was situated immediately below the summit of Parau at a height of 10,000 ft. and the other about three miles north (marked Areas 1 and 2 on the map).

AREA 2

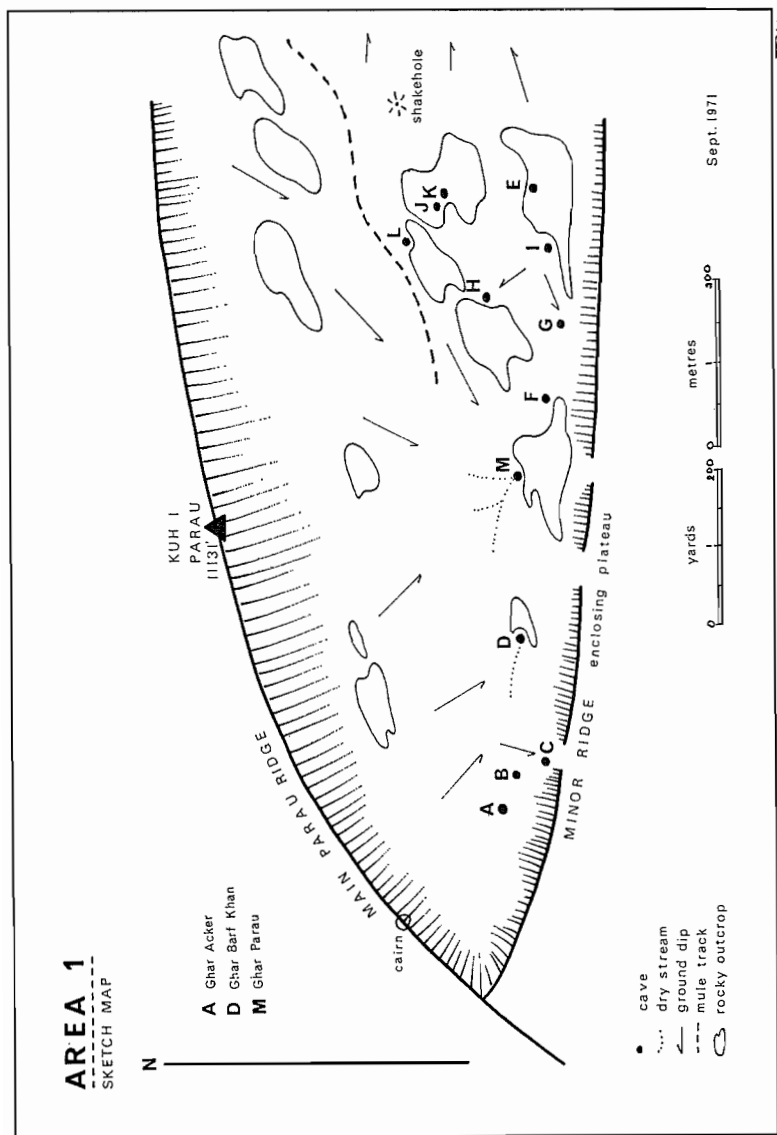
This was visited twice, once when it was discovered and then again on a two day pushing camp. To get to it we followed a steeply ascending donkey track at the north east end of the valley for some 3,500 ft. vertical. When the track eventually levelled out we entered a series of stepping poljes, each containing numerous shakeholes, several shafts, and many other karst forms which made the areas very interesting to explore. As I only descended a few shafts in poljes 1 and 2 the following descriptions are taken, in the main, from the notes of Peter Standing who led the second camping trip.

CAVE DESCRIPTIONS IN AREA 2

P.0. A large depression on the north side of the track at the end of a subsidiary valley. This terminated as a thirty foot shaft leading into a small chamber with three passages all blocked by boulders.

P.1. About 150 ft. further along, this hole was found with some difficulty at the base of some fine rock flutings. It consists of a 60 ft. entrance pitch followed by a further pitch which proved too tight to enter.

P.2. This was the largest shakehole in the second polje and has a tight entrance leading to a steep boulder slope finishing in a fifteen ft. and twenty ft. pitch down to a choke.



P.3. Immediately beneath an enormous boulder at the base of a small cliff is a 50 ft. pitch. At the base of this a northward passage continues to another choke.

P.4. Towards the third polje at the base of a small crag is a blocked twenty ft. shaft.

The track into the third and largest polje passes two dry stream beds, the first sinking in mud and the second sinking in boulders over what seemed to be a shaft. A small ridge crosses the polje and on the other side are more holes.

P.5. A large shakehole south of the path with a 24 ft. pitch, choked.

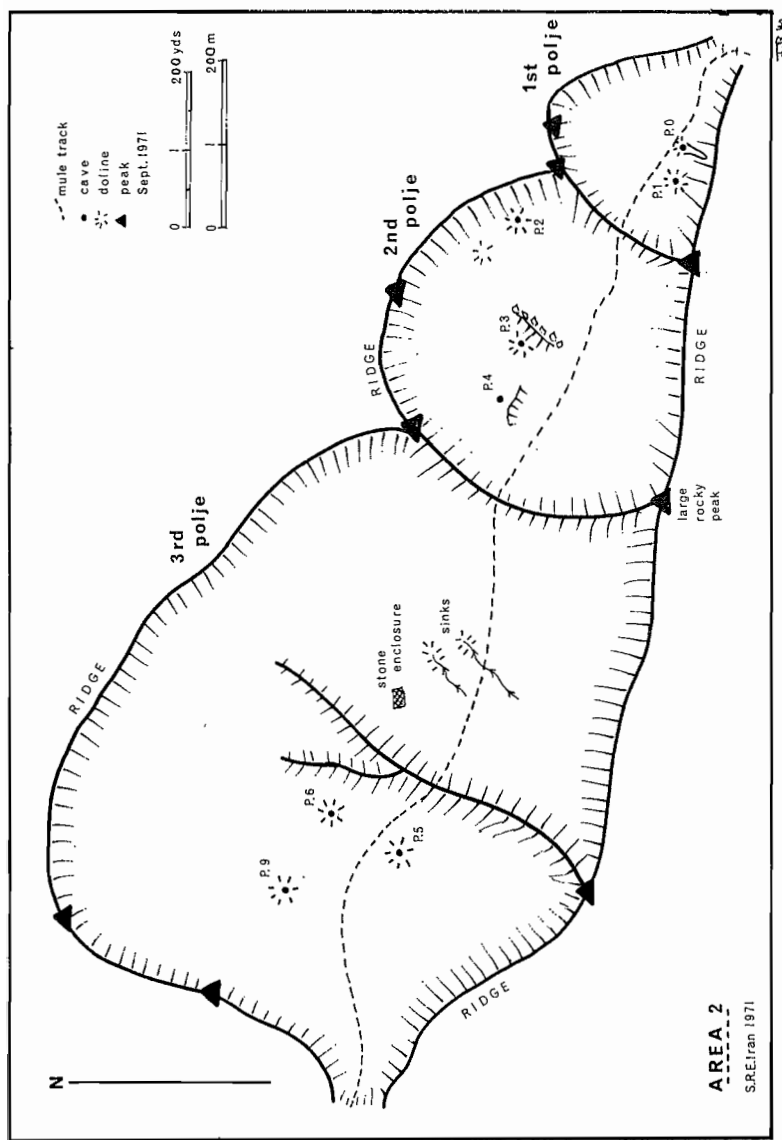
P.6. An even larger shakehole to the north of the path leads to a 60 ft. pitch, this time choked with dry mud.

There were also several other shakeholes but none containing any more open shafts, although, continuing further up the mountain one member did claim to have seen more holes.

Peter Standing also led a reconnaissance to the north side of Kuh i Parau by following the most easterly arm of the main valley until it curved round and headed in to the mountain up an impressive gorge or "tang" as the Iranians know them. To use Peter's words, the "ascent of this, which provided sporting climbing, eventually leads to a broad fan shaped slope immediately below the sheer summit faces. Two potholes were found here, one of 60 ft. and the other of 95ft. The latter has an ice plug at the bottom."

AREA 2

A reconnoitering party led by David Judson stumbled across this incredible plateau at an altitude of almost 10,000 ft. but did not have sufficient time to do more than note a few entrances. Shortly afterwards a second party armed with ropes and ladders made the ascent to the caves and were successful in discovering Ghar Acker as well as several shafts. The potential was now proved so a further camping trip was organised, this time with the assistance of three donkeys, a donkey driver and two gendarmes (as supposed protection against supposed leopards). The original route to the plateau was via a 1,500 ft. Very Difficult climb, followed by much sporting scrambling but now that there were donkeys the way



followed a crumbling track which zig zagged up to and then across an almost sheer face.

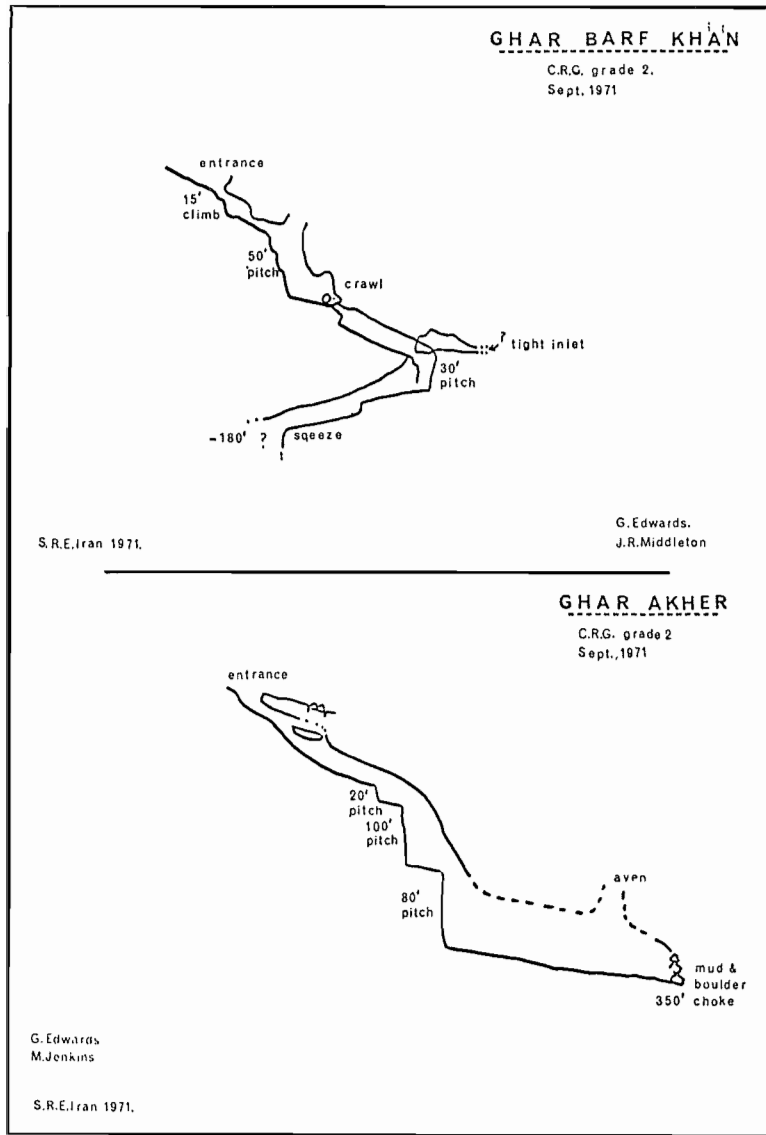
Whilst the path steadily climbs upwards an increasingly panoramic view gradually unfolds as first ridges and then peaks fall below its level. The final vista, which transcends all others, is seen as the path climbs over the last ridge before dropping onto the plateau. It is of untamed magnificence with bare, jagged peaks and ridges in the foreground falling 6,000 ft. to the broad flat Qareh Su plain on which Kermanshah sits and in the distance even mightier mountains than Parau can be seen thrusting upwards through the haze. The scene towards the plateau is none the less impressive and offers a complete contrast of solitude and silence. Low rocky outcrops lead down to a flat green expanse almost 1,200 yards long and 400 yards wide. The whole is enclosed by ridges of varying height climbing to the summit of Kuh i Parau still over a thousand feet above.

On this third visit, Ghar Barf Khan was explored to an unfinished depth of 200 ft. whilst Ghar Parau was descended to a depth of over 700 ft. This proved even bigger than had been anticipated and required more men and equipment so again a retreat from the mountains was made and further plans devised.

The final attack was made by nine men during a five day camp on the plateau. Six donkeys were used to help carry up sufficient equipment. The party suffered two casualties before exploration had properly commenced when Dave Land developed altitude sickness combined with a chest complaint and David Judson contracted an eye infection which necessitated both members returning to the valley.

CAVE DESCRIPTIONS IN AREA 1

A. Ghar Acker (First Cave). So called as it is the first cave on the western end of the plateau and also the first one to be explored. The entrance is at the end of an oval shake-hole and sports a squeeze past a snow plug onto a loose rock slope leading to a narrow rift. This almost immediately drops 15 ft., but the hole can be bypassed via a side passage which re-enters the rift just before a further 20 ft. pitch. The small chamber at the bottom has another inlet but this proved too



tight to explore. Almost immediately a very fine 100 ft. shaft falls into a further chamber with another 85 ft. drop after a short narrow section. The passage at the bottom is almost 10 ft. wide and for the next 200 ft. it is impossible to see the roof. The finish is a loose mud and boulder choke which may repay further attention. Total depth, 350 ft.

B. A boulder filled shakehole through which it is just possible to reach and descend a 25 ft. choked pitch. Total depth, 40 ft.

C. Another completely choked shaft without much hope.

D. Ghar Barf Khan (Snow Place Cave). This was named as such due to its nearness to some stone shelters which bear the name Barf Khan. The entrance is perhaps the most promising looking on the whole plateau as it is free from boulders and consists of a cave type opening. This is followed almost immediately by a 15 ft. climbable shaft with an exit at the bottom over a large block. The small chamber at the other side has two pitches in it, one being 20 ft. and choked, and the other one, after an unstable take off, drops 50 ft. via three steps into a large passage. After 40 ft. this finishes and a two ft. high crawl on the left is the continuation. At the end of the crawl the floor drops away and becomes a tight rift where progress is made by jamming at various levels, the only large section being at a 30 ft. pitch where a small inlet was also investigated. The cave was not pushed to its limit but only to a tight looking pitch shortly after three rather awkward squeezes. Total depth, 180 ft.

E. This is a small ascending cave, 12 ft. long.

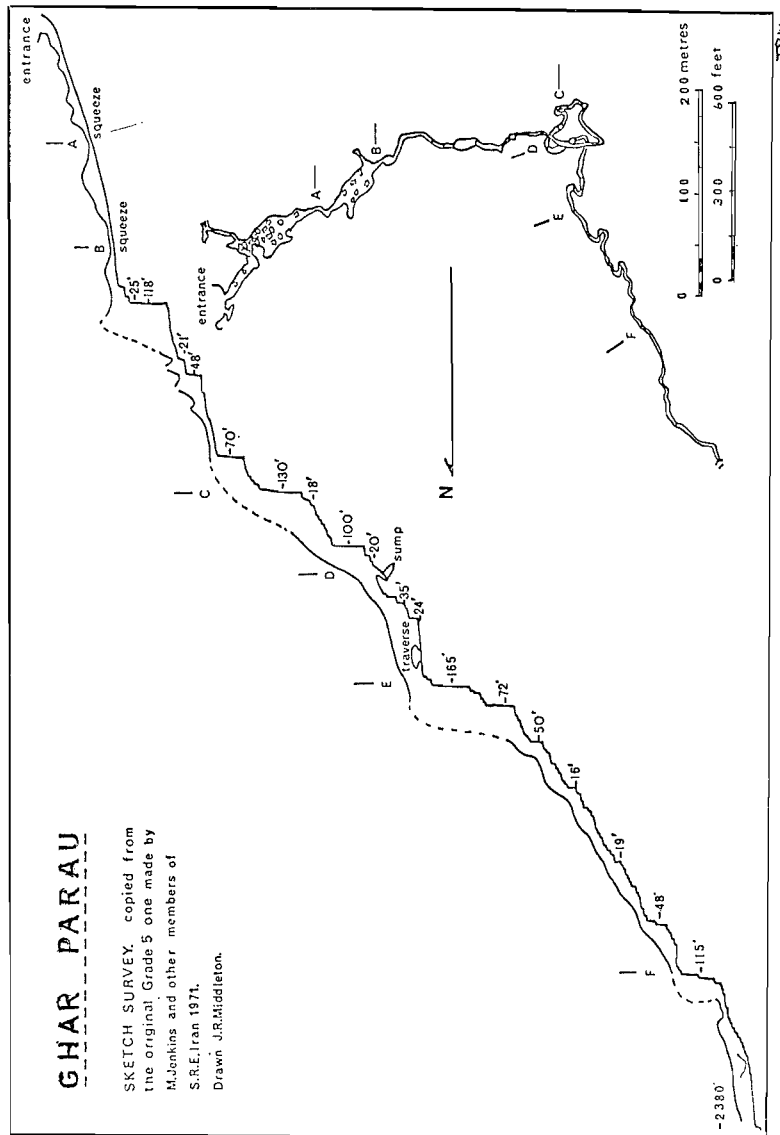
F. A completely choked shakehole.

G. A very fine 70 ft. pitch unfortunately blocked by boulders.

H. At the base of a rock outcrop a descending rift closes down just within sight of daylight.

I. It was descended but was estimated to be 50 ft. deep with no obvious way on.

J. The largest open hole on the plateau. It measures nearly 70 ft. long and 30 ft. wide. It can be climbed to its floor 30 ft. below via its north wall. A tight shaft leads off opposite but could only be descended for a further ten ft. Total depth, 40 ft.



K. Situated only 20 ft. away from J. this hole is almost as impressive being circular and 30 ft. in diameter. A 55 ft. pitch drops onto a snow plug. At the eastern end a narrow fissure descends a further 30 ft. into a largish chamber which has no outlet. Total depth, 85 ft.

L. A quite promising sink which runs inwards for 40 ft. to a three inch wide crack.

M. GHAR PARAU (PARAU POT). As the largest of all the sinks on the plateau this cave is at the end of three dry stream beds which converge just before cascading over several large blocks of red chert into the entrance. In the stream bed at this point are several deep holes covered with flat rocks which are used as a water supply source after the streams have dried up by hunters and shepherds. Unfortunately there was none there during our camp. Once inside the six ft. high entrance arch, a series of steeply dipping boulder strewn chambers lead to an extremely chaotic section. Through here the same route was rarely followed twice, the only obvious pointer being a 15 ft. high mud covered boulder which had to be negotiated each time.

Shortly afterwards a more solid passage begins to develop only to close down suddenly to a three ft. wide by one ft. high crawl (A). Once through, the rewards are impressive as the continuation is a passage up to 40 ft. in diameter passing glistening calcite flows and grottos, over hard mud floors and down rocky cascades. In this section a large inlet enters containing several deep crystal clear pools from which fresh water was laboriously fetched for the camp each day.

Such beauty could only be short lived and round the next corner a head-first vertical slot twists into a horizontal squeeze (B). Several rocks had to be removed before further progress could be made.

On the other side of this constriction the cave presented us with a completely different face. From a gently sloping, roughly circular passage it now develops into a high rift, steeply descending numerous pitches and cascades in rapid succession. The cave is immensely solid with large Aventure chambers at the bottom of every shaft and high narrow twisting passages leading off which frequently need sideways movement. This latter is made more awkward by the many

smaller steps up to ten ft. deep with chilly pools as landing places.

At the 1,000 ft. level (D) a small trickle of water, which has gradually developed, sumps in a constricted section but a way on was found by retreating for 100 ft. and then chimneying up into an abandoned and very greasy passage. This rejoins the trickle some 40 ft. lower down and 100 ft. further on. After two more pitches the stream again sumps, this time after a very jagged and sharp hands and knees crawl. Again a way on was found by going back and traversing upwards for nearly 50 ft. into a dazzling fairyland of virgin formations and needle sharp helictites. An airy but jug-handled descent is made at the end into a chamber with mud and gravel finely layered into a cross section nearly eight ft. thick. Several more cascades lead to the largest pitch yet found, a magnificent 165 ft. (E). This was the lowest point which I reached but on the last day an extremely fit team consisting of Glyn Edwards, Peter Standing and Mike Jenkins pushed on down a similar passageway for a further 1,000 ft. of depth in an epic 26 hour trip. They were stopped on the edge of a drop for which no more tackle was left.

Such success in so short a time (just five trips down the cave) can be attributed to just two things; the first was the marvellous team work and the second the abseiling and prussiking techniques which were used solely from the 900 ft. level downwards. The total depth we reached was 2,383 ft. with a length of passage just under one mile. The majority of the survey is to C.R.G. Grade 5c but the one reproduced in this Journal is in a condensed sketch form.

RETURN AND POSTSCRIPT

Our homeward journey we varied as much as possible and spread over fourteen days. We started by visiting the remainder of the mountain range to the west, finding it as promising as Parau. There proved to be even larger resurgences and we had some excitement when we were all rounded up one dark night by Kurdish soldiers who suspected us of being Iraqi infiltrators. Luckily, after being taken to their hill-top fort, we found that the commanding officer spoke a little English

so after just one night 'under guard' we continued our journey.

Through Turkey we travelled along the dismal and well-named Black Sea where we felt rain for the first time in five weeks. After Istanbul we kept south, crossed Greece and journeyed up the Yugoslav coast for its full 600 miles. From there it was straightforward across Italy, Austria and so back to the Autobahns.

The autumn of 1972 will see a further expedition to Ghar Parau which should have returned just before this report is published, but too late to be included. However it is hoped that if a new depth record is not reached at least the 3,000 ft. level will be passed.

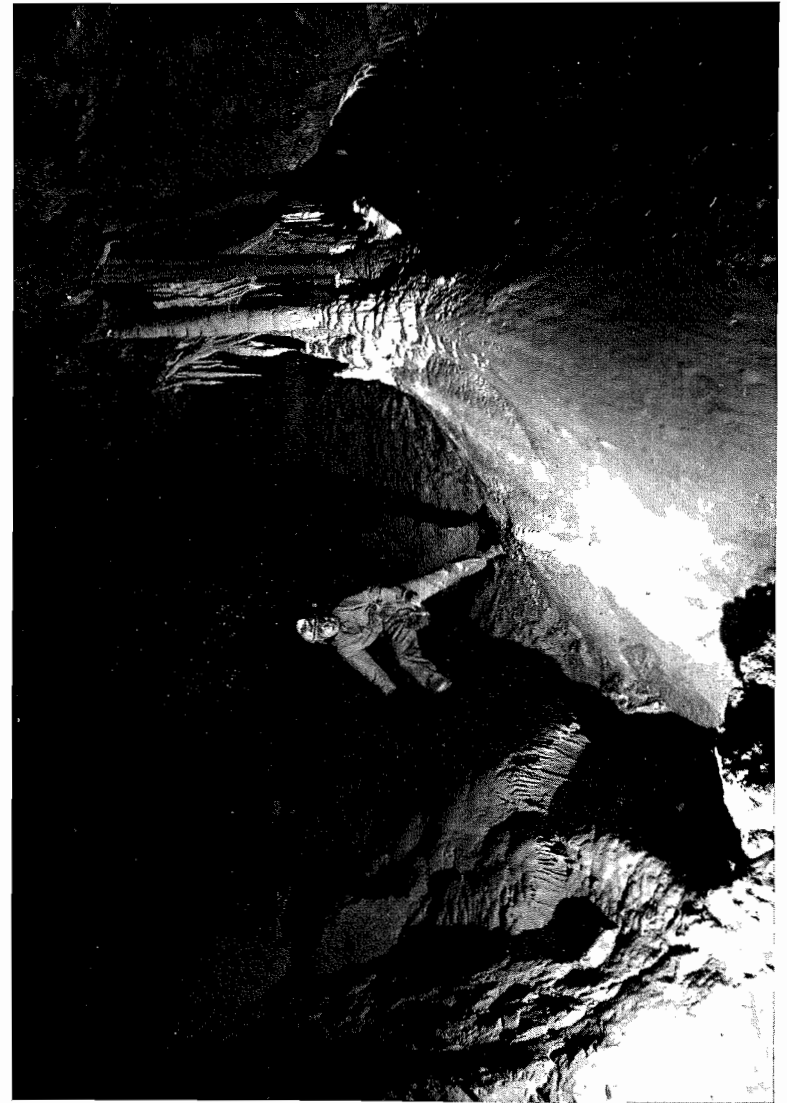
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Glyn Edwards	Yorkshire Ramblers' Club
John Harper	Wolverhampton Cave Club
Christine Jenkins	Food Officer. Wolverhampton Cave Club
Mike Jenkins	Wolverhampton Cave Club
David Judson	Deputy Leader. Yorkshire Rambler's Club
Peter Kaye	Cave Diving Group.
Harvey Lomas	British Speleological Association
David Land	South African Speleological Association
Janet Middleton	Food Officer
John Middleton	Leader. Yorkshire Ramblers' Club
Peter Standing	Doctor. University of Bristol Speleological Society

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to Mr. Adelpour, his liaison officer and the local Highway Policemen. In this country Mr. A. M. Shapurian, the Press Attaché at the Imperial Iranian Embassy worked extremely hard on our behalf and Mr. Norman Falcon, ex of B.P., gave us considerable practical information on the area. And last but not least our thanks to the lady members of our expedition, Christine and Janet, without whose charm at the borders, patience at meal times and resilience to hardship, it is doubtful if we should ever have made it...



GHAR PARAU : CYRUS THE GREAT

SOME USEFUL NOTES AND LOGISTICS TAKEN FROM THE EXPEDITION

by J. R. Middleton

GENERAL

The length of the journey from Calais to Kermanshah proved to be 3,880 miles. With non-stop driving to Istanbul and thereafter stopping each night it took us just 6½ days. With the exception of a 70 mile stretch of very badly corrugated dirt road around Myandoab in Iran the roads are surprisingly good. We had no problems with customs either way but at the Iran/Turkey crossing there was a good hour's paper work. A visa for each person entering Iran is required and must be obtained in England. An individual transit visa is also needed for Bulgaria but this can be obtained at the border.

TRANSPORT

It is necessary to obtain a Carnet de Passage from the A.A. before taking a vehicle into Iran. The normal Green Card Insurance is valid in all countries with the exception of Bulgaria and Iran where good comprehensive cover can easily be arranged at the border.

Short Wheelbase Land Rover. The total mileage covered was 9,980 at an average of 18 miles per gallon. The only maintenance required was for one puncture, two oil changes, one new oil filter, four new light bulbs, one new speedo cable and a new wing mirror. The usual load was three persons (rather cramped) plus 800 lbs. Extras which proved very useful were free-wheeling hubs, and extra ten-gallon petrol tank and a tropical roof.

Commer 30 cwt. Walk Thru Van. The total mileage covered was 8,050 at an average of 13 miles per gallon. The only maintenance required was five oil changes, two new oil filters, five light bulbs and one puncture repair. The usual load was eight persons plus 1,800 lbs. The dividing partition was removed and a three man seat added, two hammocks were also slung across and proved very useful.

FOOD AND COOKING

We had approximately 25% of our food donated by firms and the remainder was purchased, usually at advantageous prices. Of what we took about 40% was dehydrated, 40% was tinned and the remainder we purchased locally. Meat and sweet things proved to be the most important items and those most in demand as fresh meat rarely looks trustworthy and anything sweet is almost unobtainable.

Whilst travelling we cooked breakfasts but purchased our evening meals and found this an ideal solution so that the vehicles were not disrupted too much. Once in camp we cooked breakfasts and evening meals and took dry snacks on our explorations. For the first week we all drank vast quantities of fluids and the three gallons of concentrated cordials we took soon ran out.

For cooking we used petrol stoves but found them, once encamped, unsatisfactory for such hot and dusty conditions. Gas or paraffin are probably better.

EQUIPMENT

As we were primarily a reconnaissance expedition we only took the minimum of gear but in the event used it all. Items which we found of particular use were bolts (for placing belays), pegs (for climbing and where cracks were available for easier belays), gloves (for abseiling and avoiding cuts), and good quality nylon rope (the cheaper tended to twist badly when abseiling).

We took and used:—

1,000 ft.	1½" polypropylene rope
600 ft.	1¼" cheap nylon rope (hawser laid)
300 ft.	1¼" good nylon rope (hawser laid)
1,000 ft.	wire ladder
30	bolts
25	pegs
56 lb.	carbide

Surveying was done with Suunto Compasses and Clinometers plus fibron tapes.

FINANCIAL

To say that the only item we received free was about £50 worth of food the expedition was a surprisingly low cost one as can be seen from the balance sheet.

Expenditure	£	Income	£
Administrative	36.46	Member payments	1,228.04
Equipment	93.59	Sale of goods	11.02
Photographic	82.07	Other income	15.28
Food	101.86		
Publishing (to 1972)	50.00		
Miscellaneous	19.88		
Ferry (Channel)	74.00		
Land Rover. All away			
expenses	199.00		
insurance, repairs			
servicing, etc.	76.64		
Van. all away			
expenses	184.53		
insurance, rental,			
repairs, etc.	151.88		
Refund to members	184.44		
	<hr/>		<hr/>
	£1,254.44		£1,254.44
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GHAR PARAU 1972

by Harvey Lomas

PLANNING AND FINANCES

THE SECOND EXPEDITION to Ghar Parau was a far longer expedition than that of the previous year. Firstly it was a different kind of undertaking. Ghar Parau had the chance of becoming the world's deepest known cave. The year before we knew very little or nothing about the areas around Kermanshah; our task then was solely to try and find caves.

Now we had a cave, Ghar Parau, some 2,300 ft. deep. John Middleton, the leader on the first expedition, was unfortunately unable to take part in this second one. David Judson who was Deputy Leader on the first trip stepped into John's place. A. C. Waltham became the Deputy Leader; almost all the members from the previous year came, and some fresh blood was brought in, mostly from the Craven Pothole Club.

The previous expedition had been entirely financed by members. This time sponsorship was sought—book rights, television rights and grants from the R.G.S., M.E.F., W.U.E.A. and the Yorkshire Ramblers' Club. The bulk of the planning naturally fell on David Judson, Tony Waltham and the treasurer, John Whalley, and took ten months. It included an attempt to arrange through Kermanshah for a water supply for a camp on the plateau of Kuh-Parau. The plan favoured by most of the members was to use ladders to the first camp and Prusiking techniques from then on.

It had also been decided early on that most members would fly out to Iran while a party travelled overland with the gear. In addition three big cartons would be sent via T.I.R. to Tehran. The overland party consisted of S. Craven, R. Blackham, J. Allonby and myself. The Landrover left England on 5th August 1972, the rest followed two weeks later on the 19th August.

After ten months of normal clean living I found myself once more on the road. The route taken was the same as the previous year—Belgium, Germany, Austria, Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, Turkey and finally Iran. We arrived in Kermanshah on Monday, 14th August. Little time was lost in finding a

camp; permission was given to camp in the grounds of the new television station. The site chosen was in a little wood, very good for shade. There were six days in which to acclimatise, find all the cool spots and keep away from the flies if that was ever possible.

Two days before the flying contingent arrived, Roy Blackham and Stephen Craven went to Tehran to meet them and also to pick up the three cartons of much needed food. When they went to collect, they found that the goods had been impounded by the Iranian Customs on the Turkish-Iranian border some 700 miles due west of Tehran. When the matter had been cleared with the government departments in the capital Craven had to drive to the border and then back to Kermanshah. This took several days and he did not arrive back until Friday, 25th August.

While this was taking place the expedition had to carry on, on limited food, so that only a small party could go up to the plateau. An attempt to organise a helicopter lift petered out in a succession of directions from one office to another. Fortunately negotiations were more fruitful with the 'Donkey Man', a one-eyed Kurd who seemed to own the mules. The only trouble was the hire rate which rose by the day and even by the hour. The first job was laddering the cave and drilling holes for belaying bolts. John Harper who knew the cave organised the team. By Wednesday, 23rd August, food became short and progress in the cave stopped. On the Friday the main food had arrived and on the Saturday the gear was ready for the plateau.

This was it—rope, food, extra camping gear, were carried up to Mangalat, the village just before the first col (Mangalat Col). The walk started in the late afternoon to avoid the sun. The rest of the party set quite a pace and I still felt unfit from mild dysentery. Having new boots to break in did not help. There was good light as far as the first col, though it faded quickly above that. The party had separated into couples and I was with John Whalley. It had been ten months since I last did this walk. I managed to find the correct gully to climb. We were in semi-darkness by now, when John asked "Leopards—was it true they lived in these mountains?" "No", I said, "in my opinion they are extinct in this area". John would not

take my word, arming himself with a piece of wood, and saying that he did not feel like taking chances.

I said, "If it's any consolation, they are nocturnal and this is when they do their hunting". John picked up a larger stick. The higher we went the more difficult it became. The only signs of life we could see about the black mountain side were the Kurdish tents with fires burning far down below. The sound of bells on the flocks were the only noises to be heard above the wind. Occasionally we would become caught up in patches of large thistles. As far as the second col the path could be followed, though higher it became more obscure, and eventually disappeared. The moon cast a shadow on our side of Kuh-Parau and in total darkness we were lost. At this point questions from John regarding leopards became more frequent. We went straight up and reached the plateau with only about half a mile to walk across to the camp. Later Mike Jenkins and Bob Graham did come across a leopard on the summit ridge of Kuh-Parau but it just moved out of sight.

The next day I wanted a good trip, and somehow felt I was going to get one. After several alterations in plan I ended up going with John Whalley and carrying three big ropes all nicely coiled and each 300 ft. long. So, with three shiny new ropes, we entered the cave. It was not too difficult traversing through the large entrance chambers, though the occasional crawl presented a problem. Our real trouble began below the much feared "Eroica". This splendid third pitch is completely freehanging. I abseiled down first and John followed after he had lowered the three ropes. I felt very nervous when I stepped over the edge and the rope had a thick coating of mud. One had absolute trust in the equipment and in the people who had fixed it there. Into the void I started moving fast down the rope, eventually splashing into a pool of water. John and I took turns in carrying the extra rope; by now all three had become wet, and loose, just bundles to be shoved through the narrow sections, to fall into pools at the bottom of narrow pots, then to be fished out of the cold brown mucky water. The deeper you go the more difficult it becomes and we ended up throwing them down climbs. One of us would stand at the bottom of the 'pots' and the other would throw the ropes down into the pool, showering his

fellow with very cold gritty water. Trying to manoeuvre with two ropes over your shoulder, catching on stalactites, stalagmites, rock projections, and even the other fellows boots, was hard. We reached the first sump, and unfortunately went down to the siphon: we should have climbed into the roof, just before some very difficult climbs and squeezes. This mistake demoralised us so we decided to call it a day. Besides John was having trouble with his sight.

The next day, Monday, was a rest day for John and myself, but not for Mike Jenkins and Peter Standing. They went down to look for a camp site near the limit of previous exploration. They past the previous year's depth and found a siphon blocking the passage about one hundred feet further down. It was quite a disappointment to us all.

The only thing now was for Glyn Edwards and Peter Livesey to attempt to find a route over the siphon. Both were very good climbers; the success of the expedition rested upon them. Just above the siphon the roof dipped steeply down to the water. Glyn and Peter's job was to find a route farther back where the passage was highest.

Halfway down Peter became ill, so Arthur Champion of the Craven Pothole Club, took his place. The chances were slender. It was a long way down at 2,300 ft. and risks could not be taken. Glyn and Arthur made several attempts at climbing out, up pitches on very muddy walls with hardly any protection, but could not find a route.

The only tasks that remained were to photograph the cave and to conclude the survey. John Harper and Clive Green went down to the bottom and finished off the survey. John Whalley, Tony Waltham, Bob Graham and I undertook the photographic work. John Whalley was the chef, the rest of us were but the kitchen helpers. Although his recipe took a long time to prepare, the results were excellent and much praised. The last and final task, the de-tackling, is usually a very hard part of any expedition. In three trips the cave was stripped of the ladders and ropes, that had only a week previously been carried down so hopefully.

Next men and equipment headed down to Kermanshah. Stephen Craven and I were first down to the col. We had

to arrange for mules the next morning to ferry the gear down from the plateau. When the mules arrived, six in all, the Kurds started to overload the poor creatures; some even collapsed under the strain. On the way down one mule was killed when it lost balance and fell well over 1,000 ft.

On arriving in Kermanshah, my first operation was to set up a shower, on the lawn of the television station. There was quite a contrast, high up on the quiet dusty plateau among eagles and leopards, surrounded by great pinnacles of jagged limestone, in looking down at Kermanshah and seeing clouds of swirling hot air, or conversely in gazing up at Kuh-Parau mountain from the noisy crowded streets of the city.

Members soon after coming down from the mountain went their separate ways, some to Isfahan, others to climb Mount Damavand. The overland party of four headed for Tehran. We planned to go home via Baghdad and Syria and on to Southern Turkey. Visas were necessary in order to visit these places, hence the trip to Tehran.

The expedition had been staying with an ex-Craven Pothole Club member, Dr. John Sutcliff, in Tehran. Having been used to sleeping rough under the stars for over a month, we were pleased at the chance of staying under a roof (an air conditioned roof). The effect was most refreshing, as was cool beer and an open air swimming pool. On my first night I remember jumping straight off the balcony into the pool. Some people even had a bed to sleep in. The following day was to be a very busy one indeed. Iran had no diplomatic relations with Iraq, so we had to go via the Afghanistan Embassy. The Iraqis, rather than completely close their Embassy, just changed brass plates. It was the time of the Olympic massacre and we were proposing to visit a left-wing Arab state, so the situation was delicate.

The embassy was found, we all bundled through the narrow gate straight into the little office, with a little Arab, supporting a large smile. We stood directly in front of him and asked for visas. "Yes", he said. On producing our British passports his smile dropped as though someone had dropped a portrait of their latest general on his foot! There were no visas for Britons; this had been so for about a year. No trip to Baghdad—this was quite a disappointment. To make up for the

Baghdad flop Isfahan was the next place, and after several days of the good life, the journey home began. Down to Isfahan, across the Zagros Mountains to Kermanshah, up to the Turkish border, through the mountainous region of Southern Turkey.

The first night involved a drive of 150 miles down through the holy city of Quwair. It was there that I saw my first really impressive looking mosque and that was only a sample of the things to come. In the morning we entered the city in style on the top of the Landrover roofrack. My first impressions seemed just another dusty town, very western in appearance, full of madly rushing taxis—a national feature of Iran. The first mosque I saw was the 'Chahabareh College' (School of Theology). It was bright blue, mosaic tiles, patterns in gold, white, and a rusty red—the designs varied, mostly flowers connected by white curving lines.

We had only five hours in Isfahan. I would have liked more, but the others didn't agree. Next I went to the "Maiden Shah Squar", which was dominated by the "Majjid-i-shah" or Royal Mosque. After our brief visit to Isfahan, the long journey back to Kermanshah began. The route threaded through the Zagros mountain into Luristan, at first travelling along wide plains as far as Daran. At this stage our tyres began to rip beyond repair, and we had to buy new ones. As soon as Kermanshah was reached all the gear was repacked. It took a whole day and finally we said farewell to Kuh-Parau and the people who had helped the expedition.

THE JOURNEY BACK HOME

The journey started on 11th September and lasted until 26th September, starting in a Landrover, ending in a plane! The route taken was the best and most interesting we could think of, and that was to go up to Lake Reza'lyeh, thus cutting across Turkey.

The first night we camped as usual by the side of the road near Miyandoab; then on to Lake Reza'iyeh. Once in Turkey the scenery improved greatly, with high mountain ranges and lush green valleys carrying large streams. The area as often in Turkey is covered with impressive castles guarding spectacular gorges. The road from Yuksekovia to Van is typical

of this type of scenery. We were not yet out of the old Kurdistan and seeing Kurds riding on horseback through the rocky gorges in their colourful costumes added splendour to the wild surroundings. From there we went to Lake Van, leaving behind the most rugged stretch of road. There were still numerous passes to negotiate on the way to Kayseri. Apart from the windscreen shattering and the trailer tyre bursting, the journey was faultless.

Our objective in visiting Kayseri was a valley called Goreme, situated near the town of Urgüp, just forty miles from Kayseri. The whole of this area is covered in the most unique landforms I have ever seen, with great pillars of volcanic ash eroded to a cone shape and ranging from 10 ft. high to 150 ft. high. These the local people have turned into fortified dwellings. One entered at the bottom, then climbed from floor to floor via little shafts with hand holds carved into the sides. On each level the rooms were connected by very narrow passages, each of which had small windows where the hot unbelievable sun shone through into the cool, semi-dark musty smelling rooms. Some of these eroded towers had rocks balanced on their very tops, probably to give a little more impact to the tourists.

Another feature in the valley of Goreme is equally remarkable, a small valley sliced into the Anatolian plateau which has carved into its sides early Christian dwellings, comprising churches, and general living quarters. For the price of four Turkish Lira (approximately 10p) one was able to explore the valley at will, inspecting the chapels. Each had a name—"The Church with the apple", "The Church with the buckle", the latter being the largest of all the Goreme churches. Inside the churches there are beautiful paintings of scenes from the New Testament, though raiders over the centuries have tried to disfigure them. The churches had several levels and one could explore them all; that day I must have explored several miles of narrow passages with all the thrills of a good caving trip. The occasion I remember best was when I started to climb a shaft and suddenly realised that three sides were missing, leaving me in a very exposed position! In the floors of the churches and in places leading off from the main hall, coffins had been dug out of the soft rock in rows. Care was

needed when walking over them and there was a very strong and unpleasant smell about the place. We could only spend a day in this unique and strange place of Goreme.

From Urgüp we headed south towards the refreshing Mediterranean through Mersin, along to Antalya (between these the scenery improved tremendously). We then turned inland again to Isparta and from there to Izmir. It had taken seven days to cross Turkey; Greece took a day, and the route then went through Yugoslavia.

Near the city of Titograd in Southern Yugoslavia, relationships in the Landrover reached crisis point. There were two separate schools of thought, one wanted to rush back to England, the other didn't want to rush; we went our separate ways. So I found myself along with John Allonby and Roy Blackham, with a large rucksack and a Persian carpet. We managed to obtain a succession of lifts to the beautiful town of Dubrovnik where the three of us just got a cheap student's flight back to England.

LIST OF EXPEDITION MEMBERS

John Allonby	Craven Pothole Club
Roy Blackham	Craven Pothole Club
Arthur Champion	Craven Pothole Club
Stephen Craven	Craven Pothole Club
David P. Ede	Nature Conservancy
Glyn Edwards	Yorkshire Ramblers' Club
Robert Graham	Wolverhampton Caving Club
Clive Green	Craven Pothole Club
John Harper	Wolverhampton Caving Club
Michael Jenkins	Wolverhampton Caving Club
David M. Judson	Yorkshire Ramblers' Club
Peter M. Livesey	Bristol Pothole Club
Harvey A. Lomas	Yorkshire Ramblers' Club
Peter A. Standing	British Speleological Association
Anthony Waltham	Happy Wanderers'
John C. Whalley	Craven Pothole Club

LAND, SEA AND SKYE: THE WHIT MEET 1972

LAND—by A. B. Craven

MEET? Perhaps a misnomer, since many of those who tried to attend never met. It looked very different therefore to different groups as they arrived or failed to arrive from land and sea.

Members and guests who on Saturday had enjoyed a leisurely breakfast at the hotel at Mallaig took a contented stroll down to the pier and were soon aware that small clouds of doubt were blowing around the meet. Larger clouds were already blowing rapidly above Mallaig: the wind was rising, the sea was increasing, there were warnings of gales. But the boat which was booked to take the Club to Coruisk at 2 p.m. was reassuringly tied up alongside the jetty.

Very soon however numerous native bodies, festooned with camping and climbing gear began clambering into it. It was discovered that they were going to camp at Coruisk until Monday. The owner of the boat was not available for comment. His son appeared fleetingly and was politely vague. Wind and sea kept rising, the Scottish boarding party kept increasing until they numbered more than thirty; the omens were definitely bad. The boat eventually cast off at 11 a.m. The time at which it would get back, if it did get back, was in doubt. Unquestionably however it would not be available at 2 p.m. West Coast business acumen had won another victory over the Sassenach.

As YRC members assembled during the morning discussions continued on the pier, in the boat sheds, in cars, in the hotel. Could 60—70 people camp at Coruisk? Did 60—70 people want to camp at Coruisk? What time would the boat get back? Would the crew be willing to make another trip that day? Would conditions be fit for another trip? Nine people had no doubts—they wanted to cross if possible that evening. The boat returned at 4 p.m. and the crew were persuaded to go out again despite the steadily worsening conditions. The party was seen off at 5 p.m. in good shape and full of confidence. No one gave up the ghost on the crossing though everyone except Don Mackay gave up something. The weather was now very bad indeed: the boat arrived back in Mallaig

about 10 p.m. The rest of the meet had set up camp at Loch Morar, where an obliging farmer swept up the manure he had just spread in a field on the edge of the loch so that the YRC could sleep in unpolluted surroundings. This part of the meet was to join the rest at Coruisk on Monday when the boat went over to collect the Scottish party. Most members spent Sunday in comparative shelter along Loch Nevis and the upper reaches of Loch Morar. The full gale developed on Sunday night and was still blowing on Monday morning.

Contact was made with the boat-owner. He wasn't sure, he didn't think it was fit, the party at Coruisk would have to wait until Tuesday, he'd see how the weather developed, he'd make up his mind later in the day, he'd take them tomorrow—most of the Loch Morar party were tired of indecision and made off to Inchnadamph. A handful stayed on. Four got to Coruisk that day when the boat eventually went over to retrieve the Scots. Two other parties of two each made their own way by ferry to Skye and finished up at Elgol and Glen Brittle respectively.

The Inchnadamph party enjoyed good weather for the rest of the week. Parties traversed Suilven and Canisp both ways, and were out on Quinag, Cul Mor, Cul Beg, Stac Polly and Ben More Coigach. A boating party circumnavigated the Summer Isles. Three eagles were observed for a good fifteen minutes hopping about in brilliant sunshine on a nearby ridge. One eminent past president found himself sitting almost in the lap of a basking adder. The camp-site was dry, extensive and covered with the delightful flowers of *dryas octopetala*.

SEA—by E. C. Downham

WHEN the revered fathers of the Club, to wit, the Committee in their wisdom decided upon Coruisk in Skye as the base for the Whitsum Meet of 1972 one dreamed of unforgettable days in the Cuillins where one could feel again the sandpaper of gabbro and lie on the peaks with the Hebrides and the mainland spread out before one in glorious sunshine.

After several trips with the Senior Vice-President in his sea-going yacht, the "Helen-Frances", the attractions of a trip up the West Coast threading a way through the inner Hebrides to Loch Scavaig to join the Club Meet seemed an

ideal method of locomotion. Initially, the crew was supposed to be made up of the Senior Vice-President, hereinafter referred to—amongst other names—as the “Skipper” and the Secretary with the high sounding title of “First Mate”—although it must be admitted at a later date in the cruise, the Skipper forgot the rule of the sea and addressed the Mate with names other than “Mister”. Whilst the “Skipper’s” knowledge of the West Coast of Scotland was never in doubt (after all he spends all the summer months in idleness in the fastnesses of the West) the Mate’s seafaring knowledge was strictly limited to the contents of the liquor locker situated in the sharp end of the boat and whilst such knowledge may have been intimate it did little to ensure the safety of a sea-going passage. The remainder of the crew was supposed to be made up of four of the Y.R.C. misguided enough to trust their lives at sea to the ministrations of the Skipper and his mate. Whether news of the proposed trip had filtered to the four men’s wives is, perhaps, debatable, but certainly, and eventually, the four in question decided, discretion being the better part of valour to journey to Skye by more conventional, if hackneyed, methods and to cross to Loch Scavaig by the private ferry hired to the Y.R.C. at Mallaig.

However, nothing deterred, arrangements were made for the Secretary to meet the Skipper aboard the yacht anchored in Loch Craignish on the morning of Friday of the Whit Meet, an arrangement which meant the former driving north during Thursday night from the Lakes and thereby craftily adding another day to the Meet. Leaving Lakeland after suitably celebrating a wedding—or sympathising with the participants, depending on the point of view—in the village on the Thursday afternoon, midnight saw the Secretary heading north in torrential rain which worsened as the miles slipped by, so much so that speeds were reduced to a miserable 20 miles an hour and less north of the border, and the road alongside Loch Lomond was not only under water, but, in places, completely washed away. Fortunately due to the good offices of the police and the A.A. the ‘mauvais pas’ was successfully circumnavigated, the rain eased to some degree, and after snatching a couple of hour’s sleep around Arrochar, seven o’clock on the Friday morning brought a view of Loch

Craignish with the yacht lying at anchor. Certainly a glorious view from the summit of the hill, but an ominous swell gave food for thought. A brave halloo to the Skipper brought the dinghy bucketing out from the yacht, and after suitable exchange of greetings the pair adjourned to the local hostelry, the “Galley of Lorne” for breakfast intending at least to start the week’s break amongst the flesh pots with someone else doing the galley work. With the intention of returning to the yacht later it was some indication of the power of the wind when it was found to be quite impossible for two subdued yachtsmen to pull a heavily loaded dinghy out in the middle of the lagoon to the yacht, and so the two departed elsewhere to load up with stores and other necessary victuals for the delectation of the Coruisk party.

On their return in the early afternoon the Skipper did take the ferry across to the yacht alone, using his seaman’s knowledge in persuading the Mate first to drag the dinghy no little distance along the water’s edge and then allowing the wind to sweep the dinghy in one almighty flurry of oars to the yacht which the Skipper dexterously impaled with a boat hook. A disconsolate secretary still ashore forthwith adjourned to the hotel to revive the deep depression which had set in and arranged for a powered launch to take him across. It was not until late evening that this was successfully accomplished and so to the bunks for an early start for Coruisk on Saturday morning, confident that the gale would have blown itself out, in spite of the dire forebodings of the Glasgow shipping forecast for Hebridean waters.

Far from dying down the gale gained fresh impetus and it was considered inadvisable (sic !) to sail on the Saturday and the day was not illspent aboard the yacht under the eagle eye of the Skipper ensuring everything was stowed shipshape and the locker at the pointed end wasn’t too frequently broached.

Sunday was a repeat of the previous day’s weather but it was decided it might be possible to venture out of the loch and set a course for Tobermory and Mull. Bucketing up the sound with a shuddering look at the notorious Corryvreckan and its whirlpool between the isles of Jura and Scarba the Skipper’s calculation that we should miss the flood of the Dorus Mhor—or in more civilised language, the “Great Bate”,

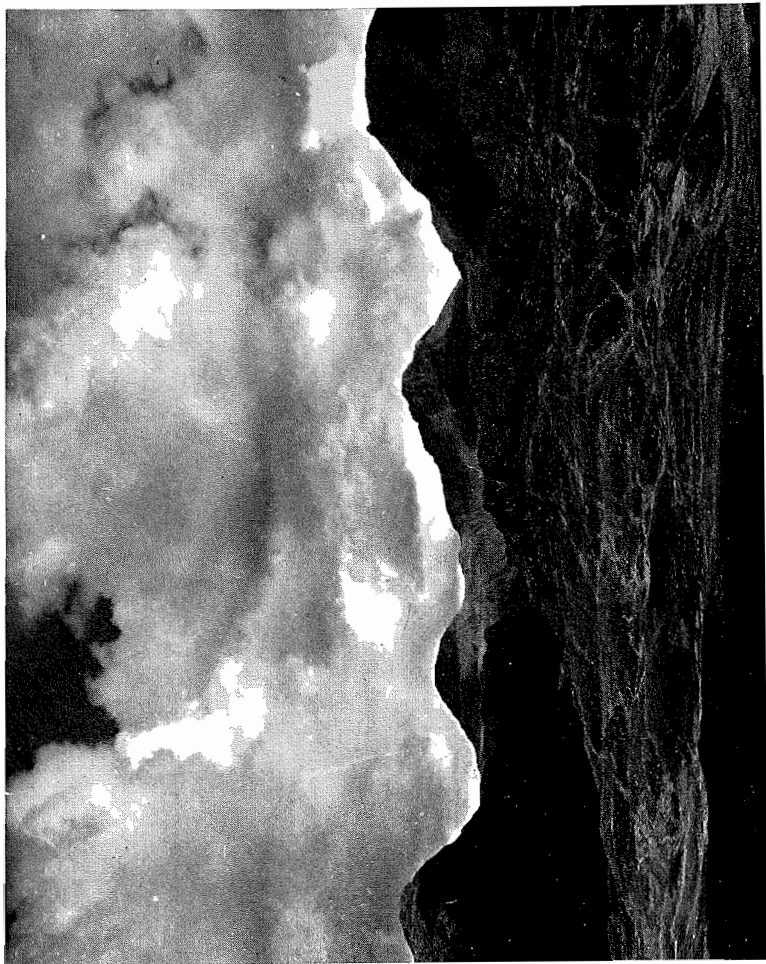
where all the tides around the coast seem to come together in one mighty smother of water, was justified and it was a relieved Mate who took over the wheel and braced himself to steer the thing in the general direction of Tobermory. A lively sail, to say the least, and it was a relief to reach the shelter of Tobermory and to tie up alongside the fishing fleet riding at anchor in the harbour.

Monday again saw the yacht still anchored in Tobermory—along with the fishing fleet—and a social visit to the crews of the latter did nothing to dispel the prevailing gloom when an enquiry as to conditions outside brought the terse and hardly encouraging response that anyone sailing or trying to sail in such weather should have his head examined. The skippers in the fleet were unanimous in their opinion that it was the worst weather experienced in forty years' fishing the West Coast. Recourse to the ship's store of refreshments gave more hope of future conditions than did the monotonous radio forecast of gales with Force 10 winds in Hebridean waters, but on the Tuesday patience gave way to desperate measures and with full sail and the powerful deisel motor pounding away the yacht left the shelter of Tobermory and headed bravely and entirely alone northwards.

Once outside the shelter of the bay it was realised just how severe the gale was and it was hurriedly decided to haul down the sails—the boom, that miniature tree trunk which keeps the sail down or something was crashing around like a demented thing and threatening to decapitate the two misguided individuals alone on the raging seas—and rely on the diesel. At times certainly at least the Mate was frightened of the yacht sinking, the sinking feeling that later gave way to the more fearsome thought that the thing wouldn't sink and life, such as it was, would continue. Before rounding Ardnamurchan Point—it was a sobering thought that there was nothing between Ardnamurchan Point and America but, the Cruel Sea—a shouted conference resulted in a hurried decision to run for shelter to the Mingarry pier at Kilchoan and snatch a much needed hot meal before ploughing on. Approaching the pier through the spray at the rate of knots it was observed that a coal barge was unloading and the Skipper gave explicit instructions suitably embellished as to what the



STOB GHABAR: FEBRUARY MEET 1973



J. C. Whalley

RHUM: WHIT MEET 1973

Mate should do. Simple in the extreme, all that was required was for the latter to throw a rope to the coaler who would then tie up and the yacht would be drawn alongside and tied to the barge, tho' it was understood that a granny knot was hardly the best method of tying a rope fast. All perfectly simple and only a matter of securing a suitable belay. And so the yacht powered on with the Skipper luridly directing the Mate to make sure the paintwork on the yacht's gleaming side wasn't scratched. Having watched the Virginian on T.V. lasso the baddies there seemed nothing to it, but the first two casts resulted in precisely nothing. Whether it was the Mate's lack of direction or the Barge Skipper's lack of alacrity it's hard to say but the yacht had to come about and in the words of Robert the Bruce "try, try again". With the Skipper foaming at the mouth, matching the foaming seas, it was fortunate the wind scattered his ejaculations, but eventually it was with some pride that the Mate did eventually succeed in landing the business end of the rope and the barge pulled in. It was unfortunate that the Mate forgot the rules of mountaineering and omitted to shove the other end of the line around a stanchion or bollard or whatever the thing is that sticks up from the deck. The result was the Mate painfully trying to pull in a vessel weighing eighteen tons in a raging sea. When the rope had finally slipped through his hands, leaving them pleasantly warm, and the yacht's side had screamed in agony, as had the Skipper, and it was clear that the paintwork wouldn't need any paint-remover when the next refitting was due, the yacht came about still again. A veil can be drawn over this contretemps but the atmosphere was hardly conducive to a mutual admiration society and the silence could be felt in the saloon over a well deserved hot meal.

With a reluctant farewell to the grinning crew of the coaler, the "Helen Frances", very unladylike, headed north again amidst the rolling seas and into the teeth of the gales. After some hours of thrashing about nearing the Point of Sleat a weather eye was kept open hoping to see something of the other yachtsmen in the club for Crowther with a crew of three had towed his boat, the "Talisker" from Coniston to Arisaig on the Saturday intending to sail across to Loch Scavaig on the Sunday. Like the crew of the "Helen Frances" they heard

the shipping forecast with dismay telling of wild seas and gale force winds and after venturing out of Arisaig scuttled back to the harbour for safety. On the Monday a slowly rising barometer together with a slight fall in windforce tempted them to try and make the Isle of Eigg on the ebb tide at Monday tea-time, but once outside the harbour they had the old rule amply demonstrated that although wind may moderate the seas remain violent for some time afterwards, and to further reduce their morale a third of the way to Eigg the motor ceased to function and could not be induced back to life. Whilst wallowing out of control, broadside to the heavy seas they managed to set a jib and run before the wind then rising again, and cruised smartly back to the mooring. On the Tuesday the weather was still wild and an hour or two's work on the motor convinced them it needed more expertise to make repairs than they possessed. The decision was made not to venture forth in such conditions without the motor, to call off their part in the Meet, cut their losses, and return to the Club cottage, Low Hall Garth, in the Lakes, leaving the yacht at its moorings to be attended to at a later date.

And so the "Helen Frances" looked in vain for their co-yacht and in view of their own experiences in the gale-smitten Hebrides wondered cheerfully if the "Talisker" had sunk but failed to find any bodies floating about or anything resembling the wreck of a yacht.

Loch Scavaig was eventually reached after much trial and tribulation late on the Tuesday evening with the "Mad Burn" living up to its reputation when in spite to see forlorn looking tents, tethered with climbing ropes, and a beleaguered party of disreputable looking Y.R.C. men hurling insults to the intrepid yachtsmen. Ashore lurid tales were told of flysheets blowing away and of the chaos which had prevailed in Mallaig, and the delay when the ferry had sensibly refused to sail in such weather. Of the eventual breaking up of the landlocked Y.R.C. on the mainland. Forty odd bodies should have been encamped at Scavaig and Coruisk but a quick count showed only eighteen in camp.

Tuesday evening was pleasantly passed by the courtesy of the J.M.C.S. in the Coruisk Hut when the tale of the Meet was unfolded.

The mountaineering activities of the crew of the "Helen Frances" can be dismissed in almost a single sentence. Just one full day on the island, a gentle walk round to Camasunary and a return to Coruisk by the "Bad Step", still not blasted away as was once threatened by the army when they built the bridge over the Coruisk burn. It was good to see the bridge had completely disappeared with no sign of the thing ever having been there, though this meant a very cold wade across the burn to reach the Hut again.

Again, discretion being the better part of valour, it was decided it would be more sensible and safer to sail on the Thursday for the Isle of Eigg to ensure being back at Loch Craignish for the Saturday. Surprisingly, the sail to Eigg was a pleasant trip and the seas relatively calm with good views of the mainland peaks, so much so that the pair decided to spend the afternoon on the island after making the harbour around lunch time. A glorious walk across the island beneath the Sgurr of Eigg did much to make life worth while. It was the intention to sail on the Friday but still the trials and tribulations weren't over for during Thursday night another gale blew up, more vicious than ever and the crew have memories of the very early dark hours when a dragging anchor meant a desperate endeavour to make fast with another mooring line. With oilskins over pyjamas the Secretary recalls the fearsome sight of the Skipper being tossed around in the raging seas in a cockleshell of a dinghy trying without success to lasso a mooring buoy whilst the boat was drifting to some most unpleasant looking rocks. Fortunately their plight had been observed from the island and a power launch put out to succour them and succeeded in getting the line to the buoy, and all was safely gathered in. Whilst the navy may have abolished the rum ration this certainly didn't apply at any time during the voyage and never was rum so much needed as it was in the storm-tossed harbour of Eigg on that never to be forgotten morning.

To close the epic journey, suffice to say that the yacht left the island at 3.30 a.m. on the Saturday morning and a full day's sail in conditions not too extreme saw a weary crew back at Loch Craignish at 4 p.m. Then followed a hurried sorting of gear and the Secretary on his way back to Lakeland

at 5.30 p.m. A really memorable Meet, enjoyable in retrospect—rather like banging one's head against a stone wall—its nice when it stops! The dreams of halcyon days in the Cuillins never came to pass but at least the memories of the Meet will remain for ever!

Altogether a remarkable Whitsuntide Meet in 1972.

Technical footnote by the Skipper

In May one expects good weather in the W. Highlands and Islands. I've been going up there for forty years and know that in May and June one gets good weather, but once the Solstice has passed it worsens, and there is nearly always a short gale at the Solstice lasting one day usually.

I had been basking in the sun at Loch Craignish, all the week doing all the usual jobs one does in the spring, i.e. getting ready for the next winter's lay-up and preparing for Cliff's advent.

Cliff had sailed with me several times and deliberately on my part had been gradually introduced to worsening conditions, but the year before had missed his trip with me, so a lot of what he had learned before must have lapsed into the limbo of forgotten things.

Behold therefore a bleary eyed Skipper expecting a hail from the shore in the very early morning of the 26th May having looked out at 3 a.m. and 4 a.m., etc. and then slept; just like Cliff does! What was my surprise when I woke up and looked out to see a familiar car on the shore, so I went ashore in the punt, and woke up a weary Cliff, I being much flattered by his remark that he had not liked to disturb me too early being such an elderly gent. Breakfast in the pub soon made Cliff full of bounce and confidence; so soon to disappear as a gale was imminent. Anyhow we were able to give much thought to the other members of the club, and their possible requirements and so stocked up, knowing the shortage expected at Lake Coruisk.

I told Cliff that with the two of us, it wouldn't be so easy, and he would have to steer when possible, to relieve me.

Ah well the adventures of getting aboard began to chasten him (damn good I thought) and the wild day in port at Tobermory with the other fishing boats I thought might cure

him. But not a bit of it, next morning, with a rising barometer, which after a gale usually means a stronger wind from the north-west, Cliff wanted to go, and I being a kindly person thought of all the other members in camp, short of five gallons of paraffin etc., so we went out, into the open Sound of Mull (N. Part). I decided that we would be better with the sails off, in any case they would be a hindrance on the first part of the journey. Well, I hadn't coached Cliff into holding the ship "head to wind" and the force of the wind was so great, that shouting wouldn't carry the length of the deck, so several trips up and down decks to the helm were necessary because we had not a third hand to pass orders along. I'd worked the ship into more sheltered water, and we managed to get sails off her thanks to the simple Gaff Rig, and put into Kilchoan Bay, a nasty refuge when occupied by a Puffer. The wind was so strong that we could hardly communicate, words being blown out of our mouths. The N.W. wind funnels down the Glen here. So with grub inside us, we set out again about noon, as I expected the gale to die down later. It was O.K. to Eigg, and we fed in the lee of the island, couldn't do it earlier. Off the north end of Eigg it was wild and the big Anchor got loose and I nearly broke my leg going out to secure it again.

Tide was against us, and tides are bad round here and Point of Sleat, so we made slow progress, which of course the Mate didn't know about. How lovely it was to get into the lee of Soay Island and up into Loch Scavaig. The pool in the loch isn't easy to navigate, it is a passage only 60 ft. wide, but the peace was glorious, and then to see a crowd of miserable, wet, but well fed YRC men was a surprise; we expected a full Meet. Others must have more sense... they got better weather... Anyhow Cliff and I did not have the mud to contend with, so with thoughts of lovely sunshine we forgot about gales, etc. only to run into a bad time at Eigg; still we had a day and a half of sun, and that and good company is a lot to be thankful for. Anyhow we got home in time for Cliff to appear at work on Monday morning.

Jack Woodman.

SKYE—by David Smith

THE VERY MENTION of the word "Skye" floods the mind of the mountaineer with visions of rocky ridges, rough rock that reduces the fingers to shreds, blue seas, bubbling burns and peaceful serenity. The YRC Meet of 1973 added quite different pictures; chaos, confusion and indecision. For instead of men raving to get aboard the boat for Coruisk, something short of press gang techniques had to be employed to persuade even nine on the deck of the vessel. One member resorted to sending his guest off in his stead, then relented and made the double trip without going ashore.

Was it the heavy seas, or the knowledge that many wild Scotsmen had been put ashore or was it the thoughts of water-logged camp site that deterred people from action?

Late in the afternoon the miserable remnants of the forty strong party cast off from Mallaig to submit themselves to the rolling and tossing of the sea and the buffeting of the rain and high winds. The little craft had hardly taken in all ropes when the first of the band deposited the whole of his expensive lunch into the sea, to be followed after brief intervals by previous meals. This curious ritual was performed by member after member; perhaps it was a Nordic sacrifice to the God Thor. But alas he was not to be pacified.

Having rounded the Point of Sleat it was clear that conditions would not improve and worse conditions were in store. The boat lifted clear of successive waves taking the propeller clear of the water. The skipper at this point cut out the engine to avoid over-revving. A highly disconcerting experience giving the brief impression that the engine had failed. Eyes saw the buffeting seas and searched for survival gear; after what seemed an age the engine restarted.

Eventually the party was put ashore on the little jetty at Loch Scavaig, but it might have been any Scottish island as mist ensured that nothing could be seen. The wind dropped one point and as the rain gave the impression of lessening, the party were lured into a false sense of security and commenced erecting their canvas shelters. Swiftly the wind returned, tents billowed, pegs were torn out and the exercise was repeated. Having finally succeeded in putting up a tent, a drier patch of earth was noticed or a more sheltered corner

was found, but after changing sites the wind would change too.

A complete re-design of tent supports and fixing was obviously needed; flat stones were placed under poles; 24 inch long pegs, cut from drift wood, were employed. The most ingenious system was adapted to a Black's Niger, renowned for its good housekeeping and resistance to weather on former Whit Meets. This tent, now in the temporary hands of a member and his guest, would have horrified its owner; 120 feet of nylon rope was festooned about it and upwards of a dozen railway sleepers were utilised to ensure that it would be there in the morning.

After a meal, the site became quiet, everyone feeling happy to be once again on Skye; things didn't seem so bad after all. Several hours later as the wind increased to gale force and the rain hurled itself against the canvas, one after another of the tents were abandoned and laid low. The sturdy Niger was invaded. The relative peace and order there degenerated into tumult and squalor as bodies with boxes forced their way in.

By morning only three tents remained and not all those in a good state of repair, but it had stopped raining and hopes were high once more. Repairs were effected and plans made.

On reaching the island, the unfortunate guest sent as a substitute for his member friend found that his total food ration for a week was a large cake and half a bottle of whisky, plus a little chocolate. The problem was quickly resolved; one tent of two with rations for at least a month, with greedy eyes upon the whisky, came to the rescue and the unfortunate guest perhaps fared better than he might have. The two were later amply rewarded by a very well informed account of the geological formation of the island and the making of a good friend too.

Small damp excursions were made on Sunday. Monday saw further poor weather and the return of the boat. Fully expecting the remaining members of the party to disembark, the campers were amazed to see just four green-faced people come ashore.

The four who had braved the seas enjoyed the same disagreeable conditions as the previous party and were confronted by even worse camping sites. Oblivious to the

conditions, they pitched their two tents in a sheltered bog. The pegs were pushed some six inches or so below the water level in an endeavour to gain a hold.

The Scotsmen turned out to be our good friends of the J.M.C.S. and as the last man left the hut he was waylaid and the sturdy hut became the property of the Y.R.C. for the remainder of the week. The comparative luxury was quickly realised and bunks were quickly filled. Drying out of food and clothes was a great activity, but the greatest interest was shown in a jigsaw puzzle of a scantily clad female. The instinctive detection of key pieces of the lady's anatomy was clearly an innate skill of some of the members.

Such were the shambles of the first few days. Tuesday did show an improvement in conditions and excursions over the Dubhs and Gars Bheinn and as far as Blaven were made. Wednesday was better and great stretches of the ridge from each end and the middle were covered. The ultimate day was Thursday, when two of the party successfully completed the Great Traverse in very good time whilst others did the ridges of Sgurr nan Gillean or the Middle peaks of Alasdair, Inaccessible and Banachdich in training for further attempts on the Great Traverse or the Greater Traverse on Friday.

Friday was a complete reversal of weather and conditions were back to the earlier part of the week. Much time was spent in the hut. The highlight of the day was the production of fish and chips for all by one enterprising member and his guest. The fish it was learned were pushed ashore to us by the occupants of a small boat sheltering in the little bay. Later we were hosts to a group of very bedraggled soldiers. The very superior officer in charge was quite happy to leave his men outside but he was persuaded that the hut was not an officers' mess and the men were welcomed in. Interesting information on the ownership of the land was gained from the officer.

Saturday dawned dry and all the packing was completed and stacked ready for the boat, but hardly had the little boat fixed itself to the jetty than the most torrential of rain descended upon the campers, followed by wind and hail. Within minutes all were soaked.

The return journey was very much a repeat of the outward

trip, the same green and grey-faced members pacing the decks, the same regurgitations. One prospective member showed great nautical expertise in the manner in which he swabbed the decks for his friend, quite unaffected by the mess.

On reaching Mallaig all sickness ended and the weather improved, even the sun showed itself. Various car problems were sorted out and the drive south started. The shambles did not end there, one party developed a wheel wobble on a bad bend and narrowly missed the experience of driving on three wheels.

Having said all this about the chaotic conditions all would agree it was a good Meet, climbs were ascended, ridges were walked and scrambled over, friendships were cemented and experiences were gained. Thus the spirit of the hills was manifest throughout the Meet.



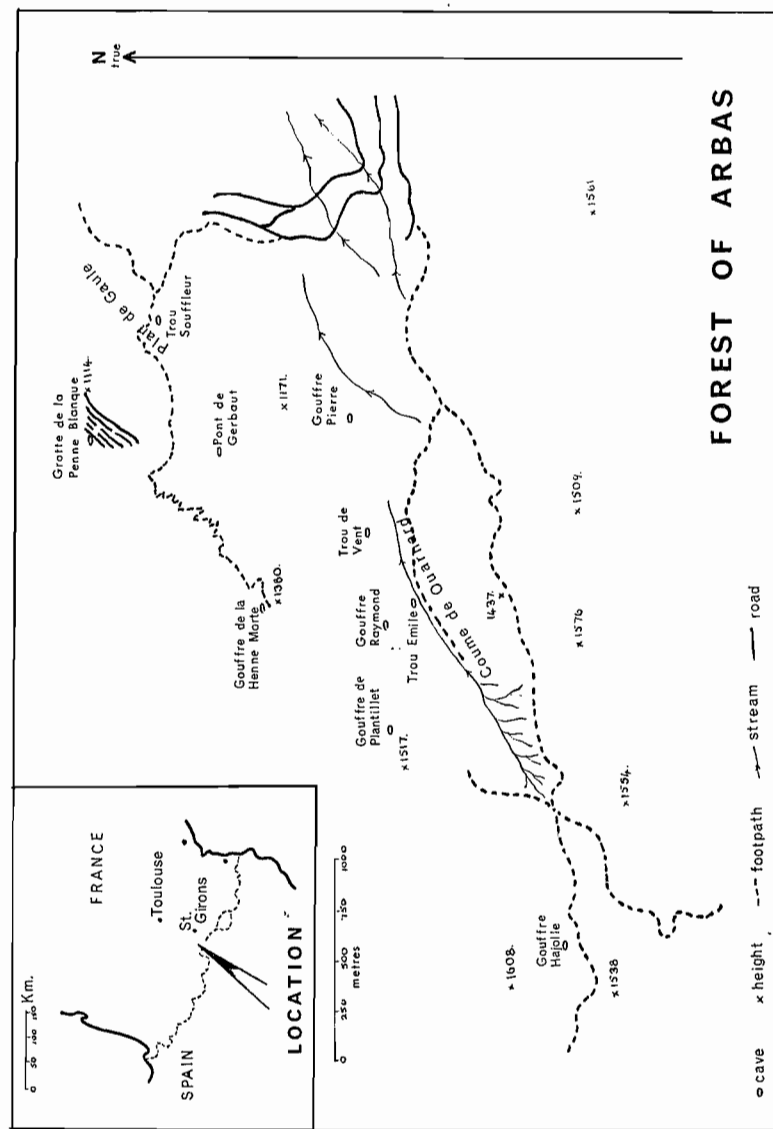
THE RESEAU FELIX TROMBE

by J. R. Middleton

THE LONGEST and perhaps most complex cave system in France is situated in the Pyrenees beneath the many-coloured trees of the "Forest of Arbas". A dense tangle of birch, beech and conifer rises to a height of over 1,500 metres above the slumbering village whose name the forest bears. On the lower slopes a thick carpet of leaf mould, fallen trees and brambles helps to camouflage numerous cave openings whilst higher up, as the trees start to thin out, the holes appear amongst a more typical limestone surround of clints and depressions. Further up still, even to the summits, heathers and wind-blown junipers crowd to the edges of Yorkshire-type shakeholes.

The Reseau Felix Trombe is not just one deep cave, it is to date, a series of ten inter-connected major systems. Its total depth from the highest entrance, Puits de L'If, to its terminal syphon is 900 metres, making it the fourth deepest in the world, and its combined length is in excess of a surveyed 30 kilometres. Its potential length is considerably more, as apart from possible other connections with caves in the area, it is assumed to connect with the 6 kilometres long Reseau Marcel Loubens which includes Casteret's "Gouffre de la Henne Morte". As to depth, the terminal syphon is almost 70 metres above the resurgence and the highest known and as yet un-connected cave is over 100 metres above the Puits de L'If.

Towards the end of October 1972, Clive Rowlands and I were privileged to visit this complex as guests of the Claude Chabert of the "Spéléo Club de Paris". A recent extension had joined the Grotte de la Pene Blanche to the Reseau Felix Trombe deepening the whole system considerably. Our object was to make and prove possible a first through trip from the Gouffre Emile, high in the mountain, to Pene Blanche which is the lowest entrance. This traverse we most successfully completed in an unbelievably exciting 28-hour trip. We descended to a depth of nearly 720 metres and then climbed out over 200 more. In between we covered 8 kilometres, made 20 abseils, did two Tyrolean traverses, waded for over an hour in waist deep water, passed through every



type of passage imaginable and used every technique both known and unknown to us.

THE TRAVERSE

The quivering flames licked at the grey stones as they reached towards the blackened chimney. The pinewood logs crackled and spat upon the open hearth. We sat around the survey strewn table, Claude, his fiancée, Nicki, and Bruno Dressler, all from Paris, then Maurice Duchene and his fellow cavers from the Groupe Spéléologique des Pyrenees and us, the two English already wondering what we had let ourselves in for.

That night we made our plans. There would be eleven of us. We would split into three teams, and enter the system at two hour intervals. It seemed a large party but it was obviously necessary as no single member knew the complete route, only certain sections, so it was intended that by using combined experience and "Scotch Light" tape a way would be forced. Clive and I hoped so, as an abseil down the wrong way would mean a long and cold wait. . . . The first team of four would place markers, bolt pitches if necessary and take in a long rope for the big 90 metre abseil. The second party of three would follow, helping the first if they caught up, and then waiting in Pene Blanque to assist the third team out. The whole trip was expected to take around 18 hours and it should not be too wet. It sounded simple, straightforward and obviously well organised. Clive and I slept soundly.

The Gouffre Emile is perhaps the easiest of all entrances to find as all it is necessary to do is to follow the path at the end of the road over a ridge and into a valley, follow this up until a stream is reached and the trees start to thin out. By the side of the stream and only one hour's walk from the road was the entrance, barely a metre in diameter and starting with a short vertical drop into a small chamber. A superb high and narrow streamway meandered away between numerous cascades of yellow calcite and over floors with crystal clear pools edged in flowstone. Two pitches followed, one of 5 metres and one of 7, and here again we felt apprehension that the trip might not be quite what we expected. Bernard, who was leading in this section, immediately bridged his way

down the slightly overhanging pitches on minute nodules of calcite. We followed.

The passage continued in this sporting vein down numerous cascades and a further pitch of 10 metres, then the whole system suddenly changed character. The roof came down, the walls widened and became coated with mud until the inevitable sump arrived. Just back a short distance we scrambled round some boulders and entered a dug out crawl leading to a difficult 15 metre climb up a slippery wall. At the top a narrow twisting rift led us into the side of the "Grand Salle" of the Trou du Vent: a main passage almost as large as Gaping Gill but vanishing into the distance. The second team caught the first up here so a stop was made for food and to marvel at nature's work.

The French had used this chamber to camp in and had discovered the Gouffre Emile after a considerable amount of work. Exploration was then made slowly upstream until the small chamber just below the surface was reached. This entrance was then opened up and a new way in found.

The first party left and when we were too cold to wait any longer we set off to the end of this impressive gallery, over a slab, down a boulder and into a beautifully waterworn cascade passage terminating all too soon in a free-hanging 25 metre pitch. More sporting going followed with traverses around deep black holes, crawls through tubes, a climb down a steep wall and finally a walk to the edge of a deep cross rift over which the water roared and frothed. We just caught up the last members of the other party who had been experiencing trouble when abseiling down without a long enough rope, consequently two had been joined together and this necessitated getting off on a small ledge halfway down the 30 metre pitch, passing the knot and then continuing. The pitch proved extremely wet and from a small ledge just before the bottom we made a short climb to a window, at the other side of which was the big 90 metre shaft. Bolts had been put in at the top and a ledge broke the descent at 25 metres, the final section proved really magnificent as at least 50 metres of it hung free into a large passage.

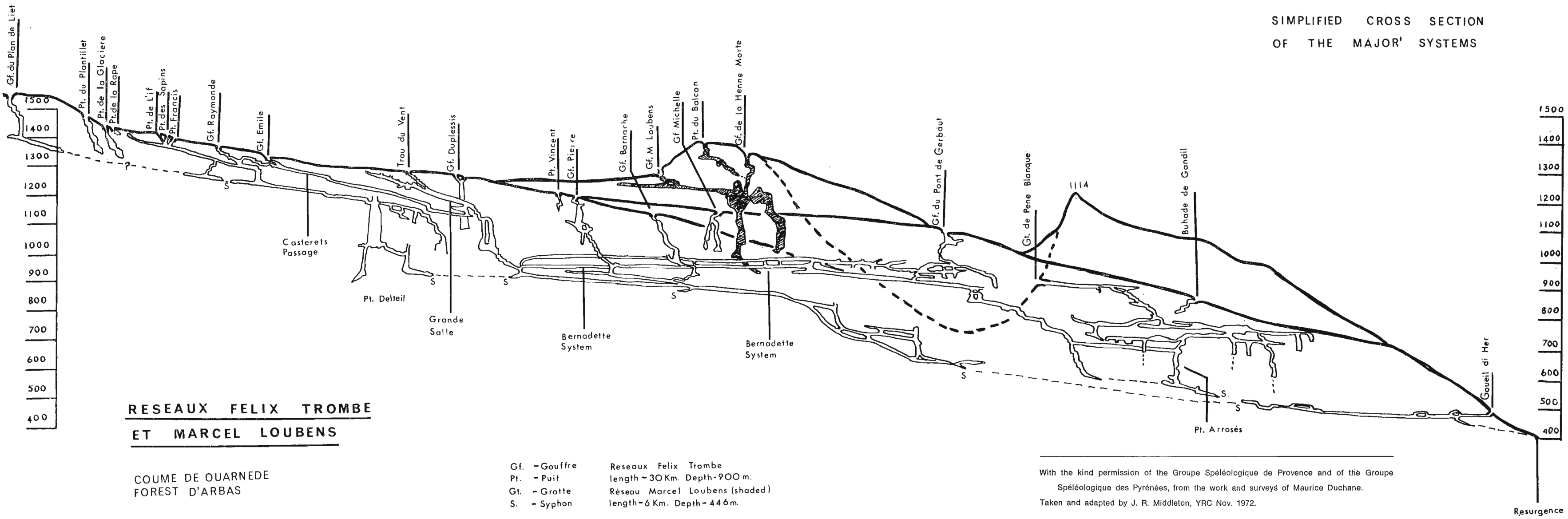
The cave now seemed to take on a much sinister and serious air as apart from getting noticeably harder technically we

saw no more formations and the surrounding limestone was much darker. An hour of hard going saw us at the head of a seven metre pitch where we left the not inconsiderable stream and made a difficult climb up into the incredible fossil galleries of the Reseaux Bernadette.

The Reseaux Benadette is a very complex series of large abandoned passageways totalling many kilometres which have not yet been fully explored. They join the Trou du Vent to the Gouffre de Pont de Gerbaut with the Gouffre Barnache also entering. The galleries which we traversed were so dry that a small kick at the fine silvery sand caused a cloud of dust to rise. We followed the main way for nearly two kilometres of easy and relatively flat going to large chamber with a small trickle of water falling from its roof. This was, in fact, the only water we saw in the whole series. We had now caught up with the others again and were amazed to learn that we had already been down for over twelve hours and had still not reached the half way point. Dejected we sat down for a second snack and a well earned rest, the strenuous sections of the river passages and now the monotony of these big dry galleries beginning to take their toll.

Just before we all started to nod off, Jacques, the leader of the first team managed to rouse us back into action and led us away from the main passage and into a narrower one with a weird erratic stalactite hanging just inside its entrance. The going was proving more strenuous now with awkward climbs over and through superbly waterworn projections and difficult traverses round deep holes. After one very awkward one a large 30 metre deep and 10 metre wide shaft completely blocked the way. Any drowsiness we may have felt left us as we watched Jacques crab onto the line stretched across the void, slide speedily down to the middle and then pull himself up the other side. We followed. With the extra adrenalin now coursing through our veins we again took greater interest in where we were going. The passage enlarged until it was well in excess of its original size and "Gaping Gills" were the order of things, each separated by large piles of scree and rock which we repetitively climbed and descended. At the bottom of one of these chambers a small squeeze led us from the Bernadette system and down through a complicated choke

SIMPLIFIED CROSS SECTION
OF THE MAJOR SYSTEMS



**RESEAUX FELIX TROMBE
ET MARCEL LOUBENS**

COUME DE OUARNEDE
FOREST D'ARBAS

- Gf. - Gouffre
 - Pt. - Puit
 - Gt. - Grotte
 - S. - Syphon
- Reseaux Felix Trombe
 length - 30 Km. Depth - 900 m.
 Réseau Marcel Loubens (shaded)
 length - 6 Km. Depth - 446 m.

With the kind permission of the Groupe Spéléologique de Provence and of the Groupe Spéléologique des Pyrénées, from the work and surveys of Maurice Duchane.
Taken and adapted by J. R. Middleton, YRC Nov. 1972.

Resurgence

for 40 metres back to the stream. The icy water really woke us and we made good speed for over 400 metres passing many sporting cascades and fine formations until we reached the head of a 60 metre pitch. Just before descending this obviously very wet way we noticed the first team vanishing from sight over the top. Up we followed and into an amazing mini-network of descending and inter-connecting tubes and rifts eventually landing back in the stream via three pitches of six, five and twenty-five metres.

The next section of our explorations confirmed our earlier vague suspicions that "the cave might have more to it than we thought". Undoubtedly the most arduous part so far followed, since for over a kilometre we waded in the chilling water which was never less than waist deep, frequently up to our necks and occasionally even over our heads . . . (Someone had said that it would not be too wet so we only wore long johns, pullovers and boiler suits). The floor, which for the most part we could not see was covered with incredibly slippery flowstone, the force of water literally shot us over cascade after cascade as well as seven more pitches. This section finished with a truly beautiful 28 metre abseil by the stream into a shallow lake in a large chamber.

At the far side hung salvation in the form of a 35 metre ladder leading up into the Pene Blaque system. Several of the Pyrenees Group had put this in the day before we entered. Our battered bodies had now been going for 22 hours and in the draughty chamber at the top of the pitch we decided that due to our state and length of time below we would all go out and apologise later to the third party—of whom we had not yet seen any sign. The way on was thankfully dry and after passing a squeeze and descending a small pitch we reached the second of the Tyroleans. This time not quite so awe-inspiring but still exciting with its shower of water half-way across. The pitch below was the way to the deepest part of the Reseau Felix Trombe at—900 metres, still over 160 metres below us.

From now on Claude knew the way as he had taken part in pushing the exploration of Pene Blaque some nine years earlier. We followed him through large boulder and chamber complexes, clambered up steep slopes and then back down

again, climbed a thirty metre wall and then, at last, seemed to travel more up than down. In the absolute dryness our English type Carbide lamps had long gone out and we blindly clung to the others' shadows. Gradually the passage became smaller and more interesting with many sporting climbs and traverses until we finally reached the place where Martel had stopped on his inward exploration. Once past, a solid mud floored passage one to one and a half metres high and six metres wide led us round several bends to what must be one of the most impressive exits anywhere. For the last 50 metres we had a gradually enlarging view through autumn-tinted leaves over the vast plains heading towards Toulouse. We again breathed the sparkling mountain air for the first time in 28 hours.

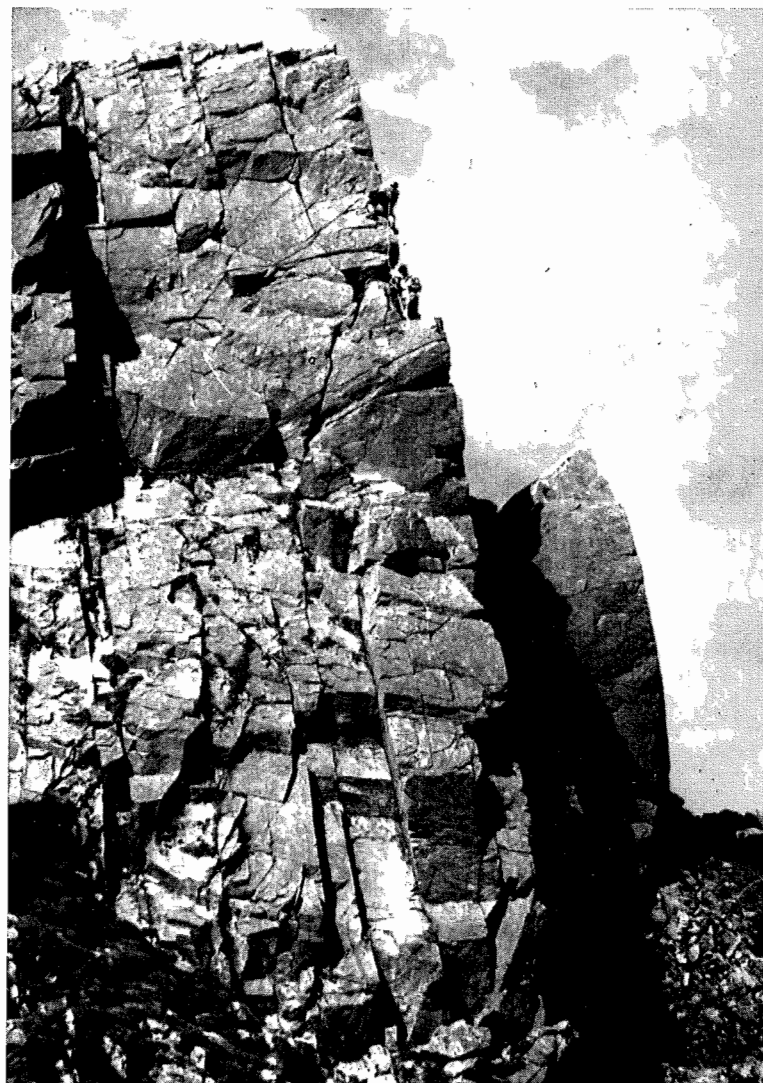
The third party surfaced some seven hours later, having been lost in the Reseaux Bernadette for four hours trying to find the way through the boulders and back down to the stream. . .

In finishing we must thank Claude Chabert for giving us the opportunity to take part in this unique first traverse which must surely now dwarf even the mighty Trou de Glaz and Pierre St Martin classic through-trips. Our thanks are also extended to Claude, to Nikki and to Bruno for their generous hospitality and friendship and of course to the cavers of the Groupe Spéléologique des Pyrenees without whom the trip could never have been made.

RESUMÉ OF THE MAIN EXPLORATIONS

Grotte de la Pene Blanche. alt. 925 m.

1908 to	60 m.	Martel.		
1952 to	— 110 m.	Spéléo Club de Paris.		
1953 to	— 260 m.	" "	" "	
1955 to	— 305 m.	" "	" "	
1956 to	— 360 m.	" "	" "	To the Puits des Paques
1963 to	— 380 m.	" "	" "	To the Puits Arroses
1963 to	— 380 m.	" "	" "	Ended in a sump



BIRKNES COMBE: OXFORD AND CAMBRIDGE DIRECT

D. P. Penfold



B. E. Nicholson

RHUM: WHIT CAMPSITE 1973

1971 The Groupe Spéléologique de Provence and the Groupe Spéléologique des Pyrenees discovered a passage above the Puits Arroses and made the connection with the Pont de Gerbaut.

Gouffre Pierre. alt. 1131 m.

Discovered in 1956 by Pierre Gicquel.

1956 to — 150 m. Guy Maurel.

1957 to — 320 m. Groupe Spéléologique de Provence, 2nd Aix en Provence.

1958 to — 564 m. Groupe Spéléologique de Provence, and Casteret.

Terminated in the Syphon du Fer.

Gouffre Raymond. alt 1,275 m.

Discovered in 1957 by Norbert Casteret.

1957 to — 195 m. Groupe Spéléologique de Provence, 2nd Aix en Provence and Casteret. They reached the top of the Puits Deltail, later proved to be 130 m. deep, free hanging all the way and wet.

1959 to — 448 m. Groupe Spéléologique de Provence, 2nd Aix en Provence and Casteret.

1959 to — 492 m. Groupe Spéléologique de Provence, 2nd Aix en Provence and Casteret.

Terminated in a sump. Made a first connection with Puits de l'If.

Trou du Vent. alt. 1,236 m.

Discovered in 1956 by Norbert Casteret.

1956 to — 75 m. Groupe Spéléologique de Provence, 2nd Aix en Provence and Casteret.

1958 to — 200 m. Groupe Spéléologique de Provence, 2nd Aix en Provence and Casteret.

1960 to — 300 m. Groupe Spéléologique de Provence, 2nd Aix en Provence and Casteret.

Stopped at the top of a 94 m. pitch.

1960 to — 657 m. Groupe Spéléologique de Provence, 2nd Aix en Provence and Casteret.

Made a first connection with the Gouffre Pierre.

- 1962 to — 713 m. Jolfre, Lefranque and Felix. They also climbed an inlet which is now known as the Gouffre Emile and is a further entrance.
- 1963 to — 765 m. 2nd Aix en Provence and Casteret. A first connection was made with the Trou Mile at — 100 m. Discovery and exploration of the Reseau Bernadette commenced. First connection with Pont de Gerbaut made.
- 1964 to — 811 m. Jolfre, Lefranque and Nave. First connection made with Gouffre Raymond.

Pont de Gerbaut. alt. 1,181 m.

- 1908 Discovered by Martel and explored to first pitch which was considered too dangerous because of loose rocks.
- 1936 to — 100 m. R. de Joly and Casteret.
- 1963 to — 130 m. Jolfre, Lefranque and Nave after digging.
- 1964 to — 186 m. Jolfre, Lefranque and Nave after explosives. First connection made with Trou du Vent.
- 1964 — 370 m. Jolfre, Lefranque and Nave and Cordée Spéléologique du Languedoc.
- 1964 to — 480 m. Jolfre, Lefranque and Nave.

First major traverses

- 1965 July From Puits de L'If to Pont de Gerbaut.
- 1972 July From Puits de L'If to Pene Blanque (without touching the Trou du Vent system).
- 1972 October From Gouffre Emile to Pene Blanque (through the Trou du Vent system).

I am indebted to Claude Chabert of the Spéléo Club de Paris for supplying all the above information.

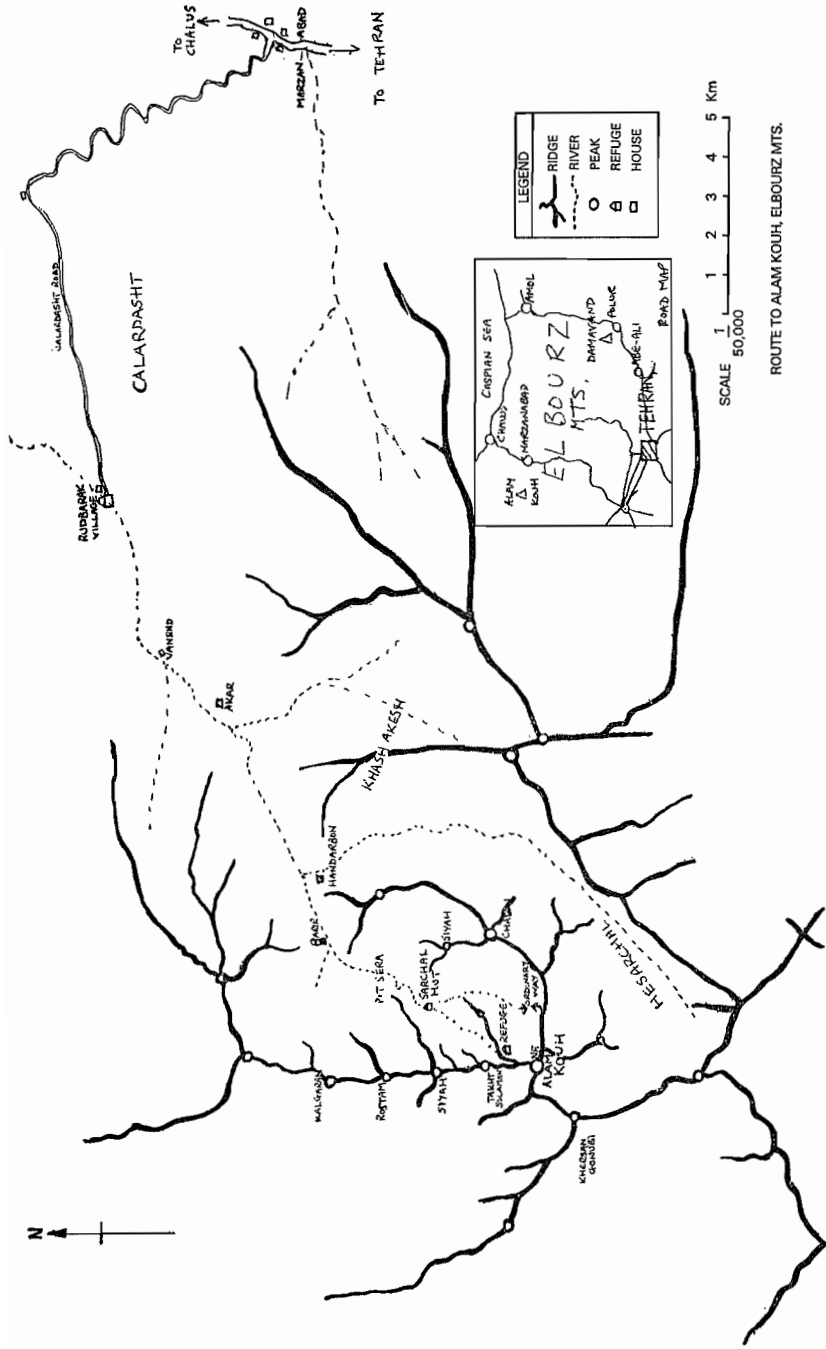
DAMAVAND AND ALUM KUH

by Glyn Edwards

DAMAVAND is an extinct volcanic cone 5,671 metres (18,600 ft.) high and lies in the sun some fifty miles east of Tehran from whence it can easily be seen in the morning.

Peter Standing, Peter Livesey and I left Tehran during the heat of mid-day. Steven Craven had kindly offered to take us to Damavand in the expedition Land-rover, accompanied by Harvey Lomas. The road to Abe-Ali was taken and soon the hustle of Tehran was left behind in the dust of the road. Beyond Abe-Ali we slowly crawled behind huge 'Macs' up a winding pass. The Iranians were busy erecting snow tunnels over the road which is the main route to the Caspian Sea. The top of the pass offered a superb view of the volcano and we took the opportunity to photograph it. From here the road dropped steeply down to the village of Polur, where the main road was left and we ventured into a complex of dirt tracks. As usual the wrong one was taken and we eventually ended up at a Kurdish village on the west side of the mountain. On our left the fabulous Yakhâr river flowed 1,000 ft. lower down in its gorge between us and the lesser peaks to the west. The usual route starts from Reyre on the east side. Obviously we were off route but we decided to attempt an ascent by this unfrequented west route because of the late hour. We could see the summit and the way up seemed straight forward. From the village we plodded up a dusty zig-zag track steeply, wondering which way W. T. Thomson climbed when he made the first ascent in 1837.

We walked for two hours until the shadows of darkness overtook us. So far we had seen no water, running or still, so our pint and a half was rationed until we did. A fairly comfortable night was spent bivouacked inside a ring of stones. In the morning we were up before the sun had climbed into the sky and a long thirsty ascent followed. Soon we left the steep valleys at the base of the mountain and ventured onto the cone itself, walking, scrambling up cindery scree. It was not altogether monotonous for as the air became colder and thinner the view became proportionately finer—all the more reason to stop and rest. Around lunchtime we thirstily arrived



at the snowline where we dined on the crystal water and rested. The volcano was beginning to look more rugged and mountainous with the advent of the snow. We climbed up a series of small snowfields, where the sun had serrated the snow into a sort of staircase. There was the odd rock to scramble up as well as deep snow in places and we arrived on a rocky shoulder which we estimated was no more than 3,000 ft. from the summit. It was here we intended to spend the night as one is supposed to visit the top only in the morning because of the sulphur fumes—the springs are activated by the sun and presumably frozen at night. We spent the rest of daylight shelter-building and cooking until the sun dropped low and water began to freeze. The wind summoned gusto for its nightly dance—a signal to hide deep inside sleeping bags and wait for the reinforcements of dawn. Livesey awoke us in the morning with lifegiving hot lemon tea and so we broke the ice enshrouding our sleeping bags and slipped on frozen boots.

We climbed a steep snowfield capped by frozen rocks chilled by an icy wind, thinking that for the ascent of high mountains one should be properly dressed with windproofs, balaclava and duvet. We reached the sulphurous yellow rocks of the summit with surprising ease. It was really an anti-climax. We traversed around the snow-filled shallow crater, the cold stinging and obliging us to shelter behind rocks wherever possible. We saw pumice stone and the sulphur springs smoking, but did not inspect them too closely. The view was hazy but gave an impression of height. One remarkable sight was the shadow of Damavand thrown miles onto the western hills—it was a perfect triangular cone and we looked to find our own shadows on top of this! We were glad to descend and decided our route was dangerous without ice axes. We paused for a meal at our shoulder bivi and carried on down into the heat. We got a lift and were in Tehran that same evening.

The day after Damavand Standing and I contacted the Iranian mountaineering federation. They supplied us with a map and information about Alam Kuh (about 14,000 ft.). We decided to attempt the German route which is the large buttress to the right of the North Face. We could then do a traverse of the summit ridge and descend by the ordinary

route. We were assured that this was a rock route with some pitches of grade V but mainly III and IV, and that a bivi would be necessary on the way down.

That afternoon we were on our way to Marzan Abād by bus. We arrived there at dusk and had the greatest difficulty finding transport to Rudbarak. A bus took us to Calardasht where we eventually slept in a kindly two-roomed house owned by a little man and his family, the only furniture being superb carpets and bedrolls. A small pipe-stove warmed a corner of the other room, into which moved all the lovely children and their good parents. It is quite futile to travel by night (unless, of course, already booked).

We rose early and walked to Rudbarak, arriving there at eight o'clock. We found the mountaineering federation hut, where we had intended to spend the night, but a large sign deterred us from entering. It was the price list for guides and pack mules—very expensive—and we hadn't the time to explain that we wanted neither. We walked some two miles beyond Rubarak on a good track (suitable for cars) before it turned into a footpath. The houses were built of logs and Standing said they were similar to the sherpa's homes in Nepal, and occasionally there was a modern bungalow—the holiday or summer house of the Tehran rich, newly built. In the narrow valley, washed by the fast flowing glacial river, we stopped for breakfast proper, where we found a dead porcupine in the lush grass. Cattle wandered freely and there were many herds of sheep looked after by goats and small boys. We continued beside the still rushing waters following the deep valley. Seemingly we made good progress but we had not yet begun to climb. At Mandaboro, where a bungalow lay, pointing the way, we followed the right hand fork in the river and left behind the last homely house. We traversed the shoulder of a fairly deep gorge and below us the river fell in cascades. Steeply now, climbing, packs growing heavy. Surprised, we came upon men with strange hats (like Hendrix sheepskin wigs of varying colour) dipping sheep into the river. We zig-zagged up the valley side beginning to feel very tired. The last section from Marir to the Sarchal Hut is very steep and rugged. Time to rest, and we arrived at Sarchal after nine hours' hard walking which I consider good time

(Iranians allow twelve hours). The hut is little used and in bad repair but we made ourselves at home and cooked dinner. Afterwards soon retired with thoughts of a pre-dawn start and the German route.

It was quite light as we ventured out in the morning. A petrol stove fire all ablaze delayed our departure and nearly destroyed the hut. On our sacks we carried bivi gear, climbing gear and food; in our hearts, joy, of walking on the wildside. The terrain was rugged moraine boulders as we forced a way directly towards the junction of a low ridge with the main face and the start of the German Route. It took nearly two hours to reach the ridge top, the rock was shattered and extremely loose. The ridge itself proved hard going with tottering gendarmes and gaps but we were presented with a magnificent view of the North Face and the ice field sweeping away from its foot. The sun just peeping over the top causing minor avalanches. Directly below we could just discern the 'Refuge'. We continued, free climbing easy slabs and all of a sudden we knew we were on route. We passed belay slings and a large blue arrow accompanied by Iranian graffiti. We concluded that this must be a 'trade route' for artists. A wall presented itself, so we had second breakfast on a convenient ledge, then roped up. Standing led off, it was a v.s. pitch on remarkably good rock, just being warmed by the sun. I led through, the climbing was superb and the next pitch was topped by an overhanging aid move well supplied with slings. Superb, with birdseye view of snowfields down below. Life is good. The next pitch was disappointing, just scrambling, so were the next three or four rope lengths. We didn't mind as rapid progress was made. Obviously too rapid, for I led off round a corner into a couloir where the sun never shines it was plastered with powder snow and underneath in some places, ice. It became very cold and unfriendly; progress slow and painful without gloves or axes. We seemed in a dangerous situation, even when I arrived at a reasonable belay, for the next pitch necessitated a traverse across the couloir. With aching fingers and fear I watched Standing proceed carefully. He was across and I joined him, snow biting fingers, frightened. The difficulties eased, and soon we were able to laugh again. About six or seven more 150 ft.

rope lengths saw us on the summit ridge. There was one pitch with an easy tension traverse and a few others of interest, otherwise the climbing was around V. Diff. The sun shone on the summit ridge and the other side plunged away in a mass of boulders, screeing down to distant snow fields. The summit itself was a mass of tottering blocks and rocks and here we lunched as it was 1 p.m. Afterwards we traversed along the rotting ridge towards the ordinary route which we were to descend. The day was not yet won and the descent proved, in many ways, more hair-raising than the ascent. We dropped onto a shoulder and then into a world of splintering spires dissected by splintering gullies. A gully was chosen and we descended, delicately, the objective dangers being great. A rope was not used as no belay was sound. After what seemed a long time a scree run was found which deposited us on hard snow and we were then soon walking across the icefield towards the Sarchal Hut.



1972, THE YEAR OF THE PUSH

by J. R. Middleton

THE PAST TWELVE MONTHS has perhaps seen more major discoveries and explorations throughout the caving world than during any equivalent period. There can be no doubt that the reason for this is the great advance in both caving equipment and techniques. By this I mean the move to smaller high powered teams of very competent cavers, the use of special clothing, lighter and stronger ropes, bolts, harnesses, better lighting, better foods, more practical camping and cooking gear and above all the development of abseiling and prusiking devices.

Listed below are a few of the most interesting discoveries and I am indebted to Paul Courbon of the "Abime Club Toulonnais" for the majority of this information. Paul is himself an exceptional caver, even by French standards and has contributed considerably to several of these discoveries.

CHOURIM DES AIGUILLES

This cave is situated in the Hautes-Alpes of France and during August of last year the "Abime Club Toulonnais" extended a major inlet passage by climbing over 505 metres including one pitch of 40 metres. The entrance to this passage is over 200 metres below the cave entrance before the climb is commenced. The total depth of the system is now 980 metres and the end has still not been reached. This type of upward exploration is perhaps the largest which has ever been made. A further inlet was explored and a way to the surface eventually forced and this entrance gives a depth of 960 metres.

GOUFFRE DU CAMBOU DE LIARD

In the Hautes Pyrenees last August the S.S.P.P.O. of Pau and the S.G.C.A.F. of Grenoble reached a terminal syphon at a depth of 908 metres.

GOUFFRE D'APHANICÉ

The unique part of this exploration in the Massif des Arbailles in the Pyrenees was that it was done by three

individuals and the depth reached was 504 metres. At a depth of 155 metres there is a pitch of 328 metres and this was descended on a special 9 mm. French caving rope and Jumars used for the ascent. The expedition was made in September.

SCIALET DE GÉNIEUX

This cave situated in the Grande Chartreuse area of the French Alps was discovered last May and by the end of October the three man exploration team had managed to reach a terminal syphon at 675 metres.

KEF TOGHOBEIT

A French expedition from the "Spéléo Club de Blois" visited this Moroccan cave last summer and pushed it to a depth of 560 metres. They were stopped at the top of an estimated 80 metre deep pitch.

SUMIDERO DE CELLAGUA

On a visit to Spain during the summer the "Société Spéléologique de Bourgogne" discovered passageways leading to a depth of 853 metres. They were stopped at the top of an estimated 15 metre shaft. The cave is situated near Santauder.

ABISSO DELLA GENZIANELLA

In August the Gruppo Speleologico Monfalconese reached a depth of 513 metres.

ABISSO DAVANZO

An expedition to this cave in the Italian Julian Alps by the "Commissione Grotte Boegan" of Trieste was stopped by a large lake at a depth of 735 metres.

BUCA GRANDE DI MONTE PELATO

Situated not far from the well known "Corchia" in the Apennine Alps this cave was pushed to a depth of 522 metres by the "Gruppo Speleologico Bolognese". They were stopped by an awkward meander passage.

BÄRENSCHACHT

Over Christmas an interclub expedition of the Swiss S.S.S. reached the top of a large shaft at the depth of 565 metres.

HÖLLOCH

This Swiss giant has had its explored and surveyed length relisted this January as 115 kilometres.

BREZNO POD GAMSOVO GLAVICO

Again in the Julian Alps but this time on the Yugoslavian side the "Club Zeleznicar" of Ljubljana was stopped on their exploration by a tight meander at 615 metres deep. This depth seems to have been disputed by another club so it cannot at the moment be regarded as accurate until re-surveyed. The discovery was made in August.

EL SOTANO

In the Queretaro State of Mexico this impressive cave was bottomed at 455 metres. The uniqueness of the exploration is the discovery of the world's largest free fall pitch of 410 metres. This was descended on half inch U.S.A. rope and ascended by rope walkers. Exploration was made by the "Association of Mexican Cave Studies".

FLINT RIDGE/MAMMOTH CAVE SYSTEM

It has still to be officially confirmed but it has been reported that these two systems have now been connected thereby giving a total of over 212 kilometres of surveyed passage.

The above is just a brief list of what I feel are the most interesting discoveries and I have not included those made by British Expeditions during 1972. These ranged far afield and are worthy of a special report but most expeditions have published their own reports in their respective club journals. However it is worth mentioning a cave of 400 metres depth discovered in Peru, several kilometres of new cave found in Ethiopia, the finishing of Ghar Parau in Iran at 751 metres, considerable extensions to the Pierre Saint-Martin and other trips to Morocco, Italy, France, Spain, etc.

JIEKKEVARRI '71

by Stephen V. Bugg

THE OBJECT of the Jiekkevarri '71 Expedition was threefold. Primarily we were to climb Jiekkevarri, the highest mountain in arctic Norway, and if possible also to traverse the entire ice-cap. Secondly we hoped to explore the Sydbreen and Steindal glaciers, climbing as many virgin peaks as possible. Thirdly, and less tangibly, the expedition leader hoped to determine how people of different social backgrounds reacted together under severe conditions. As far as this went we were well equipped having in our ranks an Etonian, an apprentice engineer, a research graduate and a salesman, to mention but a few.

Apart from one brief meeting in the Lakes, we did not meet each other until we congregated at Victoria Station, late one evening in July. From this station the ten of us travelled by rail and air to Tromsø, Amüdsen's birthplace, where we met the two-man advance party.

Having sorted out a minor transport problem, (the 'bus driver refused to load his precious 'bus with our ton or so of food and equipment!), we left for base camp.

Base camp was situated $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles up in Goverdalen, or Andersdalen, depending on which map one is using, a valley covered with dense birch scrub at its outlet into the fiord, and boulder scree and moraine higher up. The first load carry took $2\frac{1}{2}$ hours, and at least one member of the expedition now knows that 60 lbs. is not the same as 60 kgs., having misinterpreted the figures on the boxes.

From base camp one could look up the valley to the overhanging peak of Sphinxen; to our left, out of sight lay Jiekkevarri. The whole camp was overshadowed by the huge vertical face of Titind which lay immediately to the right of the camp. Looking down the valley one could see the fiord and numerous snow capped peaks.

The expedition was to last three weeks, and the plan was to spend six days climbing, and then return to base for Sundays. The first week the expedition divided into two, each party with certain objectives. The party of six which Duncan and I were with hoped to find a new route on to Jiekkevarri.

The remaining six people went to investigate the Sydbreen Glacier and possible routes to Jiekkevarri from this glacier.

When we departed on Monday it was raining. The river rose dramatically and we needed ropes to safeguard the crossing. The route lay up a steep boulder field, and then wound through morainic deposits. On reaching the top of one of these mounds the glacier was suddenly revealed. It looked really ugly, not at all as I had imagined a glacier. We made our way on to the glacier by a snow slope to one side of its snout. Every now and then we could hear avalanches, but could not see them since we were almost in the clouds. We chose a camp site just below a rocky buttress, hoping it would keep any avalanches away from the tents. A snow platform was soon created and we retired for the night.

The following day the cloud had lifted slightly and we saw the source of the avalanches. The ice-cap of Jiekkevarri was oozing over a thousand foot cliff on the other side of the glacier. A short sortie through some ice-falls on the glacier was thwarted by inclement weather. The attempted route was temporarily abandoned. We returned to base camp that day and prepared to leave for Fugledäl, the valley on the other side of Jiekkevarri.

We walked to Fugledäl via the road which runs beside the fiord. The object of our visit to this valley was to determine if there existed a suitable escape route from the ice-cap should an ice-cap traverse party need one. Our first view of Fugledäl suggested that there was no such route. The entire valley was hemmed in by sheer cliffs.

However, the following day (Thursday) with a cloudless sky, we started up a snow gully. It looked short and easy, but six hours later we were still climbing and the gradient was steadily increasing. We had slightly under-estimated the country! We left the gully by a very loose rock wall and finished with a scramble to the summit of Hundtind, so named because the summit overhangs and looks like a dog's ear from the valley. At this point Duncan and I decided to assist Nature in her process of erosion. Several large boulders were dropped from the dog's ear and the mountain named Trundle Tind. (At that time we were unaware that the mountain had a name).

A short recce along the ridge towards Skavenhausen suggested that it might lead straight to the ice-cap, without any trouble. (We later learned that there was a nasty gap in the ridge with fairly vertical sides).

The descent from Hundtind was eventful. We descended on the opposite side from the ascent. Slushy snow, loose rocks, weighing anything up to several cwt., and a very steep gradient made life interesting. There were several minor casualties, all of whom attributed their injuries to Duncan, who seemed to have the misfortune to knock every loose rock on the hillside. Indeed at one point he gave a very impressive acrobatic display, doing two or three complete somersaults before crashing down on his rucksack. It is probable that his rucksack saved him from serious injury.

Eventually we regained the road and meandered back to our tents in Fugledäl. The climb had taken no less than seventeen hours and left everyone just a little shattered.

Friday, strangely enough saw little activity. A cloudless sky meant sunbathing, etc. There were various suggestions to the effect that I should be floated down the rapids on my lilo. (It was assumed, wrongly, that I was asleep). Commonsense prevailed however. After all it would be a pity to waste a good lilo.

By six o'clock Duncan and I had decided to return to base camp. The walk back down Fugledäl, and along the edge of the fiord was well worth the effort. It was a calm evening with the reddening midnight sun reflected by the fiord, and giving the snow capped mountains a beautiful golden glow. Undoubtedly the most breathtaking scenery I have seen.

We rolled into base camp expecting to be the only people in residence. However, Mike Nosworthy and Brian Sylvester were already there constructing a rock and mud oven. They had opted out of an attempt at the summit of Jiekkevarri in order to climb Balgesvarre, a mountain that had caught their imagination. It proved a very easy climb and so they kept going until they reached base camp, and not feeling tired they set about making the oven.

During that day (Saturday) the rest of the expedition drifted into camp. The other party had put four people on to the summit of Jiekkevarri. Having tired of paddling about on a

very slushy Sydbreen Glacier they achieved the summit by means of a ridge, described as the normal route.

Saturday and Sunday we baked bread and lazed in the sun. Plans were re-vamped and parties re-organised. Four people went to have a second attempt at the glacier route. John Burrows, Mike Nosworthy, John Hansford and myself headed up the valley towards Sphinxen and the Steindal Glacier where, we were told, there were numerous virgin peaks. During this trek we encountered the only mosquitoes seen during the expedition, despite warnings that this part of the country was plagued with them. The few we did find were tough. One or two kept after us until we reached the Steindal Glacier.

Monday morning dawned (if dawn comes in a land of twenty-four hours of sunlight) and the four of us left for our mountain, Nallacakka. Someone casually mentioned that the holes in the glacier were probably caused by rocks falling from the cliff on our left. We moved away from the cliff!

The route, after we left the glacier, was straight up a rock pinnacle. Two-thirds of the way up this pinnacle we admitted to defeat. We did not have enough hardware to protect ourselves on an increasingly steep climb which was, as always, desperately loose.

That evening it rained. We had just finished eating a magnificent "pog" (a sort of stew and anything handy) when the expedition leader and three others arrived. Due to some highbrow reorganisation it was arranged that I should move out of my nice, warm, dry mountain tent into a small bivouac tent made from single skin light-weight nylon. It was a prototype of the tents Dave now makes commercially and it leaked along the seams! Dave was occupied in determining how and why it was leaking and countered all my criticisms with "it's only a prototype". This didn't stop the rain coming in! (Incidentally, the production model does not leak).

Tuesday was a little better and we did do a short recce of the glacier and climbed a peak presumed unclimbed (Point 1352 m.) Meanwhile Dave and John Burrows climbed Sphinxen.

We were tent-bound on Wednesday until after lunch when four of us decided to return to base camp with the object of climbing something—possibly Jiekkevarri—and maybe even

traverse the ice-cap. However, when we reached base Allan, Mike Patten, Duncan and Brian were all in camp. Allan and Mike had again been thwarted in their attempt to force the new route via the glacier, having been stopped by a waterfall. Duncan and Brian had started to follow them but were put off by the crevasses (unlike Allan neither had any experience of glaciers) which had opened up since our first recce. They then decided to go for Jiekkevarri by the normal route. They in fact reached the south summit but in white-out conditions decided not to trek across the ice-cap to the main summit.

Plans were again reorganised. Dave Challis and Brian went off to climb Titind, the mountain which overshadowed base camp. The face we could see was nearly vertical, and several hundred metres high. During Duncan and Brian's return from Jiekkevarri they had walked beneath this face just as a thunderstorm broke. The mountain was transformed into a torrent of running water, forcing huge rocks off the face. Duncan and Brian literally ran for their lives as rocks crashed down.

The remaining six, incidentally the same six who were originally grouped together, decided to attempt Jiekkevarri.

The first stage was a walk up to a col in a hanging valley off our main valley. On the way up we passed some magnificent lakes with tumbled blocks of ice and snow floating in the green water.

The col was very rocky, and it was difficult to pitch the three "bivi" tents. We found the "food dump" left by Duncan and Brian—one gas cartridge, a chunk of nibbled cheese and a packet of salt!

The following day was cloudy, but we decided it might clear and so off we went. The ridge was fairly steep, almost a buttress. We used ropes, although the actual climbing was not difficult or even badly exposed.

As we climbed upwards the clouds rose with us, remaining just a few feet above our heads. We soon gained the south summit. The cloud descended and so we walked on a compass bearing towards the true summit.

Every now and then there would be a dramatic break in the clouds and we could take stock of our position. We could see

the giant east face of the mountain, where, it was rumoured an Austrian party were climbing, although we saw no sign of them. A little further on and we could look down into Fugledäl. Finally we came across a boulder field, with a cairn in it. We all signed our names, addresses and the date. (I also added a note claiming to be the youngest person to have climbed Jiekkevarri). A stroll through the mist brought us to the summit. The highest point of the dome took some time to determine, but having found it the clouds cleared and we could see hundreds of snow-capped peaks stretching as far as the eye could see. Photography time! I took as many shots while on the ice cap as I had taken in the previous one and a half weeks!

From the summit we walked back the way we had come and then left our tracks and ascended Cvieta—another bump on the ice cap. Finally we descended to the point where our original attempt at a route should have come out. Allan soloed down and came back a few minutes later. He had seen a way round the waterfall, so the route was possible.

By the time our meanderings about the summit were concluded it was again very late. The sun had a decidedly red tint and produced some magnificent effects in the clouds, some of which were recorded by the camera.

Eventually we returned to the col and concocted another meal. Not wishing to spend another night on the rocky col, Duncan and I left for base camp. On the way down I heard how Duncan and Brian had stopped on their way down from South Jiekkevarri to put on cagoules, and had promptly fallen asleep! A few hundred feet above base camp we stopped to watch a great finger of mist spread up the valley from the fiord and engulf base camp. It was tremendously eerie.

We had to cross the river to get to base camp so we headed for a shallow section and donned plimsols. On the other side of the river I unexpectedly found myself upside down with my head amongst the boulder scree!

A race developed to see who could get the mug of tea proffered by those in base camp. I ran round the moraine and Duncan waded the lagoon.

We finally reached base camp by 4 a.m., where we learned that Titind had been climbed but that Brian had fallen on

the way down. He was badly shaken but had no broken bones.

Saturday and Sunday we again made bread and did little else. It rained heavily most of the time.

The expedition now entered its final week. Duncan, Alan, Mike and Brian planned a girdle traverse of Titind. David Challis and Dave Berry intended to try the ice-cap traverse. John Burrows, John Hansford and Pete wanted to try a peninsular traverse.

Since there was nothing left to traverse, Mike Nosworthy, Bruce and myself, (the three youngest of the expedition), went round to Ellendalen to have a go at climbing Ellendalen Tind!

Our route took us up on to the side of Titind, to a small lake where we camped. This camp afforded superb views of Jiekkevarri. The following day we climbed point 940 m. and then descended to the road. The descent was as usual—loose and steep. By this time the rough Gabbro rock had worn Bruce's and my boots totally smooth and on one stretch of grass I slipped and a pointed rock pierced my sack and burst a gaz cylinder.

Ellendalen was similar to Andersdalen—covered in boulders and birch scrub. Ellendalan Tind looked impressive and difficult. We elected not to climb it but to go and investigate life in the fjord area.

On Thursday we returned to the foot of Andersdalen. We met Brian, Duncan, Mike and Allan, who had failed to traverse Titind and had in fact also been investigating the life in the fjord area.

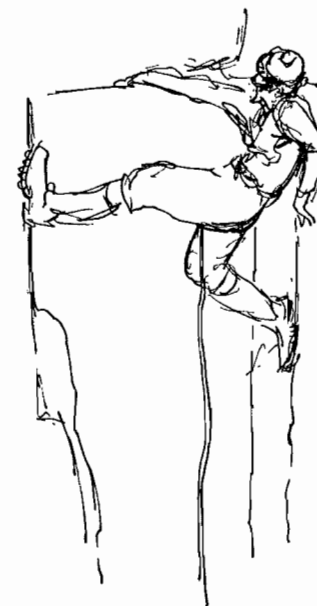
On Friday we woke late and spent the morning climbing boulder problems. We then walked up our valley to base camp.

In base camp we heard that the peninsular crossing party had in fact crossed the peninsular, walking forty miles on boulder scree—no mean achievement.

The ice-cap had also been traversed but the party had run into a slight problem along the route we had declared feasible.

An so to the final meal. We started eating at 6 p.m. and didn't finish until 3 a.m. The evening's entertainment included a Viking funeral, when old lilos were set adrift on the river with heaps of burning rubbish aboard.

By 4 a.m. all the tents were down, and we departed the camp site. The expedition was over.



THE GOUFFRE BERGER

by Glyn Edwards

PETER WATKINSON of Nottingham, a veteran of the Berger, and Etienne Lemaire from Belgium organised the trip very efficiently. The Belgians supplied the rope (9 mm. perlon) and the British the ladder.

The teams met on the scenic Sornin plateau along with a French team who wanted to join in. Lemaire and his 'pirates' had been established in camp for a week and had laddered the cave as far as camp II. They intended to bottom the pot without the help of an underground camp—hard men indeed. The British sensibly used camp I, near to the "Hall of Thirteen", from which to strike for the bottom.

Peter Watkinson, Rod Mumford, David Jack, Alan Gamble, Dave Sinclair and another descended the cave at ten o'clock one fine sunny morning. I followed them down a few hours later with two friends (John Harper and Eric Inson) who, wearing shorts, only wanted to have a quick look at the "Hall of Thirteen". The weather forecast was very favourable, which lightened our hearts and we descended in good spirits.

Abseiling the pitches "Aldo's shaft" was soon reached, which is the last pitch in the entrance series and 180 ft. deep. There we met members of the Pegasus Club who were supposed to be backing up Peter Watkinson. They were lowering down their personal bags: unfortunately one of them fell about 20 ft. and badly damaged his hand. I continued to the camp alone as Harper and Inson organised the Pegasus and effected a rescue.

Apart from the ice and the biting cold at the entrance and in Cairn Hall the initial part of the cave is very much like a typical Yorkshire classic with shafts connected by narrow meandering rift passages but fortunately dry. The pitches are: (1) Ruiz shaft, 90 ft., (2) Holliday, 25 ft., (3) Cairn Hall, 100 ft., (4) Garby's, 130 ft., (5) Gontards, 100 ft., (6) the Relay's, 3 x 25 ft., and then Aldo's.

From Aldo's a very small winding passage breaks out into the immense "Great Gallery", large enough for two double decker buses to pass. At the "Bourgin Hall" a bit of clever route finding was required as Lake Cadoux had

vanished. A boat and slippery mud indicated where it was in normal weather. A steep mud slope led to the top of the "Little General Cascade", which was still very sporting despite the dry conditions. A traverse at the top of the "Cascade of the Tyrolienne" avoided a deep pool at its foot. From here the stream disappeared under the boulders of the "Big Rubble Heap". The rays of my glimmering carbide lamp dissolved in the darkness. Luckily a sort of footpath led through, over or around the boulders, some as big as the Bowder Stone. Dropping down this steep path gave me a more vivid impression of depth than did abseiling the pitches. In the distant depths glimmers of light showed Camp I and my companions.

Over a brew of tea I learned that a delay at Camp I was inevitable as the French who were laddering the final pitches were not expected to have finished. Just as we were settling down to sleep, clankings and rumblings disturbed our peace. Harvey Lomas had arrived on a visit with his steel-toed boots. John Whalley and Mike Jenkins were his companions. We heard exclamations of wonder and amazement as they visited the magnificent "Hall of Thirteen" not fifty yards away. A second French team arrived and settled down for a short sleep before they made for the lower reaches.

As the second French team did not disturb our rest when they set off, we were awoken at the optimum time by the first French team returning. After a huge meal we also followed the path towards the bottom. Beyond the "Hall of Thirteen" was the "Germain Hall" which contained many gours and flowstone climbs. To the 50 ft. "Balcony Shaft" the cavern is a glittering fairyland. At the bottom of the "Balcony" the river is again met for a while. Leaving the river again at "The enormous cascade" a traverse up and right is made. Here the returning second French team were met emerging from another glistening world of flowstone. The route lay up cascades of frozen stone until a descent at the "Cloakroom Pitch" led back to the river. The wet half of the cave begins at the aptly named "Cloakroom". A long chest-deep canal ensues with traverses or a swim over deep sections: a beautiful clean washed passage. Two sporting 25 ft. cascades marked the end of the canal. "Claudine's Cascade" was now a reality and no longer the pitch of dreams. This surely must be one of

the finest pitches in the world. The ladder hangs from the end of a 6 ft. length of scaffold pole to avoid most of the water. The landing pool is waist deep and almost completely fills the chamber. Much excited by the widening of the passage and by the increase in height the river was followed. The next traverse and cascade was "Topographers" and after this the titanic proportions of the "Big Rubble Heap" were again encountered, but I think the "Great Canyon" is more impressive. The route down this lies on the right hand wall, following a steeply descending traverse with nothing to be seen on the left but an awesome blackness. At the bottom of this "Great Canyon" lies Camp two (no longer used) and "Gache's shaft", a dry pitch of 60 ft. At the bottom of "Gache's" the river is again met and soon cascades over the next pitch, the "Grand Cascade". There one descends the top half of the pitch diagonally leftwards to a piton to avoid most of the water. In point of fact nearly all the cascade pitches had elaborate traverses of some kind to avoid the main force of the fall for obvious reasons.

Following a large passage bestrewn with boulders, now one thousand metres down, a drystone wall is seen in a corner. This was built by members of a previous British expedition in an attempt to keep warm while trapped by high water: a grim reminder of what the Berger is like in less clement weather.

Just before "Monkey Shaft" is one of the only crawls in the cave, but it is short. Then the acrobatics start, the water descends in a series of cascades and pools. To avoid these there is a bolted traverse on the right hand wall. The ladder hangs from the last bolt and descends 70 ft. to where a dry ox-bow passage is situated in the opposite wall. The water plunges down dramatically on its way to the bottom of "Hurricane Shaft". Swinging across to the ox-bow passage is hair-raising but much easier if abseiled. In the ox-bow a calcited drop leads to a ledge at the top of "Hurricane". This shaft seems much deeper than 180 ft.: it was like abseiling Malham Cove in a thunderstorm. At the bottom, and in a sheltered alcove, we lunched on fudge, chocolate and cigarettes. In the immensity of this airy hall we felt very small and extremely lucky to be there, as if we were trespassing in one

of nature's more exclusive reserves. Continuing from boulder to boulder down a passage 30 ft. wide and of immeasurable height, good progress was made. A large inlet entered on the right, very impressive and previously explored. A few small drops were encountered and the roof came into sight; closing down, rapidly—the canals, reputed to be the grimmest part of the cave. Reluctantly entering the very cold and deep water progress was painful. Swim a few yards, cling to the wall and regain breath, swim again, eventually reaching the siphon at a depth of 3,650 ft. Shivering with cold, little time was wasted at the siphon as the return swim was 'gotten over with'.

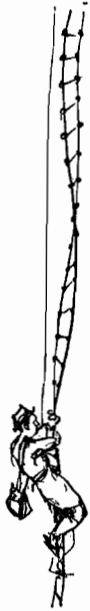
As all the pitches were equipped with only single lines, climbing up them necessitated the use of a 'clogger' as a self-life-lining device. This method is very efficient as the amount of rope used is halved, and the time spent throwing down the life-line is reduced. The clogger, attached to the waistline by a short sling is towed up the rope without effort.

At the top of "Hurricane" the warming effect of the ladder climb overcame our numbness. De-laddering was not necessary as Etienne Lemaire was due down next and his team planned to detackle back to Camp II or further. Our task was to continue the work after resting at Camp I by de-tackling back to Camp I or further. The return up "Monkey" was enjoyed but unfortunately a "clogger" was lost to the depths. With no tackle to carry the obstacles were overcome with much pleasure, including acrobatics at cascade pools to avoid a dousing. Great delight was experienced in climbing the "Grand Cascade" by sense of touch.

At the "Cloakroom" we met the Belgian team on their way to the bottom. Wishing them 'Bon chance' we returned to our comfortable Camp I. Devouring a huge meal of steak and much tea we retired and slept well. The returning Belgians awoke us some twelve hours later. They had done well: the tackle was at the top of the "Grand Canyon" awaiting us. The Belgians were very tired, but they all made the surface, Lemaire doing the round trip in 18 hours!

Donning our wet gear was no fun, but we were soon on our way to the tackle and reached it with little effort. No snags were encountered on the way out, even "Claudine's

Cascade" offered little resistance, and within eight hours we were back at Camp I. There we decided to eat as much of the food as we could and strike camp. With an overloaded packframe and 100 ft. of ladder each the path up the "Rubble Heap" was steep and exhausting. The obstacles were slowly taken in turn, the "Tyrolienne", "The Little General", the climbs and the steep mud slope up the Great Gallery. It was hard work with many rests before "Aldo's" was reached. Here the tackle was left and we continued with just our personal gear, a kitbag each. Slowly we pulled these and ourselves up the pitches. At "Ruiz" we were shattered, but managed to extract ourselves and emerged to a beautifully hallucinating dawn over the Alps.



THE GOLDEN AGE OF YORKSHIRE POTHOLING

by P. C. Swindells

IN THE CRAVEN DISTRICT, exploration of caves and potholes by individual men had started well before the creation of the Yorkshire Ramblers' Club. For example, Mr. Farrar surveyed almost the whole length of Clapham Cave in 1837/8 and Mr. Birkbeck of Settle reached the ledge in Gaping Gill in 1872, having previously bottomed Alum Pot in 1870 but it is fair to say that the formation of the Yorkshire Ramblers' Club saw the birth of sustained and organised subterranean exploration.

Most interestingly, caving and potholing had no mention in the objects of the club which have remained unchanged since its formation in 1892 as—"to organise walking and mountaineering excursions, and to gather and promote knowledge concerning Natural History, Archaeology, Folklore, and kindred subjects". Nevertheless, interest was there from the beginning as is instanced by the first annual meet being at Ingleton when members visited Yordas Cave (in a deluge) and the second being at Settle when they went down Hull Pot. By 1895 the annual report was stating that "... during the year substantial progress has been made in the exploration of Yorkshire's caves and potholes. At Whitsuntide a thorough examination of Manchester Hole was undertaken in the hope of finding a through passage to Goyden Pot. No practical way was discovered, but the party penetrated a longer way into the cave than was known to have been reached before".

In those days the underground party used to be supported by a handyman, by name of Ben Mason, who used to tend the ropes and also pass down refreshments at suitable intervals. Obviously there were certain advantages to be found in the pot-holing practices of our forbears.

Reading through the early journals, I have been struck by the high quality of the writing and the obvious intelligence and knowledge shown by members of the club. No doubt it was the spirit of adventure, coupled with man's curiosity that drove them underground, but every new discovery had to be examined and evaluated, and I am confident that it was this close attention to detail that enabled them to be so effective

in their discoveries. From the beginning they were carrying out accurate surveys of every hole they explored, having quickly acquired a scathingly low opinion of what plans were then in existence. The first survey the Club did was of Rowten Pot in 1897. It was prepared by S. W. Cuttriss, who was known as "The Scientist", and always went underground accompanied by a green haversack and who was responsible for most of the early slides in the Club's collection. There is a delightful picture, in the report on Rowten, of "The Scientist" at the bottom standing for ten minutes up to his knees in water, with a thermometer hanging from his trouser buttons whilst with one hand he chipped bits off the rock, and with the other he operated a compass and a barometer. The result was—"365 feet down, air 48.5F., water 48F."!

This search for knowledge was not limited to natural history or geology, nor did the club scorn easy caves when they contained something of interest. In 1905 they visited Skoska Cave, which is a simple affair in Littondale, and there they stumbled upon human remains; first a radius, a vertebra and a portion of rib; then, after many more painstaking visits, further bones including a skull were found embedded in stalagmites and the whole was identified as belonging to a woman, aged about forty, and about 5 ft. 3 ins. tall, of the Bronze Age. They found a hole in the side of her skull which would approximate to that made by a sharp instrument, such as an axe or spear, and medical experts deduced that she had been banged on the head and had withdrawn into the cave to die. Medical experts also decided that she was an acute sufferer from adenoids with the result that her nasal bone was set almost at right angles to her face. What with this and the fact that she was undershot, she cannot have been a thing of beauty.

In 1913, Brodrick, an ardent potholer with much good work to his credit (and also sometime mayor of Southport) was brooding over the plans of Clapham Cave and Gaping Gill and it struck him that the low bedding plane, just visible at Foxholes, might prove a link in the chain. A considerable amount of digging, assisted by men from the Farrer estate, proved his theory false, but it did reveal a rock shelter consisting of an upper living space and a lower burial space in

which were found, as well as human bones, bones of numerous animals, evidence of a fireplace and pieces of Neolithic pottery. Brodrick reported that the whole was probably unique in England.

In 1896 the Yorkshire Ramblers' Club claimed the discovery of the canal in Clapham Cave, but, unfortunately for them and fortunately for historical accuracy, the Headmaster of Giggleswick School, the Rev. Style read the report and wrote to the club pointing out that the area described resembled very closely the area reached by himself, Professor Hughes of Clare College, Cambridge, Mr. Birkbeck and party in 1872. A lengthy and entirely harmonious correspondence ensued with the result that the Yorkshire Ramblers' Club withdrew all claims of discovery of these areas.

It is logical to move from Clapham Cave to Gaping Gill, which was first bottomed by M. Martel in August 1895. Actually E. Calvert of the Yorkshire Ramblers' Club had designs on the place himself but the delays and procrastinations of YRC organisation let the Frenchmen in first. This, of course, was highly irritating to Calvert and spurred him on to action so that he reached the ledge in September 1895 and bottomed it in May 1896. From that point on, for many years, the Yorkshire Ramblers' Club virtually took over exploration of Gaping Gill and it might be of interest to follow the sequence in which the exploration developed. In 1895, Martel simply circumnavigated the cave. In 1896, the YRC opened up the East Passage and penetrated to the end far beyond Mud Chamber (and by so doing recognised that the through way to Clapham Cave was not going to fall as easily as they hoped). In 1903, Booth and Parsons did their famous crawl, in 1905 the Club reached Stream Chamber and in 1906 the West Chamber, the NW passage beyond Stream Chamber, the Belfry, Flood Exit Pot and the passage beyond. In 1907 they found the letter box in West Chamber and they opened up Flood Exit and reached the top of the final pitch down to the pot. It was not until 1920 that they did the Gaping Gill Flood Exit cross-over and even then they only exchanged two men from each party because the life line was too short and when they extended it, the knot caught in all projections in a dangerous manner. Actually the position of Flood Exit was

deduced by the Yorkshire Speleological Society in consideration of the great height of the chamber above Flood Exit Pot and the great height of the waterfall, also because of a strong draught in the passage that did not go beyond the pot and finally because they found in the pot several flies and a live, red, worm. I quote this in order to illustrate, once again, how sharp eyes and intelligent deductions led to major discoveries.

It is, I think, equally interesting to consider the methods of descent and the exploration of Fell Beck. In 1872, Birkbeck dug a thousand foot trench to divert the waters and Martel used the same trench. In his first descent, Calvert fixed tackle across the hole and was lowered by windlass and it was during this descent that he discovered Jib Tunnel, and in 1896 he descended thereby in a bosun's chair, a free fall direct to the floor. Finally, in 1921, the Burrow brothers found out how to site the gantry in its present position, thus allowing the bosun's chair to be used in the main shaft itself.

In 1909 the Club discovered a low bedding plane in the side of Fell Beck, half-way between the camp and the main shaft, which was capable of taking all the water under normal conditions and which thereby enabled them to ladder the main shaft dry. This they called "Rat Hole". And in the same year Booth and Wingfield made a landing by swinging from the bosun's chair onto Spout Tunnel, which is where the lateral fall cascades into the chamber. It sounds a hair-raising operation as, not only is the mouth of the tunnel under water, but it also had an appreciable slope towards the chamber and it must have been similar to jumping on to a sloping roof in the middle of a thunderstorm. However, they did it, and got ropes across, so that a surveying party could go up and thus complete the knowledge of all the means by which water falls into the chamber.

Also in 1909 occurred one of the landmarks of the early potholing experiences of the club when a party was marooned in the bottom of Gaping Gill for thirty-six hours by a flood. The rain started at midnight, and by noon the next day was rushing over the windlass platform (for a Jib Tunnel descent) and at one time the gauge in the main chamber showed that the level of water had risen four inches in half an hour. The

party below was wet and tired and hungry but in no danger as they spent the time 45 feet above the main chamber in the South Passage, and, to my mind, the highlight of the story is the courageous descent by Booth, at the height of the flood, with a rucksack of provisions. He had an exciting time on the way down as the full force of the lateral fall drove him against the opposite wall; the lines got tangled and it was only with difficulty that he got them straight again. Then, when he got down, his troubles were by no means over as the reserve store of candles had been swept away and he had no light, other than matches, and it took him an hour in the dark to locate the party. During this escapade, the telephone had broken and not only did the underground party use their revolvers at frequent intervals (apparently a common means of attracting attention) but also the surface party joined in by borrowing a gun from Mr. Metcalfe of Clapdale and firing it down the hole; presumably on the reasonable assumption that a gun made more noise than a revolver and gambling that the force of the fall would so dissipate the impetus of the pellets as to render them harmless to anyone who might have been at the bottom.

Finally, one cannot leave Gaping Gill without some reference to the camp at the surface. The annual Yorkshire Ramblers' Club Whit Camp by Fell Beck became a well loved institution and references are made on many pages in the journals to the friendly atmosphere, the singing round the camp fire and, above all, to the excellence of the commissariat.

I have already indicated that, prior to the formation of the Yorkshire Ramblers' Club, known underground exploration was limited to Clapham Cave, Gaping Gill and Alum Pot. Of those yet to be investigated, Rowten Pot came top of the list. Martel refers to it as of the same magnitude as Gaping Ghyll, and someone else had estimated its depth as 600 ft. so what more natural than that it should be amongst the first objectives of the Yorkshire Ramblers' Club and in 1897 an assault was mounted with a strong party (Booth, Cuttriss, Parsons, Scriven, Swithinbank, assisted by Woodhouse and Somers) and they successfully bottomed the pot. I dwell on this report as I think it brings out some interesting points and permits of another anecdote. I do not think anyone will deny

that those men possessed in equal measure to the "Tigers" of modern times the qualities of courage, determination and physical ability and yet they rated Rowten as a most severe undertaking whereas, today, it is rated V. Diff. Why was this? Firstly, they had not discovered the easy way down and in this case, they laddered a big pitch from the bridge all the way in the waterfall, whereas nowadays one can avoid the worst by going through the eyeholes. Secondly, there was the ever present danger of falling stones from the bridge, and it must be remembered how much worse the old ladders were for dislodging loose rock than the modern electron. Thirdly, it was impossible to keep any light going when descending 140 ft. in a waterfall. The next point concerns the sheer quantity and bulk of equipment. Knowing the reputation of the pot, they went prepared and their gear included 200 ft. of ladder, 1,700 ft. of rope, numerous coils of telephone line, flare lamps, crowbars, pulley blocks, and much other paraphernalia weighing many hundredweights. 200 ft. of ladder may not appear excessive when measured in terms of neatly rolled electron but with bulky and heavy rope ladders it becomes an entirely different proposition and there were numerous references in the early journals to the difficulties and effort required to manipulate wet ladders in a constricted pot. In the very early days, they apparently had only one ladder and if further laddering was needed after the first pitch, a man at the top of the pitch lowered the ladder on the end of a very strong rope. To help this man pull the ladder up, on the return journey, they used to fasten a life line to the top rung, pass it over a pulley, and lower it down the hole so that the underground party could lend a hand.

To return to Rowten Pot, this very thing had happened, and when they returned to the bottom of the waterfall pitch they communications had broken and they could not tell the man up top to pull the ladders up. What happened next is best described by Swithinbank in his memoirs and I quote verbatim . . .

"A kettle, cork, and broken telephone line seem to have little in common with each other, but they are to my mind inseparably associated with Charlie Scriven and Rowten Pot. It is difficult to understand why a telephone line always

breaks down when it is most required, but the inevitable happened on this occasion. When the time came for hauling on the main ladder lines at the bridge, to restore a climbable means of communication with that point, the telephone refused to work. Whistling and shouting were tried but anyone familiar with the pot and the 250 ft. level will readily appreciate how utterly impossible it was that such a means would be successful. We were indeed in a sad predicament: as a last resource, a letter was written on a scrap of paper and tied to a light halyard that had been used for the conveyance of refreshment, hoping that sooner or later someone on the bridge would haul it up. We had not long to wait; the line with its vital message suddenly disappeared up the chasm, to our infinite satisfaction and delight. Everything that goes up Rowten Pot main chasm does so in the heavy waterfall for something like 150 ft. yet we hoped that the message would land. It had, as we subsequently learnt, met with a watery grave, but Charlie sensed the situation and sent the halyard down again with a tin kettle, having a cork in the spout, tied to the end. One does not find much opportunity for a hearty laugh in potholes as a rule, but when Charlie's kettle with its corked spout appeared we had one of the finest reasons for hilarity that ever came our way below ground".

I can't find anything of particular interest on the subject of communications, except the revolver shots to which I have already referred, and even these were not universal, or else they would have shot off in Rowten. From the earliest days they had a telephone of sorts and they also used the standard whistle signals and there are one or two references to the advisability of having in the party men who knew each other so well as to recognise changes of voice inflection on the argument that inflection carries further than words. But I suppose this is just as true today. A semi-humorous report on Lost Johns in 1898 comes next and I start by quoting from the author as they prepared for entry . . .

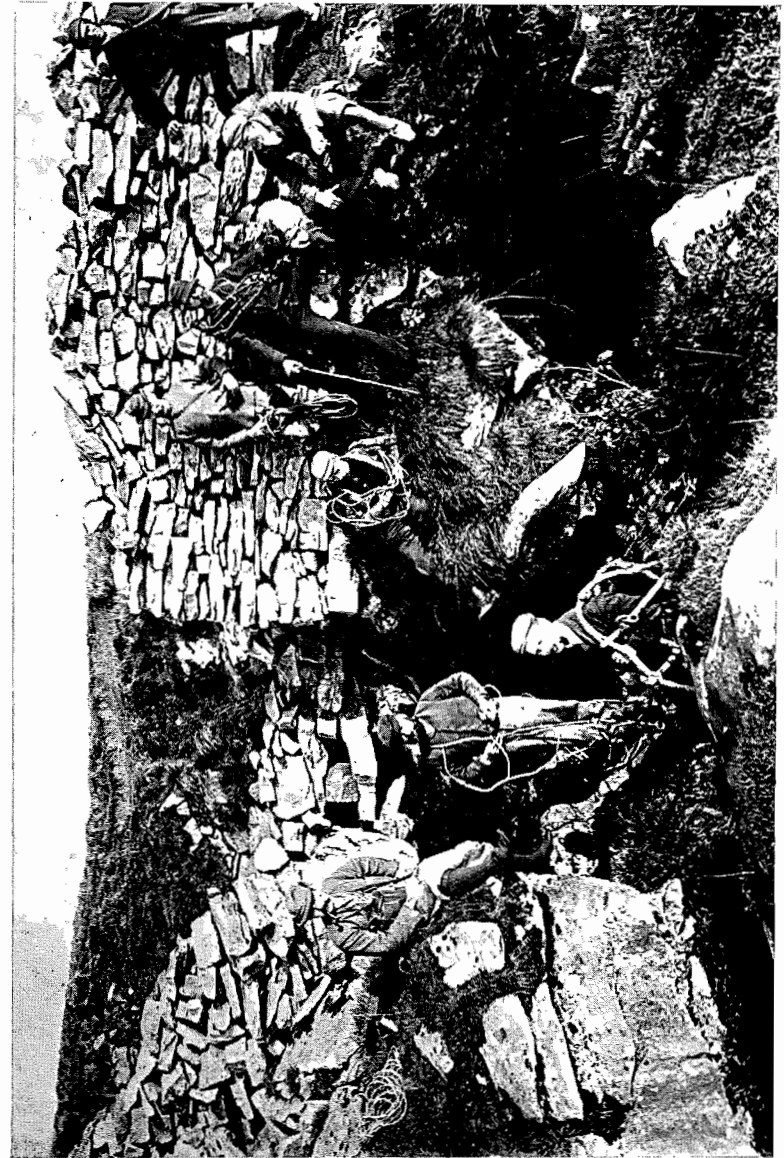
"But the Scientist, at this point, handed me a large lump of clay and a singular hat. The latter was extremely hard. In shape a compromise between clerical and lay, it was in colour a dingy and unbecoming yellow flecked with spots of dirty white and much too large. The clay I supposed was to make

it fit. Fortunately before my ignorance was discovered I observed that it was to be moulded into a candle holder and stuck in front of the crown. The insertion of a candle gave the hat a more imposing appearance but there was still much to be desired in looks and comfort. Before potholing is likely to become popular with women the millinery incidental to the sport will require careful thought and more chic."

From this description arise two points. First, how on earth did they get a lump of clay to stick onto their hats and to stay there? Secondly, the development of lighting is fairly clear from the journals provided that one understands what is meant by flare lamps. I imagined this must mean hurricane lamps, as somewhere there is reference to paraffin, but I am informed that a flare lamp worked off carbide and had a side flame. In any case early potholers started with flare lamps, balls of magnesium wire for long range illumination and candles. Candles or tallow dips were the main source of illumination as they were the handiest. Some they stuck in their hats, some they carried in their hands, either singly or in clusters, but always they were made of tallow, not paraffin, so that they could be eaten in emergency. Reference to the modern shape of carbide lamp is found in the Flood Entry exploration in 1909 and Roberts refers to the good light that they threw in enabling Dr. Mackenzie to attend to Boyd in Sunset Hole. Roberts also refers to electric lamps for the first time in 1911 in the Siege of Mere Ghyll and he liked them a lot except that they were so unhandy.

The second point from the Lost Johns article concerns the female sex. The Yorkshire Ramblers' Club has never had female members, but there is ample evidence of women being present at early potholing meets and they did not play merely a passive role. Obviously they acted as the commissariat but when, for example, Boyd had his accident, it was Mrs. Payne who ministered to him on the surface and in the description of the exploration of Little Hull Hole, Roberts paid tribute to Miss Bowden. Roberts, I think, was feeling a bit peeved because the weather was wonderful and certain stalwarts preferred to sun themselves while he and Stobart struggled underground, and here I quote . . .

"The result was that during the time Stobart and I were



YRC AT DICCAN POT

engaged in the arduous task of rigging the first pitch and passing the ladders through the window, we were surprised by Miss Bowden, who had most gallantly travelled alone from the pool along the eerie passage". From then on Miss Bowden played her full part in the exploration and in the arduous task of dragging out the ladders.

To revert yet again to Lost Johns there is an anecdote that amused me and I will again quote from Swithinbank. He and Booth were in the advance party and, having outstripped the others, they decided to have something to eat. "Sitting together, eating sandwiches, surrounded by Stygian darkness, made more intense by the feeble rays of a tallow candle, we became conscious that something was wrong out front; the passage was becoming luminous, a soft glow at first, but increasing in intensity until the whole passage became one glowing mass of light. This lasted for a short time and then the luminosity appeared to concentrate in the centre of the passage and take vague shape. By this time I was badly scared, it was my first real ghost, and I had no precedent to guide me. Scared as I was, I knew enough of Lost Johns to realise that any display of speed would probably end in something worse than the ghost. The luminous form now began to approach slowly, but still decreasing the distance between us; common sense gave way to unreason. Here in the very heart of Lost Johns was the spirit of the cave resenting our intrusion. Fortunately the tension was released, the ghost, still approaching, began to smell, and I recognised the smell". What had happened was that they had retreated a few paces to eat and had left behind a candle which had fallen over and ignited the covering of the telephone cable.

We now move on to the year 1909 and the transition period between the first and second waves of explorers. Ernest Roberts was the leader of the second wave and I think it is possible to detect slight and subtle changes in the spirit of the club. Perhaps a slightly less serious note was struck, perhaps there was greater emphasis on potholing for the sport of the thing, but certainly there was ample evidence of a spirit of bonhomie, of the spirit of the camp fires and of community singing. We are in the era of the song writer and there are innumerable versions of club songs, of which *Yorkshire*

(words and music by the Rev. A. C. Calvert, headmaster of Batley Grammar School) was first sung at the dinner of 1909.

Apropos of nothing at all, it appears to have been de rigeur from the beginning to smoke a pipe whilst potholing, and when reading the journals one comes across inane remarks such as . . . "the only discomfort suffered by so and so when climbing the waterfall pitch was that his pipe went out." And again, on another occasion, "everybody except one man broke his pipe and that unfortunate was made to share his smoke at the bottom with his comrades." They played a game; each man in turn had a smoke until the pipe went out, in the meanwhile the others, by jest and by engaging in conversation, tried to make the smoker lose control. As a pipe smoker myself, I can just imagine the state of the tobacco when the turn came for the last man to light up.

To turn from the frivolous to the dramatic, 1910 saw the only serious accident reported in any of the first five journals, from 1892 to 1930 and it occurred in Sunset Hole. To set the scene, Roberts and Addyman had sufficient energy, after a full day dismantling tackle and clearing Gaping Gill, to walk over the col and examine a hole previously noticed by Addyman which they hoped would link up with Braithwaite Wife Sink Hole. It was sunset when they arrived, without tackle, and they went in and reached the last pitch. History does not relate the time they came out nor the time they set off again next morning from the camp at Gaping Gill but it was again sunset the next day when they emerged, having bottomed the hole but having failed to find a way through. Hence the name Sunset Hole; and an apt illustration of the energy of the men of those years and in particular of Roberts. Reveille at camp at Gaping Gill was at 6 a.m., breakfast at 6.30 and the first descent started at 7 a.m., and most people did not emerge until 12 or 14 hours later and often they slept below ground.

In 1910 they forced a through way into the sink hole (since blocked up) and in Whit 1910 the accident occurred. A mixed party of experts and novices entered the hole at 11.30 a.m., intending to have an easy day, and by 3 p.m. seven of the eight men had been hauled up the last pitch. Boyd was the last man to come up and in so doing, the rope broke and he

fell back thirty feet, fracturing his thigh and suffering bad bruising. Kilburn, the landlord of the Hill Inn, cycled to Ingleton for the doctor (and just imagine the time that would take) and Addyman scrounged a leaf from a farmhouse table and took it down the hole to the top of the pitch, whilst, during the same period, the others got Boyd up the pitch. Dr. Mackenzie courageously went straight in to the top of the last pitch and strapped the patient to the table top and then returned to the entrance to await the arrival of the long suffering man who was eventually brought out at 8 a.m. the next day, seventeen hours after the accident. Apparently they had not taken ladders in, but had fixed a pulley at the top of the shaft in such a convenient way that they decided to use only a single rope, contrary to the normal practice of having a second, or life line. The rope they used was of great strength, and had been used in Gaping Gill a number of times, but it was untarred and at some time cannot have been dried properly, with a consequence that a short section was rotten. From that time forward the Yorkshire Ramblers' Club took greater care in drying out ropes and enforced the rule always to wear life lines.

The Siege of Mere Gill is an epic account of an assault on a Super Severe Pothole which started in 1908 and was not completed until 1912. During that period there had been four or five intervening attacks and they had all failed because the assaulting party was too small in numbers and recruitment was difficult because of the reputation of the pot for extreme wetness. The crux was to get the whole party down the third pitch, or was it the second—it is difficult to be certain because the pitches are not numbered in the journals as they are in Pennine Underground—and to do this a rope ladder was necessary rather than a rope and breeches buoy because of the difficulty of getting the last man up; on the other hand none of them thought it was safe on the ladder because of the distance to be climbed in the waterfall. It was not until they diverted the beck that they were able to solve the problem and thus open the way for a final, successful, assault. I realise I have done scant justice to what was regarded as an epic achievement and I can only recommend anyone interested to read the full account for himself.

My last extract from the journals is of Little Hull Hole which again took a long time to conquer. Starting in 1910 it did not actually fall until the fourth expedition in 1922, but of course the war years intervened and Roberts himself comments that in the early stages they were suffering from anti-climax after Mere Gill and did not push it as hard as they might. They reached what they thought at the time was the bottom in 1913, but some doubt lingered, and they returned to apply the acid test—namely that a pot is not bottomed until two men, in each other's presence, have each tried and failed to progress further. The account is of interest as Roberts talks about ladders and the weight thereof and says those were the days before the Botterill Ladder, thus indicating that between 1912 and 1922 Botterill designed a lighter ladder.

In the first Yorkshire Ramblers' Club Journal the secretary, Lewis Moore, reviews an article written by four Y.R.C. men in the volume on Cave Exploration in the series, *The Encyclopaedia of Sport*, and I quote . . .

"If there is one point upon which it is possible to join issue with the authors it is upon the form of rope ladder best adapted for this work. In spite of its extra weight a ladder with alternate rungs of wood and rope, or at least every third rung of wood, is to be preferred to the ladder with one wooden rung in every four or five recommended". The authors were Calvert, Ellet, Gray and Green, all experienced potholers, and presumably they liked the maximum of rope rungs because of lightness but in the opinion of later generations wooden rungs, even though heavier were to be preferred because of the extra stability they gave.

In the article on Little Hull Pot, Roberts also underlines the relative difficulties encountered by the early explorers, before the easy ways and the best holds had been found, and he says, when describing their exit from the pot . . . "I was first up the top pitch and if anyone wants a really sensational position I can recommend leading from the window up a ladder at an angle of originally 45 or less which trembles and threatens to turn over, first on one side and then on the other. We had not then found all the holds that permit the pitch to be done most gracefully".

By this time nearly all the major known holes had been

conquered and the golden age of potholing in Craven was coming to an end. I do not wish to give the impression that the Yorkshire Ramblers' Club had the monopoly of underground exploration. That is palpably untrue. Nor do I wish to imply that they were interested only in new ground and in severes and upwards.

To conclude, I can do no better than to make a final quotation, again from Swithinbank. "A priceless memory is the faith and trust in each other that is born of potholing. I wonder how many men outside the climbing world would know what safety and confidence can be found in a single hand clasp, when that clasp is the only link between safety and death. In the early days of potholing, when tackle was not so commonly used, it was no unusual experience to hear the words, 'Right, now swing clear'. That hand clasp was symbolic of the purest system of ethics ever thought out by mankind".



CHIPPINGS

THERE WILL BE GENERAL RELIEF amongst walkers and climbers that the threat to the one-inch Ordnance Survey map has now been removed. The Ordnance Survey has confirmed that the map will continue to be published for the whole country, but it seems that the publication of the 2½ inch may have to be curtailed, only those districts being covered which are likely to attract a reasonable sale of maps.

In *Mountain Life* for December 1972 Dennis Gray considers the controversy stirred up in European climbing circles by the Russian proposals to establish competitive rock climbing as an international sport. He attended an international gathering of mountaineers held at Munich in conjunction with the twentieth Olympiad. The ultimate objective of the Russians appears to be the inclusion of competitive climbing as an Olympic event. Gray does not consider this a serious possibility as it is the policy of the Olympic Committee to reduce rather than to enlarge the number of events. Gray's report is followed up in the February 1973 number of *Mountain Life* with a revealing account by Marek Brniak of the fifth rock climbing championships in the U.S.S.R. Competitors are held on a top rope (a steel cable, in fact): stop watch timing is used, the winner being the climber who gets to the top and down again by abseiling in the shortest time. If the climber's weight comes on the top rope he is disqualified.

All this is of course dead against British climbing tradition, and most of the Europeans are opposed to the idea, although several countries sent observers to the Russian event. In fairness it should be noted that the Russians do not regard this as a branch of mountaineering, but as an entirely separate sport. But the virus of international competition has without doubt come into mountaineering in the last thirty years, and any attempt to encourage this disease by whatever means should be discouraged. It is just as well that British climbers should know what is going on abroad.

THE FIRST ENGLISHMAN IN ZERMATT. Many of our members have made Zermatt the base for their climbing in the Alps, but probably few know that the first Englishman ever to set

foot in the village was a fellow-Yorkshireman, one George Cade, of York. He is a shadowy figure today, and enquiries in York and elsewhere have failed to uncover information about him, although he must have been a citizen of some substance, as he made an extended tour of Switzerland in 1800, engaging local guides for his travels. He wrote an account comprising some 170 pages, describing his journey, but this was never published, the day of club journals not having yet arrived, and the manuscript now seems to have disappeared. Whymper, in his *Zermatt and the Matterhorn* mentions having seen it, and quotes several passages from it. But the longest resumé of the manuscript appeared in an article in the *Alpine Journal*, vol. VII, 1874—6, by the Rev. J. Sowerby, entitled, *A Tour in the Alps in 1800*. The reverend gentleman had fallen in with Cade's son during a holiday in Switzerland, and had borrowed the manuscript from him, thus obtaining the material for an article of historic interest.

Cade and his companions approached Zermatt over the Theodule Pass from the Val Tournanche. They were well received by the resident Curé, but found the "High Dutch" spoken by the Zermatters rather too much for them. They continued down the Visp Tal to the Rhone valley, and the Curé of St. Niklaus told Cade that he was the first Englishman he had ever seen. The whole account would be well worth reprinting but so far my enquiries have failed to locate the manuscript—if indeed it still exists.

In conclusion here is a sample of George Cade's literary style, without comment: "O ye verdant scenes, ye glassy lake and woods and hanging rock. Ye towers and solitary hamlets, what happy memories ye recall! Thrice delightful mountains, how ye expand the soul in the delight of sentiment; how ye beckon to it from the strife of cities and vain pomps of life to a safe haven of retirement amidst the charms of nature and solitude".

J.G.B.

NEW CLIMBS. HARRIS BUTTRESS, TRALLVAL, RHUM.

Archbishop 360 ft. Mild severe.

To the left of Central Rib there is a large black overhanging gully. Left of this another rib rises up leading to a broad

diedre. The lower half of the route follows the rib, the upper half the right side of the diedre.

- (1) 110 ft. Start at the left hand edge of the rib and follow an obvious line of cracks and short slabs up to a large boulder-strewn ledge beneath an overhanging slab.
- (2) 30 ft. Up right-hand edge of slab to ledge.
- (3) 90 ft. Move up rightwards towards a line of broken black rock. Climb straight up this (crux) to ledge.
- (4) 110 ft. Follow crest of rib to right of diedre up pleasant rock to top.

First ascent: G. Edwards, P. A. Standing (alternate leads). May 31st, 1973.

Archdeacon 240 ft. Very severe.

100 ft. left of Archbishop is another buttress with overhangs at 50 ft. and 80 ft. Start at the left hand base of the buttress by a cairn. The standard and interest of the route are well maintained.

- (1) 60 ft. Climb up a line of overlapping, light-coloured rock to a prominent nose at 50 ft. Move past nose to ledge.
- (2) 70 ft. Move delicately right onto slab and climb up rightwards to the overhang. Traverse right until it is possible to pull up over the overhang, and then climb up leftwards to the large grass terrace, which splits the western end of the cliff.
- (3) 70 ft. Looking from Pitch 2 there is a large black gully to the right. Pitch 3 roughly follows the left side of a small rib to the left of the gully. Start at the base of the rib and climb up via two obvious steps. Continue trending rightwards to a small ledge below the final slab.
- (4) 60 ft. Climb up leftwards from the stance and then take a direct line to the top on small holds, avoiding the wide crack running up rightwards, which is an easier line. The finish is superb.

First ascent: G. Edwards, P. A. Standing (alternate leads). May 31st, 1973.

Fallen Angels 70 ft. Hard severe.

About 150 ft. left of Archdeacon is another small buttress.

Start by cairn and follow obvious line up light-coloured gabbro to top.

First ascent: G. Edwards, P. A. Standing. May, 31st, 1973.

RHUM COMPARISONS AND IMPRESSIONS.

Whit. Holidays 1964 and 1973. Cloudberry on the centre of the ridge rising from the col between Hallival and Askival—two small rosettes only. Eagles seem to have increased substantially since 1964. There were said to be four pairs this season. Many members mentioning sightings. S. M. and I saw one near Wreck Bay and shortly afterwards the “fall” of a grouse which had been plucked. Do the two Eagles Crags on the map (South and North coasts) relate to Sea Eagles (said to feed mainly on sea birds)? Grouse and heather seemed to have increased since 1964 but the fluctuations of grouse populations are well known. We did not see any evidence of heather burning. Snipe—there seemed to be a noticeable increase since 1964. Divers were seen, but were scarce, as they were also in 1964.

As in 1964 it was an island of primroses and violets. The two seemed to favour differing districts—primroses around the camp site at “Salisbury Plain” and violets the north western valleys. The whole island was much drier than usual (possibly owing to dry winter). Deer seemed to have increased—I did not get a population count from any of the Conservancy men. To me of interest, the broken shattered crag at the head of Glen Guirdil—“Sron an t-saighdeir—the soldier’s nose. Why? Badly shattered!

Trout-fishing (not official!) and not taken seriously. Poor, fish small and “dour”, Good fly hatches seen many times—Stonefly, Alderfly, Yellow Sally, etc., but no natural rises of fish in Loch Long. A cold north-west wind may have inhibited fish taking surface flies. If so, why? Grouse and claret seemed favourite for few fish taken. Loch Sgaorishal reported poor, but high altitude may make this a “late” loch. No calcareous rocks makes for poor trout.

G.B.B.

KINDRED CLUB JOURNALS

The Alpine Journal, 1972. Vol. 77 No. 321

In the last YRC Journal the reviewer of the *Alpine Journal No. 74*, said that the Journal was so large and magnificent that to review it was not possible, one could only make obeisance! The present reviewer applauds these sentiments, but feels he will not be allowed to get away with it so easily. At the outset it must be repeated that the *Alpine Journal* has always been the premier club journal, and this number shows that it still holds that honoured place.

Leslie Stephen's "*Playground of Europe*" has always been my favourite mountain book, and now, like Ko Ko "I'm glad to hear my opinion backed by a competent authority". Sir Arnold Lunn in an absorbing centenary tribute to Leslie Stephen says that to him "*The Playground of Europe*" still seems to be perhaps (only perhaps, Sir Arnold?) the best book about mountaineering ever written. For humour, modesty, and fine prose this book will always stand alone. A monument to an age of mountaineering now regrettably long past.

The much publicised International Himalayan Expedition of 1971 to Everest was too generally written off as a failure. John Cleare, who went as a photographer, does not however accept this judgement. In spite of the failure to reach the summit by the south west face, the petty squabbling and dissension on the part of some members, the tragic death of Bahagunu, the bad weather and sickness, Cleare still feels that it was worth while. Later in the journal a reporter's view is given by Murray Sayle of the Sunday Times. For a mountaineering novice Sayle gave a remarkable performance being one of the last four to leave the mountain after five weeks in the western Cwm.

In "*Optical Phenomena for Mountaineers*" John Harris tries to throw some light, or rather remove some shadows, from such sights as the Brocken Spectre, and the unexplained crosses seen in the sky by Whymper and the Taugwalders on their descent from the first ascent of the Matterhorn.

Those of us who are now getting on in life will gain some encouragement (or otherwise) from Walter Kirstein's account of his ascent of the Piz Badile. For an over-seventy truly a magnificent achievement.

The Japanese are now much in evidence on the mountain landscape and some of their exploits are recorded in this journal. Akira Tahahashi writes of the 1971 ascent of the west wall of Manaslu, and Ryozo Yamamoto of the first ascent of the west and central peaks of Churan Himal.

A welcome change from this exalted stuff comes in a pleasing essay by K.C.F. on "Climbers". Are they different from other men and if so why? K.C.F. brings in the word Pharisees which seems to arouse some disturbing misgivings

Riccardo Cassin recalls Italian climbing between the wars, and recollects how he and his companions arrived one August day in 1938

at the foot of the Eigerwand only to find the Austro-German team already on the face starting what was to be the first complete ascent. Cassin and his friends left, but won some compensation by their first ascent of the North Buttress of the Pointe Walker on the Jorasses.

These are but a few comments on the good things in this journal. Members, whether Alpine Club or not will read the whole with interest and enjoyment. Needless to say the photographs are of the same high standard with some hair raising rock climbing shots. In this connection Leo Dickenson writes of the difficulties of filming on the north face of the Eiger.

J.G.B.

Cairngorm Club Journal. Vol. 18. No. 94. 1971.

The Ladies Scottish C.C. expedition to Alpefjord, Greenland, in 1970; hill walking in the Snowy Mountains and in the Laminton National Park, Queensland; an account of the first party led by Shipton from Katmandu to the Everest Ice Fall; another on the Ruwenzori. The rest are on Scotland: Coigach to An Teallach, rock-climbing on the N.E. coast, and three completions of all the Munros.

A.B.C.

Climbers' Club Journal. 1970-71. Vol. XV. No. 5. New series. No. 95

The latest Climbers' Club Journal opens with an editorial blast against complacency, apathy and wrong-headed views prevailing in the club. The debate to admit ladies has led to "signs of schism", the age of the amateur and "the Old School League" have had their day. The Climbers' Club had better look to its methods before it becomes a museum piece, etc. etc. And the final despairing cry, "Your club is dying. Help save it".

Well, we know nothing of the Climbers' Club's domestic affairs, every club has its own problems, but glancing through this journal we cannot believe that the club is in such desperate straits as this. Mr. Lewis is too pessimistic about his own journal. He has produced a journal with an attractive collection of articles of both historical and contemporary interest, with about 35 pages of new climbs.

John Gregory writes of the abortive attempt to climb the Ogre in the Karakoram in which our member Clive Rowland took part; Dennis Gray of rock climbing history in what is in fact a long and informative review of "The Black Cliff. Clogwyn Du'r Arddu" by Soper, Wilson and Crew. Those who have read Peter Steele's book, "*Doctor on Everest*" and particularly our medical members, will be interested to read here the reprint of an article he contributed to *The Lancet* on "Medicine on Everest". The Englishman's main conversational standby being the weather, and a very limited one at that, we welcome P. Davies's informative article, "Meteorology and Climbing". Other writers deal with Ireland, "The Poisoned Glen, Donegal", the Dauphine, (the Pic Gaspard) and Patagonia. There are also notes on

the latest activities in the Lake District by Ian Roper, the Peak District by Paul Nunn and D. Carnell, the South West by F. E. R. Cannings, and Pembroke by J. Perrin, together with reviews of new books and journals.

J.G.B.

Craven Pothole Club Journal, Vol. 4, No. 6, 1972

Brief accounts of new pots and extensions to old pots. No nonsense, no frills and most of it solid Yorkshire stuff. Ghar Parau (Iran), Slanting Cave (Kingsdale), Greensett—Wold End (Whernside), Kirk Gill Pot (Langstrothdale), Mongo Gill Hole (Greenhow), Bishopdale Gavel area, Great Douk, and notes on a score of other local pots and caves. For news of what is happening this journal is always good value. The photographs are worth looking at, including for the first time two in colour, and there is some climbing at Thornton Quarry and Damavand (Iran).

A.B.C.

Fell and Rock Journal, 1970, No. 62, Vol. XXI, no. III

Considering the size of the Fell and Rock Club's membership this is rather a slight journal, without any contribution of much weight. Fell and Rock Club members must be as reluctant as Yorkshire Ramblers' Club members to put pen to paper. For this reason the editor must have thanked Heaven for Ian Roper whose name appears three times in the contents list, first for his graphic account of the ascent of the South Pillar of the Cima di Castello, second for his "Leader's Eye View", a short study of a leader's mental stresses on a hard climb, and, third but by no means least, his coverage of notes on new climbs. He also contributes two fine atmospheric camera studies of Wastwater and the Vale of Grasmere.

Eric Arnison found his long Johns a great comfort during a cold night before climbing Point Lenara on Mount Kenya; a noble effort for a 69 year old. F. Alcock contributes an amusing article, "The Frightful Fifty-Second", this being the fifty-second week of the year when hut wardens sally forth and pressgang club members into a weekend of hut maintenance.

Some poetry as well as prose is included, which makes a refreshing change and the journal carries a substantial review of new books and journals.

J.G.B.

The Midland Association of Mountaineers' Journal, 1971-72, Vol. V, No. 3.

This Midland Association of Mountaineers' Journal makes it clear that club members by no means confine their activities to the Midlands. A wide ranging collection of articles cover such varied subjects as "A Short Walk in Kashmir" (Frank Solari) to "The Longest Pub Crawl in England" (Stan Crawford), which turns out to be the Pennine Way. An original, and to some, attractive way of approaching this

walk. Other members were busy in the U.S.A., on Mount Kenya, the Transvaal and of course the Alps and Scotland.

This is the club's fiftieth anniversary number, and we congratulate our friends of the Midland Association of Mountaineers on attaining their club's jubilee.

J.G.B.

The Pinnacle Club Journal, Fiftieth Anniversary Edition, 1971

"And those who can't climb are admitted instead,

On a knowledge of knots and the use of the 'thread'....." the one and only John Hirst quoted by Trilby Wells, one of only four of the original members of the Pinnacle Club still left. She refers to "six of us ... the first women to go down Gaping Ghyll, at the invitation of the Yorkshire Ramblers" (and provides two photographs of the occasion). "This was a great adventure in those days, but now is just an everyday occurrence." But not, regrettably perhaps, with the Yorkshire Ramblers' Club. The articles and the distinguished contributors nicely bridge the half century, and also Wales, Australia, Scotland, the Dolomites, Widdop, Africa and Afghanistan. There is no longer such a thing as "an easy day for a lady": only XS and continued success to the Pinnacle Club.

A.B.C.

The Rucksack Club Journal, Vol. XVI, Nos. 3 & 4, Issues 62 & 63.

The Rucksack Club could always be relied upon to produce a good, sound journal replete with solid Lancastrian virtues, and this is no exception.

Dennis Davis does not give away his age but he was delighted to find that there was enough "Life in the Old Dog Yet" to complete, along with Colledge, Collister and Ferguson, an ascent of the north face of the Grosshorn in the Oberland. John Allen and Nobby Clarke both contribute articles on the Manchester Nepalese Expedition of 1970 which just failed to reach the summit of Nampa, but apparently a good time was had by all. Cliff Meredith went to the Karakoram with other Lancashire lads and reached the top of an unnamed mountain which they christened "Pointed Peak" (17,500 ft.) and brought back some fine photos.

Writing from "Down Under" Joe Walmsley writes an enticing account of the country and the climbing in New Zealand.

Arthur Clarke tells of his experiences with the impressive sounding London University Graduate Mountaineering Club Expedition to East Greenland 1968/69, which entailed a 250 mile sledge haul with exploration in the Mount Forel area.

Nearer home John Eastwood, with four companions, did the Lakeland 2,500 ft. tops one weekend between 7.10 hrs. Saturday, and 05.00 hrs. Tuesday, and Peter Roberts made an extended trek through the Highlands from Loch Duich to Achnashellach.

Finally, in addition to New Climbs and a sad list of obituaries, there is an intriguing technical note on nostril expanders. This useful gadget

is not yet a commercial item, but the author, Philip Brockbank, gives full instructions for the do-it-yourself man.

J.G.B.

Scottish Mountaineering Club Journal. May 1972

Sandy Cousins, in an article on his splendid walk from Cape Wrath to Glasgow mentions his visit to the Yorkshire Ramblers' Club in camp at Lone—"This was in true safari style—mess tent, tables, chairs and an ample wine cellar—they do not believe in roughing it in hotels like the Scottish Mountaineering Club". No prize for guessing whose tent that was. This number is satisfyingly Scottish in feeling from the scientific exactitudes of the opening article by Gordon Manley on Scotland's semi-permanent snows, via the controlled nightmares of "Pink Elephants in the Black Shoot" (of Beinn Eunaich) or the Thin Red Line on the Trilleachan Slabs, to the period excerpts of "The First Scottish Ice Climbers". "New climbs" appears perhaps for the the last time: a moratorium on publication of this information has been proposed to safeguard the opportunity for future generations of Scottish climbers to exercise the skills and pleasures of route finding and exploration on crags in their own land. In line with this thought a new editor flexes his editorial elbow on threats to mountaineering values and traditions from rules, regulations, "harbour-masters of the hills", safety devices, too many refuges, and adequate equipment.

A.B.C.

The Librarian also gratefully acknowledges the following journals:

Alpine Journal, 1970, 1971
 Appalachia 1970, 1971, 1972
 Appalachia Bulletins 1970, 1971, 1972
 Bristol University Speleological Society Proceedings,
 1970-71, 1972
 Craven Pothole Club Journal, 1970, 1971
 Deutscher Alpenverein. Mitteilungen. Jugend am Berg.
 1970, 1971, 1972
 Gritstone Club Journal, 1970
 Himalayan Journal, 1969
 Japanese Alpine Club Journal, 1969, 1970, 1971
 Leeds University Speleological Association. Review, 1971, 1972
 Mountain Club of South Africa Journal, 1969, 1970, 1971
 National Speleological Society (USA) Bulletin, 1970, 1971, 1972
 National Speleological Society (USA) News, 1971, 1972
 Scottish Mountaineering Club Journal, 1971
 South Wales Caving Club Newsletter, 1972
 Spelunca, 1971, 1972
 Swiss Alpine Club. Bulletins, 1971, 1972
 Swiss Alpine Club. Reviews, 1970, 1971, 1972

IN MEMORIAM

FREDERICK SINGLETON BOOTH (1924-1972)

The Club suffered a great loss with the death of Fred Booth on 16th December, 1972. He joined in 1924 along with his brother Harold and was brought up in the best traditions of the Club. His father, Tom (T.S.) Booth, a member of the Club in its first year and President in 1930, was a member for over 40 years.

Fred gave unstinting service to the Club and was one in an outstanding line of Secretaries. He was a Committee Member from 1926 to 1946 and from 1954 to 1959, Assistant Secretary from 1926 to 1946, Secretary from 1946 to 1952 and Vice-President from 1952 to 1954. He was elected an Honorary Member in 1959, an honour of which he was immensely proud, but had to decline the Presidency owing to indifferent health.

Like Hazard and Smythe he began his climbing at Almscliffe Crag and Rocky Valley and became a very accomplished cragsman. Many new members have been glad of his friendly encouragement and guidance on their first climbs in the Lakes, on Tower Ridge or in the Alps.

In potholing he was keen and determined, always maintaining a sense of responsibility for safety. He was in the second party in Diccan to reach the top of the Alum Pot waterfall in 1925; one of the first to repeat Hensler's crawl in Gaping Gill in 1938 and also in that year in the party which discovered Pollnagollum. He was in the team which redeemed a chapter of caving disaster in the Rowten Pot fatality in 1939.

Those who knew him well will always remember his quiet sense of humour, his strength of character, and his complete integrity. They will rejoice to have felt the warmth of his friendship.

S.M. B.N.

H.L.S. adds:

It was the first Y.R.C. Meet that my brother and I attended, we knew nobody and were rather shy, but by great good fortune we met Fred and Harold Booth. This was in 1933, and, although forty years is a long time, I remember to this day how they went out of their way to welcome us and draw us into the fold. The friendships then started matured during innumerable climbing and potholing jaunts.

Fred and Harold were members of a keen and accomplished group of climbers, which included C. D. Frankland, W. V. Brown, E. E. Roberts and Jack Hilton, whose customary Sunday exercise was to walk from the Leeds tram terminus at Lawnswood to Almscliffe, climb all day and walk back in the evening, the best part of twenty miles plus the climbing. Frankland was dead, Brown and Roberts less active by the time we joined the Club but the habitual activity continued, almost every weekend at Almscliffe or Ikley with an occasional

venture to the Lakes or to Scotland. Nor was potholing neglected. Among many arduous trips I remember particularly the descent of Mere Gill during the King George V Jubilee weekend in 1935 when Fred, Roberts and I spent three whole days underground. I believe it was the third or fourth descent.

On my first climbing visit to the Alps Fred was one of the party. We went to Arolla, remote in those days. None of us had a great deal of Alpine experience, and, although we flogged ourselves hard and spent a prodigious number of hours on each expedition we were either too slow, too cautious or lost our way too often for we only got to the top of two peaks and crossed some passes.

One day on the South face of the Aiguille de la Tsa sticks in my mind. It was late afternoon, we had lost our way as usual and got into an area exposed to falling stones, and although we were not a long way from the top we decided to retreat. There was a lot of loose stuff and one large slab slid on to Fred's leg and damaged it. We were young and impecunious and Fred's main concern was to avoid the expense of being "rescued". So a fast man (David Reed, I think) hurried down to explain that no help was needed, while the rest of us helped Fred who struggled down manfully. By 11 p.m. we reached the top of the woods and there was our fast man with coffee well laced with cognac. He had been down to Arolla and come up again. It was some of the best coffee I ever tasted; we had been out twenty-two hours.

Other Alpine holidays with Fred took us to the Maderanerthal and the Susten Pass area, and he was also very fond of the Pyrenees. On the hills he was a delightful companion—careful, reliable, but always eager to "have a go". Moreover he was full of fun, and quick to see the amusing side of a situation however irritating.

One small incident is typical, I think, of Fred's meticulous approach to everything he undertook. For some reason or another we decided to walk over forty miles on that particular day, and, having done so, we returned to my house for supper. I could see something was niggling Fred's mind and it came out that he didn't think we had gone far enough. So, after supper, we needs must turn out again and put in a few more miles for good measure.

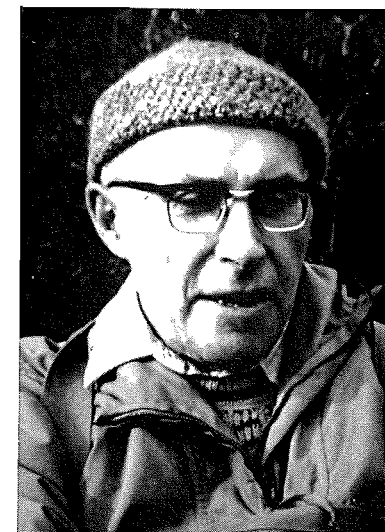
His father (Tom) and Walter Parsons (of Parsons' chimney fame) were next door neighbours. Their exploits in the potholing world are legendary and include, among many others, the discovery of the Booth/Parsons Crawl in Gaping Gill.

In 1946 Fred cemented the accord between the families by marrying Edith Parsons. After her death he married Rona Rennie, who shared his love of travel.

In recent years Fred had great trouble with his breathing and this made it almost impossible for him to walk up hills. But his interest in the Club never faltered, he managed to attend an occasional meet, and never failed to get to the Dinner.



FREDERICK SINGLETON BOOTH



ARTHUR LEESE

He was buttoned-holed at the last Dinner by a young man who was writing a book on the history of caving and who wanted information about some of the old potholes. Fred was in his element. I can still see his animated face—alert, full of interest and repeatedly breaking into a smile. Within a month he was dead, but this is how his friends in the Club will remember him.

Our sympathy goes to his wife, Rona, and to his sister, Linda, and brother, Harold.

ARTHUR LEESE (1957 - 1972)

Arthur Leese was born in Newcastle-under-Lyme. After a brilliant career as a student at Cambridge and subsequently in research under J. B. S. Haldane, he first came to Yorkshire in 1931 to do Cancer research in Leeds. He became a house physician at the General Infirmary, left for more research at Oxford, and returned to Leeds General Infirmary as tutor a few months before the outbreak of war in 1939. During the war he was O.C. Medical Division of the Military Hospital in North Africa, returning afterwards to Leeds as Reader in Medicine. In 1950 he became consultant physician at St. James's Hospital and three other Leeds Hospitals, and from then until his death he was fully and intimately concerned with the enormous expansion and re-building of St. James's Hospital.

Outside his busy and onerous professional life he had a number of deep interests. First and foremost his family, with whom he spent much time in the Dales and in Scotland; then archaeology, an interest widened and enriched by his war service in Egypt and North Africa, and by subsequent holidays in these areas and in Turkey. And finally, mountain walking, ornithology and botany. He joined the Club in 1957 and was a regular attender at Meets and a very good goer over rough country. He rarely missed the Whitsuntide camps in Scotland. He had a great love for Scotland and returned with his family year after year to Sutherland. No member of the Club could rival his knowledge of eagles' eyries in the North-West.

Following an incident in which a club guest was injured he was heard to say "It's a pleasure to look after a man who carries his own triangular bandage". But he went to great personal trouble to see that the man was properly looked after and as usual his kindness was hidden by superficial brusqueness, at the next Whit camp his tent was largely occupied by black bags full of medical supplies.

He was a shy, reserved man, very often silent when in a group. He was tolerant without concessions, and one was always aware of the underlying firmness. It was typical of him that few members of the Club were aware of his eminence as a physician. With his death the Club lost a devoted and loyal member.

A.B.C.

CLUB MEETS

1969-70. 14 weekend meets were held during the year and one day meet; the average attendance was 27. In addition there was of course the Annual Dinner, the Ladies' Evening and two lectures.

The Annual General Meeting was held at the Hotel Majestic, Harrogate, on the 15th November, 1969. The 56th Annual Dinner followed with the President, E. M. Tregoning in the Chair. The Principal guest was Sir Charles Evans, President of the Alpine Club. 133 members and guests were present. The attendance at the after-dinner meet on the Sunday at Sparth House, Malham, was 69. The Christmas meet was held at the Grove, Kentmere, with the Senior Vice-President and his lady as host and hostess. 43 members and 3 guests had the good fortune to enjoy this advantage. There was some snow on the hills though it was thawing and misty on the Saturday. Several parties did the round of the valley, one way or the other. Others ambled down the Huggill Heights, and one member even claimed to have reached the shore of Windermere. A splendid Christmas dinner was followed by the President's punch and that in turn by a film made by Don McKay. Sunday morning was wetter and more cloudy, though those who persisted had a break in the afternoon.

The Hill Inn was crowded for the January meet. 76 members and guests were present for part or all of the meet. Saturday morning dawned cold with a little snow which fell on and off all day. Whernside was as usual knocked off before breakfast and the Three Peaks before dinner. Other parties visited the Howgills and Lowstern, and inspected the old bridge near Gearstones. An excellent dinner was followed by slides and a talk by Clive Rowland, on his climbs in the Alps. There was heavy overnight rain and low cloud on Sunday as members left for a short day on tops or in pots.

Somehow 47 members and guests were accommodated in and around Low Hall Garth for the February meet. There was snow above 1,000 ft. both on the ground and travelling horizontally on a very strong wind. Parties struggled through and against it on the Coniston Fells, on the Crinkles, Pike o' Blisco and Side Pike. More mature members kept below the snow and enjoyed some patches of sunshine.

The Grampian Club Hut in Glen Etive provided an excellent base for a winter meet in late February. Twenty-three members and three guests filled the bunks and overflowed on floors, in outbuildings and in tents. The early arrivals had a day on Ben Starav and Glas Bheinn Mor on the Friday in hard snow and sunshine. Saturday could not have been better, with brilliant sunshine, crisp snow and superb visibility. There was a long queue on Aonach Eagach and parties on Bidean nam Bian. Other parties climbed the left-hand finish of Crowberry Gully and descended the Great Gully, others did the Curved Ridge, others skied on Meall-a-Bhuiridh. The weather broke on Sunday. There was heavy rain in the morning which continued for

most of the day and drove members home early.

The experiment of holding the Easter meet at the Club Hut in Little Langdale instead of in Scotland did not encourage a larger attendance, only 7 members putting in an appearance. Those who attended had an excellent weekend, but that applies also to the handful who attend Easter meets—with a better prospect of good snow—in Scotland.

31 members and one guest camped with Denny Moorhouse at Deiniolen in April. Most members walked on the Glyders and Snowdon and some climbed on Tryfan. A tour of the Clogwyn Climbing Gear workshops on Sunday was followed by climbing and walking at Tremadoc, as well as Ogwen and Llanberis.

The May meet at Lowstern was intended as a potholing meet, but no potholing was done. The total attendance over the weekend was ten, though only three of these slept in the hut, the remainder making a day of it on the Sunday and devoting their time to walking on Ingleborough and climbing on Attermire. The Whit meet was held on Arran with a camp site in Glen Sannox. The weather was generally poor—cold, wet and windy, and some of the tents were damaged. Despite this there was some good climbing on Cioch na h'Oighe, Torr Nead an Eoin and on the south face of Cir Mhor, and all the major ridges were traversed. For the Long Walk the Club stayed at the Barnsley Mountaineering Club Cottage on the Snake Pass in Derbyshire. The walk followed the Derwent Watershed starting and finishing at the Yorkshire Bridge Inn. 26 members and guests were present and 19 attempted the route of 37½ miles originated by Eustace Thomas in 1918. It was a brilliant, hot and sunny day, the moors were powder dry with puffs of peat dust rising at every step. Feeding points were sited at Main Nick, on the Snake Pass, and at Cut Gate, and the support party did a magnificent job particularly in carrying water up hill to the last named. On the last stretch over Marjory Hill and Derwent Stones members welcomed the chance of a bathe in Abbey Clough. The last of them arrived at the Ladybower Inn around 7.30 p.m. Sunday was even hotter; the Alport River was popular: three tigers were seen with lots of rope.

Ten members camped at the foot of Cam Spout in July. Cloud lifted on Saturday and gave a good day to those who climbed on Scafell Pike and Pikes Crag and walked on Scafell Pike and the ridge to Great End. Sunday began dull and damp but became progressively fine to the delight of those who climbed again on Pikes Crag or walked around the head of Eskdale.

Marble Steps was the pothole designated for the August meet at Lowstern, and one member did bottom it by joining up with a Cambridge Party. Two Y.R.C. photographers, three potholers and a dog descended Great Dawk Cave and Hardrow Kin, enjoying some of the finest formations in Yorkshire. On the Sunday six members visited Dowlass Moss and spent an enjoyable day popping in and out of holes—Thorn Pot, Boggart's Roaring Hole, Cave Hole and Trapdoor Pot.

Walking parties visited Halstead, White Syke and Cowsen Gill in bright sunshine. 15 members and guests attended.

17 members and guests travelled to Galloway in September, for the meet at the bothy at Back Hill o' the Bush in Merrick. Saturday began cold and windy, though cloud lifted steadily during the day and there were only two showers of rain. Several parties climbed Merrick, one crossed three more tops northward and returned via Tunskeen bothy, another walked out the Rhinns of Kells. On Sunday cloud remained at 2,000 ft. all day, but all present set out, aiming to swap sides of the valley. A party on Merrick reported goats and an eagle; another party browsed on bilberry patches up Craigtarson and then traversed the Rhinns.

14 members stayed at the Robertson Lamb Hut in September for the Joint Meet, as many again stayed at Low Hall Garth and ten or more used tents or cars. Albert Ravenscroft with understandable but quite unfounded hesitation assumed the role so splendidly performed for years by Harry Spilsbury. Parties comprising both clubs (the Rucksack Club was represented only by its President) were out together anywhere from Helm Crag to Wasdale. The weather was perfect. A number of ropes were in evidence, the most notable including an ex-President of the Yorkshire Ramblers' Club celebrating his eightieth birthday climbing on Scout Crag and Pavey Ark. Sunday was wet and misty and all parties returned wet enough for satisfaction.

The October meet at St. Patrick's Well Inn, Bampton, was devoted to the art and craft of orienteering over a well organised and testing course, and fortunately in clear sunshine. The Lake District eagle was reported, as well as red deer and motor-cycle marks on High Street. Sunday was windy and overcast, the wind causing difficulty for those climbing in Swindale. Walking parties traversed Harter Fell, Nan Rield, Rough Crag and High Street.

The last meet before the dinner was held in November at the Blue Bell Hotel at Kettlewell, and attended by 25 members, who enjoyed a perfect late Autumn day on the surrounding fells on the Saturday. Conditions on the Sunday were atrocious. Two tigers in wet suits persuaded three amateurs that the volume of water flowing through Out Slets Gill Pot, on the shoulder of Fountains Fell, was not excessive. At the top of the second pitch the discussion about volume passed beyond the academic and the last three members reached the surface as the flood overwhelmed the dam.

1970/71 13 Club meets were arranged for the year and 12 were actually held. The average attendance was 31, excluding the social occasions of the Dinner, the Ladies' Evening and Lectures, and the day meet for climbing at Rylstone. At the Annual General Meeting on the 21st November, 1970 the annual subscription was raised from £3 to £5, mainly to meet the increased cost of printing the Journal. The 57th Annual Dinner was held at the Hotel Majestic, Harrogate. The President, E. M. Tregoning, was in the chair, and the principal

guest was Mike Westmacott, Hon. Secretary of the Alpine Club, and member of the first expedition to climb Everest. The attendance was 143 and approximately 70 members and guests attended the after-dinner meet at the New Inn, Clapham. Most of them headed for Ingleborough, disappearing into mist and snow.

The Christmas meet was based at the Bolton Arms Hotel, Leyburn. Saturday was gloomy with low cloud and rain. The President's party made over to Swaledale and up on to Water Crag and Rogan's seat, one pair detouring via Tan Hill. Another party was conducted round the old lead mines in Apedale and on Redmire Moor. Other members were still making their way to the meet, by various routes, including Dodd Fell and the Roman road to Bainbridge. The dinner was held in the Great Chamber at Castle Bolton, the company being played in to the meal by one of the Club's resident pipers, and the traditional punch with the incoming President followed. A bus was hired to assist members back to Leyburn. Sunday was a beautiful sunny day and members were out early on the moors on both sides of Wensleydale.

With great regret the long tradition of holding the first meet of the year at the Hill Inn in Chapel-le-Dale was broken because of extensive internal alterations at the Inn. The meet was transferred to the New Inn at Clapham. 70 members and guests attended. The early start for the Three Peaks was continued, one party starting from Clapham and the traditionalists from the Hill. The Dinner on Saturday was an enjoyable if rumbustious occasion, and was followed by an excellent talk given by Peter Swindells and illustrated by slides from the Club's library, on the Club's early potholing ventures. On the Sunday there were parties on Pen-y-Ghent, Whernside and Gragareth, climbers on Attermire, farming talk at Rainscar and groups in Bowland.

No circulars were sent out for the February meet at Low Hall Garth because of a postal strike but as usual about 40 members and guests turned up; Dennis Driscoll was quite unperturbed in catering for the unknown, the meals were excellent, and the meet as usual a great success. After dinner on Saturday, Pete Watson, one of the instructors at Brathay Hall Outdoor Centre gave a talk, and showed a film on the work of the Centre.

28 members and guests assembled at the Grampian Club Hut in Glen Etive on the last weekend in February: this meet is becoming as firmly established as the Low Hall Garth meet. Cloud was down at 2,000 ft. which was also the freezing level. The President's party traversed the Aonach ridge; others were on Sgurr na Ulaidh and Bidean nam Bian; others again were ski-ing. On the Sunday there were parties on Buachaille Etive Mor and up the Lost Valley.

A high level camp was intended at Red Tarn, Helvellyn, in mid-March. There was a blizzard on the Friday evening, the snow continuing for most of the night. The President spent the night in his car at the Glenridding mines, retreating to Patterdale next morning, where he joined three other members in a quick dash to Red Tarn. Six

months later it was established that John Medley had actually camped there on the Friday night, but no signs of his sojourn were evident when the President's party arrived. The meet was therefore transferred to Low Hall Garth where eventually 9 people assembled from various refuges. On Sunday in brilliant sunshine the President and a small party traversed Crinkle Crag. The Easter camp was set up at Auchertyre Farm, 2 miles south east of Tyndrum. Heavy road traffic, trains and the continuous night activities of oystercatchers and snipe made it a noisy site. The weather throughout the meet was splendid—hot sunshine all day and every day and brilliant moonlight every night. The snow was not in good condition but the swimming was excellent. The first day was spent on Ben Dubhcraig, Ben Oss and Ben Lui. On Saturday one party was on Ben Vorlich and the other did the full ridge of Ben Cruachan. On Sunday both coasts were clearly visible from the top of Ben More and the round of Stob Binnein and Stob Coire an Lochain completed the day. Monday was spent on Beinn a' Chroin and An Caisteal. In all but numbers attending (7 members and one guest) a most successful meet.

28 members and guests were present at Lowstern for the potholing meet in May. On Saturday the potholing party eventually found Sunset Hole and bottomed it. They then beaked up Hell Gill, climbed the final fall and by diving established the depth of the pool below it. Gingling Hole was tackled on the Sunday in unusually dry conditions. The tight section, "The Thrutch", four pitches from the bottom, sorted out the men of substance. The rest reached the mud wallow at the final siphon.

By Saturday evening 25 members and 2 guests were established at an excellent camp site at Lone, in Sutherland, for the Spring Bank Holiday meet. The weather was splendid for the greater part of the week, and stimulated members to full and strenuous activity. Arkle and Foinavon were traversed in both directions. Ben Stack, the small range around Meall Horn, and Ben Hope were climbed by several parties, a couple of members walking to the latter from the camp via the "Thieves' Track" and Gobernuisgach Lodge. Others made the round trip to Gobernuisgach and back via Glen Golly. North/south and south/north parties traversed the cliffs from Cape Wrath to Sandwood Bay, sighting a peregrine en route. Virtually the whole meet spent a day on Handa Island, overwhelmed by birds in thousands, by diving skuas and bombing blackbacks. A memorable and varied week.

The Long Walk in June was a north/south traverse of the Lake District from Whinlatter Pass to Black Combe. Having first devised the route, Bob Chadwick most nobly and effectively provided the main support and cook waggon for the walkers from his brand-new motor caravan. Walking began between 5 and 5.30 a.m. and by the time the first group reached Grisedale Pike the cloud was down and the rain began, and with a strong wind behind it was soon driving heavily and horizontally, continuing in this fashion until mid-afternoon.

Routes diverged immediately. By the first feeding point at the top of Honister several walkers found that they were too lightly clad, and called it a day. A fair number of the 24 starters reached the second feeding point at the summit of Hard Knott, a smaller number arrived at the third point on the Eskdale/Ulpha road and only five hard pressed men pressed on to the fourth in about 17 hours.

Peter Swindells' temporary residence in Northern Ireland led to arrangements for an ambitious weekend in the Mountains of Mourne in July. The political situation unfortunately caused a reluctant cancellation of the meet at the last moment, or rather the substitution for it of a working weekend at Low Hall Garth. One determined member did however join Peter Swindells and the pair had two fine days, doing the full round of the High Mournes on the Saturday with excellent visibility across to the Isle of Man and almost to Dublin; and on an equally fine and clear day on the Sunday completing the traverse of the Low Mournes. The working party did some work.

The August meet saw 12 members and 3 guests in Nidderdale. A strong party explored the labyrinth of Goyden Pot. A slightly older party made off over Dead Man's Hill to Horsehouse and back over the shoulder of Great Whernside. Sunday was given over to becking up How Stean Gorge, and rounded off by exploring Elgin's Hole.

Ten Yorkshire Ramblers represented the Club at Robertson Lamb Hut for the joint meet with the Wayfarers and the Rucksack Club in September. An overflow of nineteen Club members stayed at Low Hall Garth. Cloud was low on Saturday though it cleared later in the day. Parties scattered widely over Southern Lakeland, from the Pikes to Ulpha with "becking" thrown in on Blake Rigg. A climbing party on Wallabarrow Crag had a good day concluding with a rope of five on the Girdle Traverse. Several parties climbed on Sunday on Dow Crag, others walked on the tops which became cloud covered during the afternoon. Provisioning at both huts was as usual excellent—consumption was phenomenal.

Climbing and walking were combined with archaeology and history at the Roman Wall meet in October. The hotel staff gradually became accustomed to the vagaries of the Club. Neither the distractions of hunt balls and hunt meets, nor the lowness of the Saturday mist deterred members from starting early. Parties made for the Wall and Housesteads, for Dere Street and Chew Green Camp, for the Cheviot and for Crag Lough where the climbing was excellent. Sunday was damp and misty with a succession of sharp, heavy showers. An astonishing degree of expert knowledge and guidance was available on matters Roman for more ignorant members and was very much appreciated by them.

1971-72. There were 15 meets during the year, excluding the Ladies' Evening and the dinner and the average attendance was 29.

To relieve the Secretary of the additional burden of organising meets a successful experiment was tried of appointing a different

member to do this job at each meet. The Annual General Meeting and the Annual Dinner had to share the Hotel Majestic at Harrogate with the 1971 International R.A.C. Rally. Two inches of very wet snow fell between 5 and 6 p.m., making road conditions difficult for those travelling to the dinner, which had to be delayed about a quarter of an hour.

The President, A. B. Craven, was in the Chair, and the principal guest was Professor Fred Hoyle, who is both a Yorkshireman and one who has completed his Monros. The attendance at Dinner was 143. 85 members and guests turned out for the after dinner meet at the Racehorses Hotel, Kettlewell. Most people made for Great Whernside and Buckden Pike, although Old Cote Moor Top on the opposite side of the valley was also visited, and one seasoned party crossed Great Whernside into Nidderdale and had to cross back again, losing one guest in the process. The attendance of 68 members and guests at the Christmas Meet testified to the popularity and hospitality of Dennis and Margaret Driscoll at the Grove, Kentmere. Climbing parties were out on Saturday on Buckbarrow and Gimmer, walkers completed the Kentmere Horseshoe, others reached Kilnshaw Chimney via Thornthwaite Crag and John Bell's Banner, and two parties were reported on Helvellyn and Bowfell.

A superb Christmas dinner was followed by a sophisticated show of concurrent ciné film and slides of the two previous Whitsuntide meets (Inchnadamph and Lone), to a musical accompaniment of Beethoven's Sixth Symphony. The President's punch followed. Spontaneous activities continued in the bar which very much later became, like the front lawn, an extension to the sleeping accommodation. Sunday morning brought low cloud and light rain. Again there was climbing in Longsleddale and walking around the Kentmere Valley, Haweswater and Troutbeck. Sparth House, Malham, was the venue for the January meet. 45 members and guests were soon spread out in the prevailing low cloud over Darnbrook and Fountains Fell, Malham Cove, Goredale, Attermire and the surrounding moorland and limestone. In some cases expectation was confounded by navigation and when Malham Cove eventually loomed up in the mist it did so in the indisputable shape of Attermire Scar. Dinner was followed by slides of the 1971 potholing expedition to Iran. Cloud was still down on Sunday; there was climbing on Attermire and walking within the limit of a shorter day, rounded off by an excellent ham tea.

The February meet at Low Hall Garth was attended by 38 members and guests, for whom Dennis Driscoll again catered with five-star sangfroid. There was no snow but the morning was bright and frosty and there was enough ice to test a climbing party of three on Hutable Crag in Deepdale. Walkers traversed the Coniston fells, Helvellyn and the Langdales.

The meet at the Grampian Club Hut in Glen Etive has achieved traditional quality in every way. 22 men attended, including 4 guests. According to the meet report, 40 man-monros were produced, as

follows: (a) Six men on Friday round the Glenduror horseshoe, (b) on Saturday: (i) Seven men via Aonach Mor to Stob Ghabar and back via Sron a Ghearrain, (ii) Four men on skis, power assisted, up Meall a Buiridh, (iii) Eleven men in three parties up Bidean nam Bian. (c) on Sunday—various parties up various mountains (including three up the Curved Ridge on the Buachaille). A satisfactory record of activity in view of white-out conditions on the Saturday.

March saw the Club at Edale, at the Church Hotel, for a weekend of warmth and sunshine. 22 members and six guests were present. There was climbing at Castle Naze and other outcrops, potholing in Giant's Cave, and walking on the Kinder and other Edale Edges.

For the Easter meet six members and one guest had an excellent campsite by the loch in Glen Callater, with a 3½ mile carry on which to loosen up. Friday was warm and sunny and a first party of three had a good day in Corrie Kander: the rest of the meet arrived during the day. Saturday was wet until early evening: the second party up the Corrie Kander gully found conditions less pleasant. The whole meet walked over to Lochnagar on the Sunday, via Carn an' Sagairt Mor and the Stuic in low cloud and heavy, persistent showers. Because of the poor condition of the snow no climbing was possible, and it was a damp party that returned to camp. Two members stayed on on Monday and had a splendid day of alternate sun and snow showers on Tolmount and Tom Buidhe.

Gale force wind and torrential rain greeted eleven members and three guests as they struggled to set up tents at Deiniolen in April. Conditions were no better on Saturday morning and most people took up Denny Moorhouse's offer of a conducted tour of the Clogwyn Climbing Gear Factory. Some men moved off to the coast on the Lleyn peninsular where there was sunshine, seals and iron-age forts, others inspected the nearby copper mines and when the weather began to clear around 4 p.m. a party did a fast round of the Snowdon Horseshoe.

The site chosen for the Spring Bank Holiday meet was Coruisk. Because of gales on Saturday, Sunday and Monday, it became the most disjointed meet of the year. Thirteen members and guests did eventually camp at Coruisk and spent most of the time surviving. On the only fine day (Thursday) two of them traversed the ridge in 9½ hours. Others were less ambitious but climbed or scrambled. Four other members got to Skye but did not camp at Coruisk. The first boating party (Hon. Sec. and Senior Vice-President) arrived hazardously at Scavaig on Tuesday evening and left on Thursday. The second boating party (four members) failed to arrive and finished up *sans* boat at Low Hall Garth. The President and the remaining eleven members of the meet spent most of the week in reasonable weather conditions amid considerable activity at Inchnadamph.

The Long Walk in June followed the Yorkshire-Lancashire boundary across the Trough of Bowland, starting near Dunsop Bridge and ending at the Club Cottage in Clapham. Detailed arrangements had

been made prior to the meet with landowners and keepers about the exact route. Mist and rain over the first section led to some variation in the exactness. The first pair came home in just over 9 hours. Two ran, twenty walked and ten did a superb job in support.

At Lowstern in July a party made the Club's first descent of the recently discovered Rainbow Sink on Newby Moss. The weekend was hot and sunny. Walkers were out on part or all of the Three Peaks, climbers on Attermire Scar, and a party as far afield as Keld. Attendance was nineteen. The high level camp in August was in Eskdale, below Cam Spout Buttress. The pack ponies made available from Brotherilkeld did not reach the camp but nineteen members and guests arrived. Climbing parties were out on both days on Esk Buttress and Pikes Crag, and walkers on Harter Fell, Scafell and the fells ringing the head of Eskdale.

The joint meet with the Rucksack Club and the Wayfarers in September was attended by 32 Y.R.C. men, distributed between R.L.H. and L.H.G. Albert Ravenscroft was again responsible for the arrangements at R.L.H. and therefore largely for the success of the meet. As usual there was an element of doubt about all the activities of all the parties out on the weekend, but there was no doubt about the general enjoyment.

The October meet, organised by the Teeside contingent of the Club took the form of an orienteering search for the stone crosses that are to be found widely dispersed over the N.E. Yorkshire moors. 30 crosses were listed with an elaborate points score for each one found. The search covered two days, the weather was superb and the meet was comfortably based on the Milburn Arms at Rosedale. 26 members and guests attended.

The potholing meet in late October was held at Lowstern, with 8 members and one guest present. Saturday was devoted to Bar Pot through to the Main Chamber and Mud Hall. On Sunday two members climbed on Malham Cove, the remainder walked.



CLUB PROCEEDINGS

1970—The week-end meets were: January 16th-18th, The Hill Inn, Chapel-le-Dale; February 6th-8th, Low Hall Garth and a high level winter camp above Greenburn; February 26th-28th, Grampian Club Hut, Glen Etive; Easter, March 27th-31st, Low Hall Garth; April 17th-19th, Deiniolen, N. Wales; May 8th-10th, Lowstern Hut; Spring Bank Holiday, May 22nd-30th, Glen Sannox, Isle of Arran; June 19th-21st, The Long Walk, the Derwent Watershed, Derbyshire; July 17th-19th, High Level Camp, Eskdale; August 7th-9th, Lowstern Hut; September 4th-6th, The Back Hill o' the Bush, Merrick; September 18th-20th, Joint Meet with Wayfarers' and Rucksack Clubs, Robertson Lamb Hut; October 16th-18th, Swindale, Bampton; November 6th-8th, Blue Bell Hotel, Kettlewell; December 11th-13th, The Bolton Arms, Leyburn. Average attendance at Meets was 27, and total membership at the 31st October, 1970 was 197, including 169 ordinary, 23 life, and 5 honorary members. The deaths were recorded during the year of A. L. Middleton, H. P. Spilsbury and H. G. Watts.

The 78th Annual General Meeting was held at the Hotel Majestic, Harrogate, on November 21st, 1970. The following officers were elected for the year 1970-71: President: A. B. CRAVEN; Vice-Presidents: J. HEMINGWAY, E. J. WOODMAN; Hon Secretary: E. C. DOWNHAM; Hon Asst. Secretary: F. D. SMITH; Hon. Treasurer: S. MARSDEN; Hon. 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: W. WOODWARD, R. HARBEN, J. GOTT, W. C. I. CROWTHER, D. J. HANDLEY, D. P. PENFOLD.

The 57th Annual Dinner, also at the Hotel Majestic, followed the meeting. The Principal Guest was Michael Westmacott, a member of the first successful expedition to Everest, and Secretary of the Alpine Club. The retiring President E. M. Tregoning was in the Chair and Kindred Clubs were represented by Jack Kenyon, Fell and Rock Climbing Club; Dr. E. J. Clegg, Wayfarers' Club; R. J. R. Lomas, Rucksack Club; R. Atkins, Gritstone Club; T. Austin, President, Craven Pothole Club. The total number of members and guests present was 143; the after dinner meet was held at the New Inn, Clapham.

On January 26th, John Gregory gave a lecture at the Bankfield Hotel, Bingley, on the "Fortress" (Patagonia), and on February 17th at the same hotel Bob Chadwick and Harry Stembridge gave a talk on their visit to the Himalayas.

1971—The weekend meets were: January 15th-17th, The New Inn, Clapham; February 5th-7th, Low Hall Garth; February 26th-28th, The Grampian Club Hut, Glen Etive; March 19th-21st, High Level

Camp, Red Tarn, Helvellyn; Easter, April 9th-13th, Crianlarich; May 7th-9th, Lowstern; Spring Bank Holiday, 28th May-6th June, Lone, Sutherland; June 25th-27th, The Long Walk, Whinlatter to Black Combe; July 23rd-25th, Irish weekend, Mountains of Mourne; August 8th, Rylstone; August 20th-22nd, Goyden Pot, Ramsgill; September 17th-19th, Joint Meet with Wayfarers and Rucksack Clubs, Robertson Lamb Hut; October 15th-17th, Otterburn Towers Hotel; December 10th-12th, The Grove, Kentmere. Average attendance at meets was 31 and total membership at the 31st October, 1971 was 196, including 5 Honorary members, 23 Life Members and 168 ordinary members.

The 79th Annual General Meeting was held at the Hotel Majestic, Harrogate, on November 21st, 1971: The Officers elected for 1971-72 under the Presidency of A. B. CRAVEN were as follows: Vice-Presidents: E. J. WOODMAN, W. A. LINFORD; Hon. Secretary: E. C. DOWNHAM; Hon. Asst. Secretary: F. D. SMITH; Hon. Treasurer: S. MARSDEN; Hon. Editor: A. B. CRAVEN; Hon. Librarian: J. G. BROOK; 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: R. HARBEN, J. GOTT, D. P. PENFOLD, D. J. HANDLEY, C. ROWLAND, G. EDWARDS.

The 58th Annual Dinner followed the meeting at the same hotel. The Principal Guest was Fred Hoyle, the eminent astronomer who is also a widely travelled and experienced mountain walker and a Yorkshireman. The President, A. B. Craven, was in the Chair and Kindred Clubs were represented by D. D. Stewart, Scottish Mountaineering Club; D. P. E. Evans, Climbers' Club; D. Smithies, Rucksack Club; W. Atkinson, Wayfarers' Club; F. Austin, President, Craven Pothole Club; E. Hambly, Midland Association of Mountaineers; J. C. Ackroyd, President, Bradford Pothole Club; C. J. Radcliffe, Oread Mountaineering Club. 143 members and guests were present; the after dinner meet was at the Racehorses Hotel, Kettlewell, and 85 members and guests attended.

On April 21st, Chris Radcliffe of the Oread Club and the Alpine Climbing Group gave a lecture on the Scottish Himalayan Expedition of 1969 to Ali Ratna Tibba, at the Overdale Hotel, Skipton, to members and friends.

1972—The weekend meets were: January 14th-16th, Sparth House, Malham; February 4th-6th, Low Hall Garth; February 25th-27th, Grampian Club Hut, Glen Etive; March 17th-19th, Church Hotel, Edale; Easter, March 31st-April 3rd, Glen Callater; April 28th-30th, Dieniolen, N. Wales; Spring Bank Holiday, May 26th-June 3rd, Coruisk; June 16th-18th, The Long Walk, Bowland; July 14th-16th, Lowstern Hut; August 18th-20th, High Level Camp, Eskdale; September 15th-17th, Joint Meet with Wayfarers' and Rucksack Clubs, Robertson Lamb Hut; October 6th-8th, Orienteering meet, Milburn Arms,

Rosedale; October 27th-29th, Lowstern Hut; December 8th-10th, Buck Hotel, Reeth. Average attendance at Meets was 29. Total membership at 31st October, 1972 was 193, including 5 Honorary Members, 25 Life Members, 162 Ordinary Members and 1 Junior Member. The deaths were recorded during the year of A. Leese and F. S. Booth.

The 80th Annual General Meeting was held at the Hotel Majestic, Harrogate, on November 18th, 1972. The following officers were elected for the year 1972-73: President: B. E. NICHOLSON; Vice-Presidents: W. A. LINFORD, A. J. REYNOLDS; Hon. Secretary: E. C. DOWNHAM; Hon. Asst. Secretary: F. D. SMITH; Hon. Treasurer: S. MARSDEN; Hon. Editor: A. B. CRAVEN; Hon. Asst. Editor: D. P. PENFOLD; Hon. Librarian: J. G. BROOK; Hon. Huts Secretary: W. A. LINFORD; Hon. Hut Wardens: Low Hall Garth, J. D. DRISCOLL, Lowstern, J. T. TEASDALE; Hon. Auditor: G. R. TURNER; Committee: R. HARBEN, J. GOTT, W. D. CLAYTON, D. BUSH, G. EDWARDS, C. ROWLAND.

The 59th Annual Dinner followed. The Principal Guest was S. H. Cross, M. B. E., of Ambleside. The retiring President, A. B. Craven, was in the Chair, and Kindred Clubs were represented by A. D. M. Cox, President, Alpine Club; H. B. Sales, Vice-President, Climbers' Club; G. S. Roger, President, Scottish Mountaineering Club; D. Green, Grampian Club; P. Howard, Past President, Wayfarers' Club; V. T. Dillon, President, Rucksack Club; H. Bottomley, President, Craven Pothole Club; C. J. Radcliffe, Oread Mountaineering Club; S. J. G. Hutchinson, President, Midland Association of Mountaineers; C. S. Tilly, President, Fell and Rock Climbing Club; E. Gudgeon, President, Gritstone Club; J. C. Ackroyd, President, Bradford Pothole Club.

On the 22nd March C. J. Radcliffe gave a lecture at the Bankfield Hotel, Bingley, on his ascent of the north face of the Eiger.



NEW MEMBERS SINCE JOURNAL No. 35

1971

David James Atherton Andrew Scott Lindsay
Ian Douglas Anthony Sharp

1972

Peter William Kaye Harvey Anthony Lomas
Duncan James Mackay

RESIGNATIONS

1971

Rex James Aldridge John Arthington Brayshaw
John Anthony Threlfall Stock

1972

David Godley Brian Hartley George Eric Griffiths
George Harold Lowe Richard Gerard Titley

DEATHS

1972

Arthur Leese Frederick Singleton Booth