THE YORKSHIRE RAMBLERS' CLUB JOURNAL 1985

Edited by

A. C. BROWN

VOLUME XI . NUMBER 39

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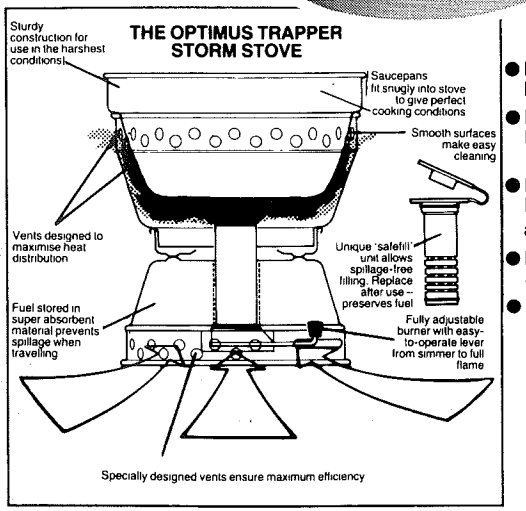

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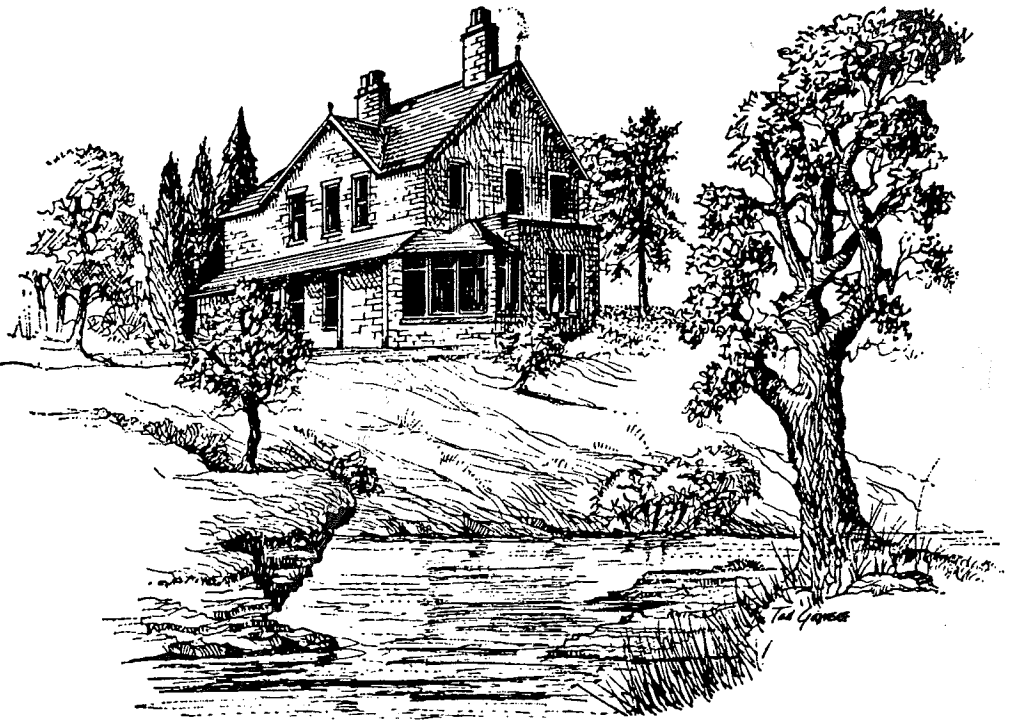

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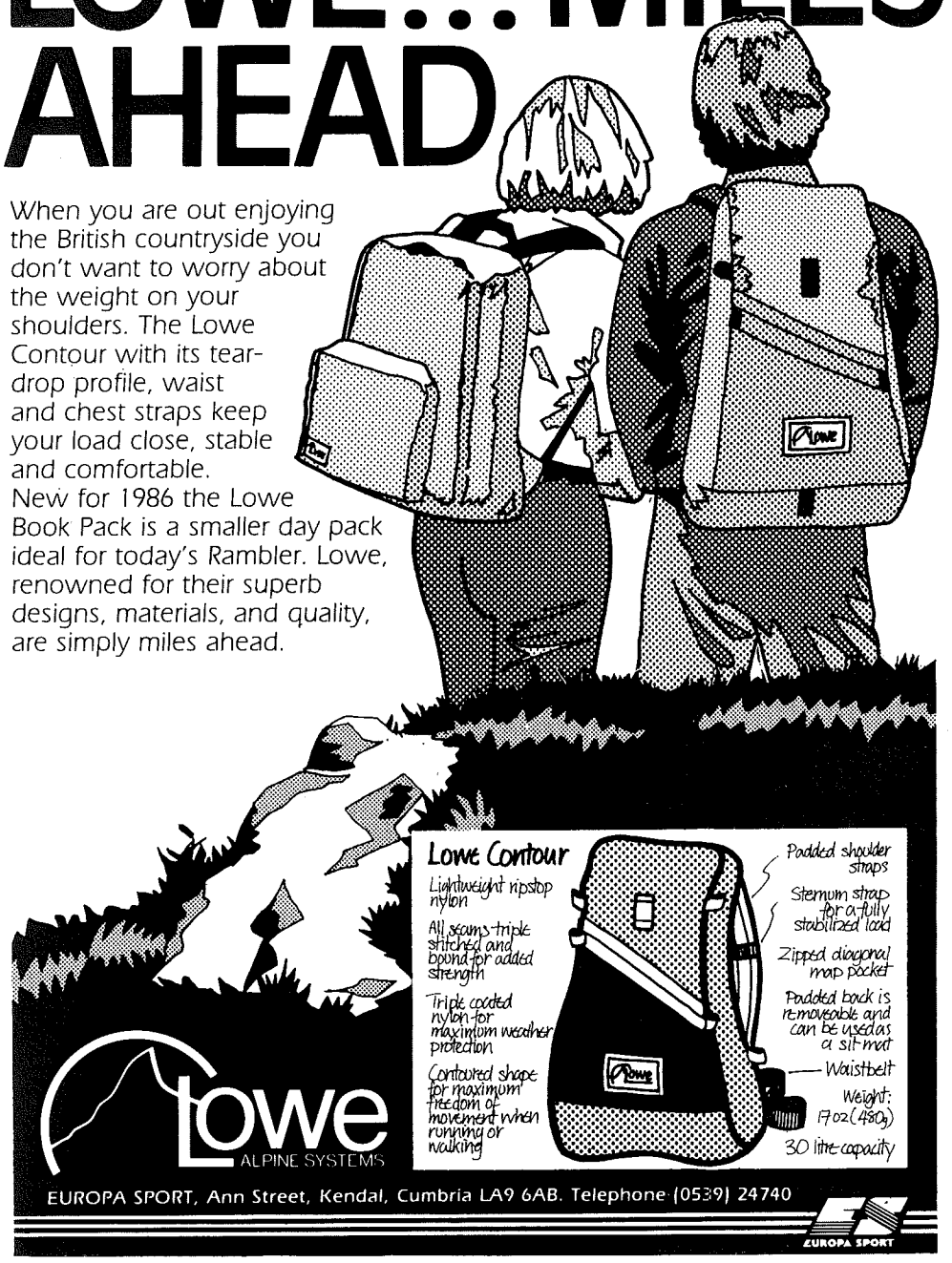

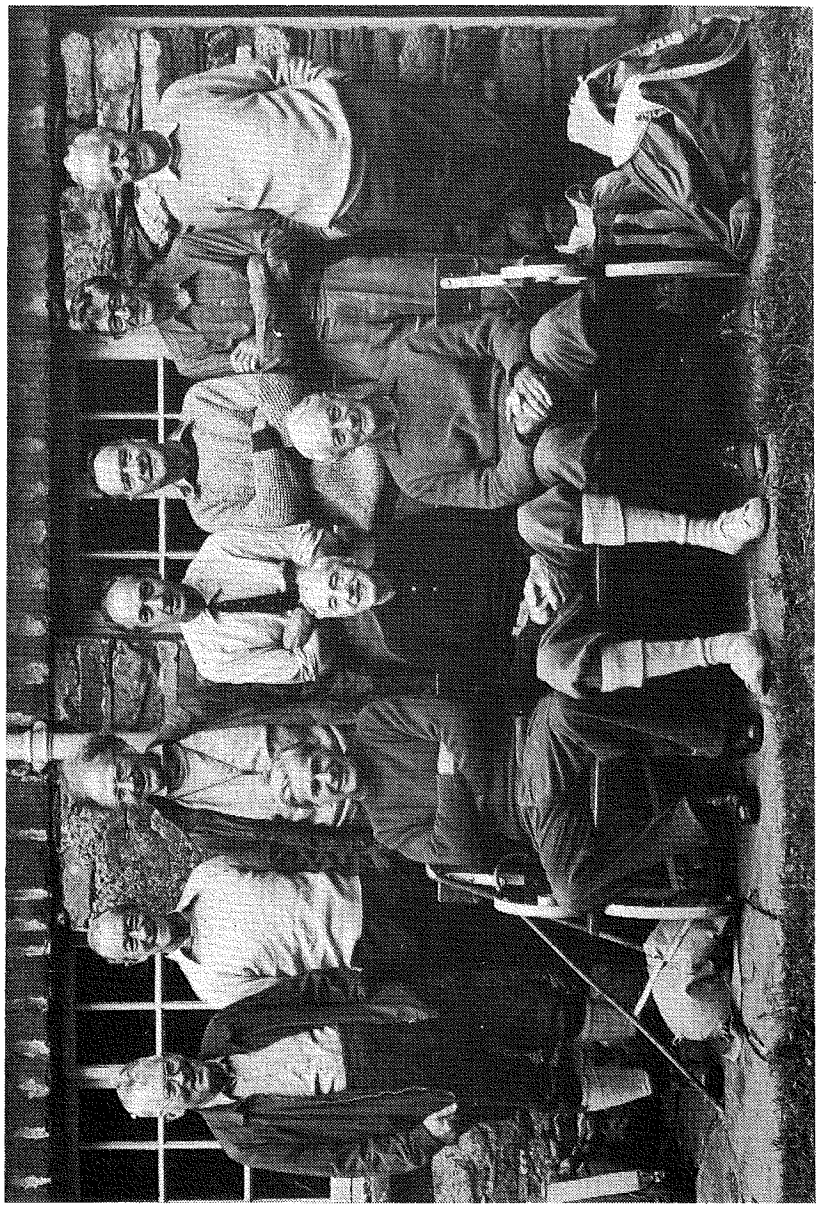

After climbing Route 1 on Scout Crag followed by Gwynne's chimney in 1970 to mark his 80th birthday, Jack Hilton climbed Route 2 on Scout Crag on 6th September 1980, when he was 90. This photograph of Jack was taken on 7th September 1980 with the President, John Barton and those Past Presidents who were attending the Joint Meet.

Back Row 1 to r. John Godley 1958-60, Frank Stembridge 1960-62, Bob Chadwick 1962-64, David Smith 1976-78, Jack Devenport 1974-76, Brian Nicholson 1972-74, Stanley Marsden 1956-58.

Front Row John Barton 1978-80, Jack Hilton 1952-54, Harry Stembridge 1954-56.

THE

YORKSHIRE RAMBLERS' CLUB JOURNAL

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by J. D. Armstrong

Although it gives me great pleasure to write this foreword I do so with mixed feelings, for in gratefully acknowledging the time and effort put in by the Editor, and several other members, I have to accept that this may be the last copy of the YRC Journal.

A journal has been part of the YRC tradition since the beginning. Our first journal was published in 1899, recording in the best tradition of our forefathers their exploits on the hills and underground. Times change however. There are now monthly periodicals providing the space and opportunity for deeds of outstanding achievement to be recorded and broadcast to the mountaineering and the caving fraternity. The need for club journals to record such deeds is no longer necessary. Times also change in other ways. The men who make up the YRC are no longer in the forefront of rock climbing and few are in the forefront of caving. As readers will quickly perceive, the articles contained in this journal cover a range of activities rather different from those recorded in earlier editions. With printing costs continuing to rise, the committee has had to ask itself whether what the YRC is doing in the 1980's is so significant that it deserves such resources being allocated to it.

In common with other mountaineering clubs we do not have as many young members as we would like, yet there is much vigorous activity and solid achievement with increased numbers attending our regular meets. I am proud of the spirit prevailing in the club and if we can no longer afford to record our outstanding deeds regularly in the traditional journal I am hopeful we will be able to adopt other more economic means of keeping you up to date with our activities. I hope that readers will enjoy this journal, that they will be tolerant of the short-falls it contains, of which the Editor, I can assure you, is most conscious, and that in the future they will continue to enjoy reading of the doings of the YRC in their new form when they appear in 1986.

It gives me great pleasure to commend this Journal to your reading.

THE

Yorkshire Ramblers' Club Journal

Vol. XI 1985 No. 39

WASDALE **DIARY**

by J.H. Hooper

Having spent a week at Low Hall Garth at the end of August for three successive years I decided in 1981 to make a change and move over to Wasdale. Our kindred Club, the Fell and Rock, provided excellent accommodation for me at Brackenclose. Surprisingly few YRC members appear to stay there. I have a soft spot for the place as it was the first climbing hut in which I stayed, just twenty years ago as a guest of the YRC. For the past three years the weather has been poor up to the day before departure and then has changed miraculously on the morning of setting off to give brilliant sunshine for the rest of the holiday. This year the weeks before the holiday had been good and I could not believe that the weather could hold for another week, particularly considering the weather record for most of 1981. Therefore I packed all the gear I could think of including my wellies and winter breeches, but hopefully added my sun-hat.

DAY 1: Saturday morning was reasonable, dry and grey. When I crossed the Pennines from Harrogate to Skipton the weather changed, as it always does, and the sun appeared. By the edge of the Lake District the mist and drizzle had clamped down and remained so until I was almost in Wasdale. I sorted out some food and mashed a pot of tea, hoping the cloud would lift meanwhile, without my hopes being fulfilled. As a means of signalling to my body that it was going to have to start working for a week, I decided to walk from Brackenclose along the top of the screes and come down to the Youth Hostel. It was already late afternoon and nothing could be seen above 1500 feet. The walk was uneventful but my legs still worked. It was warmer

than expected and I had put on breeches. I always seem to do my first walk in breeches, almost as if to convince myself that shorts are better, which they undoubtedly are for all walking except in winter conditions. After all, when one of the problems of hill walking is replacing liquid, is it not better to stay cool and lose less liquid and body salts in the first place, especially when one considers that only 70% of liquid lost can be replaced in the same time, leading to gradual dehydration? When I arrived back at Brackenclose, the Fell and Rock had two representatives installed and the M.A.M. four. Later on, after a meal, it was very sociable sitting around a blazing log fire, talking.

DAY 2: I awoke to clear blue sky and sun and was soon out dressed sensibly in shorts and shirt, but carrying breeches and weatherproofs. Never having been on Lingmell I took it by the nose straight from Brackenclose and had sweated gallons by the time the summit was reached, but was rewarded by views all around and into Piers Gill before the cloud drifted up, by which time I was on Lingmell Col heading for Scafell Pikes. The summit cairn was not quite so well covered as the last time I was there, only thirty-five bodies against seventy-six. Once more the sky was clear and the sun hot. Having ticked off Lingmell on my mental list of previously unattained summits, I thought of Glaramara which was also on the list, so I headed over Broad Crag, Esk Hause, Allen Crags and Pinnacle Bield to arrive at Glaramara in time for lunch which was eaten admiring the scenery and planning the rest of the day. Derwent Water shone in the distance like a sapphire in a setting of green and brown. Judging by the remarks made by one of a group of three nearby as I arrived, it was evident that they considered they had proprietary rights to peace and solitude on Glaramara. The choice of routes open to me was: via Styhead; back the way I had already walked; or more interestingly drop down to Seathwaite, up by Sour Milk Gill, then Green Gable and Wasdale. I chose the last. The Sour Milk Gill climb was cooler because of the generous amount of rushing down, but the sun was still hot. Height is gained rapidly on this route and the hanging valley enclosed by Base Brown, Green Gable and Brandreth was soon reached. The pools looked inviting and I was hot and

sticky, so off with boots and socks and shirt and in I went for a splendid splash down. It did wonders for my feet. The walk was enjoyable and Gable summit was reached at 17.05 in cloud. I had passed a family party on Green Gable, obviously heading for Great Gable, who had come up by the same route as myself. Seathwaite to Great Gable took me two hours and twenty minutes, including thirty minutes by the stream. The family was moving very slowly and had not reached Great Gable when I left at 17.20, in three hours it would be dark and they had no equipment with them. How do people like that survive? Lone walkers like myself receive a goodly amount of criticism, but surely, is it not far worse for one incompetent person to be in charge of several others in the hills as so often appears to be the case? Calling at the hotel on the way back to Brackenclose I pondered why it had been necessary to change the name from the traditional Wastwater Hotel with its links with the past. Back at Brackenclose, pleasantly weary after a marvellous day, and revitalised somewhat by a shower, I ate a good dinner crowned by a large helping of apple and blackberry pie and custard baked by my wife as an insurance against my own cooking. Three Fell and Rock climbers up for the day cast envious eyes on the pie but my resolution did not weaken. I left the remainder in the fridge for successive days.

DAY 3: The weather was holding good, the barometer in the hall set at "Fair" as if the pointer was nailed in place. After yesterday I felt a little dehydrated and the legs weary so I decided on a less ambitious day. Down the road to Netherbeck, follow Netherbeck to Scoat Tarn and then on to Scoat Fell. The early part of the route seems to be off the beaten track and I had the valley to myself. Gradually my legs revived as the day wore on and oxygen was pumped round my body, and by the time I was on Scoat Fell they were feeling fine. Today was definitely the day for visiting Steeple. The tops were clear in all directions, the view into Ennerdale was map-like, it was good to be alive! I had the top of Steeple to myself which was as well because I had the uneasy feeling that there was not much room for anyone else. The thought entered my mind that if I stumbled against a stone and fell in any direction I should very quickly be a thousand or so feet below. Back to Scoat Fell and on to

Wind Gap where I met the tourist traffic climbing down off Pillar. The views were expansive with all the tops clear. In memory I went back to just such a day in 1961 when I was in the same spot during the Long Walk which that year was the Wasdale Skyline circuit. Coming off Black Sail Pass, just below the top I met a of four youths anxious to know if they were right for Youth Hostel, and even more anxious if that was the top they could see. When I returned to base, the F.RC.C. party and the M.A.M. party had left to be replaced by a Fell and Rock member and his wife who generously shared their bottle of wine with me at dinner. One of the joys of being in the hills is meeting pleasant people.

DAY 4: Not an exceptional morning weatherwise so I did not rush out early. The clouds were being driven in from the sea in spasmodic groups at about 1500 feet, but quite a lot of blue could be seen. The decision was taken to walk to Styhead, but to walk in the valley bottom by the stream. This turned out to be an excellent choice; others could be seen toiling above on old pony trail and disappearing into the cloud while I stayed below the cloud and had the benefit of a much more interesting route which can be highly recommended. All good things must come to an end and I too reached the cloud just at the point where I had to connect with the Corridor Route. Map and compass out! The Corridor was found and the cloud occasionally blew away to let me see a short distance. In spite of the damp conditions it was still warm and I wore only shorts and a thin shirt. After Lingmell Col the cloud was dense and because it was so long since I had been in that area, the lie of the land had gone from my mind, so it was again map, compass and watch via Hollow Stones to Mickledore. The scree from Mickledore was far worse than I remembered. A family party ploughed upwards; mother struggling in the rear and not enjoying it a bit; father shouting instructions that it was easier on the right; children up with father. I moved to the left to avoid falling stones, According to one of my F.RC.C. friends, Lord's Rake is even worse and is now only safe when frozen hard. On reaching Mickledore I settled down to eat my sandwiches. As a concession to the mist I put on my sun-hat. I heard a voice behind me, and a man in a cloth cap

and windcheater, map in hand, advanced. "Where am I on this?" I pointed to Mickledore on his map. "If I go down there do I get to Borrowdale?" he asked pointing to Eskdale. I said no, that was Eskdale. "What about down there then?" pointing to Wasdale. "Yes," I said, "you can get down there but I don't advise it. In this weather you will not find your way to the Corridor Route and you will most likely finish up in Wasdale. Your best way is to go back up Scafell Pikes and back the way you came." "Eh! If I tell him that, he'll die, he's shattered already," he said indicating the younger of his two sons, aged about ten and thirteen, and without any weatherproof clothing or boots. "I've left my car in Borrowdale, I'm certain I can get down there," again pointing to Wasdale. He left me to ask someone else, who immediately told him to go back up Scafell Pikes, whereupon the previous conversation began again. At that point I disappeared into the mist Eskdalewards to look for the Fox Tarn route. Ten minutes later it began to pour with rain and I abandoned my search because I had no clear idea of what I was looking for. Donning cagoule and yellow sou'wester I headed back to Mickledore. Sixty-five minutes later I arrived at Brackenclose still in the wet and looking like an advertisement for tinned sardines. What happened to the man in the cloth cap? Should I have guided him back to Styhead? The Fell and Rock couple were still out, the rain siled down, so I lit the log fire and got the kettle on. An S.M.C. pair had signed in. They arrived back three hours later from Moss Gill. Rain was not going to spoil their climbing! They asked me if the Y.RC. was still active.

DAY 5: A most glorious morning. At this time of year the sun shines through the gap between Scafell and the Pikes over Mickledore, throwing the rock face into relief and making the magnificent cliff of Scafell appear to tower over Brackenclose. I straight out to get to the top of Scafell which I missed yesterday. I went by the Green How route, which I found enjoyable, the scenery becoming better the higher one climbed. On the lower slopes brilliant red rowan berries glistened in the sun against the sparkling stream water. Near the top I paused to examine the eroded section of Lord's Rake; it looked terribly loose. From the summit of Scafell the view was superb. The rain of the previous day had

cleared the air. South-east I could see the hills of Yorkshire, north-west the Mull of Galloway, the Solway Firth and hills in the background. Out at sea the Isle of Man floated like a giant battleship. Between the Isle of Man and the Mull of Galloway some dark grey patches appeared. Could they have been the Mountains'of Mourne? Nearer, the whole of the Lake District was spread out in full colour. From the summit cairn I took a series of over-lapping photographs covering the full 360 degrees, something to look at in the winter months. During the last few days I had decided to ascend every summit around Wasdale during the week. So far I was doing well, the main outstanders being Yewbarrow, which I had never set foot on, Red Pike and Kirkfell. I looked across the valley at Yewbarrow and speculated how I could include it today while the weather was so good. Go back down to the valley and then up Yewbarrow? That did not seem very sporting. How about the sky-line circuit? That was a bit much starting at this time of day. What about missing the tops of the Pikes and Great Gable, as I did those on Sunday, and by-passing Kirkfell? That's more like it, but I cannot really miss out Kirkfell just because I don't like it. How about Fox Tarn, Mickledore, the climbers' traverse, Lingmell Col, Corridor Route, Styhead? O.K. so far. Windy Gap next? No, the south traverse of Gable. So the ideas came and so the walk went. Possibly one of the best day's walking I shall ever have, superlative weather and scenery, a magnificent route and physically I felt unstoppable. On Miekledore I paused in the sun to watch a party descend Broad Stand, and then had some amusement watching an attempted ascent which demonstrated why the first cleft is named "Fat Man's Agony". In this instance it was "Fat Girl's Agony". To be fair it was not the girl who was fat but her load. Her consort had like a true gentleman allowed her to go first and stood watching as her Karrimat which was rolled up on the top of her load, jammed fast in the gap and she appeared to hang suspended by her back-pack straps, boots scrabbling futilely in the air. I was interrupted in my amusement by a German pair from Cologne who wished to know "Which way to the top goes?" and "Which mountain the highest is?". I was tempted to practise and inflict my German on them but decided that their English was better

than my German. They were relieved to know that Scafell Pikes was the highest and that there was another route back to the car in Wasdale, as the scree up which they had just scrambled had. not done their training shoes much good. They we.re staying m Grasmere and were enjoying their first holiday m the Lake District, not having expected so much beauty. Before leaving them I gave them a sketch map of the lie of the land and route instructions made for myself for which I had no more use.

Piers Gill and Styhead I met forty-six people going up-hill, the thirty-eighth being Y.R.C. member John Varney en route for Eskdale. The heat on the South Traverse. was bli.stering and I was pleased to fill my water bottle with tingling cool water from the spring near Kern Knotts. Near Napes it looked like Blackpool, with climbers lying iii the sun. I said so to one coming towards me. he said, "naw we from Wigan"!

KIrk Fell was monotonous with its twin summits and just as hard as .usual to get off'. On Pillar an upper-class picnic party. was m progress and It was burning hot. Since early mormng I had been dressed in shorts, vest and sun-hat, keeping my shirt dry and clean in my rucsac. My cool attire must have had certain attractions because as I moved on the Mummy of the picnic party could be heard telling little Fiona, "No, she could not take her vest off". As I walked on I could not. help muttering, "superb, superb" to myself, at the same time looking at Yewbarrow and wondering if I would get there before the light went. Scoat Fell came and then Red Pike. All the time as I was dropping from Red Pike to Dore Head, two small white blobs were descending Stir.rup Crag, very,. very slowly. Could I get up there? I had no on It other than that there was a route up it. In fact It.took me twelve minutes bottom to top, but it was the sting iii the day's tail. The last hundred feet seemed like a spiral staircase with half of the steps removed' where the steps were missing one shinned up the centre pole.

What a splendid day! I celebrated on Yewbarrow by drinking the last of my Kern Knotts water. Ten and a half hours after leaving I was back in Brackenclose where I found that my film had pulled from the spool, and that I had not after all taken any photographs!

DAY 6: A quick glimpse through the curtains from my bunk showed that another beautiful day had started. Today there was not much choice for a route if I was to stay with my plan of picking off all the summits aro.und Wasdale in the week. Only Seatallan, Haycock and MIddle Fell remamed. It was hotter than ever; after wearing only a vest yesterday, today I hid to wear my shirt to avoid sunburn. The technique was sleeves down, collar up and sun-hat on the back of my head. It was a real scorcher. Greendale valley was deserted as I struck up the side of Middle Fell through rough grass for the summit.

By the time the cairn was reached, sweat was runmng down my arms and off the end of each finger, my shirt and vest were as wet as if I had been sWImmmg. The sun was violent. Organising a few rocks to make a seat for lunch-time, I realised what a good view-point Middle Fell was. My shirt and vest were spread out on rocks to dry whilst I wore my pullover and sun-hat to protect my body from the sun. Bare legs were covered by my map and rucsac. Almost completely covered I lay back and enjoyed the and sandwiches; Through bmoculars I re-hved the preVIOUS day's walk picking out the Corridor Route and Gable Traverse, but I was unable to see anyone demonstrating the ascent of StirrupCrag. Time to pack up and move on. Just as I had put on my dry shirt, someone appeared as If from nowhere. Wearing nothing but shorts and a beard he told me that when he had done Green Crag he would have ascended summit Wainwright had written about in his seven volumes. Middle Fell was his last but one. Somethmg made me think that he drove as near to each summit as he could and then did a quick up and down: maybe it was the spare tyre above his shorts. Even so it is quite a feat. After Middle Fell, Seatallan was just a slog on grass and Haycock was a slightly longer slog with a. hard pull up by Gowder Crag. Objectives achieved, I decided to make a quick descent to Netherbeck and if a suitable pool could be found a dip was the top priority. I found a beauty, wide with greenish clear water fed by small cascade, and a large rock in the middle. Not quite deep enough to swim in, but so cool and refreshing. I let my body sink until the water reached my neck, I rose out of the water, repeated the process but this time ducked my head under. Up for air, then under again, having a drink this time; it made the whole day worthwhile!

DAY 7: The last day - how short a week is! I was aware that at 6.00 a.m. my two S.M.C. friends were already getting up. I asked what the weather was doing. "Another glorious day" was the reply. By 6.30 we were all having breakfast. I remember the comment, "It just doesn't seem British sitting down to breakfast wearing shorts at 6.30 in the morning". British or not it was real and the last day for all of us. I had to agree with my legs that morning when they complained that they had had a hard week, and my feet were looking more like the proverbial plates of raw meat each day. So to ease the load I put on studded running shoes. There was not much likelihood of breaking into a run, but they were lighter than boots, and I intended to be on grass all day. The route was to start by the Burnmoor track to Boot. When I arrived at Boot I would decide which way back. On the way to Boot I considered a last ascent of Scafell by way of Slight Side, but decided against it. The better route would be down the road to Eskdale Green, then through the woods to Irton Fell, but I have no love of road walking. Then the idea occurred to me that maybe I was in time to catch 'Ratty' between the two places. It would be cheating but it was the last day. Consulting the time table at Dalegarth station I saw that the little train should have left ten minutes previously, but as I had not heard its whistle or its blowing off of steam, I was optimistic. On asking the lady in the souvenir shop if the train had gone, I was met with a reply which not only by her words but by her whole demeanour indicated that I was a nut-case. "The train goes half past, and its now twenty to". "Yes I know," I said lamely, "but I thought that as I had not heard it, it might be late." Another glance confirmed what she thought of me. Obviously 'Ratty' was never late. Moving into the cafeteria I asked if they sold pots of tea, having the kind of thirst which according to the ballad a man can only raise east of Suez. I visualised at least six cups. "No", I was told, "only these", indicating expanded polystyrene cuplets barely big enough to quench the thirst of a couple of good-sized bluebottles. I settled for a bottle of 'pop' and a hot sausage roll before hitting the road again and having as

dessert blackberries from the hedge. Shortly after the Outward Bound School in Eskdale Green I turned up a cool, shady track leading to the River Mite and then into the woods. The walk through the cool pines was pleasant after the hot sun; spaces between the trees caused by rocky outcrops were covered with purple heather. As I climbed higher up Irton Fell, if Lpaused and looked back, I could see the hills in the haze on the far side of Eskdale. Emerging at last on to the open fellside in the sun and heather, it was easy to follow the track along the top of the screes over Whin Rigg and Illgill Head before the final drop to Brackenclose. Those members of the Y.R.C. who in the early days of the century would take their horse-drawn caravan and spend the summer there climbing from Wasdale certainly knew where to enjoy life.

I drove away from Wasdale Head late on Friday afternoon and as I left I switched on the radio for the first time that week. "Here is some traffic news for motorists. Heavy traffic is causing long tail-backs on the North Circular ...." The North Circular, whatever is that? It seemed as remote as the moon.

A TALE OF TWO CHIMNEYS

by E.B. Sale

Listening to that splendid speech at the dinner last November by our principal guest brought back a lot of memories, especially when he referred to that vade-mecum of early days - G.D. Abraham's British Mountain Climbs- calling it the Little Red Book. Of course a lot of the memories were about splendid days and climbs successfully completed, but perhaps those which stand out most clearly are the times when one failed to get to the top.

On a clear day in May 1925 two climbers roped up at the foot of the Doctor's Chimney on Gable Crag. The Little Red Book called it 'difficult'. So what were we up to when we had hardly attempted anything but 'easies' before? Two years earlier A.M. Binnie and I, with two Cambridge friends, went to the Old Dungeon Ghyll Hotel for a week at the end of the May term. We got to the top of Scafell Pike via Esk Hause, had an easy day around Langdale, then rode motor-bikes round to Patterdale and walked up Helvellyn. Greatly daring, three of us had actually followed the crest of Striding Edge. Of course to us rock-climbing was something only indulged in by eccentrics, although we did know a college don who spent his holidays in the Alps where he climbed with a rope!

Later that afternoon we were sitting outside the hotel with well-earned pots of beer when who should appear but the very don himself, C.M. Sleeman, A.Coo Apparently a short trip to Switzerland had fallen through because of a friend's illness, and after the Alps his next love was for the Lakes. Over a beer he was soon asking about our doings, and presently said, "Have you been to Scafell yet?" We told him we had climbed the Pike, but we did not think Scafell was very easy from Langdale. "Come with me tomorrow," he said, and explained that there was a little bit of climbing to be done, but of course he had a rope. So next day he led us by Three Tarns and the head of Eskdale towards Mickledore. Suddenly a gap opened on the left, the rope was uncoiled and one by one we were shown the way up Broad

Stand. The summit of Scafell, tea at Brotherilkeld, and a long walk back over Hard Knott and Wrynose rounded off a wonderful day.

This was the beginning and before the week was out he had led us up Cust's Gully, Pillar Rock by the Easy Way, and the Arrowhead Arete from above the Arrowhead. For me this climb, on warmed by the sun, and with the realisation that I was up there high above the gullies and not frightened was the moment of truth - I was going to do this again whenever I However I did not get another opportunity for about two years. Then Binnie and I found ourselves at Seascale with a week's holiday available. So on a very wet evening we ferried ourselves and our luggage to Burnthwaite.

The next day was dull but dry. Armed with the Little Red Book we set off for Pillar and spent the afternoon working through the 'easy' routes on the east side - Slab and Notch, Arete, Pendlebury's Traverse, the two Pisgah Chimneys. These all proved well within our scope and Binnie led throughout, probably as the more experienced after a holiday in Switzerland the summer before.

Then it rained, real Lakeland rain, and all the next day we could do little but watch more and more becks appear as silver threads down the 200 feet or so of Lingmell which was visible .below the cloud. The day after that was wet as well, but *lit* eased off to drizzle in the afternoon so we spent an hour or so clambering around the Boulder in Mosedale. Not for the last time we got lost trying to take a short-cut back to Burnthwaite, and found ourselves in a maze of stone walls which got higher, looser and more difficult the nearer we got to our destination.

morning the clouds were still low, but it was dry. After studying the L.R.B., Binnie suggested that we set off for Scafell and try to get up the Pinnacle by way of Deep Ghyll and the Professor's Chimney. Catalogued as 'easy' that seemed fine if we could find the start. So after breakfast we trudged up Brown Tongue getting nearer and nearer to the clouds. However Hollow Stones was just clear at ground level and though we could see nothing of the crags away to our right, there was a fan of scree down a grassy slope which might possibly be Lord's Rake. It was, and soon we were

roping up at the foot of the cave pitch in Deep Ghyll.

Binnie led up that patch, and I suppose the second as well, though I cannot remember anything about it. Soon we were following a rock ledge along the foot of the left wall, which seemed easier than the scree in the gully. But in a short distance our ledge was broken by a cleft running up the wall from the bed of the gully. Splendid we thought, here we are at the Professor's Chimney. By now we were enveloped in really thick cloud and we could not see more than a few yards. Binnie tried to step round the corner into the chimney, but it was by no means easy, and after a few minutes he stepped back on to the ledge. "Shall I have a go?" I asked, and perhaps because of an extra inch or so of reach I managed to get round the corner on to some holds in the cleft and started to climb up. After a few feet it got shallower and soon petered out on to a slab. The could hardly be described as smooth, but on the other hand it was singularly lacking in anything that could be termed a good hold. So I more or less crawled up it and soon a dark shadow ahead suggested the end of the slab. Hurrying to find somewhere more secure I was stopped by a shout from below, "No more rope!" but I just managed to reach an almost level spot at the foot of a wall and sit down. No belay, but what I had climbed was not really very steep and Binnie soon joined me and we peered around into the mist. Behind us was a steep and apparently holdless wall, with no visible scratches. To our right however, just within the limit of visibility, a little spike of rock stood up, a few inches from the foot of the wall, making a perfect belay. Traversing across to it was easy, but at the spike the slab ended, beyond and below there was only mist. Up the wall was a clear line of scratched holds; this was a proper climbing route and momentarily we forgot that it bore no relation to the description of Professor's Chimney.

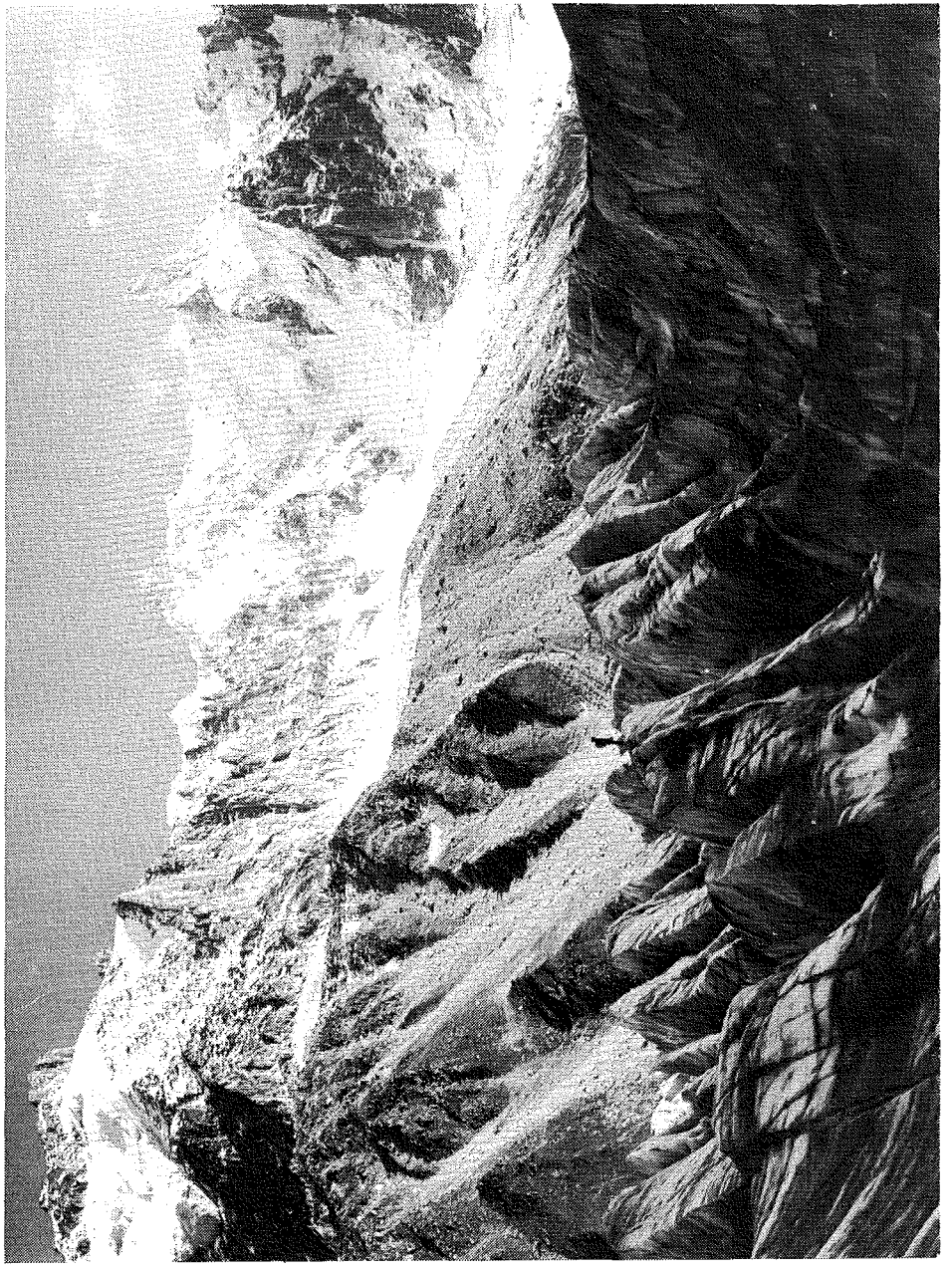
It could hardly be described as easy either. I struggled, Binnie gave me a push up on the first holds, I still struggled and he gave me a shoulder. Slowly I progressed several feet, arms outstretched, leg muscles shaking, until I could see the top of the pitch, a good flat ledge I thought, but about two feet out of reach. Minutes passed, arms ached, and suddenly I realised I' could not hold on much longer and was on the

point of shouting to Binnie when one set of fingers just refused and slid off its hold. But nothing more happened, my feet stayed put, I did not fall backwards, and I found I could stand without using my arms to take the weight, a very important lesson for a beginner. So after a rest things looked different, and panting hard I got up and on to the ledge and sat

For several minutes we had heard sounds of boots on scree coming across Deep Ghyll, and now the clouds lifted and we could see threeclimbers part-way up a climb on the other side of the Ghyll. Perhaps they might help. "Can you tell us where we are? Is this the Professor's Chimney route?" shouted. Binnie. They looked across and up. "No," one of them called back, "you are on O.G. Jones' route from Deep Ghyll." Then as an afterthought he added, "The pitch you are on is the hardest of the climb." Consternation! Binnie pulled the L.R.B. out of the sack and presently read out, "O.G. Jones' route from Deep Ghyll - exceptionally severe; 100 feet of rope needed." After a pause he asked, "Is there a belay up there?" I could not see one, but just around the corner the line of scratches continued up the wall. Perhaps the holds were not quite so far apart as on the bit I had just come up, but now the mist had cleared. The next section was no longer above the ledge where Binnie stood, but the wall plunged down sheer past the belay spike to the bed of Deep Ghyll itself, or so it seemed. This was too much - I shouted that-there was no belay and started back down. Somehow I managed and soon after we were back in Deep Ghyll where ashort scramble brought us to the real Professor's Chimney. A few minutes later we emerged to find the climbers from the West Wall sitting on the crest of the Pinnacle. As we joined .them they asked why we had turned back when we were up the hardest bit. We made our excuses, ate our sandwiches and happily found our way back via Broad Stand to Wasdale.

For me, next morning, the feeling of achievement had grown to one of disdain for climbs labelled easy. What about trying something much harder? So I persuaded Binnie to let me have a go at Doctor's Chimney. Perhaps a better idea than I realised - there was never any danger of falling out or down. I got myself into the narrow cleft and stayed there for

20 minutes I should think without making any appreciable progress. Binnie rightly decided we were not good enough, and quietly led the way round to and up the Bottle-nosed Pinnacle Ridge.



J.G. Whalley

Glacier de Leschaux

RAMBLING ALONE

by K. Aldred

Having spent several holidays in the Alps with companions, and having a month alone in which to wander about pleasing no one but myself, the idea of walking from Chamonix to Austria seemed attractive. If the destination appeared to be a little vague this was for no reason other than it was vague. The BMC bus would deposit me at Chamonix and beyond that the plans were flexible. The limits on the route, especially during the first week, were mainly in avoiding crevassed glaciers but keeping near to the hills where possible. A companion or two would have allowed the use, for instance, of the Haute Route but for a lone walk prudence dictated a less ambitious approach.

Leaving Chamonix just after 2.00 p.m., I made for Lac Blanc with the idea of spending the night there but with plenty of daylight left and a downhill journey to the Col de Montets that initial plan was soon modified. This early part of my walk coincided with the Tour of Mont Blanc and for anyone undertaking the Tour, an easy day would be enjoyed by taking the path from Argentiere to Trient over the Col de Balme, and then crossing the Fenetre d'Arpette the following day. This, however, takes one away from the mountains unnecessarily and an inviting alternative was to put the two days together and omit the vist to Trient. It made for a long day and meant a fair amount of uphill walking but was well worth the effort.

The metalled road thankfully ends at Le Tour where a few minutes were spent in viewing the house of Michel Croz. A well-trodden path climbs to the Col de Balme at a gentle angle. In winter the slopes are probably in great demand by skiers but apart from three or four walkers and small groups of cows, I had the slope to myself. An English party sat outside the inn on the col, drinking in the views and varying amounts of refreshment. This was the first of only two English parties I met before reaching Austria. As I had brushed up on my German before crossing the French-speaking Valais, a great deal of sign language was to be used

before the end of the holiday. A delightful path led from the col across some large areas of snow and then through alpen rose and stunted pines before dropping down to the foot of the Trient Glacier. The stream was crossed by a footbridge just below a refreshment hut evidently popular with people coming up the valley from Trient.

The path to the Fenetre d'Arpette is beautifully situated with the Trient Glacier on the right and the Pointe des Ecandies facing one during the ascent. One guide book described the col as being serious because of the avalanche danger. This seemed to be overstating the case when I crossed it but the northern side of the col was deep in a mixture of snow and broken rock, which, on a steep slope made progress slow but not difficult. After a late lunch at the hut I met no one going in either direction, so the feeling of solitude was almost complete as the sun fell lower in the sky. It eventually became obvious that my fitness was not up to the same standard as my ambition and that a bed in Champex was unlikely that night. I was not carrying tent or sleeping bag but had plenty of spare clothing including thermal underwear and a small stove which allowed for a fairly comfortable night on one of the numerous patches of grassy bank beside the stream. After a brew of tea I settled down in the polybag to watch the colours change on the mountain tops. It wasn't long before the new moon disappeared behind the mountains but the stars remained, providing the best possible tent for a warm, dry evening.

At about four o'clock I was awoken by what sounded like Hannibal advancing up the pass. It turned out to be four French-speaking climbers, one wearing a headlamp, presumably making an early morning start for the Pointe d'Orny at the head of the valley. They seemed taken by surprise at the figure lying in a bundle of plastic and excitedly shone torches in my direction. A loud yawn, a cough and a splutter seemed to reassure them that no assistance was needed and that the nearby rucksack still had an owner and they were on their way. After this disturbance, sleep was no longer possible, so after another brew I patiently waited for the Alpine Glow with the camera within easy reach.

Two difficult questions for any mountaineer to answer are

what is the best season of the year and what is the best time of the day. The answer to both will depend very much on the individual but a popular answer to the second must surely be the dawn as seen from a hill top. I hadn't slept on the top of the hill but at 6500 feet the situation was magnificent. The sky to the north-east gradually brightened with various changing hues until quite suddenly behind me the top of the Pointe d'Orny was caught by the sun. Layers of fine mist provided a filter for the increasing light and in a remarkably short time the colours had changed completely together with the temperature.

From Verbier a good track may be followed to the Mont Fort Cabane but during the heat of the morning it was easy to rationalise that the cable-car to Ruinette was not really cheating as it allowed for more time in the hills. The path from the top station at Ruinette to the cabane follows the course of the bisse for much of the way. The bisse was probably built to carry water from the Glacier de la Chaux round the hillsides to Verbier and Medieres. Many of these structures carry water along the sides of very steep, and in some cases vertical, faces as they contour round the mountains with a fairly uniform, gentle angle of fall. On steep faces a wooden trough supported on iron rods or stone pillars carries the water and some also carry a right of way. Being ancient in origin, many are not to be recommended as footpaths because they can be about as safe as some of the timber supports in a Derbyshire lead mine. The bisse of Mont Fort, however, was not like this. It twisted round gentle hillocks below the main peak, entering the occasional gully but generally heading in an easterly direction so that the Grand Combin was in view throughout.

The northern end of the Bee des Rosses was interesting as large areas of it had been denuded of snow by recent avalanches, the bare patches being bounded by straight margins showing where huge slabs had broken free. The adjacent snow which remained was marked by faint lines where the next fractures would, no doubt, take place. Up to the Col de la Chaux the snowfield provided a welcome change from the track, and a Belgian family in front of me gave some human interest and a feeling of not being completely alone. When we met on the col we exchanged

cameras in order to have some sort of record; or was it to inflate egos?

This was probably the best day of genuine mountain travel. After taking leave of the Belgians I headed east, dropping into a snow-filled basin which appeared from some viewpoints to be totally enclosed but which, in fact, opened to the south allowing a descent to the Val de Bagnes. Presumably this was the route taken by the family after they had finished their lunch. My way continued in an easterly direction to reach the Col de Louvie at 9600 feet. The whole area was covered with the slight depressions which indicate a hot sun on old footprints and it was obviously a popular place. However between lunch and evening I saw no one and no evidence of recent passage - a delightful situation. A total of three cols was crossed before reaching the Glacier Grand Desert. This was very wet with calf-deep slush present in many places but wearing shorts under a blazing sun meant that it wasn't uncomfortable, the wetness drying very quickly. My intention at this stage was to cross the Col de Prafleuri and stay at the cabin of the same name. As the map showed a crevassed area to the south of the col, I swung round in an arc to avoid crossing at that point. With no sign of a track it was interesting to come across a prominent stone bearing, in red paint, the legend "route 18B." As it meant that I was either on the track or just crossing it, whatever 18B was, it was of limited value. Later events proved, in fact, that I crossed the track. A long scramble up patches of snow but mostly large, angular pieces of rock was interrupted by the sighting of a large herd of chamois. They declined my attempts to photograph them so I continued up the slope to reach the ridge at a point to the south of the Fenetre d'Alleves, a superb viewpoint. It showed that the Col de Prafleuri was an easy crossing over terrain no different from that just covered. A ridge ran away from me in an easterly direction and the cabin was in the valley beyond the ridge. The easiest way to reach it would be to drop back down to the end of the glacier and then to climb the col directly. As I was unsure of reaching the cabin in daylight, a comfortable night at Super Nendaz seemed called for. That hope was eventually dashed and it was nearer midnight before I found accommodation. In retrospect a night's bivi at Plan de la Chaux would have been cheaper, would have saved time the following day and would have provided a site as attractive as the Val d'Arpette. Below the glacier was an abundance of comfortable pasture with attractive flowers everywhere. Again, this would provide an ideal camp site for anyone wishing to avoid the crowds.

The next intended pass was the well known Pas de Chevres between the hut and Arolla. From Le Chargeur the path zig-zags up the Barrage de la Grande Dixence, the collecting ground of vast quantities of water which are tapped from not only the Val d'Heremence but also from surrounding valleys by means of tunnels cut through the mountains. The rock at the southern end of the Lac de Dix is a micaceous schist which makes the narrow footpath, twisting towards the Monts Rouges, a bit greasy in places. A detour now avoids the worst part but it was not well-marked. The Glacier de Cheilon is bounded on the east by the Monts Rouges and the Pointes de Tsena Refien but the long impressive ridge is broken by an obvious gap at the Pas de Chevres and the Col de Riedmatten, two passes only 250 metres apart. The Pas de Chevres is slightly lower and has the support of an iron ladder but the Col de Riedmatten has the advantage of being reached first as one approaches from the Dixence.

The way down to Arolla in the evening was very pleasant; steep at first but then more gently through a herd of bell-ringing sheep overshadowed on the right hand by the Pigne d'Arolla and finally through the Cembra pines from which the valley and the village take their names. The sun had set before a room was obtained but the view of the Pigne from the window was breath-taking, bringing back memories of an earlier holiday.

An obvious route from Arolla for anyone wishing to traverse the Pennine Alps would take one over the Col de Bertol and a long glacier crossing to Zermatt. To avoid the glacier crossing I walked down the Val d'Arolla to Les Hauderes and then climbed to the Col de Torrent. This is a convenient way to the Val d'Moiry, passing the tiny Lac des Autannes before dropping down to the artificial Lac de Moiry. Below the barrage the path twisted among a profusion of alpine rose which gave off a heady perfume, a

memorable accompaniment on the descent to Grimetz. This was the prettiest village of the whole trip, perhaps having too much of a chocolate box setting for some tastes but the prohibition of traffic together with an attractive church, working water-wheel and paved streets made for a happy night's stay.

From Grimetz in the d'Anniviers to the Turtmanntal meant crossing a range of mountains which from Bella Tola to the Weisshorn. One attractive route crosses the Meidpass to Gruben, astraightfcrward walk which included a very fine viewpoint for admiring many of the mountains to the south. To the north Bella Tola added its own beauty to an area replete with excellent walks, scrambles and restful picnic sites among snow patches and alpine flowers.

After a night at Cassacia, at the foot of the Maloja Pass, I walked westwards to pick up the Septimer Pass which crosses to Bivio. Some years ago, with my wife, I came across this path which, in the Middle Ages, was a main thoroughfare across the Alps. In places it is paved and it is obvious that a large amount- of work must have been involved in .constructing it. It is interesting to speculate on the cause of its construction and its subsequent decline. With the Maloj a Pass so close it may appear that there are two parallel passes from the head of the Val Bregaglia with a common destination but this is not so. Whilst many walkers travel from the top of the Septimer Pass over the Passo Lunghin to the town of Maloja, thereby achieving the same result as going directly over the Maloja Pass, it must be realised that the main route continues north to Bivio. One clue to the structure of the local hills is given by a remote signpost on the Passo Lunghin. With no inns, huts or farms in view one could be excused for expecting directions to the nearest hamlet but the three arms merely indicate North Sea, Black Sea and the Mediterranean. The pass is a main watershed with the rain falling on the western side finding its way into the Rhine whilst that on the east flows down the Inn into the Danube. Any falling to the South flows down to Lake Maggiore.

At the present time the Passo Lunghin is covered in snow the whole year round but at the margins the flowers are as spectacular as almost anywhere in the moutains. A great

variety ofgentians, soldenalla and dryas carpeted large areas of what would otherwise have been bare scree and glacial debris. Piz Lunghin was climbed for old times' sake and for the views it affords of the Val Bregaglia and the Bernina hills. A slight heat-haze spoiled any chance of clear photographs and the top of the peak proved to be the coldest of the whole holiday. It was, in fact, the first time when anything thicker than a cotton shirt had been necessary during the day.

The Oberengadine is a wonderful valley for walkers, with high hills and easy passes on both sides. A number of the passes to the south-east cross over into Italy and make a pleasant and fairly easy day.

From the Engadine my route led up the Val Sulsanna to the Scarletta Pass into the Dischma at Durrboden. This route is probably done best in reverse as then the Scarletta Glacier and Piz Kesch are in view during the walk. A jeep runs from Durrboden to Davos but as the service was irregular I set off walking with the intention of finding accommodation in the Dischma valley. Having covered less than a mile from the hamlet however, I was overtaken by a motorist who had his offer of a lift to Davos accepted, the lift enabling me to press on and spend the night at Klosters.

Having used good accommodation in Klosters on a previous occasion, I made for the same hotel to be met by an elderly resident with outstretched hand who addressed me as "Der Englander Bergfuhrer". She remembered me from the earlier visit and I could see at once that she was a lady of charm and perception. For the last leg of my journey the hotelier, himself a keen mountaineer, suggested that the Silvrettahorn would make an obvious finale. He had apparently overheard the elderly lady and was full of enthusiasm for me. A freshening, warm southerly wind, which was a forecast of a change in the weather convinced me otherwise. A pleasant climb up the Schlappintabel to have a final Swiss beer at the village of Schlappin before crossing the col into Austria seemed a far more civilised approach to what was rapidly becoming the end of the journey. The border crossing at 7000 feet still bears the remains of what could be customs posts or fortifications. This part of the Rhaetican is a beautiful area and with more

time I should have liked to pay a return visit to the Douglas hut at the head of the Brandnertal but I enjoyed a leisurely stroll down to Gatgellan where I stayed the night. That evening the weather changed with a vengeance and the next morning it was much cooler, the rain was steady and the scenery began to look

It took two days to walk down the Montafon. There could be a number of motorists who puzzled over the lone traveller who preferred walking down the valley in the rain to riding in upholstered comfort; they may not have seen the hills as I had.

After a night spent in the matrazenlager of the Hotel Schwartzhorn the long grind over the Augstbordpass was completed under the blazing sun. A great deal of spring snow remained on the eastern side .of the and a few glissades soon brought me to a small lake where the track to St. Nicholas forked to the south. I had no map of this section of the walk and consequently continued in an easterly direction to reach the village of Embd, about four kilometres from my destination at St. Nicholas. It was of no consequence as the way was pleasant and I enjoyed the company of a Dutch couple for part of the way.

From the Mattertal to the Saastal no passes were involved, but a high level path from Grachen to Saas-Fee took me close to some of the Mischabel peaks. The path, protected in places with steel cables, had enough variety to provide interest throughout its length. Woods, alpine meadows, exposed traverses, a short tunnel and an amusing stream crossing were sufficient at times to distract from the views of the Fletschhorn and Weissmies across the valley.

One of the highlights of the walk was the crossing of the Monte Moro Pass. An early morning bus to Mattmark gave a good start and avoided the walk up the valley among the debris of past disasters. The Mattmark lake was the result of the valley being dammed by moraine from the Allalin Glacier. Advances of the glacier destroyed the natural dam on more than twenty occasions between 1580 and 1920. Since then the glacier has retreated and a relief tunnel has been cut. The waymarked route over to Italy was one taken in reverse by many escaping Allied prisoners during the Second World War, an interesting account of which is given

by Dr. Clare Engel in 'History of Mountaineering in the Alps'. This year the snow line almost coincided with the head of the lake so that as soon as the lakeside path was left, the track rose gently among the snow by the side of an attractive stream. The Swiss side of the pass was magnificent; mostly snow-covered but with a few short rock cliffs which needed scrambling. Arguments are waged regarding the merits and drawbacks of solo walking in the hills, and there is no doubt that apart from the question of safety there is also a lot to be said for the company of a friend on many mountains. At the risk of sounding anti-social, however, the day on Monte Moro and the hour-long rest on the col, would not have been as enjoyable had the moments been shared. Sitting in the warm sun with Monte Rosa to the south-west, its huge glaciers and moraines filling the view, I saw merchants, soldiers, ecclesiastics and adventurers crossing and recrossing the ridge, all helping to make a fascinating history. After a beer at the Italian Alpine Club hut below the col, I dropped down to Macagnaga for my first night in Italy.

From Macagnaga to Bellinzona the route was in a reasonably straight line, at first mainly downhill to Domodosolla, away from the main mountain chain but nevertheless still enjoyable following a route along the Valle Azasca. Many of the buildings on the outskirts of Macagnaga were showing signs of having seen better days. The firmly fastened shutters matched the walls in having a need of a fresh coat of paint as the colour of the old was barely discernible. An interesting place on the way to Locarno was the village of Re, not far from the Swiss border. The Centovalli is full of interest along its whole length but Re with its cobbled streets, decaying houses and magnificent church, out of all proportion to the size of the village, provided some peculiar accommodation and a fascinating evening.

No accommodation was available at Soazza in the Val Mesoleina so I spent the night at Mesocca at the foot of the San Bernardino Pass. My intention was to cross the del Forcola Pass into Italy. The pass was shown on a map of Switzerland, and a tobacconist in Bellinzona assured me that a detailed map was unnecessary as the route was followed by

all and sundry and, in fact, William Wordsworth had crossed it in 1790. All this was probably true but a last-minute purchase of a 1:25000 map in the village turned out to be a wise move as the path was not waymarked and its beginning at the foot of the valley was extremely well hidden. I saw only one other walker on the way up to the col, an Italian in shorts .and training shoes and carrying binoculars and a leather satchel. He explained, or I think he explained, that he was a chamois hunter but with no signs of weapons he didn't look like a chamois hunter. Nor did he look like all and sundry. The path the obvious crossing point of the col was not at all well-worn but over the Italian side the familiar red and white flashes of paint indicated a reasonable way down the rock-covered slope. Four female climbers were making their way up the slope towards me but they veered off to the north before we met. A coincidence I'm sure. When I reached the first farm down the valley I made the mistake of getting into conversation with a youth working among some pigs. An even bigger mistake was to accept his advice to travel to Chiavenna along a faint path via Predemascarin. This path became less distinct until I found myself traversing across a steep slope through very thick broom and associated undergrowth. The sun was uncomfortably hot, large horseflies were having their fill of me and I was feeling more tired than at any time during the holiday when I fell, caught a foot in the lower branches of a shrub and finished lying among some thick, prickly with my head lower than my feet. For a few seconds the idea of spending the night just there appeared attractive but common sense and a scarcity of water, persuaded me to make my way over to the hamlet of Foppo. A polite enquiry for a hotel caused much merriment among some of the locals and a vague wave of the arm by the spokesman indicated that I couldn't expect any accommodation before reaching Chiavenna. The prospect of a further two or three hours walking was not attractive and the interest I had aroused appeared to preclude the chance of a secret bed in a barn. After walking for about half an hour down a dusty track through the woods I was overtaken by a young man on a large motorcycle. Like me, he was dressed in tee shirt and shorts and he wore no obligatory

crash helmet. His dialect was difficult to understand but his gestures indicated a possible lift to the Val San Giacoma. It should be pointed out that the altitude of Foppo is 983 metres and that of the valley is about 250 metres. As the crow flies the distance between them is two kilometres. A series of tight hairpin bends, first on an unmade track and then, thankfully, on a metalled road, brought us to to the main road in what could have been but a few minutes. Having displayed his skill at cornering, the rider, who informed me that one of his ambitions was to have a scar on his face so that he could join a Swiss equivalent of the Hell's Angels, then proceeded to impress me with the straight line potential of his bike. A few minutes later we were enjoying a beer at a local filling station. While I puzzled over his preference for a Swiss club, for his riding certainly suited the Italian temperament, he used the German-speaking petrol attendant as an interpreter to discover whereI had been and where I was going. Regarding my origin they were both reasonably impressed by the mention of Chamonix but far more interested when I explained that Huddersfield was between Leeds and Manchester. Apparently football is not unheard of in some Alpine valleys. An unsuspecting motorist who called in for petrol was bullied by these two into taking me to a cheap but good hotel, and so I came to spend two nights at the Hotel Crimea in Chiavenna.

Chiavenna, lying at the foot of the Val Bregaglia is a pretty enough town but not one where anyone on a mountaineering holiday would normally spend two nights. After two weeks of walking however, it seemed time for a rest and the town appeared to be a suitable place to laze for a day. The hotel was extremely clean and the food superb. The only surprising thing about it was that the proprietor admitted to having a vacant room when I presented myself at the desk. Fortunately) had washed off most of the scratches, dust and bite marks in a trackside trough but it needed a bit more work with soap and razor before I was confident enough to enter the dining room.

The Val Bregaglia is steep-sided, and many of the larger peaks, lying back, cannot be seen from low down. My choice was to travel up the valley at a modest height above the floor in one day or to spend several days nearer the summits using

Alpine huts to reach the Maloja Pass. I chose the former and did not regret it. The valley is beautiful with some remarkable buildings and occasional views up side valleys to snow-covered peaks. The whole area looks promising for a future holiday. How often do we all say that?

A DAY **IN THE** CASCADES

by Darrell J. Farrant

When I last had the pleasure of writing for the Journal, I explained that after many years of experience among the British mountains I was about to go to live in western Canada. I referred jocularly to some of the new challenges: Mount Robson, Mount Baker, even Mount McKinley, but without any real feeling that I was ever likely to be involved in expeditions of such magnitude.

And so it has proved, though I suppose I can squeeze out a tenuous connection with these great mountains if I try really hard. A colleague of mine has explored the lower region of Mount McKinley, with the thought that if he can travel one summer to climb Kilimanjaro, why not attempt another of the world's major peaks this year, especially when, relatively speaking, it is only just down the road? However, Alaska is colder than Tanzania and, with regular summit temperatures at 70° below, one has to be certain of the strength of one's commitment. A former pupil wrote to me the other day of an enjoyable ascent of Mount Robson, whereas a walk of half a mile from my present home provides a superb view of the volcanic snow-cone of Mount Baker. Parties from my School Outdoors Club have three times been repulsed on Baker in the last couple of years, but on the most recent occasion only by an unexpected blizzard when they were already over the 10,000 ft. mark with most of the difficulties apparently behind them.

Before I left Scotland, I remember being amazed at a comment of a Canadian friend, who marvelled at all the open space that one could enjoy in Britain. This remark from a citizen of the second largest country in the world, with a population of only 24 million and renowned as containing some of the most remote and uncharted terrain on earth! Yet, the remark is strangely true. The open moorland or fell-side that we are accustomed to in Britain is a priceless heritage; how fortunate one is to be able to open a farm gate, or even strike up directly from the side of the road into free walking country of matchless quality. As a

self-imposed exile, I probably miss this aspect of Britain more than any other single factor. In Canada, the mountains are in abundance and it is of little significance to suggest that one has climbed quite a few peaks of over 3,000 ft. - the main road through the Rockies at Rogers Pass reaches twice that height. Nevertheless, the Canadian mountains are inevitably enclosed in a thick blanket of coniferous trees that rise to at least five or six thousand feet. As a result, they are virtually unclimbable because the hillsides are extremely steep and access is almost impossible. Furthermore, the effort to reach the summit ridges is demanding, especially when one has no view whatsoever for most of the way. There are exceptions to this, of course, and some better known mountains have trails blazed along them. In certain areas, as, for example, the Yoho National Park in the Rockies, it is possible to enjoy some magnificent skyline hiking, but such places are not easy to find. As a result, mountaineering in Canada is a serious sport for the well-trained professional, and there is virtually nothing to offer the casual fell-walker who likes a gentle day on the hills from time to time.

I suppose, in a boastful moment, I might be prepared to include myself in the former category, but the demands of my present job prevent me from getting out on the mountains very often. There is no such thing as the round of Wasdale Head on a nice Sunday; it is either a proper expedition or nothing.

Last summer, however, I decided that an initiation to Canadian mountaineering was essential and my young companion and I selected Mount Cheam in the Fraser Valley, about fifty miles east of Vancouver. As one drives eastwards through British Columbia, Cheam (pronounced Shee-am) dominates the valley, partly because of its dramatic Matterhorn shape, but also because of its steepness. The summit is 6,913 feet and this is gained immediately from a valley floor of only 100 feet. The climber is thus faced by quite a strenuous challenge.

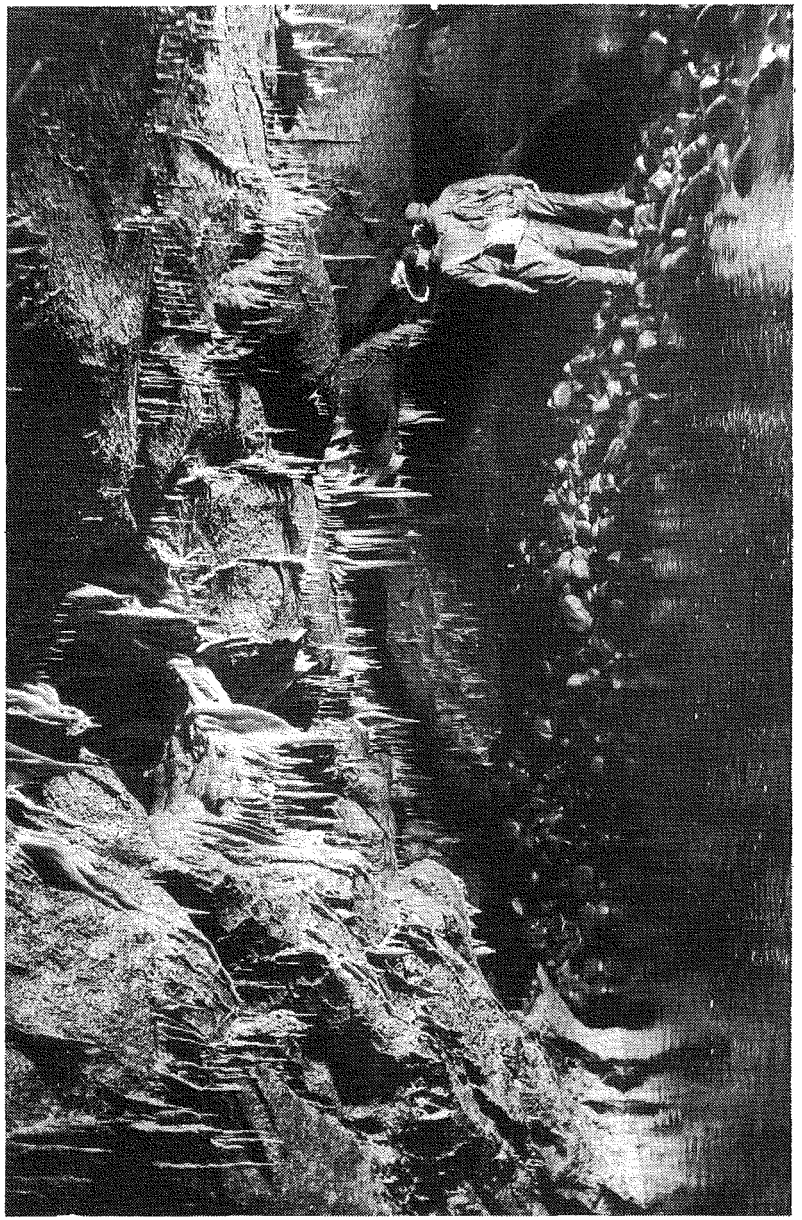
We had been led to believe that it was possible to drive the first miles up an old logging road but, after negotiating a fallen tree, a fast-running creek and a steep stony bend within the first half-mile, we decided that a motorized approach was distinctly unwise. This led to a careful

selection of gear, as we now had to back-pack everything and, in the considerable heat of mid-August, we were able to reject a number of items as not strictly necessary. At the foot of the trail (which remained clearly, but tactfully marked throughout - a thread of tape on a tree, a daub of paint on a rock) we found an indicator which proclaimed 29 kilometers, 12 hours walking and an elevation gain of 6,800 feet, so we were under no illusions.

We set off along the stony trail in the early afternoon and climbed steadily up a steep and unrewarding gradient. The track switchbacked up the mountainside and we caught only occasional glimpses of the green dairyland of the Fraser Valley at points where the trees grew slightly more thinly: A large garter snake coiled lazily away from us at one pomt: there is an abundance of them in British Columbia and they are quite colourful, with dark red and black markings. They are warm to the touch and non-venomous.

After a couple of hours walking, we reached the creek where the road forked and took a welcome rest. We almost persuaded ourselves to camp here, but felt that we should probably put some greater distance behind us before doing so. The next part of the trail was very attractive as it reached a plateau and thus provided a level section of walking, with attractive views down to the valley, as well as glimpses of snowy peaks way up over our right shoulders. Another switch of the path though, and there was a further long haul with our shirts now sticking closely to our backs and the rucksacks getting heavier. Eventually, we found a flattish patch of reasonably soft ground and I set about cutting away some clumps of bracken to pitch the tent, whilst Tim set to find some water. One more thought-provokmg observation in a muddy spot on the track as we got busy with the preparation of our meal was a large paw mark that could only have been made by a bear. Fortunately, we did not meet him, but overnight we slung all our food well up in the trees to deter him and any predatory companions.

The cloud had gathered overnight and was still quite fleecy as we set out soon after 8 o'clock the following morning. A further forty-five minutes on the track saw It wind round a final bend to the valley head, and at last we were at grips with the mountain proper. The first section lay



B.E. Nicholson

Screen Hill Passage - Marble Arch - Northern Ireland

through waist-high ferns and old tree stumps, as well as some very colourful wild flowers: lupins, fireweed, Indian paint-brush; then we moved on to a steep and rather slippery track through a wood, where we had to cling to the trees for support. Finally, we emerged on the back of the ridge in a beautiful alpine meadow, richly carpeted with brilliant flowers. Cheam is one of the terminal peaks of the long spine of the Cascades, a range that runs deep into the United States, extending into California almost as far as San Francisco. Suddenly to have this view burst upon one's sight is an unforgettable experience: chain after chain of snowy spires stretching far down into Washington State and offering a lifetime of mountaineering if one chose.

When we got up to the higher plateau, the wild life at once became more abundant: a pair of little striped chipmunks chasing each other at frantic pace over a tree stump, a vivid goldfinch in a bush, a darting red hummingbird sipping from a flower, a grouse with four chicks, and a pica nipping across the top of a rock. The most interesting meeting though were with the marmots. These are chubby, chocolate-brown animals with a natural curiosity which allows you to approach them closely. Their mountaineering skills are enviable, and they live in colonies in shallow depressions between the rocks. They have a distinctive whistle, which offers warning of your arrival, and they also have an endearing habit of popping their heads out from behind a rock and then giving you a quizzical glance as you approach them. Only then will they scamper off with marvellous agility.

The final section of the ridge looked very steep, and I thought we were in for some Skye-type scrambling among the gendarmes. The trail, however, moved skilfully between the rocky turrets and, whilst care was necessary, there was nothing of any difficulty to contend with. Finally, there was a stony plateau and a short walk to the summit cairn.

The views varied considerably, as we spent half an hour basking in the sunshine. There was a cool breeze that suggested a sweater, but otherwise it was pleasantly warm. There were patches of snow on our peak, but the higher mountains to the south were well covered and were sparkling in their clarity. A bald eagle soared close overhead

at one point, but decided not to risk a snatch at our lunch. Eventually, we reckoned that the descent was necessary and so set out to retrace our trail. The return journey was just as enjoyable on the ridges and pastures of the upper section, though the logging road grew less attractive as we lumbered stickily down later in the-day. At last we emerged at the car, footsore but satisfied, .having spent eleven hours on the climb and, in my case, having been granted a delightful introduction to the mountains of the West.

THE MONRO MEET 1983

by P.C. Swindells

During the 1983 Whit Meet the Y.R.C, by a combined operation, succeeded in putting a member on the top of every Scottish Munro, a project that so caught the imagination of the club that 64 members, plus guests, took part, by comparison with the 25/30 who normally attend a Whit Meet.

This account is written primarily for anyone who, in the years to come, feels like repeating the venture and, as a result, it dwells on the planning and administration and draws on the individual area reports only for items of special interest or to illustrate a route taken in the more remote areas.

I suppose the best place to start is by answering the question 'why'. Why did the Y.R.C undertake such an apparently pointless exercise which, on the face of it, is so out of keeping with the traditions of the club where any form of organisation is anathema and where people who go on Whit Meets go to do their own thing by day and to socialise and enjoy one another's company at the camp-site in the evening. **In** any case, everyone knows that just because a mountain is dubbed a Munro it does not mean that it is necessarily more attractive than other non-Munros.

To answer the question it is necessary to go back a few years and to eavesdrop on the conversations members indulge in when out on their activities. **In** those days there were a number of regular topics which were each of them good for at least half an hour's discussion. (Quite apart from 'What's for supper; but that only got a mention late in the afternoon). One was "women in the club", another "the future of the club huts", another "why are we not recruiting more young members", and, amongst a few of us, "that the club was getting into a drift". When I joined, twenty years ago, the majority on most meets climbed or pot-holed, walking was the exception. Today the opposite is true. No doubt this is due to the advancing age of many active members, but it does mean that activities lose some bite,

some element of purpose, that the degree of challenge is weaker and hence, at the end of the day, the sense of achievement is less than would be the case when a pot had been bottomed or a strenuous route pushed through to its conclusion. Running parallel with this line of thought was a nostalgia for the good old days of pot-holing when descents were team efforts in the best sense of the word and every member of the team shared in the camaraderie and glow that was generated by a successful expedition.

It was easy to talk in these terms, it was not so easy to be constructive and find a practicable answer. Then one Saturday in the Autumn of 1981 I attended a dinner given by one of our kindred clubs at which the chief speaker was Hamish Brown who, not so very long before, had completed his nonstop, solo, expedition over all the Munros, so graphically described in his book 'Hamish's Mountain Walks'. He indicated in his speech that whilst there are many who commence Munro bagging, there are still not many who have persevered and climbed the lot; furthermore, that if the successful climber was a member of a club, the probability was that he would belong to a very restricted number of clubs of which the S.M.C and the host club for the evening took pride of place.

Well, there it was; a real challenge; we go to Scotland regularly and we know the Scottish hills as well as most clubs and our long walk meets are amongst the best attented in our calendar. We'll do them. We'll climb all the Munros and what's more, we'll do them in the space of one meet.

a blatant piece of one-upmanship, what a pointless exercise to boot. A club could climb all the Munros in one day provided it put enough people on the ground. (In fact rumour had it that one Scottish university attempted to do just that, and rumour also had it that they failed). That is just what certain members said when I sounded them out at the December Meet. I fully accepted their comments and let the matter drop; imagine therefore my surprise when at a committee meeting in the winter 1981/82 the East Lancashire Wednesday nighters came out strongly in favour of the Munro project and proposed that a feasability study should be undertaken with Whit 1983 in mind; and, surprise, surprise, the committee agreed, without dissent. The project

was born.

A small band of us undertook the study and we first of all set ourselves certain guidelines which were:-

1 Members should operate in couples and solo trips should be avoided.

2 There was no ban on the use of cars. The object was to get up and down each Munro, how you got from one to the other was immaterial.

3 If a member walked with a guest then the member had to reach the summit of each peak.

4 Timings would be based on the Naismith rule of one hour per 2000 ft climbed plus one hour for every 3 miles walked. (This was later amended).

5 We were all very conscious that it is one thing to work out a route in the warmth of one's home and quite another thing to do it on the ground if the weather turned nasty. Also one must always remember that Scottish hills are that much bigger than those South of the border, and those people who do their climbing in the Lakes or Wales must allow for longer walk-ins and a general absence of paths. To put this point the other way round, much of the art in planning routes lies in making the best use of the limited number of stalkers' tracks. We felt it essential to build-in adequate safety margins and for this reason we decided to load each group with no more than 12 hours walking a day for 5 days only.

Having established these guide lines we allocated sections of the Munro Tables to each planner who was asked to calculate the time needed to get up and down each peak and to assess which peaks could be taken together to make a full day. We did not, at this stage, formulate the different areas in any detail but it was obvious from the beginning that they would conform very closely to the geographical sections of the Munro Tables, 1981 edition.

We told the committee that we estimated we would need 18 pairs of good goers, each operating for a full week and averaging 20 to 25000 feet of climbing and 65 to 70 miles walking plus a mobile reserve of, say 2 or 3. By this time rumour of what was afoot had got around and the committee judged there was sufficient interest to warrant taking a positive decision that the 1983 Whit Meet would be the

Munro Meet. A circular was sent to all members setting out the project and asking for names of those interested, preferred areas and an indication if anyone was likely to bring a friend, and by late 1982 the planners had a good idea who was going and were able to start assigning people to areas.

To do this we again ourselves a series of guide lines which were:-

1 Where ever possible we would put a member in the area of his choice:

2 We would keep to the geographical sections as far as we could and would earmark certain sections, those with easiest access, to members who could only come out for part of the week.

3 We would try not to dilute the element of challenge. If attendance proved greater than the minimum necessary we would increase the number per team rather than reduce the size of the area.

4 We would locate the President and the reserves at Roy Bridge, which seemed as central a place as any in Scotland.

5 In deference to the age of many who would be taking part we would add 25% onto Naismiths timings.

Section 1 was reserved for short stay teams and was, in fact, spilt into 3.

Section 2 was a big group, 40,000 feet to climb and 93 miles ;to walk and was too much for one team yet a bit easy for 2 teams. It was also an area where a driver was necessary; for the Ben Lawers ridge could be tackled by standing from Glen Lyon and ending on the shores of Loch Tay.Tn the end the area was given to a party of four who, as a makeweight, appointed themselves as general mobile reserve to the meet.

Section 3 was of similar size to section 2. It could, perhaps, have been done by one strong team provided they had a driver who could drop them at Forest Lodge and pick them up at Blackrock Cottage.

Section 4 obviously had to be sub-divided. The solution was to split it down the line of the Lairig Leacach and to allocate all to the West, together with section 3, to a strong East Lancashire team of 6 men who were wanting something that would extend them (they were not disappointed), whilst all to the East went to the Roy Bridge headquarters party.

Section 5 was another section suitable for a short-stay party.

Section 6 was a bit of a problem. No one knew much about the area and from the map it looked like a number of rounded humps separated by large distances of boggy moorland; admittedly the height differences were not great, so with clear skies and good going underfoot it ought to be possible to cover considerable distances, but if the cloud came down, good navigation would be essential. Then there was the question of access. Hamish Brown went in from Blair Athol and came out onto the A93 at Glenshee, but that was not practicable for us and it seemed we would be forced to have two or three different entry points with, of course, the attendant increase in distance walked. In the end the four Munros North of Glen Tilt were extracted and given to section 5. A most fortunate decision because, as will be seen in Appendix 2, the section 6 team had to operate under arduous conditions and had a full task completing their revised load.

Section 7 was another section reserved for short-stay people and was split with the Glas Maol hills going into section 6.

Section 8 was obviously a key area. Whoever was given it would be committed to high-level camping or the use of bothies for the whole of the week. Good navigation would be as essential as in section 6 and if there was much late-spring snow, schedules could be badly affected. To add to all this, if anything did go wrong, the reserves would find it hard to redeem the situation within the time available. Eventually it was decided to extract from the section the two Munros flanking Glen Feshie and also Cairngorm and Bynack More and to marry them to the Monadhliaths and to tackle what was left of section 8 from Deeside. This residue still amounted to 16000 feet of climbing and 74 miles of walking in a notorious area if the weather turned bad and it thus remained a potential hazard. (In fact, the team was unavoidably late getting out of the area and reporting success and by Thursday lunchtime the President had drawn up contingency plans which would put seven different teams of climbers into the Cairngorms

Section 9 was split into two. The Monadhliaths have already been mentioned, and the Creag Meagaidh group went to the Roy Bridge headquarters group.

The main problem North of the Great Glen was how to split the lower sections 10, 11 and 12.

Section 13, Torridon (plus Slioch) formed a nice concentrated allocation! of 23000 feet and 55 miles.

Section 14. An Teallach and the Fannaichs was a full load of 25000 feet and 66 miles, much of it in remote country, whilst everything North of the Garve/Ullapool road amounted to 20000 and 57 miles plus a lot of driving. These two most Northerly groups had to be self-contained. They were a long way from base and if anything went wrong - say on the Whitbread hills - it would be very doubtful if word could be got back to the President so that reserves could get out in time to retrieve the situation. It was therefore decided that each of these groups should comprise three not two climbers and that they should be ready to help each other should the necessity arise.

Section 17, the Islands, presented no problem. A senior member was having a family holiday on Mull and he would take care of Ben More, and the only question about Skye was how quickly the weather would allow us to complete all the climbs and then get back onto the mainland to help as required. In fact, the weather over Skye was excellent and the party only needed 2 days; Sunday for Blaven and Monday for a complete traverse of the main ridge.

Sections 11 and 12 together covered a considerable area stretching from Kintail, via Glen Affric and Loch Mullardoch to Glen Strathfarrar in the East and Achnashellach in the West. The hills were remote, large and widely separated and it was obvious from the beginning that 2 teams would not be able to cope in the time available. The problems facing the planners were made no easier by the avowed intentions of those who wished to climb the section 12 mountains to include in their itinerary a canoe passage up Loch Monar. Luckily the idea proved to be still-born as the Strathfarrar Estate would not give them permission (it is worth remembering that all cars have to leave the estate each night) and so the members concerned had to be content with knocking off the Farrar 4 from the East and then

driving round to Glen Carron in order to gain access to the 7 remote Munros which are in the Monar Forest.

11 could be reduced in size in a number of ways but as It was our hope that the team would base itself in Glen Shiel (and thus be able to liaise with the teams coming from Skye and Knoydart) it seemed sensible to remove from the section the 2 Easterly Munros in Glen Affric and to give them, together with those North of Loch Mullardoch, as a weekend stint to our member who lives near Inverness. This still left a formidable task in section 11 of 23000 ft to climb and 72 miles to walk which would be on top of a carry-in to Alltbeithe Hostel.

Section 10 Knoydart. We transferred the 2 Munros by Loch Lochy to the Roy Bridge team and then felt that, given reasonable conditions, 2 teams ought to be able to climb the remaining hills in the section; one team carrying-in to the Western end and the other team concentrating on the Munros around the head of Loch Arkaig and around Loch Quoich. Then both teams would amalgamate for an assault on The Saddle and the others South of Glen Shiel. Nonetheless there remained an element of risk, the carrying party had a tight schedule and no one knew the peripheral hills where the going could prove to be rough. Thus we deemed it prudent to cater for an overlap on the South of Glen Shiel (i.e. certain Munros to be climbed by more than one team) and to arrange a meeting point at Shiel Bridge where the section 10 teams could meet those from section 11 as well as those coming from Skye.

Working out routes as I have just described was an enjoyable and satisfying experience but the planners were only too aware that the Y.R.C does not take kindly to being told what to do, and that they, the planners, must do no more than the bare minimum. Once members had been allocated to an area, the rest was up to them.

We did not anticipate that there would be access problems nor did we think that small teams would experience any diffculty in finding camping sites, but we double-checked by asking friends who had themselves done all the Munros. They did not think there would be any difficulties', nor, in fact, were there.

The last point that we thought had to receive some

consideration was the method of communicating between the teams and base; it would be tragic if the scheme were to founder because of some misunderstanding over the telephone. For example, imagine the risks if members had to identify peaks by name; not only does the same name occur more than once in the tables, but the variations in pronounciation are legion. It was decided therefore that each man would be given an area reference number and that we would refer to Munros by their number in the Tables. There were really onlytwo reasons why a team would want to ring in. The first was to report success and the second was to ask for help, and in the latter case it was vital that base received concise information. For this reason we worked out a standard form of telephone procedure and all teams were asked to adhere to it. There was a good deal of discussion about the best way of forming the telephone link. What was necessary was to persuade some long-suffering soul, or family of souls, to man a telephone anywhere in Britain and to relay messages on to the President as he made his routine evening call; exactly how the President was then going to get in touch with the team that was in trouble was no so clear. **In** the event, none of that mattered as, by great good fortune, one of our senior members, Duncan Brown, agreed to act as co-ordinator, and, what was even better, to spend the week at a hotel in Roy Bridge while doing so. ThIS was an excellent arrangement and the liaison between Duncan and thePresident was so close that there was never any need to messages; one got one's answer there and then. .

ISO much for the planning. The President had meanwhile found a good camp-site near Roy Bridge and the last circular had gone out. Interest had, by this time, quickened considerably the tally of those intending to take part had comfortably passed the level set by the most optimistic of the planners, and, the club showed its fettle by knocking off the Lakes 3000's at an April Meet with snow on the ground, and all was set to go. The only thing that was not set was the weather. All through May the cold and wet continued and it was apparent that there would be more snow than one normally expects and most members thought it prudent to include an axe. **In** fact, the weather was patchy, the West did not have a bad week; elsewhere the cloud was down on most

days and certain districts had quite a heavy fall of wet spring snow.

If we were to it again, what would we change? The answer probably is very little given the same cross-section of people involved. The administration was unobtrusive yet effective. There were two occasions when reserves were called out (in one case a member.suffered a sprained ankle midway through the week and that left two groups of hills to be covered and in the other case the weather threw a group behind schedule) and in both instances the communications procedure worked without a hitch. I think the planners were justified in calculating their timings off Naismith plus 25% and I think the areas allocated were reasonable for the people involved. Admittedly there were young and fit teams who made light of their tasks and finished well ahead of schedule but most people went round about on par for the course while one or two groups had to contend with adverse conditions and had a struggle to finish on time.

In conclusion; the meet was an undoubted success and reflected credit on the wholehearted commitment of all involved. I think it achieved its objectives. There is no doubt that it generated a considerable amount of good-will amongst friends and that members felt, with satisfaction, that they had played their part in allowing the club to achieve all it set out to do. I believe most people were satisfied with the degree of challenge which they, personally, had to face. No doubt, if the weather had been better, we could have managed with fewer people, and perhaps then it would have been a bit too easy. So let us conclude, in a perverse sort of way. by saying thank you to the British climate which, by its very waywardness, made the meet the memorable occasion that it was.

Appendix 1. Summary of Areas, peaks and members

Code	Area	Munro Section Number	' Peaks by Munro number	Members and Guests
A	Far North	15,16	253,189,154,140,254,249,55,172,170,206,82	Ron Goodwin.Simon Goodwin,Ian Goodwin
B	Fannaichs & An Teallach	14	267,190,246,109,153,276,69,70,137,135, 238,51,262,41,204,210,261,239	Mike Hobson, Peter Chadwick, Howard Rutter
C	Torridon & Slioch	13,14	240,191,258,160,72,105,117,169	Bill Lofthouse, Ken Aldred
D	Strathfarrar & East of Achnashellach	12	148,149,56,79,252,275,122,74,136,219,158	lan Crowther, John Whalley, David Judson, Peter Standing, Harvey Lomas, Glyn Edwards
E	North Glen Affric & Sgurr na Lapaich	11,12	40,73,150,22,28,64	Clive Rowlands and Friend
F	Five Sisters & Glen Affric	11	66,102,194,91,129,163,46,32,131,42,200, 269,97,21,164,264,13,11,125	Derek Smithson & Brian Portas
G	Knoydart to Glen Shiel	10	156,188,202,88,113,207,128,265,215,230,108, 101,93,143,214,155,107,166,116,126,268,118,221	Alan Kay, Howard Humphreys, John Barton, CliffCobb
H	Feshie, West Cairngorms Monadh Liaths	8&9	111,34,5,52,256,220,263,247	Stanley Marsden, Victor Bugg
	Ben Avon & East Cairgonns	8	3,4,127,39,18,92,2,12,20,243,58,16,10	Stephen Bugg, Jeremy Tremaene, Mark Fey, Chris Bound
J	Glas Maol, Cairnwell Tarf& Tilt	6&7	67,157,68,112,77,98,84,217,222,177,241, 270,29,63,175	Brian Nicholson, Don Mackay, Bob Chadwick, Jack Holmes
K	Glen Doll & Lochnagar	7	199,198,114,139,248,213,19,33,80,229	Cliff Large, David Large, Robin Payton

Appendix 1. Summary of areas, peaks and members continued

Code	Area	Munro Section Number	Peaks by Munro number	Members and Guests
L	Nevis Glencoe, Etive	3,4	31,141,168,152,201,60,142,85,250,54, 224,48,43,106,196,23,182,208,146,195,233, 132,104,120,228,30,71,162,165,95,133,49,138, 231,1,7,8,6,50,37,14,173	David Smith, Harry Robinson, Derek Bush, Peter Moss, Barry Wood, Bill Lee
M	Loch Ericht, Loch Laggan, Loch Lochy	4,9,10	47,38,25,94,53,260,78,24,110,226,203, 232,81,174,36,44,76,26,75,123,236,271	The President, David Atherton, Dermis Arrnstrong, Adrian Bridge; David Sternbridge, Andrew Sternbridge, David Brown, Jack Oberlander, Eddie Edwards, Maurice Wilson, Duncan Brown, John Cullingworth, John Medley
N	Drumochter and part ofTarf & Tilt	5,6	151,119,178,272,209,227,234,145,124,121,187	Arthur Salmon, Roy Salmon, Frank Wilkinson, George Postill, R.G.,Salmon
0	Glen Lyon to Bridge of Orchy	2	57,87,167,186,99,193,244,9,35,134,45,65,257, 86,89,61,96,103,192,237,62,130,90,59,205	Peter Swindells, Arthur Craven, Alan Brown, Mike Otter
P	Tyndrum& Crianlarich	1	273,27,100,171,242, 144,216,218,83, 15,17	Peter Clarke, Roy Wilson, Mike Thompson, RalphHague
Q	Arrochar Alps	1	255,115,274,225,212	Ray Harben, Mathew Harben
R	Lomond & Earn	1	179,161,176,245	John Herningway, Neville Newman, Chris Newrnan, Jack Davenport, Pat Stonehouse
S	Skye & Sgriol	17,10	185,235,197,266,181,184,159,211,147, 223,259,251,180	Mike Smith, Mick Sutton, Duncan Mackay, Howard Papworth
T	Mull	17	183	Harry Stembridge

Appendix 2. Extracts from the individual reports.

Section 2. Glen Lyon. Known by the locals as the glen of the 3 L's. the longest, the loneliest and the loveliest glen in Scotland, Glen Lyon, together with its neighbour, Glen Lochay, has a splendid rsense of remoteness. The hills on both sides of Glen Lochay, and on the North of Glen Lyon tend to be formless and featureless, their main challenge in poor visibility being navigational. They can generally be climbed with ease from more than one point; we planned our routes to give two parties approximately equal days, and as it worked out quite well the details are as follows:-

Day	Mountain	Munro Ref.	Climbed Fleet	Walked Miles	Time Taken	Start Point	Finishing Point
1.	(evening of arrival)						
	Meall Buidhe	244	1750	5	2 3/4hrs	508463	508463
	Stuch an Lochan	193	1850	5	2¥4hrs		
2.	CreagMhor	167					
	CarnMairg	87	4500	10	7V2hrs	686477	620479
	MeallCarbh	186					
	Carn Gorm	99					
	Schiehallion	57	2500	4	2V2hrs	732564	732564
	Meall Ghaordie	89	2500	*3Vl*	2¾hrs	513422	513422
3.	Beinn Heasgarnich	61	4000	15	6hrs	422348	422348
	CreagMhor	96					
	Sgiath Chuill	237	3500	15	5½hrs	453356	453356
	Meall Glas	192					
	N.B'.You can get a car up Glen Lochay as far as Batavaime.						
4.	Meall Greigh	134					
	Meall Garbh	35	5500	10	7hrs	680400	608378
	Ben Lawers	9					
	Beinn Ghlas	45					
	Meall nan Tarmachan	86	1650	*2V2*	2¾hrs	601392	601392
	Meall Corranaich	65	2650	7	4¾hrs	608378	620479
	Meall a Choire Leith	257					
5.	BenChallum	103	2700	*6Vl*	4Vlhrs	355290	355290
	Beinn Dorain	62					
	Beinn an Dothaidh	130	5500	12	9¾hrs	327357	327357
	Beinn Mhanach	205					
	Beinna Chreachain	59	3750	8	6V4hrs	322443	322443
	Beinn Achaladair	90					
6.	Tolmount	198	3000	14	6V2hrs	282762	282762
	Tom Buidhe	199		as reserve party			
7.	Cairngorm	5	2500	9	7V2hrs	995053	995053
	BynackMore	52		as reserve party			
8.	CarnLiath	123	3000	*4Vl*	3hrs		

Total. 30 Munros. 50750ft 131 miles.

Section 6..West of the Cairnwell Pass. The following passage well Illustrates the nature of the country. 'Having absorbed all available information, spent some time gazing at the O.S sheet 43, and reading the relevant chapter of the S.M.C guide, we decided to walk in to the head of Glen and set up camp, reviewing the situation in the hght of the weather, visibility, and the look of the going. Next morning brought no improvement to the weather, so waterproofs on and away to try and find Beinn Iutharn Mhor, Caman Righ, Glas Tulaichean and Carn Bhac. Once we got into cloud, visibility was down to about 30ft. Aim was B.I.M but, with usual Y.R.C distrust of things mechanical, compass was ignored and a fence thought to be county boundary was followed until it became obvious it was something else. Soon the party found themselves on the last summit of the group instead of the first. Identified by a 'thank God' trig point. The only hill in the area that had one. Despite the positive landmark and careful bearings the next two peaks took rather longer to find than we had expected. We had hoped to do CB as well with this lot, though having sampled the Cairngorm stuff we realised that to set out to cross some three miles of pathless bog and tussock to find a hill with no obvious summit needed more careful consideration. Carn Bhac translates into The Hill of the Peat Hags and has three summits spread over some one and half miles, just like Kinder without paths or obvious landmarks like the Downfall .

Our next camp site was just off the A93, six miles South of Braemar. From there we intended to knock off the remainder of our task, CB and An S (An Socach). Most foolproof method of dealing with CB seemed to be to drive to Inverey and walk up Glen Ey for about six miles which left us with just a couple of miles to walk up the Alt na Clach Geala at the head of which lay the soggy mass of CB. A gamekeeper we spoke to on our way up the glen gave us a great feeling of confidence by saying that he could find the summit of CB but inferred that anyone else would be lucky. . . .we realised why when we reached the top and spent about. an hour and a half wandering about among the peat hags III a snowstorm with zero visibility, wondering which heap of stones was the summit. An Socach, by comparison,

was easy. A real path took us to within a mile and a half of the top and started from the A.A box on the A93 at 141836.

Section 10. Knoydart. South of Loch Arkaig. First thoughts among the planners were that the three Munros in this area might be done in one hard day. A second look at the map made them think otherwise and here is the report from those who actually did them.

'Gaor Bheinn (Gulvain) The SMC recommended route is from Glenfinnan from tlie South but for logistical reasons we were going in from the North and at the end of the day it was easy to see why the South approach is preferred. The first obstacle was the Leac na Carnaich ridge which we crossed at about 410m, with a corresponding drop into Gleann Camgharaidh, followed by a climb around the shoulder of Braigh nan Uamhachan to a very windy col and a steep tussocky ascent in thick mist to the ridge of Gulvain. The ridge connecting the South and North (main) summit is a pleasant grassy stroll, narrowing to a short rocky section at the North end. Not wishing to retrace our steps we came off the North ridge and had no problems crossing the Allt Camgharaidh but still had to recross the Leac na Carnaich ridge. The whole area is extremely wild and the ground is consistently rough for walking.

Sgurr Thuilm and Sgurr nan Coireachan. These two peaks, over 2 map-miles apart, connected by a ridge never dropping below 740m, containing two un-named and two named tops, are an obvious one-day execursion. As in the case of Gulvain, the S.M.C recommend approach from the South and again we did them from the North. The differences between the North and South approaches are not as marked as with Gulvain. We crossed the River Pean by stepping stones about one mile East of Gleann Pean bothy and continued up steep grassy slopes to the summit of Thuilm. In fine weather the ridge must be a delight but in the prevailing conditions of thick mist and high wind we only got intermittent views from the drops in the ridge - views of a total wilderness, of numberless and unnamable peaks, the only softening touch being a glimpse of Prince Charles' monument at the head of Loch Shiel. The East - West traverse is recommend and a look at the map confirms why. From Sgurr nan Coireachan the N.E ridge leads directly down to the Gleann Pean bothy and forms a straightforward way down and a leisurely stroll brought us back to Strathan. The bothy is being renovated and, vandals permitting, will make an excellent starting point for some very interesting country.'

West Knoydart. This team set off from the bothy at A Chuil carrying food for 5 days and intending to pick up their car at Kinloch Bourn at the end of their trip (the car having been ferried round by the other two). They climbed to the bealach between Sgurr nan Coireachan and Garbh Chioch Mhor, dumped their sacks, knocked off those two and descended to camp at the extreme West end of Loch Quoich. Next day they travelled with the minimum of gear, climbed Sgurr na Ciche, returned to camp for lunch, polished off Sgurr Mor and then moved camp to under the North East ridge of Luinne Bheinn. Next day they climbed both Luinne Bheinn and Meall Buidhe and moved camp to Barrisdale; finally, on the day after, they climbed Ladhar Bheinn and commenced their walk out to Kinloch Bourn, eventually camping two miles west of the road.

Section 11. Kintail and Glen Affrie. This party started by walking in to Alltbeithe and the extract begins as they are about to climb the hills on the North of Glen Affric. 'We left the hostel at 7.00a.m. to start our six Munros, which kept us busy for over 13 hours. The cloud was still low and the wind very cold. Our log forecast route-finding difficulties.

We chose the middle one of the three paths leading up from Glen Affric and this turned out to be a reasonably good choice. Nothing could make this an easy day, but a lot of thought went into reducing the strain. This was the first of four days, not a last effort; so we walked down the glen for about half an hour and then turned North, up to Bealach Coire Ghaidheil. From here we turned East, then North East, up to the unique cairn on Mam Sodhail. The ridge was reasonably defined, but visibility was so bad that a unique cairn was necessary to identify the top. The cairn was round and hollow with a wet visitor's book in a plastic box, in a

metal box. The climb into the hollow centre was made interesting by the sheath of ice formed by the combination of wind and moisture.

After Man Sodhail we followed the ridge carefully North over Carn Eige and onto Beinn Fhionnlaidh after which a steady pace took us down to the bealach and up onto An Socach where we met a/group of armed services personnel who had been at Alltbeithe the night before.

After pausing for a few words, we continued Westward across the bealach and' then traversed across Coire nan Dearcag to join the ridge at its lowest point between Sgurr nan Ceathreamhnan and Mullach na Dheiragain. Leaving our ice axes to lighten the load, we trudged 'Northwards over two tops and finally abandoned our rucksacks for the final lift up onto Mullach na Dheiragain. We returned to the axes, collecting our sacks en route and then moved very slowly up the ridge to the top of Sgurr nan Ceathreamhnan. There was an easy walk down the East ridge and then we ran down the soft snow and then the path to Alltbeithe, a dram, food and rest for weary feet.

The extract continues with an account of their adventures on A'Chralaig and Mullach Fraoch choire.

"On returning to the campsite we met Alan Kay and Howard Humphreys who had been carrying heavy sacks in the wilds of Knoydart and then, later, Mike Smith and party who had been in Skye. There was a relaxed atmosphere as we had all completed our primary tasks and each had a fairly simple day for Thursday which would allow us ample time to attend the ceremonial ascent of mountain 123 with the President.

That night it rained and blew hard and next morning it was still raining although the wind had eased slightly and the cloud level appeared higher. We finally left the car at 10.15 wearing light cotton clothing under waterproofs and carrying the minimum of gear. We choose to ascend from the West side, An Coarann Mar, to gain shelter from the full force of the wind and to traverse the peaks with the wind behind us. As we walked up the glen, we could see new snow through momentary gaps in the cloud and considered the need for axes. However we believed we fit, the short and we could not be stopped by a bit of new snow. We were wrong!

As we mounted the hillside, we found difficulty maintaining our balance because of the strong wind and the driving rain turned to snow. At about 1500 ft we had a short conference which concluded we should seek shelter for something to eat and put on spare clothing. We still thought we could force it. At about 1800 ft we traversed into a gully, added some clothing and decided to retreat and quickly! We felt that the cold could kill us, and, if not, the 2 or 3 inches of wet snow on steep grass might. This was the position on what we thought was the sheltered side of the ridge.

What we did not realise was that we were off course . . . . . .We slept 11 hours and equipped with our warmest clothing, ice axes, and plenty of food we set off again. This time we chose to ascend to a bealach just East of the ridge. With low cloud, this made route-finding more certain and the route less steep so that, if conditions were very difficult, we could force it. As we ascended, the expected cold strong wind of the last week failed to materialise. At the Bealach Choire a'Chait, there were only light winds and a visibility of about 15 yards. Shortly we met snow on the ridge; instead of it being old snow on the side of the ridge guiding us upward, we now had about 6 inches of new wet snow to walk in. At the time, we were not certain it was the bealach; we could see no paths, but the ground did fall away to the North-East. We turned due West up a steep and very wet hillside between outcrops of rock. After about a quarter of an hour we believed a slight ridge had formed and we were on route. The route began to turn to the North-West, as expected, and we met a series of cairns which led us to the summit. This was the only clearly cairned route we met and the visibility was too poor for us to understand why. Perhaps they were intended as a guide for descent because for us they started when the route-finding had become easier.

After the first summit, A'Chralaig and the top marked 1008, we were involved in knee-deep patches of snow. At one point there was a clear path traversing the East side across steep old snow covered with wet new snow which looked dangerous, so we stayed on the crest. This involved rock climbing and unstable wet snow for which we should have roped and would have been foolish to cross without ice axes. This was so difficult we did not return this way from

the second summit, Mullach Fraoch-choire, but continued North and had a longer walk back. This was winter mountaineering under thawing conditions. The descent of the steep snow-covered grass was at its most hazardous and when balled snow caused a slip, then one seemed to accelerate immediately on hitting ground.

Sections 15 and 16. Everything North of the Garvel Ullapool road. We will close these extracts from the area reports, as we began them, showing the log of this group's activities. Having a driver, they were able to make the interesting through route from East Rhidorroch to the Dirrie More but it would be unwise to assume that access up Glen Achall is always so readily available.

Day	Mountain	Munro Ref.	Climbed Fleet	Walked Miles	Time Taken	Start Point	Finishing Point
1.	Ben Klibreck	189	2640	8	5	530268	575346
2.	Ben Hope	253	3000	4	3¾	461478	461478
3.	Conival Ben More Assynt	154 140	3350	lOV2	7¾	251218	251218
4.	BenWyvis	82	3250	8	5Vl	411678	411678
5.	Seana Braigh	254					
6.	Eididh nan Clach Geala Meall nan Ceapraichean BeinnDearg Con a Meall Am	249 172 55 170 206	5000	18	13	233940	276743
7.	Driveto Roy Bridge						
8.	CarnLlath	123	3000	4½	3		

12 Munros 22940ft 61 miles

HIMALAYAN TREK

by T.A. Kay

Ever since Hillary and Tenzing set foot on the summit of Everest it has been an ambition of mine to travel in the Himalayas and gaze upon the highest mountain on Earth. In 1983 an opportunity arose and I joined a small party to trek about 150 miles in the Everest area.

After a flight over Germany, Poland and Russia, our group of eight, six men and two women, landed in Kathmandu where we stayed for two days before the trek started. We spent this time seeing the sights of the city and the Kathmandu Valley.

The city streets were a jumble of rickshaws, bicycles, ancient vehicles, cows and pigs. People were thronging everywhere, trying to sell prayer wheels of various sizes and designs, and huge kukris with razor-sharp edges.

There had been no flights to the Lukla airstrip for two days, but fortunately the weather cleared when we were due to fly out. A 45 minute flight by Twin Otter took us to Lukla, 9000 feet up in the Himalayas and there we met the Sherpas who were to accompany us on the trek, and also the twenty or thirty porters who carried our camping gear and food for three days until it was put on yaks. An hour after we arrived at Lukla, Reinhold Messner landed in the King of Nepal's private plane, en route to Cho Oyo, another 8000 metre peak to add to his tally; we met the great man in Namche.

Our first day's trek was downhill for about 1000 feet, to the Dudh Kosi river. We passed many traders and porters - all the goods are carried on porters backs, regardless of bulk or weight - and we met quite a number of scruffy, though obviously very happy young urchins. We camped at Sarogumaga and there we met a 14 year old boy who attends the "local" Hillary school- four hours walk away - and a very bright lad he was. He spoke English very well, but admitted that his least favourite subject at school was "hygiene".

It rained most of the night, and this meant, of course, that higher up there would be fresh snow. We awoke at 6.30a.m. and were off by 8.00a.m. We passed through Jorsale two

Cholatse, Himalaya

hours later and inspected the Japanese "market garden" which was built to produce vegetables for the "Mount Everest Hotel", the biggest white elephant in the Himalayas, which closed down years ago. The market garden is still maintained and is like an oasis.

The climb of 2000 feet up to Namche was taken a bit too fast, and as a result I suffered from a severe headache for two days, but this coincided with bad weather and so we stayed in Namche until things improved. To while away the time I roamed the "streets" of Namche and imagine my surprise when I heard a familiar Y.R.C. voice - none other than Roy Pomfret who was also trekking to Everest.

Altitude and three feet of new wet snow made the going hard next day. We slept at Khunde that night in a Sherpa house and next day went on to the monastery at Khumjung. There we were shown the yeti scalp which Hillary took to America some years ago for scientific investigation. The shape of the scalp and the colour of the hairs on it were very much like a bear scalp.

Ama Dablam dominates the valley and we heard that an Austrian team was currently climbing on it - they subsequently succeeded in getting to the top.

We swung into the Gokyo Valley, the snow getting deeper and wetter and for the next three days we gradually gained height and then camped at the base of Cho Oyo. This was our coldest night, and next morning everything was frozen solid - boots,suncream, cameras, tents; the Sherpas suffered badly, some from snow blindness because they refused to wear their snow goggles.

We climbed Gokyo Kang (18000 feet high), a magnificent view point, and spent *2V2* hours on top, viewing and photographing Everest (8 miles away), Changtse (in Tibet), Makalu, Cho Oyo and range upon range of unknown mountains. Best of all was Cholatse across the valley, first climbed the previous year by Bill O'Connor from Harrogate with an American team.

It had been our aim to cross the Chola La pass at about 17500 feet, just north of Cholatse, and then descend to Lobouje, near to the Everest base camp, but it was choked with fresh snow and was totally impassable. We therefore had to retrace our steps down the Gokyo Valley, and it was

A. Kay

Gyachung Kang from Gokyo, Himalaya

hardest for our accompanying yaks who had not eaten for four days because the snow covered their grazing grounds. We camped at Pheriche, a desolate, straggling group of houses made of frozen sod and tin. Next day we met two members of the American team that was then climbing Everest - the team doctor who had descended for a rest, but in so doing had got snow blindness, and Dick Bass, a 50 year old who was travelling round the world, systematically climbing the highest summit of every continent.

We then moved on to Lobouje and camped beside the Khumbu glacier, two miles from the Everest ice-fall. The ramparts of Nuptse on the opposite side of the glacier in the afternoon sun were a fine sight. Next day I climbed alone up Kala Pattar, a small summit at about 18000 feet beneath Pumori which gives a superb view into the western cwm of Everest. Visibility was not too good and part of Everest, one mile away, was obscured by mist. Nevertheless, Changtse, over the Lho La in Tibet was clear, as was the Everest ice-fall, and occasionally the boom of falling seracs echoed across the valley.

One mile to the west the map named an area as Changri La, and try as I might I could see nothing particularly magical about it, but surrounded by Everest, Nuptse, Lhotse and Pumori, it would have to be exceptional, to say the least, to merit any particular note.

I waited 1½ hours hoping for better visibility and for the others to catch up, but the weather was deteriorating by the minute, and I had to descend.

The remainder of the trek became easier day by day as we gradually descended and inhaled the thick and luscious air at the lower altitudes. Our return route was via Pangboche monastery, where we saw another yeti scalp, and Thyangboche monastery, in an unbelievably beautiful position, surrounded by ice fluted peaks.

The altitude, the cold, the exceptional amount of snow, and the food all combined to make the trek quite tough, but it was nevertheless a superb experience and I would recommend every member of the Club to go to the Himalayas once at least before finally hanging up his boots.

CAVE DIGGERS

by Harvey Lamas

The golden age of Yorkshire pot-holing, as described by E.E. Roberts, had finished some sixty years before my interest in caving began. Long gone were the days when people could explore open shafts on the fells for the first time. Now one is more likely to have to wait in a queue at the bottom of a pitch in some classic Yorkshire pot-hole.

Therefore, expeditions abroad to regions where caves were relatively unexplored became the only vent for one's desires as an explorer of new ground. However, there were also the fortunate occasions when a discovery could be made by simple observation whilst exploring some obscure region. Such an incident occurred in Dan-Yr-Ogof in South Wales, when, by scaling an aven, we reached a hitherto undiscovered section of the cave. It was a great thrill to traverse new ground and to take a tentative step into the broken darkness.

When I came to live in the Dales, I had the opportunity of joining a group of people who lived locally and went cave-digging both mid-week and occasionally at weekends. They were from a number of clubs and were very dedicated, in that rather than merely going caving, they laid siege to a particular location. The first thing I had to grow accustomed to was the carrying of such unfamiliar items of equipment as bags of cement, rolls of hoses, long straight pipes, and even oil drums down narrow, twisting passages. Furthermore, these had to be man-handled across a moor, winter and summer alike, with bad weather no excuse!

There are several kinds of 'digs', and the term covers the excavation of holes on the fell tops, the draining of sumps (by bailing, syphoning and damming), and the diversion of streams on or under the surface. There is also the quarrying kind of 'dig', such as Brunskill on Leek Fell. Here, we blasted, chipped and chiselled our way down a series of pitches and crawls (virtually making our own cave) for nearly two years, always being lured on by a booming echo and the sound of waterfalls. We followed the passage, such

as it was, to a small pitch, where at the bottom there was just a small crack. At this point our will gave in.

At that time many theories were expounded as to what lay beyond: some members had the Mastercave and all the pitches named; others had planned who they would invite on the first exploration. It is this imagination that carries a cave excavator forward through the times of disappointment. Yet if a 'dig' is a particularly good one (not too far from the road, with easy access from the entrance, as well as being comfortable and dry) there is almost a reluctance for it "to go", in that after all the exploration, wandering with bucket and spade from shake-hole to shake-hole, there is a yearning for the remote part of an unseen cavern to retain something of its mystery.

I remember one winter night tramping over the nearby fells, peering down at the soft lights shining from the warm dwellings where any sane human being would desire to be! There was, however, a charm in being on a moonlit fell with the wonderful clarity and perspective of the surrounding countryside standing out so clearly in the snow. As we approached the site, we found that the shake-hole was deep with snow, so we dug a six-foot hole down to the top of the shaft. Once we got down below, were drenched by melt water seeping down through the shoring. On leaving the 'dig', we climbed out of the sheltered hollow into the freezing blast, to experience a considerable wind-chill factor. When we arrived at the cars, there seemed a thousand and one 'buckles and belts to undo from our stiff and ridged garments.

There is a persistence or stubbornness about people who go 'digging', as they search the unfrequented regions of caves or descend shafts that are rarely explored - usually with good reason. There is a hole to dig, a boulder-choke to shore up, a to follow, or some impenetrable crawl to be blasted so that the true route can be revealed.

Sometimes a 'dig' might not be expected "to go" but is explored only to prove a theory, or indeed perhaps to search for a reason for the whole pursuit in the first place. The digger might like the comradeship of being in a team of dedicated people (but that is found in caving anyway) or the challenge of some technical point, or even the aesthetic

pleasure of being on the fells. There is, however, always the competitive drive of having a good discovery under one's belt, and the pleasure of holding one's head high in the caving fraternity.

B.E. Nicholson

Pollnagollum, Northern Ireland

Y.R.C. REFLECTIONS

by the late Geoffrey S. Gowing, edited by Richard Gowing

One of my pleasantest relaxations during the late twenties, the thirties and the immediate postwar years was my association with the Y.Re. With them I got to know a wide variety of pleasant companions in whose company I spent many happy days on fells, rocks and in caves.

My first introduction to rock-climbing was by Basil Goodfellow in 1925. In the late summer he and I went over to the Lake District in his polished aluminium two-seater Alvis one Saturday and stayed with the Peppers, in Seatoller. Around tea-time we strolled up towards Tarn-at-Leaves and came in the gathering darkness down the steep valley side to Seathwaite. On the Sunday we did a rock climb, Eagle's Nest Arete behind Napes Needle.

From then onwards I spent many happy weekends in the Lakes, sometimes staying in Seatoller, but more often at Burnthwaite or The Wasdale Head Hotel, with either Basil, or Rummy Sale, who was to be my Best Man in 1929.

And so to the Y.Re. In 1927, when I.e.I. started doing research into the production of oil from coal by the Bergius process, they took onto the staff a chemist called Alexander Rule. Rule had been a lecturer in Chemistry at Liverpool University and was an expert in that process. (He lived in Norton until his death in 1957, and proposed my son, Richard, in turn for membership of the Club.) Rule had for many years been a member of the Y.Re. and in the summer of 1928 he invited Rummy Sale and myself to a meet at Gaping Gill. We camped somewhere in Dentdale, joined the Club on the Sunday and duly went into the pot, on what was to be the first of many descents. As a result of this vetting, we were both duly approved and elected members of the Club, and in that late autumn, attended our first meet at The Rose and Crown in Wensleydale. Thereafter I must have missed few meets, with the exception of the two years I was in South Africa, until the outbreak of war in 1939.

The Y.R.e. in those days had a fascinating membership, as there were several original members and a number who had

joined in the first years of the Club's life. The Club had taken some time to get into its stride again after the war and there were comparatively few young members - practically none in their early twenties. The membership consisted almost exclusively of West Riding men who ran their own businesses and whose sons were beginning to follow their fathers. There was, for example, old Tom Booth (an original member) and his two sons, who ran a flourishing business in the woollen trade. Then Davis Burrow, who was Secretary just after I joined, and his cousin Charlie, who were brush manufacturers. There were the Humphreys brothers, who ran a successful little electrical engineering business; when Albert, on his retirement, sold the factory to The General Electric Co., he made enough to keep himself and his niece Grace who kept house for him, in great style in Uppermill near Oldham until well into his nineties, spending most winters in Greece, the West Indies or South Africa. He died in 1979.

Then there were a few professional men - lawyers, like Harold Brodrick. He lived in Birkdale, the fashionable residential suburb of Southport, of which he was mayor when I first knew him. There was old Dr. Lovett, whose son is in the Club. The old man was the G.P. in Clapham and it was in a barn attached to his house in the village where we used to store most of the Club potholing tackle. Among others. of the professional men there was, of course, Ernest Roberts who was a school-inspector, Davidson, who was a retired bank-manager - and Rimmer, who was manager of the Metropole, one of the large hotels in Leeds. Rimmer and I served. together on the Committee in the year before and during the Second War and he always used to give me dinner in the Metropole Grill Room when I came over to Leeds to the meetings. On these occasionsI often used to stay with Davis Burrow and his wife in their charming house in Alwoodley, right on the northern edge of Leeds, with a grand view over the countryside to the crags of Almscliff.

I can only remember one schoolmaster in the early days: this was Bentley Beetham, of early Everest fame, who taught for many years at Barnard Castle School. I met him several times in Borrowdale, where he used to bring over climbing parties of schoolboys and put them up in a hut he

owned. This was a vast, corrugated-iron building which had originally belonged to the old Wad mining company. I remember running into him once when we were staying in Stonethwaite and he led Richard and me up a climb opposite the hut - Richard's first rock-climb.

The President in the year I joined was H.H. Bellhouse, a retired bank-manager and an original member of the Club. The Secretaries were Jack Buckley, who ran a printing business in Leeds, and Fred Booth, son of old Tom. Old Tom died in the late thirties en route to visit his daughter Linda, in Switzerland; he was a grand old boy who, as a lad, had been a member of the crew of a sailing ship and had "rounded the Horn" under sail.

The twenties and thirties were great times in the Club. The January meet was always at Hill Inn and was a great occasion, the dinner on the Saturday night being almost as important as the Annual Dinner - we even sometimes had a guest. I remember one such was the vicar of Chapel-le-Dale. He was a very old man, who had been one of the early climbers in the Alps - a fact that I fortunately learned just before we sat down, as it fell to my lot to propose his health after our meal. We generally put on some kind of entertainment in the evening, which took many forms. Once we had a treasure hunt, with clues that led us through the snow half-way up Ingleborough on the one hand and up Whernside on the other. The solitary clue that sticks in my mind was "Fill pints, but not with tea", which led to the farmhouse, Philpin by name, near the Ribblehead Viaduct. On another occasion, someone brought in a portable radio set and switched on some loud music. Someone else, having been primed, said "Can't that d--- noise be turned off" whereupon to the utter surprise of the company, the music stopped and the loudspeaker blared forth in the unmistakable voice of the President of the Club, an admonition to the speaker himself to shut up, as they were about to broadcast a live transmission of a descent of Gaping Gill. Then followed an announcer telling us that the famous potholer Ernest Roberts was about to descend and we heard such typical comments as: "Let go, d--- you. Blast you, hold tight. What the are you doing. Slack away, confound you!", so well known to those who potholed with Roberts.

Once the whole party was cajoled up the fellside to see "great illuminations in Douk Cave", only to find that someone had left a solitary candle in the entrance.

On another occasion Charlie Burrow, disguised as a local policeman, took everyone in when he entered the pub and arrested the President for indecent exposure or some such offence. Then there was the time when we laddered right across the roof of the hotel, from ground to ground on each side, and the whole party, some thirty strong, tied up on one rope. The confusion can be imagined, particularly as two of us were able to out of a window and fasten the middle of the rope to one of the ladders! Latterly we quietened down and adopted a standard after-dinner exercise of climbing a rope ladder, stretched at 45+ to the horizontal in the big barn, up to a minute hole in the gable end, whence a vertical ladder led in the dark to the top of the dung heap outside!

The other great meet of the year was the camp at G.G. This was camping in the style of the early years of the century, with a marquee with tables and benches for messing and a bell-tent for cookhouse, complete with an elaborate paraffin cooker and oven. Over this presided Percy Robinson, a fine old member who had been an army cook during the war. With an assistant, another ex-army cook who had been Davis Burrow's batman in 1914-18, he turned out the most superb food. Piles of sausages and bacon and eggs for breakfast, vast stacks of sandwiches to take below and al on the Saturday night an enormous joint of roast beef real Yorkshire pudding - none of your miserable individual pies, but a vast spread cooked under the joint and soaked in the fat that dripped therefrom.

There was always a bell-tent pitched close to the windlass at the brink of the open pot; this housed the field telephone which was connected to a hand-set on the floor of the cavern and was presided over by "old" Harry Buckley, father of Jack Buckley. There they sat with the aid of a case of whisky, keeping a record of the descents and ascents of the pot, so that nobody should be left behind in the bowels of the earth.

Although exploration went on, the G.G. meets were generally recognised as being social affairs like the Annual

Dinner, rather than serious potholing occasions. They were always preceded by a weekend at which a few stalwarts took the tackle up to the pot and got the winch and gantry into position. Generally Percy Robinson took his holiday and stayed there the week before and the week afterwards. Women, of course, were not permitted at the meet, but sometimes accompanied their husbands on the weekend before and, if there had been time to rig the tackle completely, I fancy a few were allowed down.

Other meets were held in the usual climbing, walking and potholing areas of the north, in the Lake District, the North York Moors, one or two in the Derbyshire caving district or in the Trough of Bowland, or in North Wales or the Highlands. But perhaps the outstanding meets of the thirties, from the point of view of breaking new ground, were those in the Enniskillen region of Northern Ireland.

. This Irish district had been visited before the first World War by a party of Ramblers, which included Alexander Rule and Harold Brodrick, and it was largely at the former's instigation that the idea of another visit was raised, with the particular objective of a serious exploration of the Marble Arch system. As a result, I was given the job of organising the four meets we held there in the thirties.

Arranging the meets was quite an undertaking as it involved not only getting the party together, but making mass bookings on the Heysham to Belfast steamer, booking accommodation at the Imperial Hotel in Enniskillen and obtaining permission from the noble Lord (Lord Enniskillen) to visit the Marble Arch area. Ernest Roberts and I once had tea at Florence Court, with the Earl. He turned out to be a very pleasant man who was much looked up to in the district as a model landlord. He came into the inheritance after it had been somewhat neglected by his father, who milked it in order to live grandly at the court of King Edward VII. The present Earl was very keen on forestry and showed us with great pride some of his fine trees and his forest nursery. It was from him that I learnt that the Churchyard Yew, so common in every English churchyard, originated from a single shoot on the Florence Court estate.

For the first twb meets I arranged the hire of a car in Belfast so that we could have transport, not only for getting

to Enniskillen, but between that town and the caves. I well remember how, having arranged for the car to be on the dockside when we berthed in the early hours of Good Friday morning, we duly disembarked to find no car! Having whiled away a couple of hours, we found the garage and were received with open arms and led to the waiting car. When I pointed out that they had promised to have it to meet the boat, they explained that the hiring day did not start so early. And when I produced their letter promising this fact, I got the delightfully Irish reply: "Sure, Sorr, that's only a figure of speech!" Like the first meet, the second was at Easter and, having taken across my own car, after the meet I took Roberts down to County Clare where we joined up with another party to explore the wonderful cave systems in the Burren around Lisdoonvarna.

Then came the war and all activities were suspended, with the exception of annual committee meetings, which I attended - the committee remained in office en bloc throughout the war. The Club had a committee room, where the library was kept, in Albion Street, adjoining a solicitor's office. During the war the Club moved to an institute on the other side of the river and then, when the library was handed over to the Leeds Public Library, we gave up having a headquarters.

After the war, although I continued to attend meets, the wartime interruption was too much for me and I never took up pot-holing or rock-climbing again, though I still did plenty of fell-walking. It is true that in the late fifties, and more particularly in the sixties, when Richard became an active member, I got to know some of the younger members of the Club, but as one by one death took the older members, I found myself knowing fewer and fewer at each Annual Dinner I attended.

TWO CONTINENTS BY CANOE

by George B. Spenceley

The pleasures of long distance paddling were realised by me fairly late in life, fortuitously at the same time as hill sides seemed steeper and crags more alarming. I was thrust into it rather abruptly by Tom Price. After only a week-end on Windermere, we set off to canoe across the top of Canada. Thus I learned that for those to whom a long journey is in itself a challenge, who may wish to cross country or continent - under their own power that is - then the canoe can offer the most relaxed, leisurely and silent way of doing so with the enormous advantage that it carries the load for you.

Of course in other places or circumstances, the canoe can give you a very rough ride indeed; fast, exhilarating and far from peaceful. But it is not of that of sport that I write. For us the canoe was simply a means to an end, a vehicle we hoped of tranquil travel. When I write of canoes, I mean what all in North America mean by that term: the open canoe, not the kayak. With its substantial load-carrying capacity, it is the ideal vessel for a sustained self-supporting Journey.

After that first adventure it seemed desirable to share the next journey with my wife Sylvie, who had been mildly concerned by my protracted disappearance into the wilderness. She would come with me the next time, she said. And so after her few hours of initiation on the Oxford canal we set off to canoe the Danube.

It is 1750 miles from its source in the Black Forest to the Black Sea, passing through or bordering eight countries. There can be few rivers more scenically varied or more historically significant. Allowing time to linger as we desired to see places of particular interest, and with delays forced upon us by high wind and water, it took us four months to paddle the full 1550-mile navigable length. Conditions and circumstances varied so much that our daily distance travelled could be anything between four and forty miles or more.

Between Vlm and Vienna there are twenty one HEP Stations with their associated locks, which delayed us somewhat. At other places, particularly in the Wachau where the Danube cuts through a northern extension of the Alpine foothills, a cyclist pedalling along the river-side road could barely keep at our pace. A spell of unusually heavy rain combined with the season's melting Alpine snows caused the river to rise alarmingly. On the last day of travel before Vienna we were swept down-river along with fallen trees and dead cattle, at such a speed that we really feared for our safety. Fortunately we were able to pull ourselves into a backwater in the flooded western suburbs of the capital to discover that we shouldn't have been travelling at all. The Danube had risen three metres and the river authorities had closed it to vessels of all kinds. We now knew why people kept shouting at us from the river banks!

The Danube was still abnormally high when we left Vienna a week later. We failed to stop at the Austrian border point and were carried swiftly past, a few yards off shore, frantically waving our passports. The officials seemed Iittle concerned. Ahead was a more significant frontier and one at which it was distinctly most advisable to halt. There was no mistaking the 'Iron Curtain'; double lines of barbed wire, WOOden watch towers, stony-faced soldiers. I suppose there are few who enter Eastern Europe as did we, much at the mercy of the current, mid-stream down the Danube. In spite of bearing a letter of introduction, we were a little apprehensive. We need not have been. A military boat put out escorted us to a military post outside Bratislava where, with extraordinary courtesy and good humour, the formalities were quickly completed.

One of the rewards of paddling a river, even a great commercial artery like the Danube, or even more the Mississippi, is that it can carry you into places unexpectedly remote, far from roads, towns or tourists. It was particularly so on the Slovak shore of the river where, beyond the willow banks, we could enter a watery wilderness, a network of narrow channels, where given time we could dawdle for days, hearing only the call of the birds.

And so we leisurely travelled, crossing more frontiers, passing more capitals, camping no doubt illegally, shopping

in country markets, and every day accepting gifts of fish, fruit or melon from the country folk. It is a remarkable fact that the further east we travelled and the poorer were the people, the more generous they became. Sylvie could somehow communicate with them. They always wanted to know the same things: how old were we and how many children we had? In the major cities of Budapest, Novi Sad, Belgrade, and other lesser places, we lived briefly in luxury and were lavishly entertained by old and new friends.

Some few days of travel down river from Belgrade, we reached the most spectacular of all the varied scenery through which the river runs. After its long and leisurely progress across the great plains of Hungary and Vejvedina, the Danube now cut an improbable course through the great mountain barrier of the South Carpathians. This is the Iron Gates, arguably Europe's greatest river gorge. Certainly its statistics are impressive. Where earlier the river mayhave been a mile wide, here in the Kazan - the central gorge - there are places where it is only 150 yards across and yet the limestone walls containing it rise up, vertical in places, some 2,000 feet. It is wild country indeed, with few places to land.

Much later and further east when the Danube ceases to be Bulgaria's northern border and becomes entirely committed to Romania, we chose to leave the main channel and meandered for miles along minor waterways across the ill-drained and impoverished Dobrogea Plain. There were few villages and finding food and fresh water was a problem. We returned to the main river at Romania's river port of Braila from where we were to share the river with ocean-going ships of up to 9000 tons. Soon after, we were again on a frontier. Guarded by almost continuous barbed wire and patrolled by gun boats, the left bank was now Soviet. We kept firmly on the Russian side, but not without the occasional halt and interrogation.

The Danube Delta provided a fitting climax to our long river journey. Of its three main distributaries, we chose to take the longest and most meandering southern arm of Sfintu Gheorghe; but so complex is this Delta labyrinth of lake and channel, only 10% of which is permanently dry land, that we could have reached the Black Sea by anyone of a hundred different routes. But some of the alternatives

would have presented problems as we soon discovered. One day after threading our way through a network of narrow channels between floating islands of reed, we failed to find even the smallest island of dry land sufficient for our tent. At other times after hours of travel we would be halted by an impenetrable mattress of floating vegetation and forced to return. But the reward of our several deviations was to see a vast wealth of bird life, little disturbed by our silent approach. Most memorable .were the considerable flocks of Dalmatian pelicans which .would rise from their morning feeding ground to perform a majestic aerial ballet as they circled on thermals above our heads.

We would willingly have loitered much longer in this naturalists' paradise, but eventually we ran out of both time and river. Our journey ended among the Russian Lipovan fishermen of the Danube's last village of Sfintu Gheorghe.

"The trouble with travel," a wise man once told me, "is that it's addictive; you'll always want more." And so it has proved. After the Danube, we began to consider another river venture, this time without language difficulties and the hassle of political problems. The Mississippi seemed an ideal challenge and so we settled down to more than a year of preparation and correspondence.

We made an initial approach to the departments of tourism in the ten states through which we should pass and similar bodies in the major cities along the way. Their reactions varied from sheer disbelief and pity to the occasional expression of admiration and envy. On the whole they seem to take us very seriously. "In the unlikely event of you actually reaching Tennessee . . ." began one letter from the State, while another from Minnesota asked if we were aware that the Mississippi "is a violent and unpredictable body of water".

The apprehension from which I was now beginning to suffer was vastly increased after reading Jonathan Raban's "Old Glory". He had travelled most of the river in a small power boat and his book might have been written for the deliberate purpose of deterring others from doing anything similar. Actually we were to learn that, while each year the river attracts a number of eccentrics in various vessels from rafts to rubber boats, relatively few travel it by canoe. There

is a wealth of lesser waterways more attractive than the "Big Muddy".

But among those who were not so discouraging was Mike Cichanowsky, a leading American canoeist and canoe manufacturer, who kindly offered us on loan one of his best touring models. And so towards the end of May, with a slim red 18' We-no-nah canoe atop our rented car, we headed north from Minneapolis, driving almost to the Canadian border.

Lake Itasea, set in a bowl fringed by forest of pine and spruce, is generally accepted as the true source of the Mississippi. It emerges quietly from its eastern shore at a place where many are photographed crossing it on stepping stones. Besides this trickle, a sign states that from here the Mississippi winds 2,552 miles to the Gulf of Mexico. A short distance below, we launched our boat into the water on the first day of our long journey.

The headwaters of the Mississippi form an extensive wilderness area through which in the first four long and quite strenuous days we paddled only 65 miles. There were a few stretches of fast and stimulating travel through minor rapids, but more often we were crossing reedy plains where the sluggish river meandered in a most infuriating fashion round countless bends of 180° or more. Far more delaying were the beaver dams which spanned the river with tedious regularity and brought our journey to a complete if temporary halt. They were sturdy structures, sometimes 3ft. high over which we had laboriously to haul our loaded canoe.

But it was the wealth of wild life that provided us the greatest pleasure in those early days. In our first hours of paddling, an osprey just ahead of us briefly hovered before plunging for its prey; on our last day we disturbed a bald eagle which rose above our bows dropping its catch almost into the boat. Muskrat frequently swam the river, and turtles, which come in a variety of sizes, flopped off logs at almost every corner. And at one of our camps, coyotes howled long into the night.

We had earlier decided to canoe only a token section of the headwaters. There was ample length of river below Minneapolis fully to occupy our time. Actually because of some unavoidable delay, we put in some distance below the

city, half-way down Lake Pepin. It's not really a lake but a widening of the river where, for 20 miles or more, it is three miles or so across, bounded by limestone bluffs. It was here that we were first to encounter a delaying factor, and a potential hazard, that was to bedevil many of our days.

It occurred on our second day of travel. After heading against a gentle breeze, we/turned a headland to meet the full force of a wind that was lashing the lake into a fury of big waves and white caps. We knelt to keep the weight low and slowly battled a mile or so of open water to the shelter of Lake City's Marina. It was hardly less settled the next day, but we hugged the shore for the remaining miles of the lake. There were to be many such occasions when this was necessary.

In the 670 miles between Minneapolis and St. Louis, there are 29 locks and dams built to provide a minimum 9ft. channel for commercial vessels. The dams, along with their associated dykes, hold back the water to form a series of great pools several miles across, usually studded with numerous islands. In the high winds, from which we suffered frequently, we sought their shelter, scuttling, sometimes rather fearfully, from one island to the other.

On the down-river side of the dams there were extensive areas of sloughs. These thread through the Mississippi bottomlands, a lace-like network of minor channels winding in the most involved manner through forests of cottonwood and silver maple, oak and willow. To enter the maze we usually had to portage over a dyke. It was always worth the effort .for, once afloat on the other side, we were in a tranquil silent world, - silent, that is, except for the sounds of the wild life. In places the trees closed in around and above so we paddled through a green tunnel obstructed here and there by low branches and fallen trees. It was like an assault course, and difficult to believe that this was all part of the mighty Mississippi.

All the sloughs and most of the islands are now one gigantic nature reserve, 300 miles in length, 195,000 acres in extent, controlled by the Upper Mississippi Wildlife and Fish Refuge. The various area managers gave us much advice, and on an exceedingly wet and wretched day, paddling down a slough they had recommended, we were rewarded by the

magnificent sight of a juvenile bald eagle. As yet unable to fly, it peered at us, seemingly unafraid, from a tree stump only a few feet away. Our camp that night was memorable for one of most monumental of all our many storms.

I seem to have a particular propensity for visiting a country in what is described as the worst summer (or winter, or whatever) within living memory. This visit was no exception. We were already aware that the river was unusually high: up to 10 feet above the usual level we were told. No one in the Midwest, it seemed, could remember a June (and July) when the winds were so strong, the rain so heavy, the floods so frequent, the tornadoes so fearsome. Every day our pocket radio crackled out grave news or warnings of disaster. We had earlier been advised about storms which we were assured would be short and sharp. "If the sky looks strange," they said, "get off that river." Sharp the storms certainly were, but they were rarely short. They went on more than half the night (the worst were at night) with unbelievable violence, the storm centre seemingly poised stationary, or gently circling, right above our camp. Dazzled by continuous lightning, deafened by the thunder, we cowered in our 6ft. square tent, feeling rather vulnerable.

We suffered such holocausts with unpleasant regularity all the way down the river, but for only one of the storms did we learn of its measurements. In our camp just north of Lansing in Iowa, 5Yz" of rain fell in 3Yz hours, and it was certainly not the longest or heaviest of our storms.

In Lansing we experienced a spontaneous act of kindness that we were to learn was typical of the river people. After the violence of the storm, we needed a rest from camping. The only motel was some distance out of town. "Sure, that's no problem," said the young lady at the marina. "Take my car, keep it as long as you like." What remarkable faith in complete strangers, we thought. But, of course we were really not strangers. She already knew about us, was no doubt expecting us and waiting to welcome us, as so many were further down the river. It seemed everyone was looking out for the two Brits, in the red canoe.

Nothing much happens in the small towns of the Midwest. There is little crime, violence is rare. The most insignificant event - someone has a party, the sheriff catches a big fish -

merits a headline in the local paper. When two British - middle-aged no less - arrived by canoe, now that was really something meriting the full media treatment. Even the lock-masters were looking out for us to telephone ahead the news of our approach. To find ourselves received and as minor celebrities was for novel experience but, we must confesso, mightily good for the ego. More important, it helped us to make some very good friends.

The Danube had given ,us a close familiarity with barge traffic, but in comparison that of the Mississippi was gigantic. They are called but, in fact, they are quite the reverse. The barges, each carrying the load of 60 large lorries, are lashed together, and nudged forward by an powerful square-fronted push boat. On the upper nver, they are three barges wide to permit entry into locks, but they are about a quarter-mile in length. Below St. Louis, they are very much bigger. We were invariably asked how we coped with their considerable wash. **In** fact, with a few exceptions we coped very well.

In dealing with tows, there are two essential rules, and to ignore either would cause certain disaster. Never be anywhere near their front; it takes them a or more to stop. No-one ever goes under a tow and comes up again the other side alive. Equally, avoid the stern where the propellers (two or three of them) cause a chaos of churned-up water that forms a trail for a mile to the rear. Keep to the sides is the drill. Oh yes, there is still a considerable wash, but it i.smore like an ocean swell: the waves although big are well-spaced and a canoe can ride them with ease.

"How do you go through the locks?" was another question we were frequently asked. Again, by observing the proper drill the locks were no problem; only patience was sometiines required. At one lock early in the journey we waited seven hours while three tows were double-locked through. **It** was an unnecessary wait. Astonishingly they will hold up a IS-barge tow with 22,500 tons of grain while they lock through an 18-ft. canoe that arrives a minute earlier. Once within the walls of the lock chamber we felt absurdly small and it seemed remarkable that all this massive machinery should be put into operation just for our benefit.

But locks could sometimes give us a nasty surprise; we never quite knew what was waiting for us on the other side. On two occasions it was the wedge-shaped end of barges almost blocking the exit, leaving what seemed a perilously narrow gap through which we paddled, anxious lest the undertow drew us beneath them: a slim chance no doubt, but we had been warned too often about undertows to be completely confident. On another unforgettable occasion, at Lock No. 14 just before Davenport, it was turbulence. We had entered unconcerned in deceptively placid waters, but when the lower gates opened it was another story. Through an open sluice next to the lock an immense rush of water fanned out, forcing a procession of waves laterally across our path to crash against the guide wall, rebounding back to meet the next onslaught. **It** was really rough water and I still marvel that we didn't capsize. A house-boat heading for the lock saw our bobbing canoe and promptly turned back.

A capsize in some places might not have mattered too much but it was for our load that we were most concerned, not of which could be kept watertight and secure. But if we never tipped it was largely because of the excellence of our We-no-nah canoe and some gentle instruction from Mike Cichanowsky, its designer and manufacturer. Some weeks earlier he had kindly entertained us in his home and had paddled with us part of a day. He corrected many of our faults and greatly improved our paddling techmques.

The unusually high water brought both a benefit and a problem. There was a swifter current and to take full advantage of this we kept between the buoys of the navigation channel, when the wind permitted; otherwise, we were forced to seek the comparative shelter of islands and sloughs, or hug one shore .or the other according to the wind's direction.

The problem came when we wanted to camp. The sand bars, which we had been assured were plentiful and would provide idyllic camp sites, had all disappeared and even the few official camp sites were mostly under water. These had been created by the *V.S.* Corps of Engineers, the body concerned with flood control and the maintenance of the river as a commercial artery. With a few exceptions their facilities were basic, providing only a few tables and benches and a couple of toilets. **It** was at one of these that we suffered

a night of some discomfort. We reached it after a particularly long, hot and tiring day to find all but a few square yards were either swamp or glutinous mud. We had no choice but to pitch our tent on this island of moderately dry land. All would have been reasonably well - if you exclude humidity and mosquitoes - but soon after dusk one of the longest and most violent of our many storms broke over our heads. Very soon a river was running through the tent, and we spent the remainder of the night in the women's primitive loo surrounded by all our sodden gear.

But if there were such times of discomfort and even occasional fear and if some days were just a weary, slow slog with a wind that perversely blew always against us, or others seemed an ordeal of heat and humidity, all this was only part of the story, and the part we would quickly forget. The rewards far exceeded the penalties. The weather could be kind and our camp sites idyllic; often we didn't have to camp at all. Our British accents, together with our unusual venture provided the passport to better things. Sometimes we were urged off the river by complete strangers to be guests in some private home. With the prospects of baths and air-conditioning, we were easily persuaded. And if initially the various tourist departments hadn't taken us or our venture very seriously, now that we were actually on the river and seemed likely to be so for some time they received us with enormous enthusiasm. Very few British visit these river towns. of the Midwest. And so we loitered or travelled, rarely staying anywhere more than two nights, never exceeding 30 miles in a day - often much less - until on July 24th, we reached the confluence with the Mississippi of the even mightier Missouri. The next day, in a current now much quickened, we were carried along the waterfront and beneath the soaring Gateway Arch of St. Louis. We had reached the half-way point of our journey: the end of the Midwest and beginning of the steamy South.

The Mississippi south of St. Louis could almost be a different river, so changed is its character. Carrying more than twice its earlier bulk of water, the river now runs fast and free, unhindered by further locks and dams. It also becomes a very lonely river. But of more immediate significance to us, this was where for a few days we were to

enjoy a total if temporary change of transport. In order to experience a further aspect of river life, we became guests on a tow boat.

The Gulf of Mexico was still 1133 miles to the south but we covered the first 400 on the M/V Robert Crown, pushing 35,000 tons of grain bound for New Orleans. We felt highly privileged and it was a wonderful experience to sit in the wheelhouse and watch Captain Kenny Dae or his pilot manoeuvring this substantial acreage of barges round countless bends of between 90° and 180°. As in the days of Mark Twain, these men are still the aristocrats of the river.

Following this relaxed interlude, we had a couple more comfortable days in Memphis with its Beale Street "blues" and Presley preoccupations. It was here, incicentally that a rosy-faced TV interviewer asked if I didn't consider myself too old to canoe the Mississippi, and on that night's TV news we were described as "that elderly British couple"! Well, we did feel rather elderly when we left Memphis. For some hours we battled against a head wind in rather choppy waters, it was strenuous work and we made very few miles on that first day on the lower river.

It was indeed now a very different river, a more lonely river. Though earlier we might well have wandered for hours lost in a maze of sloughs, a string of small towns was never very far away. They lay below the bluffs each side of the river as did the roads and, for much of the way, the two freight lines, the Burlington Northern and the Milwaukee Road. The rumbling and wailing of these trams had disturbed us at many camps. Now we were re-embarked on a river where there was rarely less than 100 miles from one town to the next and between towns only a primeval wilderness, seemingly devoid of human life or habitation.

This is the so-called Delta lands (not of course the real Delta), much of it a fertile plain of cotton and soya-bean, but none of it visible from the river. The plantations lay far back, perhaps several miles behind the levees, their front line of defence in times of flood. Between us and the levees, it was forest - jungle more like - swamp and oxbow lakes, the haunt of only the occasional hunter or fisherman. The only human links were the tow boats, now much larger and more numerous.

It was also a more meandering river and among new features were the sand bars which stretched far out from the inner shore of the bends, each like a mini-Sahara. They served us well as camp sites, otherwise they were an inconvenience for it required much time and effort to round so shallow and still was the water. On the outside of the bend, the river raced land we would often cross to take advantage of the current. But you don't cross a river like the Mississippi with gay abandon. We set out on such a voyage - and a voyage is what it felt like - only after careful consideration. To be out there in the middle and find something in area like two football pitches, say 50 or 60 barges; bearing down onus was a situation we were anxious to avoid.

And then out there in the middle, or wherever the river ran fast and deep, something most curious happened to the water. The Mississippi didn't merely flow as is the habit of rivers, but it developed additionally an unexpected vertical movement: it welled up in great "boils" or sank down in whirlpools. This combination of movement laterally and vertically caused the surface of the water to take on an ever-changing pattern.

We first met it crossing from Louisiana to the State of Mississippi, paddling hard, pointing the canoe slightly up river so as to let the current glide us across. Suddenly we entered an area of total turmoil, unable now to hold the canoe-in any direction with any certainty we could keep it there.' "Boils" of water rising up from the depths of the river erupted explosively, and without apparent cause, in shoots of white foam. When we hit these we were slung outwards, either into another "boil" or drawn into a whirlpool where the water spun round in ever-decreasing circles to disappear as if into its own centre. Our puny paddle strokes gave us little control and we felt rather helpless in the grip of some immensely powerful elemental force. That first time was thoroughly frightening, but we learned that the danger is more apparent than actual, and we became more confident.

But the lower river did provide a more real hazard. This was the system of dykes or wing dams, built by the Corps of Engineers to increase the flow in the navigation channel. They were long piles of rock built far out into the water, a bit

like a drystone wall but of more massive thickness. If submerged by high water as they were above St. Louis, they posed no threat; we could paddle safely over them. Now they were only partially submerged. They lay like a long line of jagged teeth which, if we were to hit them at speed would rip open the bottom of the canoe or tip us or do both. Usually we heard the rush of water through the rocks before we could see any turbulence, and it was sometimes a battle between our strenuous effort to paddle out and up river, and the current's strength drawing us all the time closer to the rocks.

But we had long ago learned to respect the river, to be aware of our limitations and we felt that with constant care we could cope.

A greater trial in the "Deep South" which reduced much of our enjoyment and pace of travel was the combination of heat and humidity. A daily average temperature somewhere in the upper $90^{o,s}$ F. is not excessive by the standards of many countries, but when it is combined with a relative humidity of 95% or more, then the climate is distinctly uncomfortable. Long before midday, we were enormously dehydrated and drained of energy. We had to seek some shade which was not always easy, for often the forest lay far across the sand bars. One day I badly burned my feet crossing to it. The nights gave little relief except on the occasions when we had some monumental storms, for with the setting of the sun came the mosquitoes. We were forced to seal ourselves up in the tent and lie listless, as if in a sauna. It was utterly debilitating and we thought longingly of the next town where we could briefly wallow in air-conditioning and overwhelming southern hospitality.

In the 500 miles between Memphis and Baton Rouge there are only four riverside towns - Helena, Greenville, Vicksburg and Natchez - but each took us to their hearts. At each we were most warmly welcomed and lavishly entertained. My belief that contrast can provide one of life's greatest pleasures was fully confirmed. At each town we were taken to meet interesting people and on sightseeing tours. Civil War battlefields and ante-bellum plantation houses were the chief attractions, and when they talk about "the war" in these parts, which they do as if it ended last year

(and still regret losing it), they are not of course referring to any wars of this century.

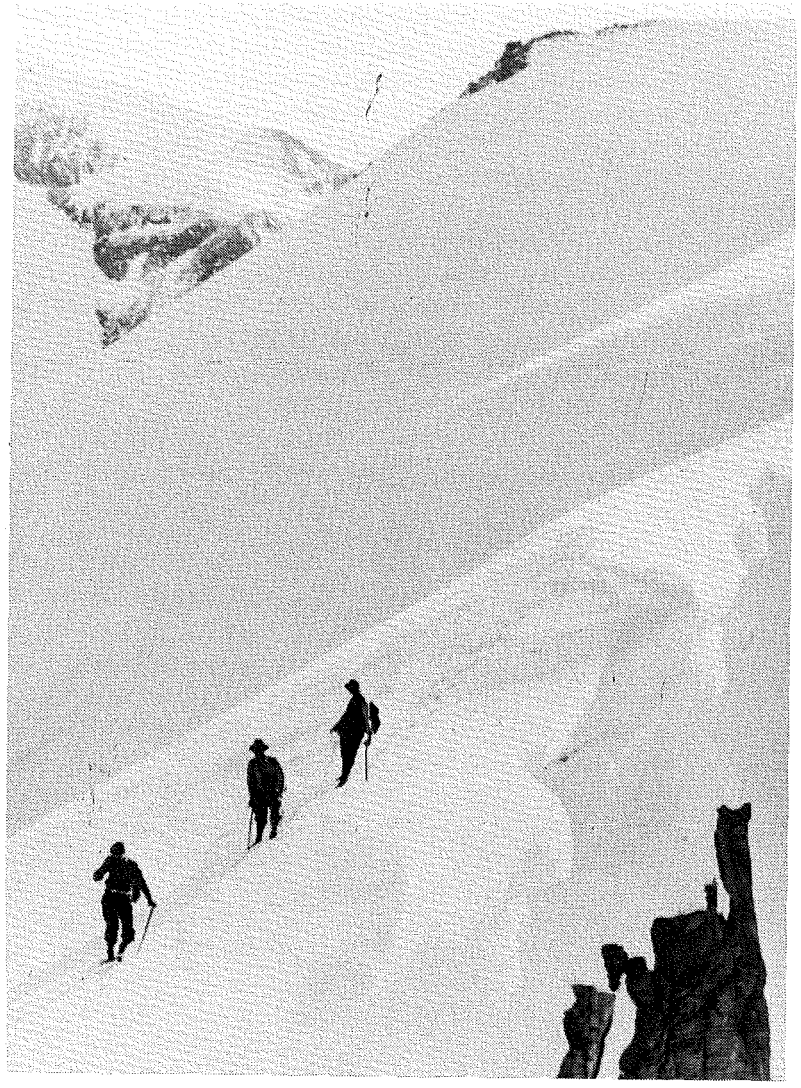
After a couple of days enjoying this big-hearted southern hospitality, we would return to the river refreshed and re-provisioned with food and water for another four days. Inevitably the heat and humidity would 'soon sap our strength but the rewards were enough to make it well worth the diseomfort. Occasionally a gentle evening breeze would freshen the air and, with the sun low and the light soft, our sand bar camps could take: on a most magical quality. Our tiny tent, with the canoe up on the sand bar close by, formed a small pocket of human life in a world dominated by nature and the river. The heat made sleep difficult and for a long time we lie awake, listening to the various noises in the night and watching the throbbing dark shapes of the passing tows, their searchlights sweeping across the river. And every morning the complex and varied patterns in the surrounding sand confirmed we had not been alone.

If nature had dominated the scene from Memphis, then industry would do so south of Baton Rouge. We already knew from our map that it was an almost continuous chain of oil refineries, chemical plants, grain depots and ship terminals. To escape this industrial drear and the much increased river traffic, we now chose to leave the main river and conclude our journey to the Gulf down one of the old distributaries of the Delta.

Kind-friends in Baton Rouge took us and the canoe a few miles. to the head of Bayou Lafourche. This is a narrow waterway running to the Gulf through the totally contrasting Cajun country. The Cajuns - shrimpers, deep sea fishermen, growers of sugar cane - are largely descendants of the Acadians unkindly expelled by the British in the 1750's from Nova Scotia. Many still speak an archaic form of French. The Bayou was bounded on each side by a road through a narrow strip of habitation and cultivation, extending almost unbroken all the way to the sea. But beyond it lay a soggy wilderness of minor waterways, floating marsh and cypress swamp penetrated only by the odd fisherman and alligator hunter. One day we went into the swamp with a remarkable lady who calls the alligators to her boat and feeds them with chicken.

Because it is such a swamp-dominated land, the Cajuns have developed their own canoe-type vessel. It is called a pirogue and originally was hollowed out from a tree. These intensely boat-minded people greeted us with enormous enthusiasm. Few outsiders had ever canoed the Bayou, certainly no British, and they waved and shouted at us from the banks; it was like a royal parade. "Where y'all come from?" they yelled. "From Minnesota," we shouted back, but they just laughed and thought we were joking. "Where y'all going?" "To the Gulf," we replied, and now for the first time we could say it with confidence.

After some days of Cajun hospitality, we were transported to New Orleans. It was there beside someone's Cadillac' in the hotel garage of the Royal Sonesta, that we "moored" our canoe for the last time. It was September 20th, the last of our 77 camps - and undoubtedly the most comfortable.



Retreat from the Ober Gabelhorn D. Smith

AN ORNITHOLOGICAL PANORAMA

by Howard Papworth

Even before actually reaching the one is aware of something awesome looming ahead. It's not just in the hazy bulk of mountain that makes its presence felt through the shimmering heat, but in the overhead cruising of black kites and other more interesting miscellaneous raptors. One knows that the Pyrénées are one of the finest raptor hunting grounds in Europe and the sense of expectancy grows as the kilometres recede behind.

In practice first impressions did not quite live up to expectancy. The French are less austere (and less steeply high) than their Spanish counterparts and somehow the bird life is harder to find. The first day dawned misty and got worse through the morning; it was only when one climbed above the clouds on the way up to the Refuge de l'Arribet that the weather improved dramatically. The path from Tech to l'Arribet demands three hours walking, allowing a little time to pause to admire the steep sided scrub-clad valleys and the shaded streams, tumbling into Arcadian rock pools, decorated with ferns and moss. The tableau is completed by the strident calling of Alpine choughs, flocks of which are flapping and bustling their way amongst the boulders and thin scrub on the sides of the valleys. Their 'chirritt' call (not quite the 'chuff' of its British brother) erupts maniacally on all sides of the valley, never allowing the walker to forget their presence, which serves the purpose of making their observation so much easier, and of distracting attention from the Citril Finches which are fluttering and feeding much closer and, yet whose grey/green combination makes them considerably harder to see.

The small trees harboured crested tits, goldcrests and firecrests, while the streams in these 'upland valleys' were a haven for grey and pied wagtails, dipper and the continental water pipit. At L'Arribet the show stolen from the sunset by a pair of black Redstarts who were obligingly tame.

Up early en route for Balaitous, few birds could have

competed with the startling sunrise as the small band of climbers moved slowly upwards. Up, to the left, round to shoulder, along just a little bit further and we were almost at the bottom of the Neous glacier. But there had to be pauses on the way up for the beautiful gentians that carpeted small sections of the hillside. A splash of blue on a green and charcoal pallet, lit up by an/even brighter sun. The route up was quiet until the glacier when we were suddenly aware of small dark shapes moving along the snow ahead of us. The larger shapes were readily.'identified as Alpine Choughs. The smaller ones took longer but were no less difficult for they allowed the band of mountaineers to come so close as to render binoculars unnecessary. Alpine accentors they were, lovers of cold areas of warm countries. The highly distinctive rufous flanks could be made out from a distance, and the birds feeding style confirmed identification. Two of them took it in turns to flutter ahead of us, leading us up towards the Neous chimney.

Balaitous conquered, the path down for some was fast and uncompromising. Following a good sleep, the next day found us refreshed and ready for new excitement. The valley leading west from our campsite demanded exploration and was well worth the trouble. Many butterflies fluttered up from beneath our feet as we moved up the valley. At first the only birds were great tits, blackcaps and serins, but as the trees gave way to the higher ground, larger shapes began to appear. Two dark shapes high up were black kites. Over on a distaht rockface, two small dark shapes revealed themselves as Choughs, of the red-billed, red-legged variety. Then, on the other side of the valley signs of what we had really hoped to see - Griffon vultures. First one, then a second were wheeling high above us. A third appeared from the south and two more from the north until five were grouped together. Two landed, silhouetted against the cloudy sky like morbid sentinels, whilst the others circled and explored high above them. The pale body and forewings highly visible, with overall 'feel' less bulky than the Black Vulture. The heavy shape on land is transformed to a creature of some elegance when in the air, with it effortless soaring and gliding as it explores deep clefts in the mountainside, turning away with its outstretched fingers

almost brushing the coarse foliage. A reminder here too that some of the bird books are not quite correct in comparing the Griffon to the 'teatray in the sky'. The Griffon has an appreciable bulge to the trailing edge of its wings, with a marked line of demarcation between primaries and secondaries. The true 'teatray' in the sky' is the Black Vulture whose leading and trailing edges are uniform black and all but parallel.

After some time spent watching the superb performance it was back to the campsite for evening refreshment. The following day took us into the neighbouring valley with a superb walk from Lac d'Estaing up the valley to Lac du Plaa de Prat. The birdwatching on this walk was rather less spectacular, despite excellent views of black Redstarts, Wheatears, Swifts and a Green Woodpecker.

The drive from Lac du Tech over the various passes of Tourmalet, Aspin and Peyresourde revealed some of the more spectacular scenery yet with tiny villages nestling in the shade of towering hills; steep mountainsides with slow movement of livestock the only reminder that we were not passing through a painting. We stayed at the very impressive Parador in Viella just inside Spain, with its heavy Spanish oak furniture, and glorious views in every direction (except over the town). The following day we drove up the Valle de Aran, noted for its outstanding beauty, pausing at some of the typically Spanish villages on the way. Arties was one such, Salardii another with church on a hillock at the centre of the village, surrounded by whitewashed houses with their red tiled roofs. With the sun mounting in the sky, we rather unwisely drove upwards to the burgeoning ski-resort of Baqueira Beret, where the wealthy middle classes of Madrid and of the larger northern towns disport themselves. A barren place with no trees, the facilities glaringly new and unused, awaiting the first fall of snow.

From Viella, we headed south to Barbastro leaving behind the spartan hills of Cataluiia in favour of the more lush valleys and steep mountains of northern Arag6n. On the way to Barbastro we had time to stop for some of the most interesting birdwatching of the trip so far. Red kites to add to the Black, the Egyptian Vulture that had so far eluded us, Hen Harrier and crested lark all allowed

themselves to be discovered. Equally interesting were the black-eared wheatear, cirl buntings and above all the eaters who were everywhere at one moment and gone the next, leaving behind the memory of a gliding splash of colour and the fluty tang of their calls.

Driving deeper into Arag6n we drove north west via Huesca up to Jaca pausing Ifor some interesting birds, and also to admire some very impressive scenery. Most impressive perhaps were Los Mallos, great fingers of rock over 1000 feet high jutting out of the plain. At their base, the tiny village of Riglos, hemmed in by the great sandstone giants on the one side, and by the river Aragon on the other. Finding time to explore some of the thickets that we passed on our way to Jaca, a nightingale gave its presence away, slicing the still hot air with the icy cutting edge of its song. The fluty 'weela-weoh' of the golden oriole gave away its approximate whereabouts but nowhere could it be found. Its yellow plumage (lime green in the female) disguises it perfectly amongst the pale yellow green leaves of the poplars that it frequents and where it normally builds it beautiful suspended nest.

A Bonelli's warbler was found as were more firecrests and spotless starlings. The latter are, I suspect, commoner than people believe, but it takes close observation to separate them from their better known cousins.

After an early morning walk to see serins, cirl and corn buntings: and to hear quails only, we set off for Ordesa. Having found a secluded camp site on the River Ara in the heart Ordesa near Torla we pitched camp and decided to stay here for two nights. Some of the finest birdwatching of this trip was to be had at and around the campsite and in the Ordesa itself. Reclining on the grass at the campsite I was able to pick out short-toed eagle, goshawk and Griffon Vulture all soaring high above, in the bushes nearby a nightingale called and sang. At night a Scops Owl serenaded the bird-lovers and irritated the rest.

Into the Ordesa Park itself for a long walk into the very shadow of the Perdido, with high on the ridge on one side the fortresses which acted as hideouts for bandits who used to frequent the hills of the Ordesa. Now the haunt of vultures, it is no less impressive. A golden eagle soared over

the edge of the ridge some 1500 feet above us before returning into the wasteland plateau high above. At a lower level an alpine swift sheared by, the flicking of its wings almost audible above the trickling of the stream that accompanied the footpath.

The woods bordering the footpath were full of small birds - marsh tits, along with crested, great and blue that revealed themselves, and where the trees were thinner, shrikes hunted. Splendidly piratical the woodchat shrike was remarkably tame, perching only a few feet above the heads of the passers by. Red backed shrikes are always less confiding, preferring to let themselves be regarded from a distance. Ravens cavorted somewhat listlessly on high, the occasional "pruk" descending to the valley bottom, where our attention was held by a more familiar friend - the yellowhammer.

A fascinating trip, greatly enhanced by the scope for the ornithologist, where although the sheer numbers of species seen could easily have been far greater, the interest provided by those birds watched will be a lasting source of pleasure.

Black Kite
Griffon Vulture
Buzzard
Kestral
Swift
Green Woodpecker
Crested Lark
House Martin
Tawny Pipit
Water Pipit
Grey Wagtail
Pied Wagtail
Dipper
Wren
Robin
Black Redstart
Wheatear
Bullfinch
Blackbird
Blackcap
Willow Warbler
Goldcrest
Firecrest
Crested Tit
Blue Tit
Great Tit
Chough
Alpine Chough
House Sparrow
Chaffinch
Serin
Citril Finch
GoldFinch
Alpine Accentor
Dunnock
Yellow Hammer

Gt. Crested Grebe (Jaca)
Black Kite
Red Kite
Egyptian Vulture
Griffon Vulture
Short Toed Eagle(Ordesa)
Hen Harrier
Goshawk
Buzzard
Golden Eagle
Kestral
Quail (H)
Black Headed Gull (Graus)
Common Tern
Cuckoo
Scops Owl (H)
Swift
Alpine Swift
Bee Eater
Green Woodpecker
Crested Lark
Skylark
Crag Martin
Swallow
House Martin
Tawny Pipit
Pipit
Grey Wagtail
Nightingale
Black Redstart
Wheatear
Black Eared Wheatear
Blackbird
White Throat
Blackcap
Bonelli's Warbler
Firecrest
Marsh Tit
Crested Tit
Blue Tit
Great Tit
Golden Oriole
Red Backed Shrike
Woodchat Shrike
Jay
Magpie
Alpine Chough
Jackdaw
Carrion Crow
Raven
Starling
Spotless Starling
House Sparrow
Chaffinch
Serin
Goldfinch
Linnet
Yellowhammer
Cirl Bunting
Corn Bunting

INTRODUCTION TO THE ALPS

by S. Goulden

The Alps have always a romantic appeal to a mountaineer whose exploits have been limited to British Mountains. Their size and complexity, the serious commitment they demand, the preparation necessary before one can set out, all create a mystique which amplifies the anticipation. Unfortunately, this also heightens. the sense of disappointment when the outcome is not up to expectations.

All mountain terrain is subject to the rule of the weather, and three years of chasing good objectives has shown that in the Alps the weather always maintains the upper hand. But experience has also shown that it can pay to sit tight in a refuge for the weather can

As a newcomer to mountain skiing it seemed prudent to find experienced company before getting too involved. The Club Alpin Francais proved to be the way to sensible progression and, after three winter seasons, their guidance towards an incompetent, but willing foreigner, have allowed me to reach the point of "autonomisdans les montagnes", which is their first level of individual respect.

From Paris, one can use the sleeper trains and wake up in the mountains. Each weekend hundreds of trains leave Paris, full of skiers, yet to destinations so diverse, that only at the ski-stations, and equipment shops, is one aware of the popularity of skiing in France. Last year I spent one weekend in two in the mountains.

Weekends are regarded only as training for long trips, but two early attempts at eight to nine day traverses proved failure - the weather won. Four long days from the refuge at Mont Fort and three days in appalling overcrowded conditions in the refuge Villar d'Arene, should dampen the stoutest enthusiasm. But one taste of the perfection of the high snows in the early morning is sufficient; one such was during a four day trip to the Gapencais,

The Gapencais, situated around Gap, are strictly part of the Ecrins, but as the most southerly part of that range, they are more like Southern Alps than the High Alps; rolling to

above two thousand five hundred metres, without much vertical stuff but plenty of ridges and open valleys, they are ideal for mountain touring. Not too well supplied with refuges, they remain relatively unexploited; in our four days we saw nobody outside the villages we visited at the start and the finish.

The start was far from auspicious. The minibus from the station took us as high as possible through the ski station of Orcieres - Meriette, closed through lack of snow, and deposited us in pouring rain: The only encouragement came from the odd patch of snow visible through the silent thinning of the clouds above our heads. Donning waterproofs, we set off to climb a thousand metres to 2800 metres, the height of the col between us and our first night, a village at 1400 metres, to the east. Skis were fastened to a heavy sac in pouring rain. We were glad to put them on at about two thousand metres, although under these conditions, the skins did not behave at their best. The trudge continued to two and a half thousand metres where the steep climb to the col enlivened the day. Because the snow was heavy, with danger of avalanche, the spacing between persons was .rigorously enforced. Ropes were produced to safe-guard the last one hundred metres as the climb traversed up soft snow at close to forty-five degrees and at thelimit.vsometimes beyond, of the skins.

At the col it was colder and the wind unpleasantly strong. Our descent was clear - five miles losing fifteen hundred metres;'quite exciting under good conditions. But we were feeling the effect of the climb, plus those of the 'sleeper', and in my case, lacking much in technique as well as enthusiasm, I must admit to a very low point. By the time we reached the village, I had earned quite a reputation, but quite a bit of technique; not to mention being totally shattered.

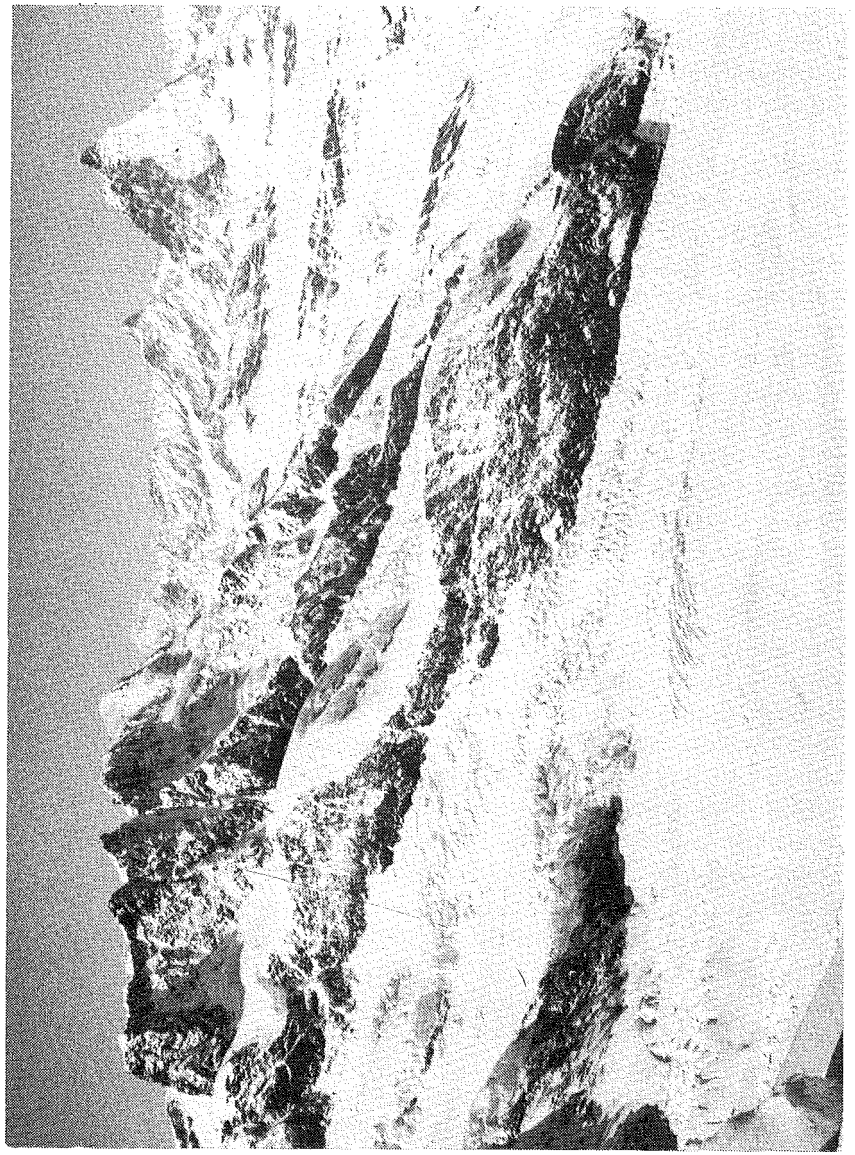
The village was uninhabited, as are so many during the winter. The location of the 'gite' was not clear and as we searched a thunder storm broke around us. **In** the only shelter, a derelict barn, we watched an astonishing sequence of rain, hail, snow and hail again, accompanied by the most intimidating claps of thunder. Finally it broke up and we looked further for our refuge, being eventually led by the resident cats to the exact location. Once indoors with the

stove roaring, the situation improved. Soon, food inside and clothes drying in every possible place, the evening became typical of such situations. The great difference between the CAF and the YRC is the hour of 'lights out'; with CAF it is usually seven-thirty.

I will never get used to starts at five o'clock in the morning. My whole being fights against it and I cannot get anything to go properly. My coffee boils over, my porridge burns, I knock the table to the annoyance of everybody else, and I cannot find the clothes I need. That morning, the information that it was clear outside did not seem to get through and I was the last to be ready. Getting down to the bridge, over snow covered ice, was too tricky to give any thought to the day ahead. **It** was difficult enough to keep the rest of the party in sight.

Suddenly, it seemed, the morning chorus started. The light snow which had fallen during the night had given the trees a Christmas card look, and the sky was cloudless. The day cannot be described adequately. Every moment was fresh, bright, exhilerating, breathtaking - and breathless, because we were again climbing, to a high point of 2900 metres, in crossing Les Lauzes Rouses - mountains as far as the eye could see, all crystal clear - to the North the mass of the Barre des Ecrins and the Meije - the wind sufficiently cold to keep the snow frozen in the sunlight, but not strong enough to blow it away, or into our faces - the occasional eagles circling very high. **It** was too cold to stop to eat at mid-day and we headed very early in the afternoon for our refuge, a shepherd's cabin, to get rid of our packs and go out and play.

Once the sun dropped, the temperature fell until nobody was willing to leave the shelter. As is so often the case the shepherd's quarters were locked and the section available to randonneurs was much less developed. We had the loft which was not sealed at the eaves. Rue-sacs were used on the windward side and most of the cooking was done from our sleeping bags. **In** the morning it had clouded over again; no point in rushing, the day did not promise great things. **In** fact the temperature rose with daylight and a thaw was obvious. Our route was simple; a traverse of Mourre Froide at 3000 metres followed by a descent along the gorge of Pas du



S.A. Goulden

The Breithorn and the Matterhorn from the Weissgrat

Layre to the village of Gourniers, at 1468 metres. The difficult part was below the snow line.

It was such a contrast to the previous day that I have only two special recollections; the descent from Mourre Froid was quite an epic, and the pleasure of taking off my boots before we went into the cafe in the village for a beer. I remember also the gorge as impressive but not unique, and the primroses sticking out thrugh the snow. Apart from that the previous day was still echoing in my head.

The next morning was warm and I heard my first cuckoo. We had to decide, on this our last day, how to get back to the railway on the other side of the range. For the two alternatives the first section was common; the ascent of the Col de la Coupa at 2200 metres marked on the map as an avalanche risk. As the epic of the previous day had not been marked, we were apprehensive. In the event, it was softness of the snow which created the only problem, but it was so close to avalanche conditions that we prudently escaped down a side valley, instead of making the ridge crossing to our starting point. It proved to be a long drag, but as befits a good outing, that memory returned only whilst examining the map. The predominant memory is that one perfect day.

I would not wish to give the impression that good days are infrequent. If I were simply writing about good days the choices would be multiple. Perfection depends upon the context.

One week with several high points was from Zermatt. The first day to the Schonbielhutte was miserable in a fog, as was the second when we tried to reach Point de Zinal - we did not even make the col- but the remaining days, during which the weather became perfect, gave a taste of the High Alps in the snow which it will be difficult to satisfy. Even though many planned objectives were aborted, in such a situation, away from the pistes, but making use of the lifts, a lot can be done in a week.

The ascent of the 4168 metre Breithorn is a joke. From the top of the lift of the Klein Matterhorn, there are barely four hundred metres to climb, of which two hundred metres are 'easytce'--but the summit ridge is committing and as we had no ropes it was not done. The exposure on that narrow ridge with eight hundred metres to the Breithorngletscher

and two thousand five hundred metre to the Gornergletscher requires good security.

Downhill from the Breithorn to Zermatt at 1168 metres must be one of the longest easy piste descents in the Alps, but set in the centre of one of the largest groups of mountains over 4000 metres, with such ample time one can appreciate the situation. It/is big enough not to be crowded, at least at that time, in the middle of May. Our evening destination at Gornergrat was easily reached - by rack railway.

Exploring the upper slopes of the Gornergletscher and the Weissgrat, the Cima di Jazzi and the rest of the edge that overhangs Italy proved interesting, if only to the extent of viewing the possibilities of Monte Rosa and the smaller, but stimulating, Jagerhorn, used by the Zermatt guides as a testing ground. To the north peaks overlooked Saas Fee with the Matterhorn to the west. The descent down the Findelengletscher, less massive than the previous day's descent, presented easy power skiing of the best kind, and with a recent fall of snow, giving an escape from the tracks of the multitude. Then once more to the Gornergrat, to collect our packs, head for Monte Rosahutte, to be ready to tackle the Nordend.

Most of our group had cried off this trip but I had decided to do it, seeing that there were many tracks, and being sure so popular an objective would not be devoid of people on a beautiful Friday in May. Three others accompanied me to the the Stockhorn, across the top of the Weissgrat and down the Gornergletscher under the Monte Rosa Gletscher. Fourtunately I had my rope since my friends found the 'faux pas' onto the Monte Rosa Gletscher beyond their competence.

The estimation of the popularity of the Nordend was supported by the saturation of the Hutte; no space remained available at 7pm. and several slept with their skis. The guardian, used to early starts, leaves a packed breakfast and thermoses of hot water for those who leave before 6.30pm. Although we had planned to start at 5am. I could not sleep and got up half an hour earlier. Others were similarly tense and I was not alone for long. For once I was organised and we were out in the starlight at 5am. No moon but one could

make out the lie of the land. This was helpful because the terrain is complicated above the hut with so many tracks that they hinder rather than help. As the first party we had to be more than usually awake - others were following and it would have been embarrassing to find ourselves the leaders of a lost herd at sun-up. We nearly went up the Gretzgletscher but saw the discontinuity of the hillside in time. Soon we were on the open slopes of the Monte Rosa Gletscher and it was just a matter of slog.

It was cold! Even after it became light, and the sun lit up the Matterhorn down the valley, we were still in the shadow and it was cold. The heating in the boot room had not finished its work and my boots had frozen. We did not seem to be making much progress; eighteen hundred metres is a long climb. Finally the sun reached the glacier but with it a cold wind, which discouraged any thought of stopping. Our rate of climbing remained a steady three hundred metres an hour. I had to stop. I was more exhauste.d than I ever remember being - a drink, a Mars bar, another drink - re-organise the sac so that lighter clothes would be easily available when heat had been recreated -another drink, and then off again.

The peace was shattered by a helicopter depositing a dozen noisy powder-bashers looking for virgin powder; too late! - we got there first - a distraction which masked the discomfort whilst I pondered on that kind of people - then the pain returned - more drinks, another Mars.

Looking ahead it became evident that the Nordend was not a good idea. The entry to the final section was barred by massive serracs, overhangs, bridges and walls. Normally the easiest summit in the group, perhaps there no technical diffculty, but it all looked terribly dangerous and all who had passed us had turned to the Dufourspitze as an alternative. We followed, heading for a col at 4359 metres to the east of the principal summit. A bergshrund at 4280 metres provided a small ice wall. I just could not be bothered to take out my crampons, unfasten my ice-axe, get out the rope. The others went on - I had another drink, another Mars bar, then I started down. Several others had taken the same decision - some consolation.

I remember little of the descent. It was unpleasant

because the shallow slope catches the sun and thaws fast, but without enough slope to give good skiing under those conditions. I took hardly any photographs! The beer in the Hut tasted good and I slept in the sun, unconscious of the helicopter making another sortie up the mountain

We left next morning skiing down the Gornergletscher to Zermatt. The surface was like glass; the much used tracks like tram-tracks caused numerous painful falls. The climb of the glacier needed crampons for all of ten metres, then back to skis and down to Zermatt. The holiday was over; the appetite was whetted and began to be formed for the next year.

Somehow the long weekends have been more successful than the weeks. Perhaps one expects less, or tries harder because there is less time. On Nordic skis we have had four-day trips in the Queyras, the Vercours, the Jura. Under more alpine conditions, in addition to the trip in the Gapencais, the Beaufortain have given a very satisfying long-weekend under the impressive southwest corner of the massif of Mont Blanc. Total failures are in the minority, but there have been several trips of simple 'aller - retour', the conditions being impossible only when the starting point was reached.

Perhaps it's age, or experience, or even the context, but I am no longer in search of the extreme. To be in the mountains, without restriction on movement, objective, route; to be able to decide, according to the circumstances, to do one thing or another, or even to spend the afternoon playing at ice-climbing or powder skiing, or do nothing except sit out in front of the refuge, all seem satisfying. Only the crowds detract from the pleasure, and one has an incredible feeling of superiority when one emerges from the backcloth onto a crowded ski-station. Even in Europe, one can still find peace in the mountains without too much difficulty!

BOLIVIAN RECONNAISSANCE

by Michael Smith

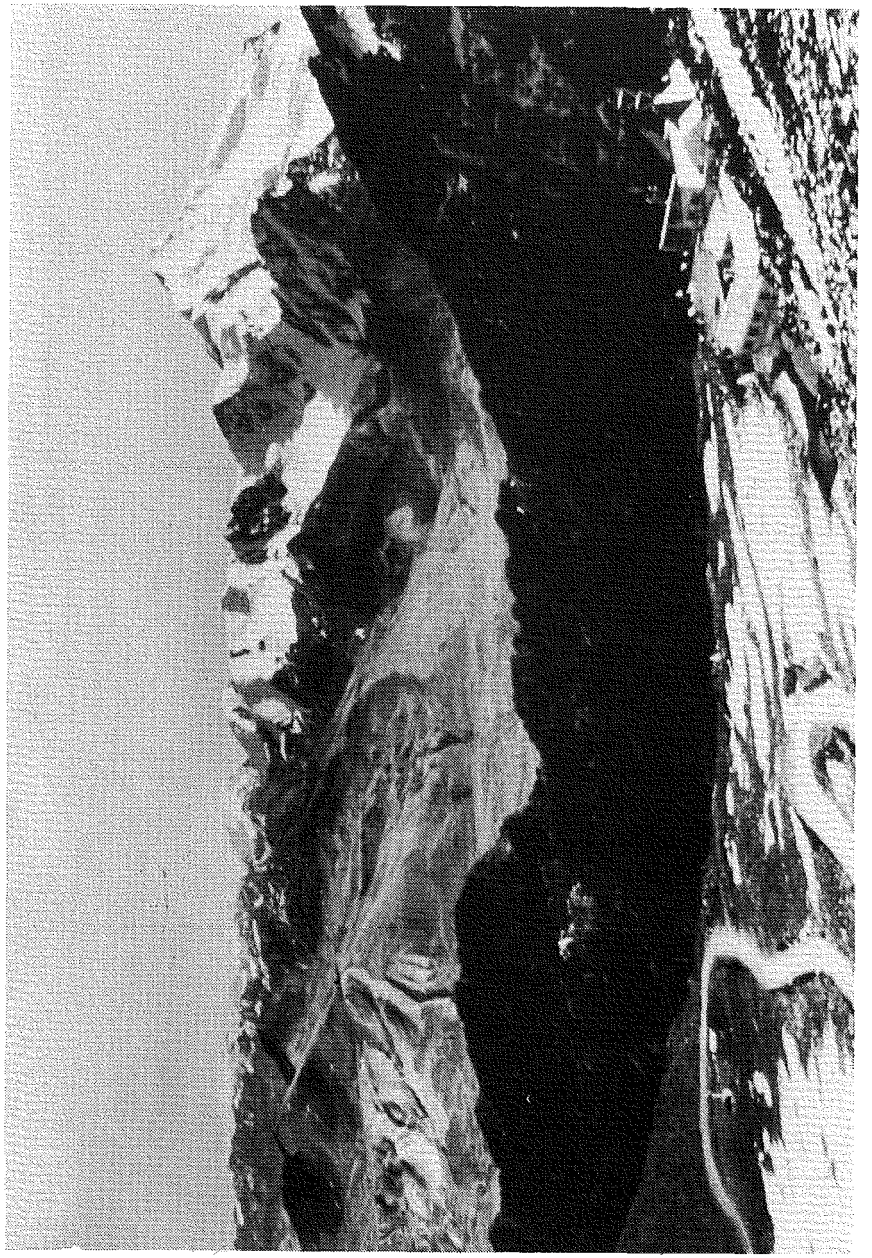
The Cordilliera Real or Royal Mountains lie mostly in Bolivia in the central, wide part of the Andean chain. The peaks rise to the east of the altiplano near La Paz and Lake Titicaca. To the east they fall steeply into the Yungas or upper reaches of the Amazonian jungle.

In the winter of 1979 I undertook a six week tour round that part of South America along with a Biologist. After some weeks of sightseeing and treking at high altitude we backpacked into the range for a few mountaineering excursions. One of these was to a peak in the La Cumbre area. Trucks pass through this on the way east to Coroico, leaving La Paz from the Villa Fatima trade district. One morning in late August a taxi took us there from the city centre for the princely sum of 20 pesos (SOp).

Access to La Cumbre from the city is comparatively easy and this led to the two of us asking lorry drivers their destinations in faltering Spanish. When destination and comprehension were both correct we jumped in the back of the lorry to jostle for a small footing amongst the sacks and huddled groups of locals. The warm early morning sun gave us a chance to savour the sights and smells of the local street market preparing itself and to weigh up our fellow passengers as they did the same to us. Crampon, ice axe, boots and rucsacks all brought forth inquisitive fingers and curious glances.

An increase in the frequency and intensity of shouts, a scrabble of final boarders and a body scattering lurch forward marked the start of the journey towards Khala Huyo. Soon those standing were shuffling about searching for respite from the numbing wind and the clouds of fine grey dust. A couple of young lads, apparently immune to the discomfort and danger, swung around the outside of the lorry their small fingers and sandaled feet poking through gaps in the boards.

We laboured out of the bowl in which the city lies then along the flat plane towards the mountains. Past a deep



M. Smith

Huayana Potosi from the Chacaltaya Cosmique

ravine where summer rains has caused the road to slip down and workers were repairing the damage. This looked like an endless task as the packed earth roadway was so vunerable. The ruts and potholes caused several small diversions or slowing to a snails pace but there was no urgency as we had not yet managed to communicate to anyone where we wanted to dismount.

A rudimentary guide suggested starting from a place where the road reaches its highest point before starting the steep winding descent to the lush lowlands further east; this being marked by a large statue of Christ with outstretched arms. Our attempts to convey this to our fellow passengers caused some amusement and helped pass the journey. Our concern that we might miss this feature was unfounded as the outsized monument was visible for' miles in this near lunar landscape of shattered small rocks and thin scrub vegetation. Reaching the spot we had our gear ready but were carried a little further before our hammering on the cab roof drew any response. The fare of 5 pesos (12p) was handed over and we were left standing in a cloud of dust and exhaust fumes.

Heading roughly towards the peak, picking a way among the multiplicity of tracks brought us by mid afternoon to a small lake in a hollow. This made a suitable campsite and we were well settled before the afternoon snows started. The evening calm allowed us to reconoitre the route, especially the heavily crevassed parts.

That night a cold wind howled and a storm rumbled away in the distance with brilliant flashes of lighting bright even through closed eyelids. We had seen a similar storm a few nights previously when travelling by train to Lake Titicaca. The distant clouds looked like cauliflowers growing out of the horizon. With each discharge they were lit up from within, glowing and flickering briefly. The rolling thunder audible above the clanking of the train was long drawn out and the whole hour long performance left a vivid impression.

Our sleep was broken with the cold so it was no great wrench to warm up a few apricots at 6 a.m. brew up and be on our feet within the hour. Another hour saw at the foot of the glacier and trying to follow our chosen route up the lightly crevassed right-hand side. Feeling the altitude but

keeping a fair pace we tramped up the steep slope. The sun on the right was intense though the thin air, stinging exposed flesh, blinding to the eyes as it reflected off the virginal white smattering of snow particles. While on the left our hands froze numb. Thankfully the zig-zag progress we made evened out some of the differences, Reaching 16500 feet brought us to the snow summit our progress somewhat halting now with the effort at this altitude.

It was 9.30 a.m. and leaving our sacs we followed a good ridge off to the west which inan hour took us to a short climb on rather loose rock. While-in the middle of this climb I had an uneasy feeling, looked up and there cruising above was a condor. Its long wings held stationary, only its head moving from side to side as it circled above us before following the ridge back along the way we had arrived. Its' interest was caught by our sacs but thankfully it did not land to investigate them further. The enormous bird majestically drifted back along the ridge visible for miles as we watched in silent awe.

The rock peak reached we returned along the ridge. Views of other Royal Mountains, Mururata before us, Huayna Potosi behind and on the far horizon to the right, its' tip snow covered, was Sajama a classic volcanic peak at the other side of the altiplano near the Chilean border. To our left clouds. boiled up below us as the forests pumped their water vapour into the air. The upper parts of the glacier were still: very hard, crampon points only just making an impression despite the bright sun being directly overhead. Lowerdown the surface yielded to a boot heel and we could glissade to the foot of the glacier and walk back to the camp, thirsty and ready for sardines and a brew.

Breaking camp we headed south for a couple of hours following a broad ridge towards La Paz. Water was scarce and the map showed a tarn. We arrived to find it dried to a depth of less than an inch, stinking and teeming with life. Pitching nearby we descended a ravine to the east and found a melting patch of snow. A collecting mug filled in five minutes and only patience wasrequired so that we could sit sheltered with a brew while the afternoon snow shower came and went. At about 16000 ft it was another long, cold night as we tossed about in our sleeping bags, duvets pulled over

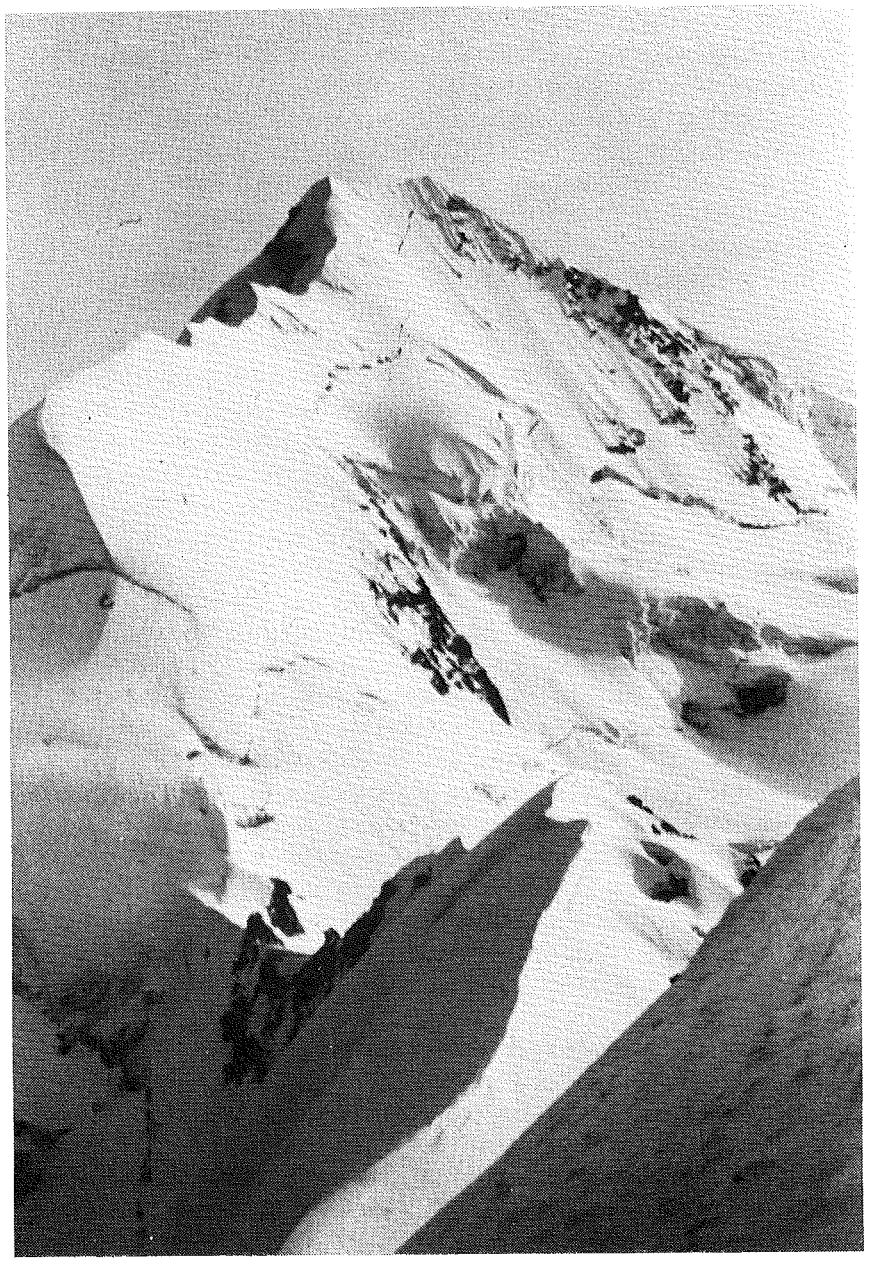
us while wearing our balaclavas. We had retreated into the tent as the temperature fell after a photogenic red sunset and the equitorial night was nearly twelve hours long. Porridge mixed the night before froze solid while a stomach bug gave my partner several chances to view the black night sky with the constellations so bright and in unusual places.

This morning the petrol stove chose to be awkward and had to be stripped down for unblocking three times though we were off by 9 a.m. walking slowly south along the shattered back of the ridge over some small peaks. Ahead at one point two condors rose expertly on a thermal without flapping. By 11 a.m. we were sitting at a col above a-small lake. The night's illness having taken its' toll, my partner rested at the col as I tackled the gendarme ridden ridge to the 16 800 ft peak of Serranias Almillanis and returned within two hours. I was greeted with amazement as having slept throughout he did not realise how long I had been away.

The walk downhill to the Rio Kaluyo led us to the mostly abandoned township of the same name by a mine. Finding an unpolluted tributary we camped on the rough pasture. The dry coarse grass could easily puncture the groundsheet so some gardening was first required. This caught the attention of an adolescent boy who was incommunicative but sat on a rock with his dog watching us until sunset.

The night again cold and clear enabled us to hear the thunder and see flashes from storms at the far side of the range. Being in a valley the morning shade and an unusually cloudy sky meant a cool start which was accompanied by a herd of llamas grazing past. Walking towards the outskirts of La Paz we passed groups damming small channels to catch muddy waters from the mines and settle out minerals from the silt. Reaching the first suburb we caught a microbus to the centre and by noon were established in a hotel at 60 pesos (£1.50) for the night.

This was a modest round, indeed the main peak could be tackled as a day excursion if suitable transport was available. Similar trips kept us occupied for a weeks. On one a taxi took us to within an hour of the summit of Chacaltaya (17000 ft) supposedly the world's highest ski slope, The hut there was being rebuilt and the main problem was melting ice for



Snow Ridge on South Side of Huayna Potosi M. Smith

water to mix cement. Crossing the Zongo pass brought us to the South ridge of Huayna Potosi which we climbed to over 19000 ft.

Other walks down tracks through the jungle took a few days to reach a mining camp or a town. These gave a contrasting view of the area and being mostly downhill, a welcome rest.

The Cordilliera Real offers numerous peaks between 16000 and 19000 ft which are readily tackled by average but experienced mountaineers. Other summits such as Huayna Potosi (20,000 ft) and Illimani (21,200 ft) require a little more planning. The latter is the highest peak of the range and its first ascent was made by Sir Martin Conway at the start of this century and is described in his book 'The Bolivian Andes'. An Austrian map of the range was produced in 1928 and Reading University surveyed in 1962. Challis with a team from Bangor University made some first ascents in 1966 and the following comment of his is still relevant.

"The Cordillera Real offers one of the last areas where the classical mountaineer may hold sway in virgin territory. . .
. . .the climber is left peacefully to his own peculiar sport unencumbered by outside influences of any kind. For the small-time explorer Bolivia is a paradise indeed and the Bolivian Andes give a useful introduction to greater mountaineering beyond the Alps, with the added spice of treading the unknown."

IN MEMORANDUM

Joseph Lether

1952-1982

Joe joined the Club in 1952 and I can still remember first meeting him at a Meet at Lastingham soon afterwards. Passionately fond of walking, he was, for several years, Vice-President of the West Riding Branch of the Ramblers' Association and was responsible for a great deal of the work done on footpath surveys during that time.

It was my good fortune to be invited to stay at his home after the Annual Dinner of the Club for more than 20 years. He was very keen on woodmaking and made a good deal of the furniture in his own home. Joe always selected the route and led the way over the Pennines on the After-Dinner Meet. He was a keen botanist and photographer which fitted in well with his love of hill-walking.

He was out walking in the Italian Alps near Bormio when he died. It was fitting he should be buried there amongst the mountains he loved so much. Our sympathies go to his widow Nancy, daughter Christine and grandchildren. For our part we miss the imperturbable Joe striding our hills and valleys, such a familar figure with his pipe and beret.

Horace Sutcliffe Stringer

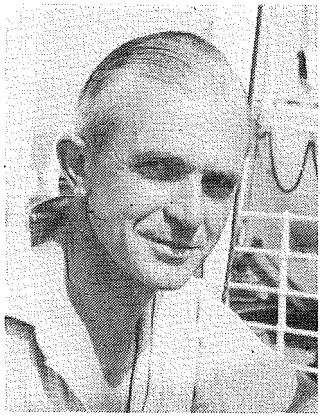
1939-1982

Jim Stringer who died on the 13th September 1982 was a keen potholer in the early days of his membership, but never got back into the stream of Club activities after the war.

He had a busy law practice in South Yorkshire but maintained a lively interest in the proceedings of the Club.

John Arthur Dossor

1954-1983



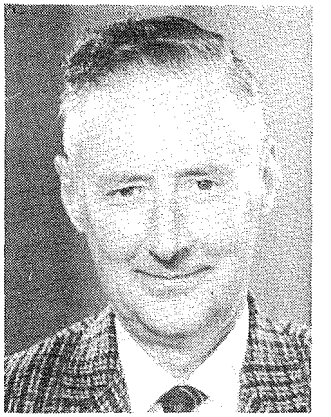
With the death of Jack Dossor the Club has lost a most enthusiastic member and /Ioyal supporter. Jack was born and lived all his life in Hornsea. He completed his dental at Guy's Hospital in 1939 and served in the Royal Army Dental Corps throughout the war. After a short association with a local practice he started his own surgery in Hull, where he practised until his retirement in 1983. He joined the Club in 1954 and his first day was typical of the many to follow. He had left Hornsea in the small hours of a January morning, driven to Low Hall Garth for breakfast and then ascended one of the gulleys on Great End in hard snow as one of a large party, and finishing his way back to the Club cottage by starlight. Jack was an habitual early riser and in the round-the-clock system that precluded all sleep in our early Skye Meets, Jack was always the motive force behind the shift which left at first light. His catering and cooking will always be remembered by the many who, at one time or another, were residents of 'Grand Hotel' at Whit. Meets and the term 'Dossor Stew' has been adopted locally as part of the English language.

changing from year to year, his tall lithe figure was always up with the first runners. Without fuss and always efficient he was a master craftsman with his hands, always able to make a neat repair in any emergency, and quietly knowledgeable on any subject which came up for discussion. Always under control, a leader by example, his self discipline was obvious. One recalls his uncomplaining wait for shearwaters to return to their burrows, sitting out the night in a polythene bag in an unexpected snow storm on the Cuillin Ridge of Rhum. These qualities were never more apparent when he endured a series of operations with outstanding fortitude.

He will be greatly missed by his many friends.

J. Denis Driscoll

1948-1983



It was a great shock to his many friends in the Club when they learned of the sudden death of Denis who collapsed and died at his home in Kentmere on the 19th December 1983. He was 69, and only a month earlier he had attended the Annual Dinner in Ilkley, when he was his usual cheery self, and had just attained 35 years Membership. He was born in Urmston, Manchester and before the war he was enaged in accountancy. During the war he served with the E.A.S.C. afterwards entering the teaching profession. He joined the Club in 1948 when living at Rainow in Cheshire from where he moved to the Lake District with his wife Margaret and opened a guest house in Kentmere. Over the years 'The Grove' gradually became a guest house of character and the many improvements and reconstructions were largely due to the Driscolls' own efforts.

Denis devoted a lot of time and effort to the Club's Low Hall Garth Hut in Little Langdale, becoming Hut Secretary in 1959 and Hut Warden from 1959 to 1963. He was Vice-President from 1968 to 1970.

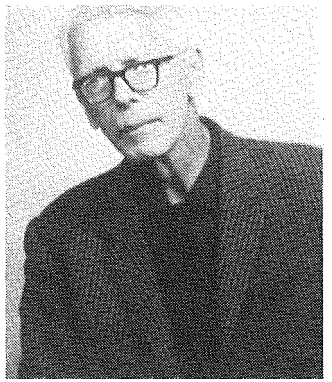
The Christmas Meet at The Grove became a tradition with the Club Meet there every other year and it is a mystery how Margaret catered for so many members over the week-end. The head of Kentmere was invariably littered with cars.

For over 25 years the New Year Meet at L.H.G. was. communally catered for by Denis and Margaret, and Denis had only just been prevailed upon to record his reminiscences in the forthcoming Journal of the Club with the many amusing incidents which happened on the New Year Meets and of the often desperate struggles even to reach the Hut with snow and ice blocking the lane from the Colwith turn to Low Hall Garth.

Denis will be greatly missed and the Club suffered a great loss and our deepest sympathy goes out to Margaret in this so sad a bereavement.

Harold Singleton Booth

1924-1982



With the death of Harold Booth in 1982 one of the very few links with the early days of the Club was severed, for his father, Tom, became a member in the year of its formation', and up to 1982 there has been a family member in the Y.R.C. - Harold was the last in the line.

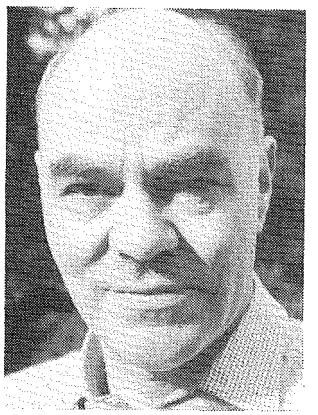
He joined the Club in 1924, served on the Committee 1929/30, was Acting Librarian during the War Years and Librarian 1946/48. With his brother Fred he began climbing on Almscliff and was one of that select band including Frankland, Hilton and W.V. Brown that walked regularly to the Crag on Sundays from the Leeds tram terminus, climbed all day and then walked back - 20 miles plus the climbing. For over 20 years he was very active. Holidays invariably spent climbing, Skye, the Cairngorms (sleeping at the Shelter Stone), the Pyrenees and, of course, the Alps - always climbing without guides. He preferred climbing to potholing but he took part in the Rowten Pot rescue in 1939. My brother and I were fortunate to meet Harold and his brother' Fred on our first Club Meet and there were few week-ends when we were not climbing or walking with them. Fred was the extrovert, Harold rather shy and retiring but nevertheless a splendid companion, always reliable on the not infrequent occasions we got into difficulties.

I remember vividly a day in 1935 on the Aiguille de la Tsa when Harold, Fred, my brother Frank, David Reed and I was trying to climb it by the South face. We were inexperienced then on Alpine Peaks and far too slow and had to retreat below the summit. During the descent a large boulder slid on to Fred's ankle and damaged it. It was a long job getting him down in the darkness we were out 23 hours and Harold was a tower of strength - untiring, cool and never rattled.

Our sympathy goes to his family.

Edward Mallinson Tregoning

1957-1980



Edward was a Yorkshireman, born in Oxenholme on 11th September 1909, and died on the 26th July 1980; he was the son of the Reverend Henry, a Wesleyan Methodist, and Agnes Tregoning, a member of a well known Colne Valley manufacturing family. He never married and his only sister, Mary, predeceased him in 1979.

In his early days the family lived in various parts of North East Yorkshire, moving from time to time in response to the demands of his father's calling. During that time holidays were spent at Seascale, splendid occasions, the family travelling in an early model 'T' Ford motor car. It was from Seascale that Edward, then six years old, was taken by his father to the top of Helvellyn in a great gale and he never forgot the fierce wind at the summit nor the bliss of eating Sarah Nelson's gingerbread in the summit shelter. His first summit, but a stimulus to wandering the hills ever since.

After school at the Leys, he took a Law Degree at Jesus College, Cambridge, followed by his articles in York and in 1935 he joined a firm of solicitors in Brighouse, retiring senior partner in the late 1970's.

In the late 1930's he joined the Territorials and served during the war with the 49th. Searchlight Regiment A.A., in Belgium and Germany, with the rank of Major.

He was a keen philatelist and after coming to Brighouse he developed an interest in Scouting, becoming Chairman of the Local Association and District Commissioner for Rover Scouts. Although the Law was his life and work, the hills and nature were his love and his holidays were spent in the Alps for over 30 years until late in the 1970's. He had a lovely garden with many roses and rock plants and a splendid collection of rhododendrons. His varieties of geraniums were very much admired and his friends were delighted to receive his many generous gifts. Edward had a lifelong

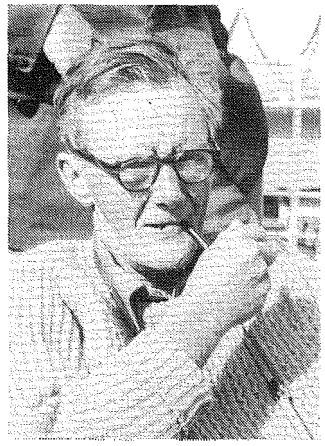
interest in birds and an extensive knowledge of the calls and songs of passerines.

After his election to membership of the Club in 1957 he quickly became part of it, taking an increasing share in Club affairs and was elected to the Presidency in 1968-1970. He enjoyed the good things in life and was a splendid companion on the hills with a good feel for the country and a fine sense of direction in bad conditions.

Edward had a natural courtesy; was warm, generous and tolerant and as his friends well remember he invariably observed the precept "and whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain". Edward was a gentle, kind man and a rare friend.

Edgar John Woodman

1927-1982

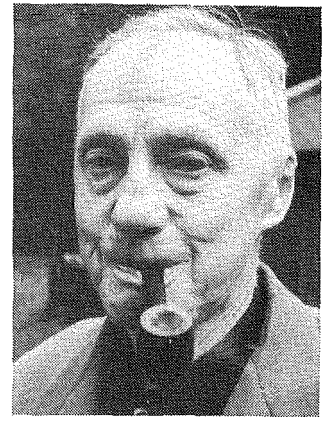


Jack Woodman died at his home in Kents Bank, Grange-over-Sands, aged 78, after a long illness. He was born in Otley and educated in Scotland and at Edinburgh University. He joined the family business of KellettWoodman & Co. Ltd., Textile Manufactures of Bradford and eventually became the company's chairman. After a severe illness when he was 28 he was advised to move into the country, but after farming for some years at Coniston, his health again deteriorated and he retired to Kents Bank.

Always fond of the countryside, Jack was a great walker and joined in many of the earlier potholing expeditions and in the famous early G.G. Meets. He was passionately fond of sailing and spent much of his time cruising up the West coast of Scotland, accompanied on many occasions by members of the Club. Up to the time of his death he regularly attended Club Meets and he will be sadly missed by his many friends.

John Hilton

1922-1981



Jack was born in Hull, the eldest of five children, on the 30th August 1890, and died on the 31st December 1981. After attending Hull Grammar School he came to Leeds at the age of 15 to be apprenticed to Dixon's woollen mill and stayed there for 60 years. He married in 1926 and is survived by his only son, John to whom we express our sympathy. Jack enlisted for military service in 1915 and served throughout World War 1 with the Royal Horse and the Royal Field Artillery.

A fine athlete, his first love was rugger, and he captained Headingley and Yorkshire in the early 20's. He was an excellent forward, full of fire, always on the ball and he kept his feet going, although it was asserted he did more damage with his elbows than many forwards did with their feet. He maintained his interest in the game all his life and a visit to Kirkstall with him quickly demonstrated that although a hard man himself he detested foul play.

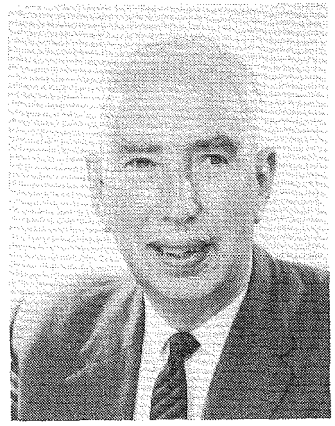
Elected to the Y.R.C. in 1922 he soon took an active interest in the work of Club, being on the Committee from 1923-34 and a Vice-President in 1935/37. Jack was President in 1952-1954, and elected to Honorary Membership in 1965, an honour he greatly appreciated as he was heart and soul with the Club and all its affairs. From the start he climbed with Frankland who had proposed him for membership and for' whom he had an enormous admiration. They were particularly impressive on Almscliff certainly in the eyes of one beholder as they climbed routes which were hazardous and severe. The account of their splendid climb on Esk Buttress in Journal No. 17 is delightful, the reader can almost feel he is there. Jack climbed in this country all his life and in the Alps with first class climbers. At about 70 years of age leading a loose and highly dangerous 'garden' area up the West end of Suilven, according to one of the

party he 'wormed his way up on his waistcoat buttons'. On his 80th birthday, Jack climbed Route 1 on Scout Crag and this was followed by Jack's Rake and Gwynne's Chimney. (Route 1 was first climbed in 1922, the year Jack joined the Club and Gwynne's in 1892!) and when 90 he climbed route 2 on Scout Crag. He was a strong climber who exuded confidence and seemingly unflappable.

As a hard potholer, he was with the 'second wave' in the early parties in Gaping Gill, Diccan Pot, Gingling Hole, Mere Gill, Rift Pot and others. When about 77 he was in Mud Hall in Gaping Gillwhen the Club celebrated its 75th anniversary and this was probably his last pot. A fast climber in a long ladder and a stylist too, he scarcely moved the ladder as he climbed. Of the highest integrity and uncompromising in his standards he was naturally quiet and unassuming. Jack always encouraged younger companions who were never made aware of any generation gap. He will be sadly missed by his very many friends in the Yorkshire Ramblers' Club.

Alfred Butterfield

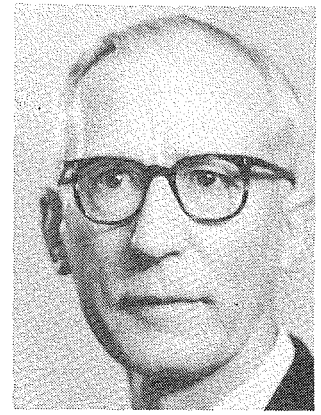
1928-1980



Alfred Butterfield died on the 3rd December 1980 at the age of 71 after' 51 years membership of the Club. In his early days his main outdoor interests were walking and potholing and in the early 1930's concentrated his activites in the exploration of Goyden Pot. In 1930 he made the low crawl at the entrance to Carbide Tin Passage and in 1931 despite being flooded out on at least four occasions he helped in the patient work which produced the valuable plan of Goyden (Y.R.C. Journal Vo1.6. Page 228). Despite a long absence from the activities of the Club he maintained a warm loyalty to the Club and a lively interest in the exploits of Members.

Eric Hanson Sale

1928-1985



Eric Hanson Sale - "Rummy" to all his friends joined the Club in 1928 as one of the early members of what became known as the Teeside Group, a substantial number of members in the early thirties. Rummy was an enthusiastic member who attended many Meets both for potholing and climbing. As one of his close friends I can look back on very many happy days climbing under his leadership in the Lakes, Wales and above all in Skye. He was always cheerful in bad conditions and considerate of weaker bretheren.

His sporting activities also included playing hockey at County level and a not inconsiderable agility at golf and tennis.

After the war his Club activities were restricted by the demands of a growing family and the seductions of the golf course, but he continued to attend the Annual Dinner where his cheerful countenance will be missed.

David Stephenson Blair

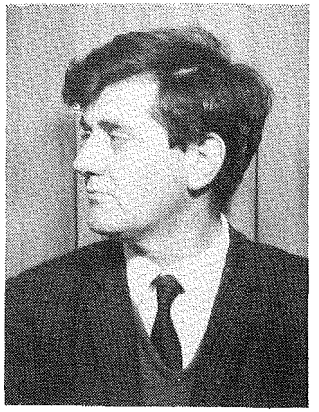
1946-1982

David Blair was brought up in Harrogate, worked in Leeds and was active on the hills before the war. He was in the Territorial Army and served throughout the war. On returning to Leeds after the war he joined the Y.R.C. and was a very active Member until moving to London in 1949. David represented the Club on the B.M.C. for many years and still found time after his move to attend occasional Annual Dinners and Meets, especially in recent years when he began to make use of Club Huts with his son. He was a solicitor by profession and worked in the Department of the Solicitor to the Inland Revenue from 1949 until early 1982.

He will be missed by his many friends.

John Gott

1967-1983



The 13th August 1983 was a bright and hot summer -day. John left the L.H.G. car/park walking up Greenburn with his wife and daughter. After a swim in the tarn he left his family for a quick solo ascent of Wetherlam and during the return he slipped and fell and was killed instantly.

John was born in Nelson in 1930 and attended Nelson Grammar School before reading botany at Nottingham University. Both his parents were teachers and John followed the same profession; the whole of his career was spent in Yorkshire Schools.

The outdoor life always had its attraction for him, walking in the Lakes with his father. He enjoyed camping and was a proficient rock climber. His most notable achievement in this field was the first ascent of the Central Route on Sron na Ciche in the Cuillin in 1951. Perhaps the long and strenuous epic days in the Scottish Mountains were John's forte and very few of his contemporaries in the Club would consider themselves his equal.

John: joined the Club in 1967 and quickly established himself as a popular and well respected member. He served on Committee from 1970 to 1975, he will be sadly missed by his many friends in the Y.R.e.

E.F. Higgins

1931-1979

Bill Higgins died in hospital at Holywell in North Wales on the 3rd December 1979 at the age of 78. He was a Doctor of Science in Metallurgy and became a Member of the Y.R.e. in 1931. He was an enthusiastic member of the Club in its caving and potholing activities in association with

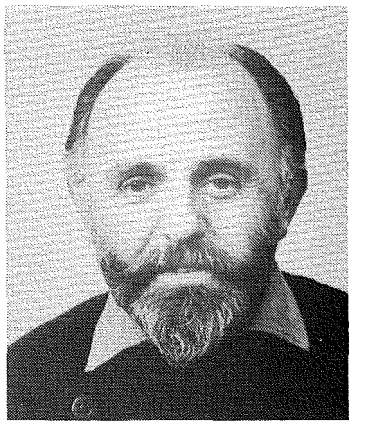
Ernest Roberts, Hal Yates and other veterans of the pre-war era and was a very helpful member of the team which made the first complete (at the time) survey, under the leadership of Hal Yates, of the intricate Goyden Pot system in Nidderdale.

His friendliness and great sense of humour made him a welcome member of many underground expeditions and I can see him now laughing at some joke as he smoked his rather unusual Austrian pipe.

He was very fond of animals and before he died was looking after at least six cats. I shall never forget going with him for a walk when Goyden Pot was flooded and seeing him dismantle as many rabbit traps as he could find.

Richard Brotherton Wharldall DSM. FRGS

1950-1983



Wally Whardall joined the Club in 1950 and died on Monday 19th December 1983, after a long and difficult illness which prevented him taking an active part in the Club activities during the later part of his life. He served on the Committee in 1955 to 1959 and was Assistant Editor from 1958 to 1959.

A Master Diver with a distinguished service career boundless energy and a desire to be involved with adventure in any form. Wally was a breeding ground for ideas and new projects, and though many of these failed to reach a satisfactory conclusion, it was unimportant. He will be remembered for enthusiasm, his continued support for the Club and its activities and his contribution to many organisations and charities throughout the country.

Hal Yates

1928-1979

Hal Yates died in hospital on the 27th August 1979 after a short illness having suffered a stroke. His ashes were scattered on the slopes of Pen-y-ghent, He was born in 1907 in Manchester and was educated at r'Fettes School in Edinburgh. He joined the family firm of seed merchants in Manchester and eventually became Chairman of the Board.

He was a man of individuality and character with a friendly philosophical attitued towards life and his love of nature in its various forms dominated his life in his leisure time. In the late 1920's and the 1930's he was an active Member of the Y.R.e. and took part in extensive explorations of the Yorkshire and Derbyshire potholes and caves with such enthusiasts as Ernest Roberts, W.V. Brown, Fred and Harold Booth, Harold Armstrong and others. His finest effort which he commenced in 1929 and took three to four years to complete was his very careful and accurate survey of the complicated Goyden Pot System in Nidderdale with its extensive labyrinth off the main river cave on more than one level. This effort with the help of Alfred Butterfield, Dr. W.F. Higgins and myself.

In those days we worked five and a half days in the week (Yates, Dr. Higgins and myself in the Manchester area) and it was Saturday evening when we arrived at Goyden Pot after yea at Butterfield's in Bradford and fish and chips later in the village of Lofthouses. Alfred Butterfield knew the manager of Scar House Reservoir Higher up the dale and always ascertained that the sluice gates would not be opened and the cove system flooded before entering, which was usually about 10.30 p.m. emerging to our tents six hours later, after a good night's work. A map of the survery with elevations, taken with aneroid barometer corrected to atmospheric pressure, ultimately appeared in the YR.C. Journal with an article by Hal Yates.

His sense of humour often took an unusual turn. When I first joined him on a caving expedition in 1929 he gave me a lesson on time and motion. There was no packing and carrying everything downstairs, all his gear went straight through his bedroom window on the second floor of his parents' house into the garden to be loaded direct into the car. In those days we always carried tallow candles with us underground, these were a standby and were used quite often, acetylene and electric lights were not very reliable and it was said you could always eat them if you were trapped by flood water. Hal put them to further use. After some cave exploration a few of us went to a hotel, and Hal arrived a little late for dinner and casually remarked that he had lost his stud and had secured his collar with the wick of a tallow candle.

The last time I was underground was in "West Mine", Alderley Edge in Cheshire in 1977. We descended a manhole in a field with the owner who wanted planning permission to open the mine to the public. We reached a main chamber down iron ladders where we observed some very interesting fungi.

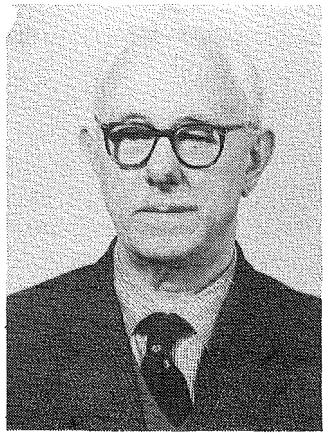
Amongst Hal's many accomplishments was his reputation as a water colour artist, and although strictly non professional he exhibited his paintings in a large number of galleries and exhibitions, including the Royal Academy and the Royal Institute of Painters where he was elected a member and held several offices. Many private and public galleries have his paintings in their permanent collections. The Y.R.C. of course has an excellent record of his characteristic tail pieces which appeared in the Journals and are much appreciated by members. In his latter years he was interested in nature conservancy and spent many hours patiently logging the occurrence of wild plants on local Cheshire roadsides and in hedgerows.

He joined the YR.e. just as it was leaving the last remains of its Edwardian foundation. In his early years Club Meets were always invariably held in substantial A.A. Hotels, and some of the older members' activities were restricted to a game of bridge, followed by a church parade on Sunday mornings. By the end of Hal's first decade of membership, the use of tents and barns for sleeping had

grown enormously and the Club had been taken to the threshold of its present state of activity.

Geoffrey S. Gowing

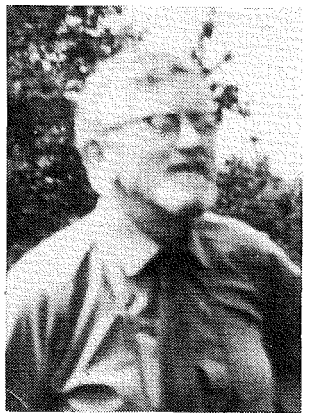
1928-1984



Older members were saddened to learn of the death of Geoffrey Gowing, a member since 1928. Geoffrey joined the staff of a chemical Company at Billingham-on-Tees in 1924, and in a few years that Company became a part of I.e.I. There he met B.R. Goodfellow (known as Robin by all on Teeside) and in the summer of 1925 he introduced Geoffrey to rock climbing with a week-end in the Lakes. I went to Billingham in the autumn of 1925 and was also recruited by Robin for scrambling on various crags around Teeside and in the Lakes. By 1926 Geoffrey and I were climbing together fairly frequently in the Lakes and occasionally in Wales. At this time a party of former Armstrong College men (two of them working in Billingham) were exploring a cave on Leek Fell, viz. "Lost John's", and asked us to help. Thus Geoffrey and I were in the first party to descend Battleaxe Pitch and explore what we called the Main Drain below. It was our first experience of potholing. Some time afterwards the news reached Dr. A. Rule (President 1934-36) who, by then, was also working at Billingham, and he pressed us to visit the Y.R.C. Meet at Gaping Gill in 1928. This we did and became members of the Y.R.e. soon afterwards and in the next few years introduced many of our friends into the Club. Except for an interruption due to a tour of duty for I.e.I. in South Africa, Geoffrey continued to be a very active member of the Club for many years, serving twice on the Committee and as Assistant Editor 1938-1947 and Vice President 1948-49.

Corrie Cecil Gaunt

1957-1977



For many years Corrie Gaunt's spare time was spent in conserving the countryside for ramblers and fell walkers. West Yorkshire members can be grateful for his persistent battle with Harrogate Borough Council for the preservation of rights of way through Haverah Park, including Almscliff, the Council's water gathering area. He spent many hours obtaining information from local people and persuading them to attend a tribunal where the Inspector recommended against the Council. There were many other rights of way in the West Riding of which he was responsible for saving, and having sign-posted by the Local Authority. The public recognition of his work came when he was asked to become a Member of the Council for the Preservation of Rural England.

Similarly, after his retirement in 1967 to Silverdale, his hard work ensured increased public access to ArnsideKnott, Eaves Wood and Leighton Moss Bird Reserve.

Corrie Gaunt was not one of those in search of hard climbs and mountain tops. His 'Everest' was that of conserving wild life and the countryside for the benefit of later generations.

He was 82 years old when he died at Skipton on the 28th April 1984.

CLUB MEETS

1978-79. The Club held 13 meets during the year, excluding the Annual Dinner, the Ladies' Evening and Working Parties. Average attention was 22. A Special General Meeting was held at the Cairn Hotel, Harrogate, on the 18th November 1978. Rule 16 was rescinded and replaced to clarify the Club's power to purchase or lease property. The 86th Annual General Meeting followed, and was in turn followed by the 65th Annual Dinner. The retiring President, F.D. Smith, was in the chair, and the principal guest was Sir Anthony Rawlinson (Alpine Club). 122 members and guests were present. The after dinner meet was held at Sparth House, Malham.

The December meet again enjoyed the hospitality of Dennis and Margaret Driscoll at the Grove, Kentmere. 63 members and guests filled beds and floors and overflowed into Head's Cottage, tents, cars and caravans. Wet and muggy weather throughout the weekend limited but failed to extinguish activity on the hills. The Marton Arms at Thornton in Lonsdale was the venue for the January meet. Snow on the roads reduced attendance on Friday evening to four, and there were only 26 for dinner on Saturday instead of the expected 42. There were near white-out conditions on the tops; the Low Stern group could see more clearly down Marble Steps. There was snow in abundance also at the February meet at L.H.G. and a surprisingly small attendance of 10 members to enjoy excursions on Swirl How, Pavey Ark and Sharp Edge, and a surplus of food. The Scottish meet in February was split between the Cd.'C. Hut below the narth face of Ben Nevis and the traditional Grampian Club Hut in Glen Etive. Three members moved into the e.l.e. Hut on Thursday and on Friday climbed Tower Gully and traversed Carn Mor Dearg and all summits over 3,000 feet. By Friday night the Y.R.e. numbered 6 including the President. A second party traversed Carn Mar Dearg and the Ben. Others ventured up and down Ledge Route, No. 4 Gully, Raeburn's Route and an unidentified ice bulge. A further 20 members and guests were at Inbhirfhoala in and traversed the Aonach Eagach both ways,

the horseshoe of Beinn a' Bheithir, Stob Dubh, Ben Starav, with skiing in the White Coire. A vintage meet. 8 members attended the Easter meet at Glen Shee. Half of them concentrated on skiing for which the spring snow conditions were good. The climbers were not so fourtnate at Lochnager with soggy snow in Block Gully. Carn Aosda, Cairnwell, Cairn a' Gheoidh and Carn Bhinnein were traversed. Only 3 members arrived through driving rain, low cloud and high wind in Upper Eskdale the high level camp in April. Each erected his own tent. Scafell was ascended in soft, wet snow via Cam Spout and descended via Broad Stand. The Spring Bank Holiday meet saw 11 members and 1 guest camping at Coruisk. The weather was disappointing. Two parties unintentionally put up new routes on Sgurr a' Greadaidh trying to follow Collie's original climb from Coruisk and then followed the ridge to Bidein Druim nan Ramh. Two parties did the Dubhs and parts of the ridge. A party traversed north to south taking in Garbh Bheinn, Clach Glas and Blaven and on Blaven summit met the rest of the meet who had come up the S.W. ridge. An attempt on the main ridge started at 3.45a.m. for Ghars Bheinn and was abandoned because of persistent rain at An Stac at approx. 9.30a.m. 36 members and guests took part in the long walk in June, starting at Mungrisedale, taking in Blencathra, the ridge from White Pike via Helvellyn to Dollywaggon, Seat Sandal to Kilnshaw Chimney, John Bell's Banner to III Bell, to Kentmere. The walk was completed but sadly marred when a new member collapsed and died twenty minutes after he had started. The front walkers were by then well away and unaware of the tragedy. A joint meet with the Rucksack Club was held at Lowstern in July. 13 Y.R.C. and 5 R.e. members attended, and along with members of the Northern Pennine Club tackled Link Pot on Casterton Fell on Saturday and Disappointment Pot on Sunday. 12 senior members and 7 juniors were at L.H.G. in August for the Juniors' Meet. Because of rain and low cloud climbing was limited to Scout Crag and Middlefell Buttress. For the joint meet in September there were 13 Y.R.e. members at R.L.H. and 7 at L.H.G. A group from L.H.G. had in retrospect a great day on Bowfell Buttress. The Welsh meet at the end of September was at the e.e. Hut at Helyg. 25

members and guests attended and took, full advantage of excellent weather, climbing on Tryfan, Idwal, the Glyders, LLiwedd and walking on Snowdon. At the first joint meet with the Alpine Club at Malham in October, 30 Y.R.e. and 7 A.e. members also enjoyed excellent weather, visiting Gordale, Kilnsey, Parson's Pulpit, Victoria Cave and the Cove.

1979-80.The Club held 13 meets during the year, average attendance at meets was 27. The 87th Annual General Meeting was held on the 17th November 1979 at the Cairn Hotel, Harrogate, and was followed by the 66th Annual Dinner. The President, J.P. Barton was in the chair and the principal guest was George Band (Vice President, Alpine Club). 118 members and guests were present. The after-dinner meet was held at the Racehorses Hotel, Kettlewell. The Christmas meet at the Coledale Hotel, Braithwaite, was attended by 57 members and guests. The weekend was wet and windy with low cloud, the hospitality contrastingly warm. Parties walked the Newlands and Derwent fells, others climbed in Borrowdale. The January meet was switched to LHG, where 39 members and guests assembled. There had been heavy snow on the tops, but roads were clear and Saturday was cloudless with warm sunshine. Guillies on the Crinkles, Dollywaggon, Deepdale etc. attracted some, others walked. Two sittings for dinner were followed by a slide show on Peru by Jack Carswell. The February meet in Glen Etive was also blessed with excellent weather. 25 members and guests enjoyed Stob Dearg, the gullies on Stob Coire nan Lochan and Bidean nam Bian and Long views, cloudless skies, skiing, early frost and good snow. The Ladies' Evening on the 8th March was followed on the Sunday by a walk down the Washburn valley after morning coffee at the Hopper Lane Hotel, where the Club in 1892 held its first meeting outside Leeds. Six members and their wives, and one member and his son walked down from Fewston Reservoir, via Swinsty Reservoir, Dob Park, and Lindsey Wood Reservoir to Leathley. For the Spring Bank Holiday meet 20 members and one guest returned to Loch Stack and camped at Lone. Ben Stack, Arkle, Foinaven, Ben Loyal, Ben Hope were visited or revisited. There was

climbing on Arkle and Ben Stack but the limited activity on Greag Urbhard. As usual the cliffs from Cape Wrath to Sandalwood Bay were walked, and the birds on Handa Island watched. Some botanised, some geologised and some caught trout on the tabs from empty beer cans. The long walk in June started at Tan Hill, then proceeded via Nine Standards Rigg, 'High Seat, High Seat and Great Shunner Fell to Hardrow; then via Ten End, Dodd Fell, Cam End to Ribblehead; and finally by Simon Fell and Ingleborough to Lowstern. 40 walked and 16 fed and ferried them with great efficiency. Rain fell most of the day. 11 members and guests turned up for the July meet at Lowstern. **In** heavy rain the potholers descended Chnstmas Pot and through to the upper reaches of the adjoining A.G. Caverns. The walkers braved the heights of Bowland. Sunday was finer: the potholers were in Chapel le Dale, the walkers on the fells above. A day meet was also held in July at Rylstone Crag. 4 members and one guest enjoyed a variety of routes on gritstone. Lowstern was the base for the August Junior meet at which 14 members were present. The younger members, and a few of the elders, went down Sell Gill Pot. The remaining fathers walked on Ingleborough. On Sunday there was climbing on. Attermire Scar. The traditional joint meet was held at R.L.H. m early September. Among climbers on Scout and Tarn Crags, Pavey Ark and White GIll, Jack Hilton celebrated hiS 90th birthday by doing Route Two, which was first climbed m 1922, the year in which Jack joined the club. 45 Y.R.C. members and guests were present. A North Wales meet was held at Beudy Mawe in late September with a surprisingly low attendance of 14. There were parties on Cnicht, and m the Cwm Silyn/Mynydd Drws-y-Coed as well as on the Snowdon range; was climbing on Clogwyn-y-Person, Crib-y-Ddysgl, Carreg Wasted, Dinas Cromlech and .Idwal, and canoeing somewhere off the Llyn Pemnsula. Attendance at the October meet near Rothbury was also 14. An Outdoor Centre at Nethertonprovided sybaritic facilities. The Cheviot bogs were in prime condition but there was good climbing at Simonside and Ravensheugh Crags.

1980-81. 14 meets were held during the year, with an average attendance of 26. The 88th Annual General Meeting was held on the 15th November 1980 at the Cairn Hotel, Harrogate, and was followed by the 67th Annual Dinner. The retiring President, J.P. Barton, was in the chair and the principlal guest was John C. Frankland, doctor to the Cave Rescue Organisation. 113 members and guests were present. The after-dinner meet was held at the Miners' Arms, Greenhow. The Christmas meet at Kentmere was a splendid weekend for the 55 members and guests who attended. Clear blue skies, sunshine and hard frosts, with snow above 1500 feet made for good going and memorable views. Provision at the was as usual superb. A New Year weekend meet was held at Lowstern. On a wet and day the regular cavers pushed on with their exploratory dig, working in a small lake. The walkers had a breezy trip to Stainforth via Austwick and Feizor. There were 8 residents and 6 day visitors. There were 34 members and guests at the LHG meet at the end of January. Dow Crag was cold and windy, Bowfell Buttress snow covered and slippery. Walkers on the Coniston and Langdale fells were less uncomfortable. 42 members and guests overflowed the hut at Inbhirfhaolain in February. Parties ranged from Craig Meagaidh. Ben Nevis and Lochaber, the Mamores and Glencoe, to Glen Orchy and even Ben Lawers. The March meet was at Dinas Mawddwy. It was very wet from Friday evening to Sunday morning but the Red Lion was not affected and was fully appreciated by the 19 members and guests on the meet. On the Easter meet in April six members enjoyed the facilities of the Cairngorm Club hut at Muir of Inverey, and excellent weather throughout the weekend, with climbing at Loch-nagar, the circuit of Meikle Pap, Cuidhe Mor and Cac Carn More, and ascents of Braeriach, Carn Bhac and Carn Creagach, and Ben Macdui. A potholing/working party meet was held at Lowstern in early May and advertised as suitable for beginners and Past Presidents. 15 members and guests spent Saturday down Long Churn to the Bridge of Alum Pot. Sunday was certainly too wet to tar a roof. The Spring Bank Holiday meet camped on a superb site on the shore of Loch a Braoin. The Fanichs ridge served as a starter, followed by Ben Dearg, the Coigach group, An

Teallach in a spectacular thunderstorm, Seana Bhraigh and Corie Mhic Fhearchair, Sgurr Ban and Beinn a' Chlaidheimh. Red throated divers flew in every morning, black throated divers less frequently, and greenshank nested nearby. Good weather crowned a successful week for 19 members and for 3 who were there the previous week. The long walk in June started on Wetherlam in mist and rain, took in the Old Man, crossed the Duddon Valley to Black Combe and back to Hardknott summit, from which two members carried on to Crinkle Crags, Pike o' Blisco and back to the hut. There were 37 walkers and 11 suporters. A dozen members and guests were at Lowstern in July, potholing, working on the hut, three-peaking, climbing on Twistleton Scar - an enjoyable, friendly weekend. 15 fathers and sons assembled at LHG in August, climbing on Scout Crag and Dow. The Welsh meet in September was at Helyg on one of the wettest weekends of the year. One party climbed on Tryfan, another canoed off Great Orme's Head, the rest walked on Snowdon, in Cwm Silyn and Mynydd Mawr. Sunday was wetter and the meet abandoned Snowdonia. Attendance 26. The October meet was switched from Cleveland to Lowstern. Rain and mist started and ended the day on Gregareth, Whernside, Ingleborough or Lock Fell Ease Gill, Barbon Hill and Gregareth. Sunday was fine on Widdale Fell. The attendance was 10.

1981-82. There were 15 meets during the year, the average attendance was 21. The 89th Annual General Meeting was held on the 21st November 1981 at the Cairn Hotel, Harrogate. The 68th Annual Dinner followed. The President, W.R. Lofthouse was in the chair and the principal guest was David Cox.

10'5 members and guests were present. The after-dinner meet was held at Long Ashes, Threshfield. The Christmas meet at High Trenhouse, Malham was attended by 32 members and guests. Facilities included a sauna. The favoured route included Fountains Fell, Penyghent and a return via Littondale. The first meet of 1982, in mid-January was at Hag Dyke, above Kettlewell. Great Whernside was invisible under a wet mist for the whole weekend, 20 members and guests were present. The L.H.G. weekend at the end .of January saw 34 members and guests buffetted by high wmds and limited by indifferent weather. An attendance of 15 at the Glen Etive meet in February was well below the usual figure. Those who stayed at Roy Bridge for the week before the meet had the best of the weather on the White Corries, Black Mountain, Aonach Eagach and Ben Nevis, An avalanche in Observatory Gully involved in rescue operations. The week-end party were actrve on the Glencoe Etive hills in poor visibility and worsening weather. At Lowstern in March caving parties were down Sunset Hole and the Easegill/Top Sink system, and walkers were on the fells around Dent. 11 members and guests made up the meet, plus 3 day visitors. 17 members made the long journey on the 30th April to Dolygaer, north of Merthyr Tydfil. In gale force gusts some made the circuit of the Brecon ridges and the Black Mountain. The potholers visited Little Neath river cave, Ponthyr Ogaf and Pant Maior. The Garbh Choire Bothy in the Cairngorms provided shelter for five members for the Easter meet. High winds, low cloud snow and spindrift tested navigation. The Spring Bank Holiday meet with 22 members and guets was at Inchnadamph for a memorable week of unbroken sunshine. Parties traversed all the major Assynt summits plus Ben More Coigach, and climbed on Quinag. Botanists and ornithologists (with Handa on the list) were also active. In June, on the 25th anniversary of the Club's Himalayan Expedition, eight of those who had been involved held a reunion at L.H.G. Their Saturday route was up the Band, B.owfell, Cnnkle Crags and Pike o' Blisco, followed by dmner at the Three Shires and a nostalgic viewing of Dan Jones expedition film. 27 members turned up in depressing weather at Motherby House for the long walk in the Cumbrian Pennines. 21 walked, 5 supported, 10 completed the walk from Warcrop to Brampton. The Lowstern meet in mid-July was attended by six members, one guest and one day visitor. Cherry Tree Hole, including the "duck" leading to Aurora Hall, Gavel and Short Drop Pots were bottomed. One member competed in a fell race, another did a strenuous day on a lightweight racing bicycle. 30 members and guests represented the club at the joint meet in September, as usual accommodated at L.H.G. as well as

R.L.H. Dry rock was enjoyed by climbing parties on Gimmer, Pavey Ark and Tarn Crag, and most ofthe fells at the head of Langdale were walked. The Welsh meet at Beudy Mawr began with a prospect of a wash out, but Saturday turned out a good day. One party ascended Cwm Glasbach by a scrambling route up Llechog Buttress, followed by the east route scramble up Cloggie and descended by Lliwedd and the horseshoe, or by the Gribin ridge. Rain, wind, hail and.thunder prevailed on Sunday and guests attended. Gunnerside in Swale-dale was the venue for the October meet. 33 members and guests were greeted on Saturday by a fine white frost and clear skies and took full advantage of the day on the fells north and south of the dale. Sunday was different and navigation indifferent.

1982-83. 14 meets were held during the year with an average attendance of 27. The 90th Annual General Meeting was held at the Cairn Hotel, Harrogate on the 20th November 1982 and was followed by the 69th Annual Dinner. The retiring President, W.R. Lofthouse was in the chair and the principal guest was Dennis Gray of the B.M.C. 99 members and guests were present. The after-dinner meet was at High Trenhouse Malham. 40 members and guests gathered at the Grove, Kentmere for the Christmas meet. This was to be the last meet at the Grove and a presentation was made to the Driscolls for their hospitality over many years. Conditions were good on both days with sunshine and snow. For the January meet 37 members and guests assembled at Hag Dyke, Kettlewell. Parties on Great and Little Whernside, Buckden Pike, the elusive Meugher and adjacent moors enjoyed clear, dry and windy conditions. Early evening on the Friday caused some problems for the L.H.G. meet m February. The eventual tally was 20 members and guests. Rain and wind, combined with wet snow to set a limit to the quality of achievement on the hills, but greatly enhanced the dining and wining. Glen Etive in February gave a perfect weekend - blue skies, sunshine and splendid firm snow. The gullies on Stob Coire nan Lochan, Bidean and Buchaille Etive Mor were in excellent condition as was the Aonach Eagach. Ben Starav gave 50 mile views. Ben a Bheithir, and on the way home Ben More and Stob Binnein were also

topped. 23 members and guests attended. The Lowstern meet in March mustered 19 members and guests. The coke stove and electricity were greatly appreciated. One walking party covered Gregareth and Whernside, Grag Hill and West Fell. Two late comers dashed up Ingleborough. The potholers mastered single rope technique and Bull Pot, followed on Sunday by Ireby Fell Cavern. The April meet, based on L.H.G. was aimed' at the Lake District 3,000s. Because of the weather and hours of daylight it was decided to. drive between the three main mountain groups to eliminate the tedious road walking. A member and his guest nevertheless did the full route. members and guests tackled the 4 peaks from various starting points and in sufficient depth of snow to point the wisdom of taking axes. The May Day weekend meet was a camp at Blackbeck Tarn with an attendance of 9. Some climbed on Burtness Combe on Saturday on greasy.rock, others walked the Ennerdale fells. Hopes of a classic route on Pillar on Sunday were foiled by high winds rain and sleet. Only 2 tents and 3 members stayed on until Monday. The Spring Bank Holiday meet took a totally untraditional form in putting a YR.C. member on the top of every Munro during the week. The main base was the Scout Camp at Roy Bridge, with an Operations Controller at a local hotel. The meet attracted the biggest turnout for a meet in the history of the club. 75 members and guests operated in small groups - backpacking, using bothies and tents, canoes and trains to achieve their objectives, before coming together for the final peak on Carn Liath on Friday. A member was to have flown over the peak in salutation at 13.30 hours, but the low cloud base prevented that. On the June meet 24 members and guests tackled the Welsh 3,000s from Beudy Mawr. 19 walked, 5 supported, 15 finished. All the walkers were away between 0400 and 0415 hours and the last group finished at Aber at 01.15 hours on Sunday. 13 members and guests attended the July meet at Lowstern. One caving party descended Lancaster Hole, visited the Colonnades and the main sump then passed through the master cave to Oxbow Corner and came out of County Pot via some of the lesser known passengers of Oxford Pot. A second party descended Cow Pot using single rope techniques, visiting the master cave,

Stake Pot inlets and the upper series. Activities also included fell running, climbing on Attermire Scar, diving at Devil's Bridge and walking.

A Juniors' meet in August was also held at Lowstern. 11 fathers and sons went down Tatham's Wife Hole on Saturday and Sell Gill Pot'ithe second deepest pot in Britain on Sunday. For the joint meet with the Rucksack and Wayfarers Clubs, on the first weekend in September, 14 Y.R.C. members were at R.L.H. and 15 L.H.G. Torrential rain and fierce winds prevented serious climbing. The joint catering was excellent, as was C.D. Milner's slide show "Mountains for pleasure". At the North Wales meet at Cwm Cowarch on the last weekend in September 20 members and guests were present. Despite poor weather two members climbed on S. Buttress, two others disappeared down a mineshaft, the remainder found their way up the Arans to be rewarded when the cloud lifted after mid-day. On Sunday there was more climbing on S. Buttress and an ascent of Cader Idris on a lovely autumn day. 18 members and guests assembled for the Cleveland meet at the end of October at the Scout camp site at Kirkby near Stokesley. They were all away before 9.00a.m. across the moors towards Hawnby. Some got there and had their pints, others circled a radio mast, all had an invigorating day. Maurice Wilson kindly showed slides of the 1953 Himalayan expedition at his home in the evening. A gale blew up during the night and it was still blowing hard on Sunday as members crossed Tripsdale andUrra Moor.

1983-84. There were 14 meets during the year. Average attendance was 24. The 91st Annual General Meeting was held at the Graiglands Hotel, Ilkley on the 19th November 1983. The 70th Annual Dinner followed. The President, W.A. Linford was in the chair and the principal guest was Sandy Cousins, Past President of the J.C.M.S. 125 members and guests were present. The after-dinner meet was based at Highfield House, Ilkley. The Christmas meet was held at High Trenhouse, Malham. Two days of heavy rain had caused flooding in Wharfedale immediately before the meet, but there was a hard frost on the Friday night. Parties were out early on Penyghent, Fountains Fell and Parson's Pulpit

over solidly frozen ground with a light dusting of snow and magnificent views. Sunday was another fine hard day, attendance was 38. The L.H.G.meet in early January had an attendance of 24. Winds increased to gale force on Saturday with low cloud and snow flurries, which made even the familiar ground of the Coniston group difficult. Sunday was little better on Pike o' Blisco and the Crinkles. The Welsh meet at the end of January was at Beudy Mawr with 18 members and guests setting out on a sunny, crisp Saturday morning towards Snowdon, Y Garn and the Ogwen valley. The weather steadily deteriorated as sleet turned to pouring rain. Sunday saw parties on Crib Goch, the Glyders and Moel Siabod. By the time they got back the weather was fine. The.February meet at Glen Etive attracted 32 members and guests. Friday was mild slushy snow and low cloud. Saturday brought clearer, colder weather with good snow conditions. Parties made up Tower Gully on the Ben, Ben Dorain, Stob Coire an Albannaigh, Stob Coire nan Lochan, Bidean, the Blackmount area and the Glenduror Forest area. Sunday was much colder and clear with strong winds. Aonach Eagach, Beinn Fhionnlaidh, Ben Vorlich, Stuc a Chroin were traversed by different groups. Those who stayed on did Crowberry Gully on the Buchaille on Monday and two members filled out the week bothying in Barrisdale and Knoydart with a day in the Mamores. Long Marton, 2 miles north of Appleby was the venue for the March meet. 21 members and guests attended. There was good skiing on Cross Fell, no one could find Knock Cave, but Murton and Dufton Pikes Mickle Fell and High Cup Nick were ascended, descended and circumnavigated. The new Cross Burn Bothy, west of the Merrick was the centre for the Galloway meet in early April. 11 members and guests enjoyed good weather throughout the weekend. There was soft snow above 1800 feet and excellent visibility as members traversed the Merrick, Kirriereoch, Tarfessock, Shalloch on Minnoch, the Rhinns of Kells, Meikle Millyea and Cairnsmore of Carsphairn - surely the most intriguing set of hill names in the British Isles. Excellent weather also graced the L.H.G. meet at the end of April for 25 members and guests who climbed on Dow and Gimmer or walked over Crinkle Crags, Bowfell, Scafell Pike and Scafell. The Spring

Bank Holiday meet returned to the excellent camp site at Spean Bridge and took full advantage of a week of sunny weather - back-packing to the Ben Alder area, climbing on the Ben, visiting the Grey Corries, Craig Meagaidh, Stob Coire Easain, Stob Ban and the Streaps. 17 members and 1 guest were present. The long walk in June started and finished at L.H.G. and took in Swirl How, the Old Man, Cockley Beck, Cam Spout, Scafell Pike, Esk Hause, Wythburn Church, Helvellyn and Grasmere. 29 members and guests walked or supported. 11 members arrived at Lowstern for the July meet. On Saturday Christmas Pot was bottomed by one group, others walked on the Howgills. On Sunday some climbed on the summit crags of Penyghent, others dived in the river at Kirkby Lonsdale. Four lads and six dads assembled at L.H.G. in August, climbing on Scout Crag and Dow Crag, canoeing on Little Langdale Tarn and Coniston Water. For the last weekend in August 21 members and guests revisited the Rhinogs. Over the two days, from Llyn Cwm Bychan they traversed south over Rhinog Fawr, Rhinog Fach, Y Llethr and Moelfre, and north over Clip and Foel Penolau then back to Clip and on to Craig Wion - all rough stuff in low cloud. 25 members turned up for the joint meet in September and were evenly divided between L.H.G. and R.L.H., coming together for supper on Saturday at R.L.H. and for a slideshow by C.D. Milner, both excellent. Inclement weather limited climbing. For the last meet of the year 29 members and guests were at Gunnerside in Swaledale. Almost every hill within a ten-mile radius of Spring End was visited on a brilliant day. Harry Stembridge then gave an illustrated talk on "Travels in retirement", covering mountains in Chile, Nepal, all the European Alps and Corsica - an amazing achievement.

1984-85. The 92nd Annual General Meeting was held at the Craiglands Hotel, Ilkley on the 17th November 1984 and was followed by the 71st Annual Dinner. The retiring President, W.A. Linford, was in the chair, and the principal guest was Bill Birkett. 106 members and guests were present. The after-dinner meet was based at Highfield House. The Christmas meet was held at Scar Top, on Whernside at the invitation of Albert Chapman. 55 members and guests

enjoyed the hospitality, the feasting, the viewing of slides, the Three Peaks (or parts thereof), Ingleton Falls and other diversions. The January meet was at L.H.G. with a thin coating .of snow above 1500 feet and a forecast of -6 degrees C on Fnday night. But Saturday was mild and dry with some sun and good visibility. The alternatives followed were the Langdale skyline from Lingmoor Fell to Chapel Stile, Wetherlam, the Carrs, the Crinkles, and Hell Gill, the Old Man via Tilberthwaite and back via the Carrs. Sunday was less promising with snowy rain and blustery winds. The major group was on the Fairfield horseshoe, some in Long Sleddale. Attendance was 29. The North Wales meet at the end of January was based at the Chester M.C. Hut at Pen Cennant Uchaf, Lanberis, 15 members and guests were present. Parties walked in icy conditions over the Glyders, Y Garn and Elidir Fach; over Yr Wyddfa and via Moel Eilio, Foel Goch and Clogwyn dur Arrdu; over LLiwedd and Snowden. Other climbed in Slanting Gully on LLiwedd in Cwm Cneifon and on to Glyder Fawr and Y Garn. The Glen Etive meet in February had days of sub-zero temperatures little wind, clear visibility, and hard though not abundant snow. 32 members and guests in a dozen parties were out as far south as Ben Cruachan, as far east as Beinn a Creachan as far north as the Central Mamores, as well as on the nearer ridges and gullies. Sunday remained dry with a slight thaw and most members had a fairly full day near at hand or on the way home. Sixteen members and guests arrived at Alport Castles Barn for the March meet, some following the snow-plough over the Snake Pass. Saturday morning produced near-blizzard conditions, though the afternoon was better for those struggling on Bleaklow and Kinder. A cloudless sky and 3 or 4 inches of snow underfoot on Sunday allowed for enjoyment of the moors on both sides of the Snake road. On the April meet at Lowstern it rained all Friday night and all day Saturday. The intended descent of Magnetometer Pot was impracticable. Ingleborough and Wild Boar Fell were practicable. Attendance increased on Sun.day to 15 and the experts conducted four geriatrics/ novices from. Calf Holes to Browgill, wading Old Ingand and ascending Birkwith Cave, all of which were full of water. The high level camp was at Scoat Tarn on the May Day

weekend. 9 members attended and in low cloud and indifferent weather traversed the Ennerdale ridges and the Wastwater Fells. The Spring Bank Holiday meet on Skye was based on the camp site in Glen Brittle. 36 members and guests had an active week despite heavy rain, violent winds and low cloud which finally defeated the planned attempt on the ridge.