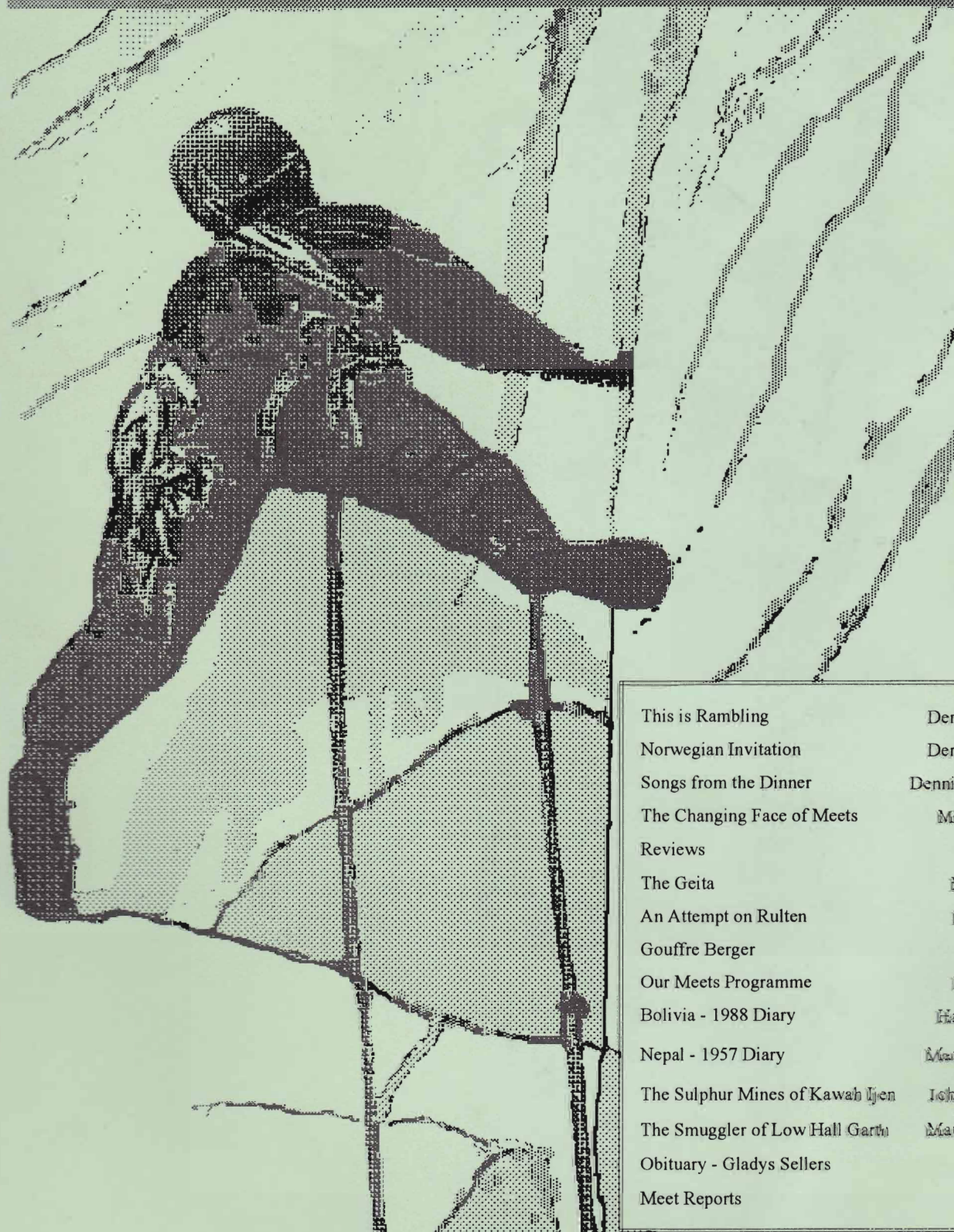


# Yorkshire & Rambler

The Bulletin of the Yorkshire Ramblers' Club



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## Foreword by the President

Over recent years the suggestion has come up from time to time that we should introduce a regular bulletin produced by desktop-publishing methods. Since the Club has just embarked on its second century, your committee deemed this a suitable time to launch this venture. The main aim of **The Yorkshire Rambler** will be to reflect fully the activities of the Club and the members, but, above all, to provide a 'good read'. The success or failure of the bulletin will depend on everyone taking the trouble to put pen to paper to let us know about any activity, or indeed any snippet of information, that will be of interest to members. May I exhort you all to make an effort so that we get a publication whose next issue will always be eagerly awaited.



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The opinions expressed in this publication are not necessarily those of the Y.R.C, its Officers or those of the Editor. An information sheet entitled 'Notes for Contributors' is available to anyone considering submitting material for inclusion in subsequent editions.

## This is Rambling

Derek Smithson

Mountaineers and hill walkers continue to be two faced about solitary journeys into the mountains. We repeatedly condemn the practice, but we all do it.

Last year, I wrote the meet report for the High Level Camp because I wanted to tell you of the joy and pleasure I had on my solitary walk from Borrowdale to Eskdale and back. The joy that comes from having no human distraction from the beauties of nature and feeling at home in the world of mountains.

To 'fail' to complete a route, or 'fail' to reach a summit, is a disappointment, but to fail to see the beauty of nature, to feel the changing climate or to feel one belonged there, that is a disaster.

There are some unfortunates who see the mountains as a sort of battlefield. For them the hills are a place to test ones courage and abilities and this is a very different outlook. This is 'man against nature'. A very British, imperialistic, all conquering attitude drummed into the older members by an educational system. It is these who need the known, the named, the recognised, so that they can boast their achievements. Sadly, they may never know that they have missed the best of it.

Perhaps I am exaggerating in retaliation for the advance of age and fading of the aggression, the adrenaline, the balls, to risk all to achieve an ambition. I hope not, but if so I am enjoying it.

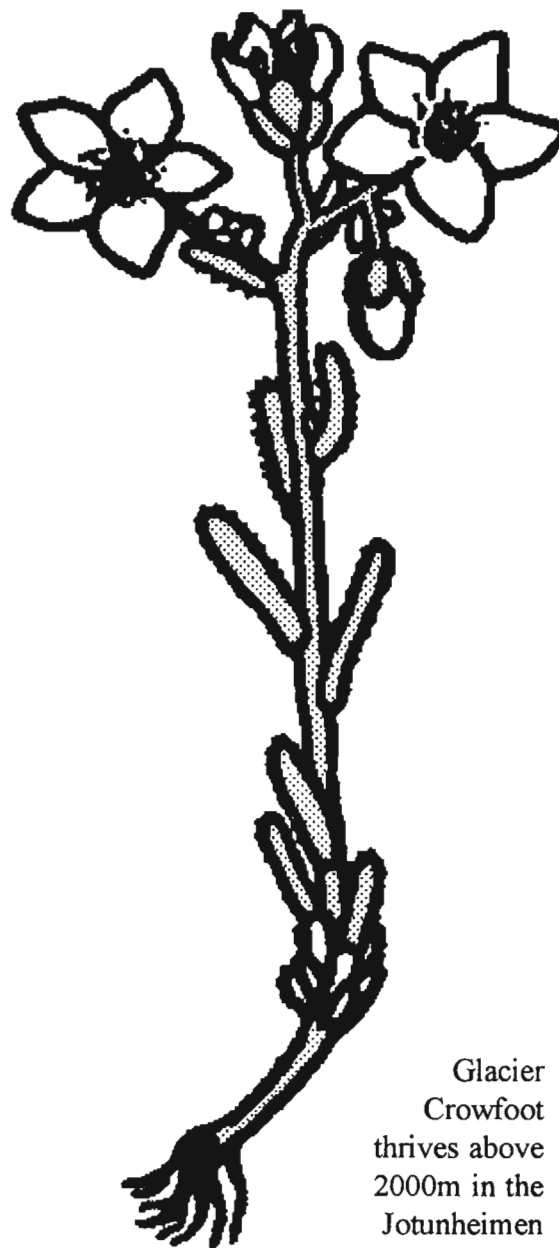


On Gladhopiggen

Last year, I am proud to boast, I climbed Storen in Norway. However, I had an equally satisfying day on a mountain whose name I'm not sure of and whose summit we failed to reach. We cached a rope because to continue up the North Ridge of Storen seemed too risky. We crossed a glaciated valley in pleasant weather and viewed the glacier on the next mountains. The crevasses barred our route to the chosen mountain, but we could reach the one on our right and moved in that direction. The next hours were mainly spent on very steep snow. We occasionally made for rocky outcrops for the security of good belays. Just below the ridge, a short distance from the summit, we climbed poor snow on rock to find that the cornice was rotten and would give is no security.

We abandoned the climb and just managed to cross the glaciated valley before it became really dark. The cached rope was found the next day.

The joy of the day was treading the edge of danger using each other and our confidence in familiar situations and techniques. We were aware of the changing climate, the different types of snow and the need to measure our reserve of strength against the passage of time and daylight. We did not feel that we were fighting nature but playing in nature. This is rambling.



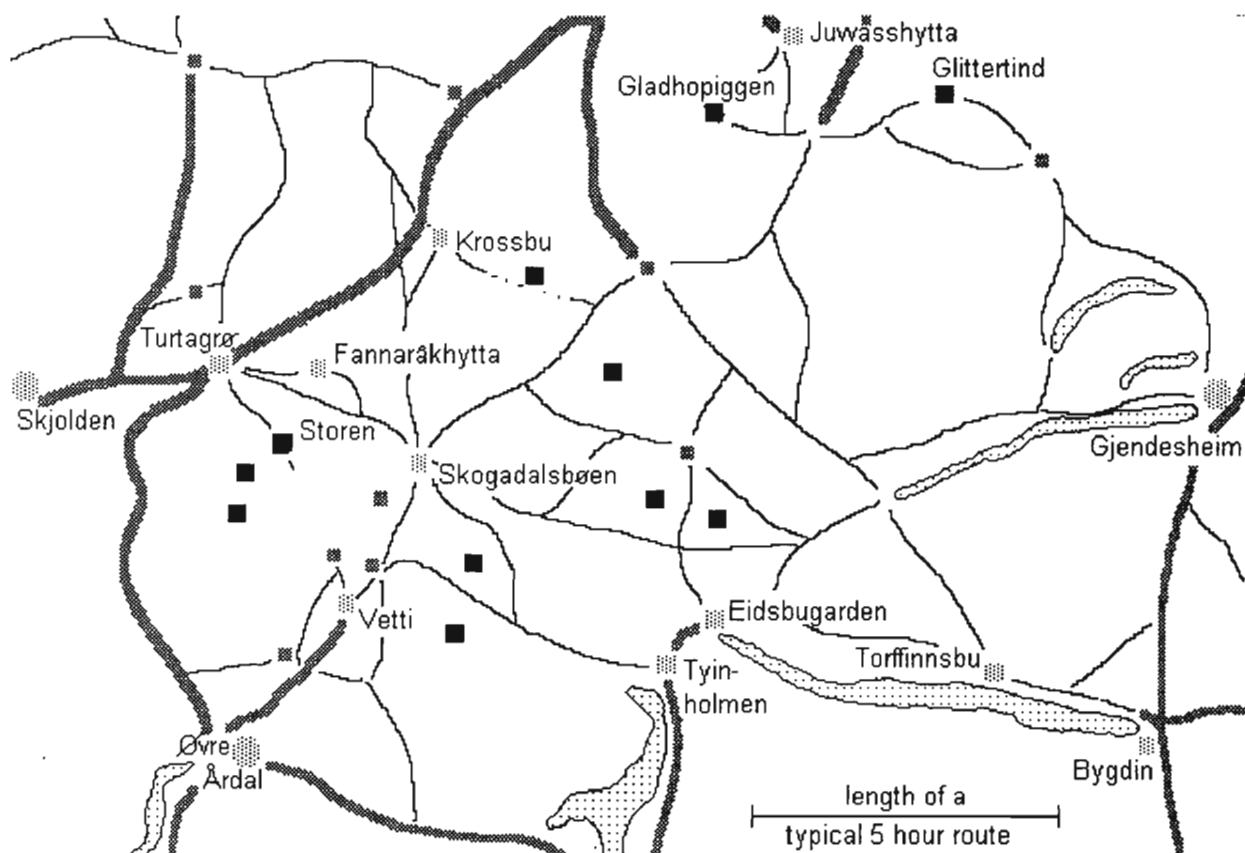
Glacier  
Crowfoot  
thrives above  
2000m in the  
Jotunheimen

## Norwegian Invitation

### Derek Smithson

Last September the Slingsby Institute organised a symposium in Norway and arranged for visiting speakers from the senior British mountaineering clubs. Harvey Lomas represented our club. This was an opportunity to become involved with the Norwegians, from different areas of Norway, in all the declared objectives of the YRC. Three British participants climbed Storen during their visit. This year there is an intention to hold another symposium near the mountains in Årdal.

Derek Smithson was one of the team climbing Storen with a Norwegian friend. He likens it to a Scottish winter climb with a fifty metre abseil to get them down past the real climbing. Camping high on the mountain they had three days out in cloudy weather but Derek had three days of sunshine for his walk to Årdal.



## In Appreciation of the President Dennis Armstrong

At the Centenary Dinner, Dennis paid tribute to the President with these verses. The Editor thought they might have been composed during the long sleepless hours of the night on a meet, but was assured me that Dennis' clear conscience permits slumber under all conditions, except Alpine huts. In fact the words came while Dennis was jogging.

To the tune of 'Three Blind Mice' (Anon).

Three Brothers Salmon  
Roy, Arthur Trev,  
They all came into the YRC  
They potholed and climbed together with glee,  
The meets were great when we had all three,  
The three Brothers Salmon.

Three Brothers Salmon  
Roy, Arthur Trev,  
Roy went off to Scot-erland,  
Trev took off to Niger-land,  
But Arthur stayed in good Leeds-land,  
The three Brothers Salmon.

George Arthur Salmon,  
Three degrees arrears,  
A B.Sc. in chemistry clear,  
A Ph.D. as a mountaineer,  
And a D.Sc for drinking beer,  
George Arthur Salmon,

George Arthur Salmon,  
Il Presidentio,  
One year gone and one year more,  
For you to go to complete your tour,  
We only ask - please don't snore!  
George Arthur Salmon,

## Onward Yorkshire Ramblers' Dennis Armstrong

Dennis entertained those at the Centenary Dinner with this musical homage to members past and present. He preceded it with an apology for the offence he was about to cause to any diners with notions of political correctness.

To the tune of 'St Gertrude', (Arthur Sullivan) and with apologies to the Reverend Sabine Baring-Gould (1834-1924), Vicar of Horbury, near Wakefield who wrote the original words to Onward Christian Soldiers.

Onward Yorkshire Ramblers, All good men and true,  
Second Hundred calling Onward ever new  
Supermen behind us, Good men never fail  
We pray those coming after Always will be male...

Chorus:

Onward Yorkshire Ramblers, Strengthen every nerve,  
Down with Political Correctness, We're a male preserve!

Supermen behind us, Men who showed the way,  
William Cecil Slingsby, He of cold Norway,  
Ernest Roberts led us, Asking: "Have you BEEN?  
Stembridge, Chadwick, Marsden, Better men ne'er seen...

(Chorus)

Now the young Turks flourish, Alpine peaks galore,  
Or down famous potholes, Camp they on the floor  
Ski-ing in far places, In whiteout, drear and chill,  
All keep to our culture Its MEN who fill the bill...

(Chorus)

Steeped in our tradition Proudly go we on,  
Seeking distant mountains, To plant our crampons on  
Youth now climb much higher, The old now them sustain  
The Good old Yorkshire Ramblers A **male** Club will remain...

(Chorus, repeated in unison)

## The Changing Face of Meets

Michael Smith

The 1932 Journal outlines the meets held over the preceding two years. These include the expected round of climbing on the Roaches, Capel Curig, caving from Horton-in-Ribblesdale, Castleton and Braida Garth, the Hill Inn, Swaledale, Wastdale (sic) Head and the newly fitted out RLH by the new road up Great Langdale. A familiar list.

Nowadays, with improved transport systems and greater leisure time (for some at least, through reduced employment hours, flexible work patterns or earlier retirement) our meets list includes venues from further afield. Scotland, the South West and even France figure as 'weekend' meets. This is simply progressive change. There is another type of change to which I would like to draw attention.

Consider a typical meet on the current calendar. A few get an active day on Friday, eat out perhaps then are joined in the evening by those later arrivals. The talk will be of recent activities, catching up on news of and from recent meets and the latest afflictions of those present and some of those who are not. Reasonable weather on Saturday will prompt an early breakfast and small groups forming to go off and walk, climb or cave as they choose. Saturday evening may well have a discussion or slide show centred around a similar activity. Sunday is often starts more slowly and is a little less energetic, some parties opting for a shorter day. I am confident that you will recognise this thumbnail sketch.

Compare it, if you please, with these extracts from the 1932 Meet notes:

*..twenty men did the through route, Long Kin East to Rift Pot..*

*..a "Scouts and Outposts" affair over Fountains Fell with the Gritstone Club. Twenty Ramblers in five cars went to Horton, crossed the Penyghent ridge and stringing out along the Siverdale Road, reached Malham in under the four hours allowed, but only collected two or three Gritstone men on the way.. One capture was made by stalking successfully a man who had got through by crawling..*

*..at the Hill Inn on 6th February.. The President organised a murder and a trial, with prelininaries which left some doubt as to whether there is or is not a Water Pollution Research Board. The subsequent bonfire and rockets must have left Ingleton wondering.*

These extracts would indicate a greater emphasis on communal activity. Organised entertainment and general rumbustification augmenting the serious business of crag, cave or fell.

I think I recall members speaking of challenges to reach as many crosses on the North Yorkshire Moors as possible in a fixed period and making traverses of the Lakes taking in peaks each of which rated a score which increased the further it was from the direct line.

Has society, if the ex-Prime Minister will allow such a term, changed so that individualism has replaced the 'club' activity? Has the attraction of nearby hostelrys increased to the point where fragmentation of those gathered leaves too few to support such events? Answers please, not on a postcard, but in a brief article or letter on the state of the Club.

Anyone offering to organise a "Scouts and Outposts" affair might like to contact the Meets sub-committee. Alternatively anyone who knows what one is might care to put me out of my misery on this score.



**Reviews**

Dennis Gray

**Mountain Lover**, Crowood Press \$14.95, pp206, 1990 or remaindered at £10, Jarvis Books, Matlock.

**Tight Rope, The Fun of Climbing**, Ernest Press £9.95, pp183, 1993

I was stowing my cabin luggage in the aircraft when a voice came from behind me. "Get your house in order Mr Todd." Before I had time to wonder who it was, my wife, looking past me, told me "It's Dennis Gray." I was mildly surprised because the aeroplane was not bound for Geneva, Berne or Delhi but for Agadir in Morocco. "Hello Dennis. Are you going to the Atlas?" says I, "No, we're going into the desert to look for some rock climbing. We're meeting Ron Fawcett." "We" was Dennis and John Beatty, a photographer of some repute and a participant in the 1982 Rucksac Club crossing of Greenland.

As we de-planed in Agadir I wished Dennis and John a good holiday. "It's not a holiday, it's work" Dennis assured me with a completely straight face. As he was the General Secretary of the British Mountaineering Council at the time I suppose he had some right to claim it as work. Nice work if you can get it. How I was able to help with transport after a ten hour flight delay on the return journey is another story.

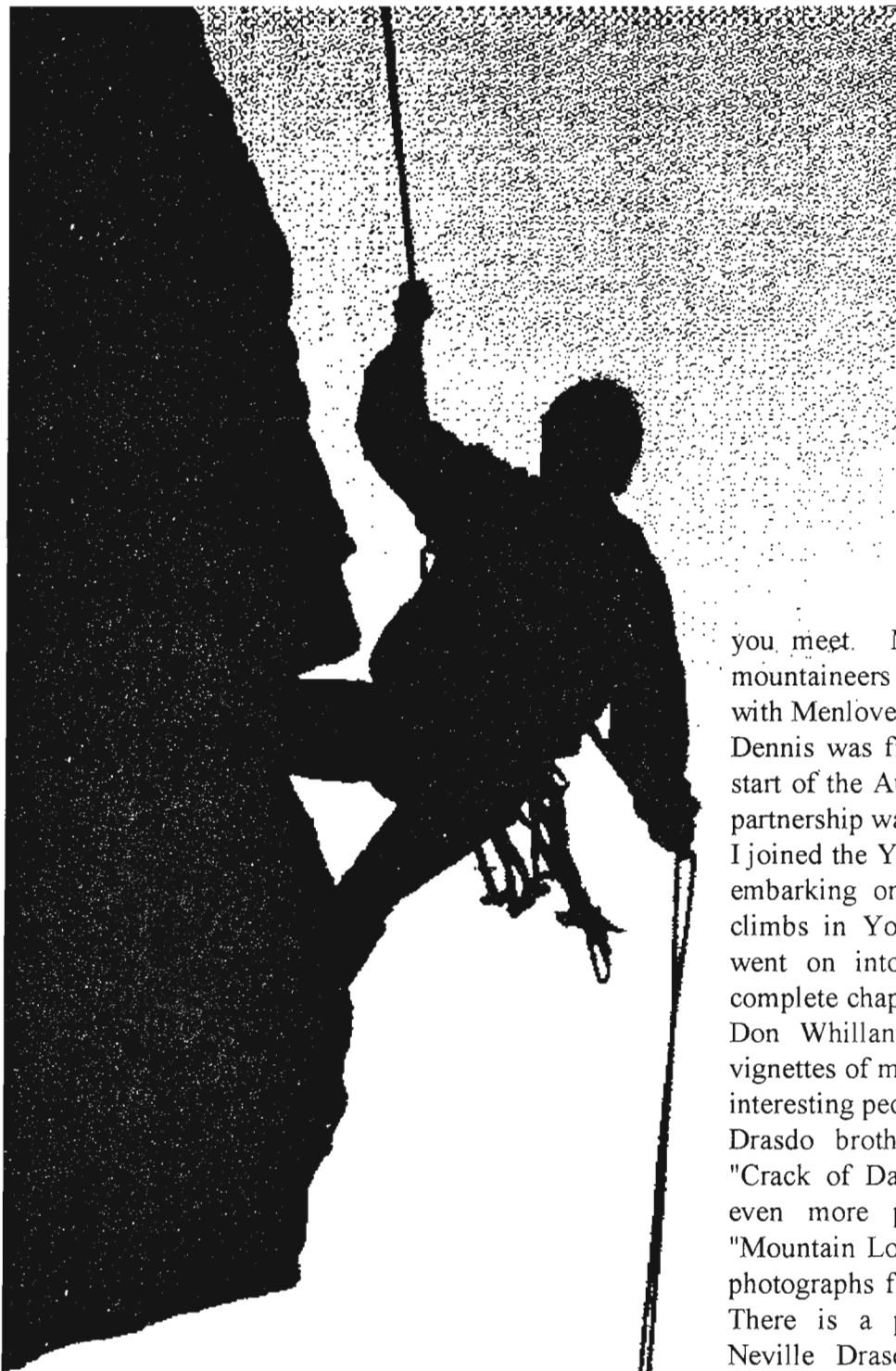
So I have to declare an interest. I must have known Dennis as one of the local climbing lads for nearly forty years and while we have never been on the same rope we always got on. And it's nice to have stuff on your bookshelf written by someone you know.

Broadly speaking "Mountain Lover" is about mountains while "Tight Rope" is about people. I have found then both unputdownable and this review is taking far longer than it should to write because

I keep getting immersed in rereading one or both of them. While a complete book in itself "Mountain Lover" is a continuation of the autobiography started in "Rope Boy" published in 1970. The author has certainly seen the world and climbed most of it. He doesn't seem to have been to Antarctica or Norway but perhaps Yorkshiremen don't really need to with Scotland within a day's journey. You may rest assured that everywhere he has been the climbing and social scene comes vividly to life under his pen. Both American continents, Israel and Bulgaria are included but most interesting to me, of course, was the section on Morocco. The venue for the climbing rendezvous mentioned above was Tafroute, a village on the edge of the desert. Joan and I also visited Tafroute, though not in climbing mode, but we did see and admire the huge boulder known as "Chapeau Napoleon", one of those climbed by the trio.

Job-wise we are told how Dennis and his wife, Leni, spent some time running the John Ruskin Centre at Brantwood, Coniston Water but this did not turn out as expected and his next venture was a post in the printing trade in Kenya, training the native Kenyans to take the job over. He returned to the UK for family reasons and shortly became the first ever professional officer of the BMC. They would have been hard put to find anybody better. Read the book for yourselves to find out why he left the BMC to go freelance as a writer and lecturer. He still does his bit for the BMC however. He has recently chaired two meetings of the Yorkshire and Humberside Committee in the absence of Angela Soper.

"Tight Rope" on the other hand is more a celebration of the fun of climbing and of the remarkable and mostly lovely people



you meet. Most interesting to senior mountaineers is possibly a conversation with Menlove Edwards in the Pass when Dennis was fifteen. His account of the start of the Austin, Evans, Verity, Fuller partnership was absorbing to me as when I joined the YMC in 1956 they were just embarking on the series of pioneering climbs in Yorkshire and Lakeland that went on into the sixties. There are complete chapters on each of Joe Brown, Don Whillans and Tom Patey. The vignettes of many less famous but just as interesting people include Eric Beard, the Drasdo brothers and Mike Dixon of "Crack of Dawn" fame. This book is even more profusely illustrated than "Mountain Lover" with black and white photographs from the fifties and sixties. There is a particularly good one of Neville Drasdo leading Walewska at Hangingstones Quarry, one of three contributed by that well known mountaineer, writer and photographer yours truly

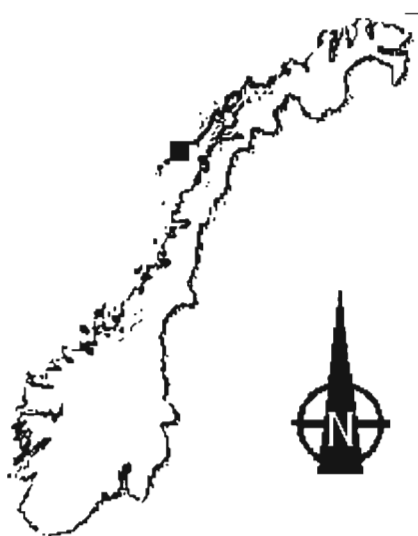
Bar Todd

**The Geita: Leaping into the twilight**

Neil Pomfret

"But I haven't got any rock boots" was simply not a good enough excuse in Graham and Pete's book. So with a borrowed pair of boots off we went to have some fun on the last day of our stay on Austvagoya in the early evening. The aim was to climb the Geita (Goat in English) pillar and then leap the gap between the two summit pinnacles which made up the horns. The climb up is probably graded around Severe and starts a few metres to the West of the little arete at the back of the pillar. The horns stand at about 600m above sea level and 200m above base level. The first horn (West) is about 0.5-1m above the second and separated by 1-1.5m, the platform's are about 4 square metres and both slope to the East quite steeply.

Walking up the steep hillside to the pinnacles the Geita is consistently visible, and so is the town cemetery directly below!! The Geita looks over the town of Svolveaer and in the past when someone has done the jump the town bells clanged in celebration. The main route starts at the back of the pillar which is climbed via a chimney and two traverses, new caving bolts occur in two places, and provide good belay points.



While a Norwegian pair were descending after a partly successful attempt Graham and John started to climb. We watched as they made their way up with apparent ease, unfortunately the light was deteriorating so we had to start climbing before they did the jump.

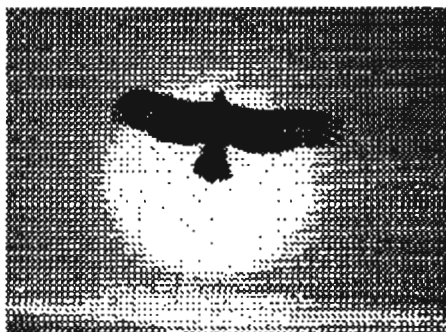
The second group was a threesome, Jason led, Pete was middle man and I followed up the rear. While standing at the base I could catch parts of Graham's conversation - he was having problems finding a suitable belay. After finding some bolts below the sloping platform of the first pinnacle he quickly made his jump. John followed soon after, his climb up to the first pinnacle was signalled with a hearty "only meeee!!".

Back down near the bottom of the route Pete was climbing just above me with his horrible yellow and black striped posing pants dominating the view. He climbed up the chimney, which we both thrutched up, while Jason had shown how elegantly it could be done without beer bellies. Jason and next Pete traversed left to the next belay point consisting of two new bolts. Both Graham and John abseiled down and regaled us with their psyched up story of jumping the horns, whilst grinning like Cheshire cats.

After I finished the traverse Jason started up the last pitch, "where the hell do you go" - that assemblage of words often used in mountain realms, was given a suitable answer, "I dunno - maybes round there mate". Jason edged around and out of sight, next appearing on top of the first pinnacle, not looking (or sounding) too happy with the current amount of exposure. Jason jumped safely, next Pete's turn, before he started to climb we shared the odd expletive and mentioned mummy a few times. Pete then climbed easily up and did the jump to join Jason on the second pinnacle.

We had been climbing up the back of the Geita, so when I had traversed round the first pinnacle a breathtaking vista appeared before me, a few more moves and two grinning faces were in front of me. Apparently there were two good nobbles on the down-sloping rock in front of me, where a good stance could be made, balancing with one foot and one hand. Well apparently Gaping Gill is a mountain in Mongolia, eventually I managed to get into a relatively comfortable stance (relative to lying on a bed of nails). I can remember counting down Three-Two-One, for the cameras, but I'm not sure whether I shouted Geromino or Yippee, I probably screamed!! I can remember seeing the edge of the second pinnacle getting alarmingly close, but feeling irresponsibly calm about it, and I can also remember Pete's arm coming up and checking my momentum (cheers Pete). I sat and gazed around, it was beautiful, the sun was below the mountains, but it was still light. After edging around the platform, all feeling a bit jittery we abseiled off, without a hitch. Then walked down the hillside, and were back to the camp-site for a twilight dram at 12.15am.

(This ascent was one of the Lofoten party's ascents contributing to the Club's meet in Norway during the summer of 1992)



## Attempt on Rulten.

**Paul Linford.**

An account of the ascent by Paul and Graham Salmon, members of the Lofoten group, as part of the 1992 Norwegian Meet.

This short article describes our unsuccessful attempt on Rulten. I think we were very fortunate to find as good a site as we did at Reknes. For a while it looked as if we were going to have a very uncomfortable time there. Even so, the large amount of rain we had during our four days there meant that even our heather terrace was becoming very soaked and staying longer was going to get more and more unpleasant. It goes without saying, though, that the running fresh water supply/fridge just outside the tent door was a real bonus. And yes, you can burn the birch (and the heather on the floor of your cook tent eh, Graham, Pete!), which helps to keep the mosquitoes off, but whether the return warrants the considerable effort of collection is dubious.

We were unfortunate in that on our boat trip to Reknes and during all the time we spent there we never actually saw the summit of Rulten. In fact, we rarely saw any of the top third, it being continually covered in cloud. This denied us the opportunity to really view the mountain and get a feel for its geography before setting off up it. The 1:50000 scale map of the area is almost useless for navigating on this massive and complex mountain.

If we had been able to see the mountain it is likely that at least some of us would have attempted the East Peak by the route described in Spilsbury's guide. We were treated to an excellent view of this route on our return trip to Svolvaer and it looks quite straightforward. As it was, the



weather ensured we managed only one climbing day out of our four there. For reasons which I can only attribute to the weather, or possibly not going to the Alps, we all decided on the West Peak route which goes up via the Snoskardet glacier. In case anyone reading this report in the future should wish to go, I will describe in some detail our short exploration of this route, which involved everyone to some degree. It is clear, though, that if the aim is an ascent of Rulten, then the East Peak via the east ridge would give a much better chance of success. However, if one could complete the West Peak route successfully, then a traverse of the mountain, descending by the east ridge, would be a real possibility and quite a prize. I understand there are few recorded successful traverses of Rulten.

The ascent from the campsite to the glacier is quite straightforward, though somewhat of a slog with the usual dense vegetation to push through and the hidden streams to fall in. Care is essential when negotiating the boulder field immediately before the glacier with its huge slime covered blocks. A fall down the large holes between the blocks, which would have serious consequences, is a real possibility for the unwary. When we reached the glacier, it was a great relief to be able to don crampons and march up the surprisingly good snow. It was the

only time one had been able to move easily for a reasonable distance on these Lofoten peaks. The ascent to the col is quite steep, but without problems and very little objective danger, though it seemed quite bizarre to be walking on a glacier whilst looking out over birch forest to the sea! We didn't rope the party and the few places where there was any suspicion of crevasses were easily avoided. I suspect that the snow is actually quite thin and there is no real crevasse danger. There were a few fallen rocks lying around, some quite large, but we didn't see any come down.

From the col, Graham and I attempted to follow the route described by Spilsbury. There was a suspicion that Spilsbury had not in fact done the route and we think we can confirm this. The described route descends on the west side of the col for a short way and then traverses south on grassy ledges to the base of a gully with a snow patch. It is now apparent that this gully is actually a considerable way from the col.

As one begins the traverse there is a very inviting grass ramp leading up about two rope lengths to a notch in a small buttress. We actually went up this and, although it effectively leads nowhere, the short abseil (from a piton) to retain the traverse is to be preferred to going around the buttress, which looked difficult.

A short distance further round from the bottom of our abseil was a gully which we believed was the one described in Spilsbury's route, as the cloud prevented us from seeing a better alternative on the sweeping face in front. We climbed the gully (three rope lengths), which was extremely loose, and found that it had placed us firmly upon the ridge. However, we were still amongst the complex tower system on the ridge and the climbing to go onwards was extreme indeed. As it was now raining heavily, we decided to abandon the attempt at this point.

Our return gave us one instance when the cloud suddenly parted for about five minutes and, although we still could not see the top, we could see most of the route. I would estimate that the snow patch gully, which we should have gone up if Spilsbury's route is to be believed, was at least five hundred meters further round the west face over some quite treacherous ground. It is not technically difficult in any way, but loose, slippery, and with very little protection on an extremely steep slope. The gully itself looked passable, with the cave pitch and jammed block mentioned in Spilsbury's guide in view. This long traverse is clearly necessary to avoid the difficult climbing actually on the ridge in amongst the towers. We could not see the 'easy snow' from the top of the gully to the summit as described by Spilsbury, but the way, as far as we could see, looked obvious and easy and it's possible that the snow is no longer there in August.

We climbed the short pitch we had abseiled down, which proved to be dirty, but not too difficult, and hence to the col. We returned to camp by the same route as the ascent and, although wet and frustrated, had no difficulty. Spilsbury gives a round trip time of eleven hours -

our experience would suggest this is definitely a best-you-could-hope-for good weather time.

We were very lucky, while walking up the glacier, to have repeated sightings of a pair of white tailed sea eagles that appeared to take flight from the walls and peak to the right of the glacier as one ascends. We did see these eagles on other days, but our short exploration of Rulten was worth it if only to get much closer to these magnificent birds.



Raw cod, cleaned, cut lengthwise and hung by the tail on outdoor racks to dry turn into the nutritious stickfish with their wood-like appearance. The cold, dry, wind conditions of the Lofoten winter are ideal for the drying process.

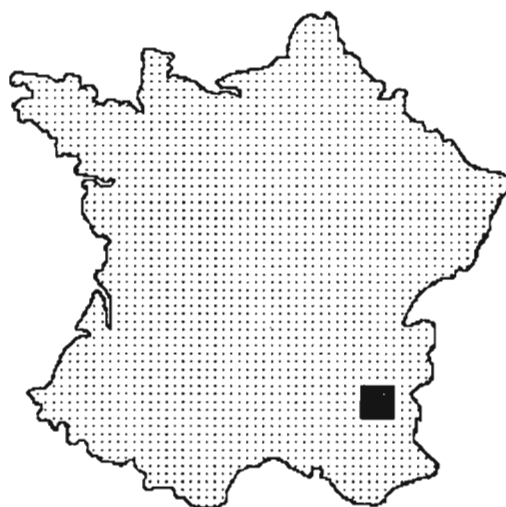
## Gouffre Berger

Jon Riley

We camped at La Molliere, known to the French as the 'British Camp'. It is a field filled with a herd of wandering cows, each armed with a bell. On a clear day it has a wonderful view of the Barre des Ecrins and its surrounding Alpine peaks. It is situated about forty minutes away from the entrance of this famous cave. On our first trip underground both Graham Salmon and I were excited and uncertain about the nature of the cave.

The entrance is much like a Yorkshire pot hole except that it is surrounded by trees and the sun was shining! Upon leaving the daylight behind you find yourself straddling a rotting wooden platform. This leads into four abseils descending finally into Cairn Hall, a memorable vertical shaft with white walls and a large cairn which serves as a memorial to a British caver. The scale was large, but I didn't think it was that big and we wondered what the all fuss was about.

Upon leaving Cairn Hall, we entered the Meanders. This was a long, narrow rift with wooden stemples which acted as foot holds, and a wire traverse to prevent you slipping into the darkness below. Both of these made carrying tackle bags a real pain. One more abseil led to the final section of the Meanders and the head of the famous Aldo's pitch. Graham descended first and disappeared underneath a boulder. I followed him closely, down the pitch and as I crawled under the boulder Graham called "Eh up Jon, you'll like this!"



We were standing in the Canyon of the Starless River. It was huge. We were completely surrounded by darkness. The only way of describing the feeling is that it was like standing outside, at night, with no moon or starlight and just the echo of our own voices and the river to remind us that we were underground.

We picked our way over boulders whilst discussing how amazing it was and before we realised it we had reached Lake Cadoux. The lake was completely empty, leaving only a muddy oval to mark its existence. We squelched across it and arrived at the head of The Little General pitch, a step of a twenty-five foot high boulder, followed shortly by the Tyrolean pitch which was free climbable because it was so dry.

A short walk from the pitch led to the head of Great Rubble Heap. The name is most apt. We scrambled and walked down this huge pile of boulders following cairns and markers, occasionally losing sight of one another, downhill for half an hour to reach camp one. We turned around and left the cave feeling excited about what was to come.

Several days later we found ourselves back at camp one with another member of the expedition, Joel Corrigan, and enough gear to rig the cave to the first sump. We set up camp and slept then at about seven in the morning we set off with the intention of reaching the bottom of the cave.

We passed the magnificent Hall of Thirteen, the gigantic white stalagmites growing clearer as we got closer. We picked our way through the maze of aquamarine gour pools until we stood beneath the formations craning our necks to be able to take in the size of them. Further down into the cave a short abseil led on to a huge calcite flowstone which we downclimbed to more dramatic formations. Among them a chamber filled with stalagmite bosses and rocks covered with white flowstone. In the middle of this enchanting scene was a cylindrical spout in the roof issuing a constant, heavy stream of water onto the rock below where it had created a perfectly round solution pool about three feet deep. We were impressed!

We followed the water for a short while, climbing over and around formations, up another calcite slope to a sort of col and down the far side to a small gap in the wall and the start of the Vestibule pitch. This was essentially a free climb protected by a rope rigged on natural stals and calcite threads. The bottom of the pitch marked the start of the Canals. We traversed above the ice cold blue-green water using frayed ropes and wire for assistance until at one point it was necessary to swing across the water 'monkey style'. When it came to Joel's turn he reached out halfway and, weighed down by his three enormous bags, slowly slipped into the canal. This incident, plus a few other water bound accidents, earned him the nickname 'Aquaman'.

The canals went over a series of short cascades and tyroleans. We were pleased

to be using gear and leaving bags as we went since it lightened our loads. However there was a problem. It appeared that we had already used a rope intended for Topographers cascade. We frantically checked the bags to discover that we had a one-hundred metre rope that we had not used due to a fixed rope being in place. We rigged the pitch from underneath an enormous metal bar left from the days of ladder rigging. As we abseiled under it we kept a wary eye on it. Climbing down the vast muddy boulder slope of the Grand Canyon we were all too aware of the black void to our left. A final series of pitches followed in quick succession, rigged from poor bolts set in rotten black limestone.

The noise of water was beginning to get annoying so we all donned balaclavas to suppress it. This meant that we spoke very little and were each absorbed in our own small pools of light, grimly determined to reach the bottom, working well as a team. I free climbed out of the infamous Little Monkey pitch and rigged my rope off two bolts. I abseiled into the tube below. It wasn't vertical and the water being sprayed about extinguished my carbide light and covered my glasses with water. I was completely disorientated and unable to see how much rope I had left. Slowly, I felt my way backwards into the darkness and out of the water.

Upon re-lighting my lamp I saw that I was at the head of the final - Hurricane pitch. With the last bolt we rigged it and abseiled to find out how it earned its name. Wind sprayed the water in all directions, the high chamber filled with deafening noise. We carried on climbing over boulders and traversing water. Passing the Thousand Metre Inlet to arrive at the first sump. We took pictures and congratulated one another. Already tired we faced a five hour return trip to get back to the comfort of our sleeping bags. After eighteen hours on the go, we slept well.



## Our Meets Programme

### F.D. Smith

In the formative years of the Yorkshire Ramblers' Club outdoor meets seem to have been quite rare. There was though in the first year of its existence a day meet at Hopper Lane held on Boxing Day. In the first twelve months there were four evening meets and the first 'Annual Meet' at the Ingleborough Hotel on the 9th to 11th October, three days after the first anniversary of its foundation. Despite appalling weather a fifteen strong party set out for Yordas Pot but a terrific rain storm prevented access. The second annual meet was staged at the Lion Hotel, Settle, when seventeen members attended. Hull Pot was descended by a large party.

Meets became more regular prior to the First World War with Easter, Summer and Autumn Meets. Soon after the war local outcrops were also visited, especially Almscliff which was relatively handy for the majority of members who lived in the Leeds area. Of course, alongside meets, members in small groups would visit all the mountain areas that are visited by present day members.

The early thirties saw a fuller programme of meets much as there is today. The first joint meet with the Wayfarers and Rucksack Clubs at the Robertson Lamb Hut in Langdale, was held in 1933. This hut was one of the first huts in Lakeland. The Rucksack Club had a hut in North Wales that was the venue for joint meets with that club. Joint meets were also enjoyed with the Derbyshire Pennine Club, rock climbing and potholing.

Ernest Roberts was a driving force, especially in the twenties and thirties. He instructed Geoffrey Gowing to organise

the first 'overseas' pothole meet at Enniskillen in Northern Ireland. It was to be the forerunner of many highly successful expeditions when many new underground works of nature were discovered. In 1938, meet leaders names were added to the meets lists, Langdale - Davidson, Newby Moss - Nelstrop, Alum Pot - Hilton and Roberts, Wass - Stembridge.

There was little activity during the Second World War though Chubb organised a camping meet at Mr. Kilburn's new farm in Chapel-le-Dale. This was the start of the Club's regular visits to that area and the legendary Hill Inn meets, with activities like revolving round the beam in room 4, or carrying a pint up rope ladders into and across the barn. Arthur Tallon was the undisputed champion at this.

Roberts recruited Cliff Downham to the Club and he was the doyen of meet leaders. Nothing was too much trouble for him, he believed in doing things correctly. The Club was introduced to meet reports. They were a happy reminder of a great weekend and served to keep the less active members in touch with the Club's activities. John Cullingworth was detailed off to produce the first one after the Whit Meet in 1956. He talks of snow filled gullies on An Teallach and the first mention of 'Munro Collectors'. The second report was by Stanley Marsden, he reported the Lyke Wake Walk, it was only the second time that the walk had been completed.

Those members not able to attend meets like to know how many of their contemporaries manage to get on meets. So in 1959 names of those attending were listed at the end of the report, though in those days names were never mentioned

in the text. Mention of the 'president's party' or two of the 'younger members' did this, was the only clue to who was doing what. There was no explanation for this cautious reticence. Meets were held at huts, at hotels, in caves and under canvas and always there was a great spirit and much activity.

Meets have been held in almost every Yorkshire Dale, in every valley in the Lake District, in every mountain area of Scotland. In all, the potholing and climbing areas of England, in Northern Ireland, and rock climbing at Lands End. Long walks are an ever popular event, always particularly well attended. The first Ladies' Weekend was held in 1986, although there are photographs of ladies on pothole meets in the early days. A Ladies' Evening was sheepishly proposed by Peter Harris in 1963 at a committee meeting and much to his surprise it was accepted. The redoubtable Roberts gave his approval reminding the committee that there had been such an event during his presidency in the twenties. It was a great success.

Low Hall Garth Meets will always be remembered along with Denis Driscoll and snow filled gullies year after year. Lamb stews, apple pies, suet puddings were provided by Denis for over twenty years. Actually Margaret Driscoll was the great provider, a fact that was brought to the attention of members at one of the wonderful meets at the Grove, Kentmere, when Margaret was presented with an ancient framed map of Westmoreland. The Grove meets were always the highlight meets of that year.

Cliff Downham made contact with the Grampian Club to arrange a winter meet.

The traditional winter meets were Easter but towards the end of the sixties they became poorly attended, probably because of family holiday commitments. Their hut, Inbhirfhaolain, in Glen Etive became a regular event in the calendar. The organisation was handed over to Derek Bush who has arranged this meet since 1970. In two of the nineties years Glen Nevis has been visited. Until the middle Eighties one could guarantee blue skies and excellent snow conditions.

There are now so many popular fixed meets in the year that it had become difficult to fit in many new venues. However a new departure was introduced in 1986 with the first Alpine meet. The success was possible because wives and families were permitted to attend. Each year there are older members, some making their first ascents of alpine peaks and younger members being introduced to the splendour of these great mountains.

From time to time a member puts forward a new idea, the Munro meet in 1983 was one such inspiration. Peter Swindells, slightly tongue in cheek, suggested that the Club try to put a man on the top of every Munro in Scotland in one week. Much planning was necessary, but Whitsun came round and the plan was put into action. Groups of members were allocated areas with one of the older members stationed in a hotel as controller. One by one, Munro after Munro saw the feet of the members. An eighty year old ascended Ben More on Mull, two pairs were given the task of the Cuillin Ridge, traversed in sunshine, another group was snowbound in the Cairngorms. Most members in other areas met with mixed weather, but the

meet was an enormous success with 72 taking part, the vast majority of them being members. Commitment was the key to that success, for one failure would have rendered the whole project a failure. Every Munro was climbed with the only resulting injury being one slightly sprained ankle.

With the great improvement in travel the Club has widened its horizons, every four years or so, a meet is to be arranged in a far away place. The first was in Bolivia in 1988 with Michael Smith as the meet leader. Two new routes were created one of them a second ascent. In 1992, the Club's centenary year several meets were held in Norway under the leadership of the then President, Derek Smithson. Endeavouring to climb many of the mountains that were first climbed by the Club's illustrious second president, Cecil Slingsby it took many members into areas new to them. In 1995 the intention is to hold a meet in the Himalaya.

The Club in its activities knows no bounds and the central features of meets continues to be activity and friendship.



## Expedition Diary 1988 - Bolivia

### Harvey Lomas

Extracts from the arrival at La Paz and a trip to Cuzco.

.... touch down at La Paz... city lies in the middle of a crater overlooked by the snow topped 21 000 ft. Illimani. ...spiralled down through the jumbled suburbs... Vendors were trading everywhere. Indian women wearing bowler hats and dresses with innumerable petticoats carried children or goods in blankets on their backs... chaotic, exciting scene...

..climb out of the crater...early drizzle, the traction between the coach tyres and the cobbled road surface was negligible. Passengers assisted by jumping up and down. The smell of burning rubber accompanied us until we reached the metalled main road that runs over the altiplano towards Lake Titicaca.

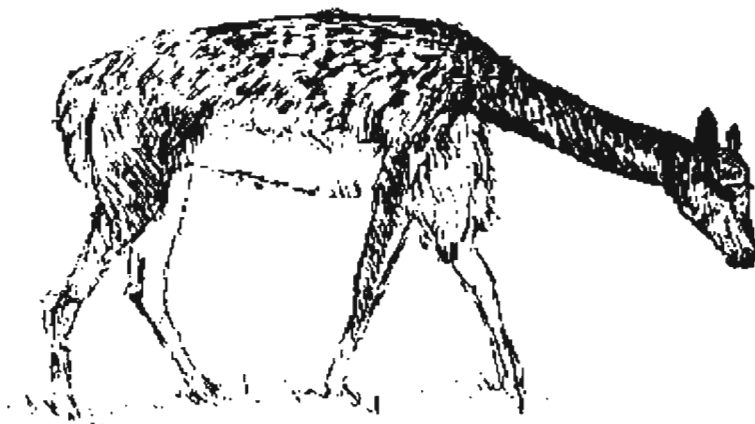
...across a dry river bed, lurching from side to side. Passing women with children on their backs wielding pickaxes to prize rocks from the gravel beds. An hour was spent passing through the depressing suburb of El Alto with its succession of rubble strewn streets and half built houses festooned with low slung electrical cables.

Across the narrows of Titicaca on choppy waters aboard a rickety boat. Everyone crowded together and standing upright. A boy poled us out from the shore the boat flopping over the black waves. Casually he brought the outboard motor into life...



We climbed gradually into thick depressing cloud and crossed a pass as rain gave way to snow. As if by magic, we emerged from the cloud into bright sunlight and into Copacabana, a small border town of Spanish colonial appearance on a peninsula jutting into Titicaca.

There ensued a marvellous train journey from the lake over an endless plateau to Cuzco. The clear air gave wonderful views to high mountains. From Cuzco another train to Machu Picchu zigzagged over a pass and down again into the Urubamba gorge.



The setting of this outpost of the Incas was for me the highlight of the excursion. From the terraces of the Machu Picchu, great domes of what appeared to be granite tower above the jungle and the white twisting torrent of the Urubamba.

Three days later we were back in La Paz. The Monday morning traffic

clogged the roads. Our jeep was well laden as the expedition members had gathered together vital supplies. The trekking company had supplied other items of gear. For the second time we climbed out of La Paz through El Alto's rubble streets. Our route after 30 miles turned off the surfaced road onto the wilds of the Bolivian Andes plateau. For hours we journeyed round the eastern edge of Lake Titicaca seeing domestic animals feeding along the shores. Our route eventually took us away from the succulent shores of the lake and on towards our barren destination.

There were no trees and only scrub vegetation. Neither were there signposts and the driver stopped at regular intervals for directions. Groups of campesinos sat by the track in some places and looked on impassively as we sped past trailing a cloud of dust. We climbed over endless hills and into an unhelpful and unwholesome mist accompanied by strong winds. Hamlets passed by but usually we saw nobody. Over the doorway of a building we read a sign "La Paz 100 km". Eventually the mist cleared, all around was a desolate, dusty dry landscape strewn with rocks. On the distant horizon, some forty miles away, a small white line of snow capped mountains could just be seen, the Apolobamba.

Route finding became more problematic as the daylight quickly faded and gave way to night. In the dark we bounced and rattled along a poor track heading for the school at Nubi Pampa. As we approached, the headlights picked out the white walls of the school house.

Dark shapes crept from the huts, heavily wrapped up against the bitter cold of this starlit night. Small groups of children looked on as we unloaded then the vehicle lurched back towards better tracks and La Paz. We had a meal then we settled down for a night in the classroom with its concrete floor. There was no electricity or water only a curling edged print of Simon Bolivar watching over us, occasionally joined by faces at the windows peering in.

A site for the base camp was chosen five miles up the valley past a series of lakes and the equipment transported to it. I felt weak from a stomach bug and took some time to acclimatise. We were at 15,000 ft and surrounded by 19,000 ft mountains. At dusk I returned to the school house, exhausted and dehydrated, every step had to be forced so that the school house came nearer. I opened the door to the cry from Michael Smith, Ian Crowther and John Sterland, "What are you doing here?" "Because my gear's here" I replied. "Oh no it's not" came the reply. That night, in a temperature of -10 °C, I slept on a concrete floor wrapped in a



## Expedition Diary

# 1957 - Nepal

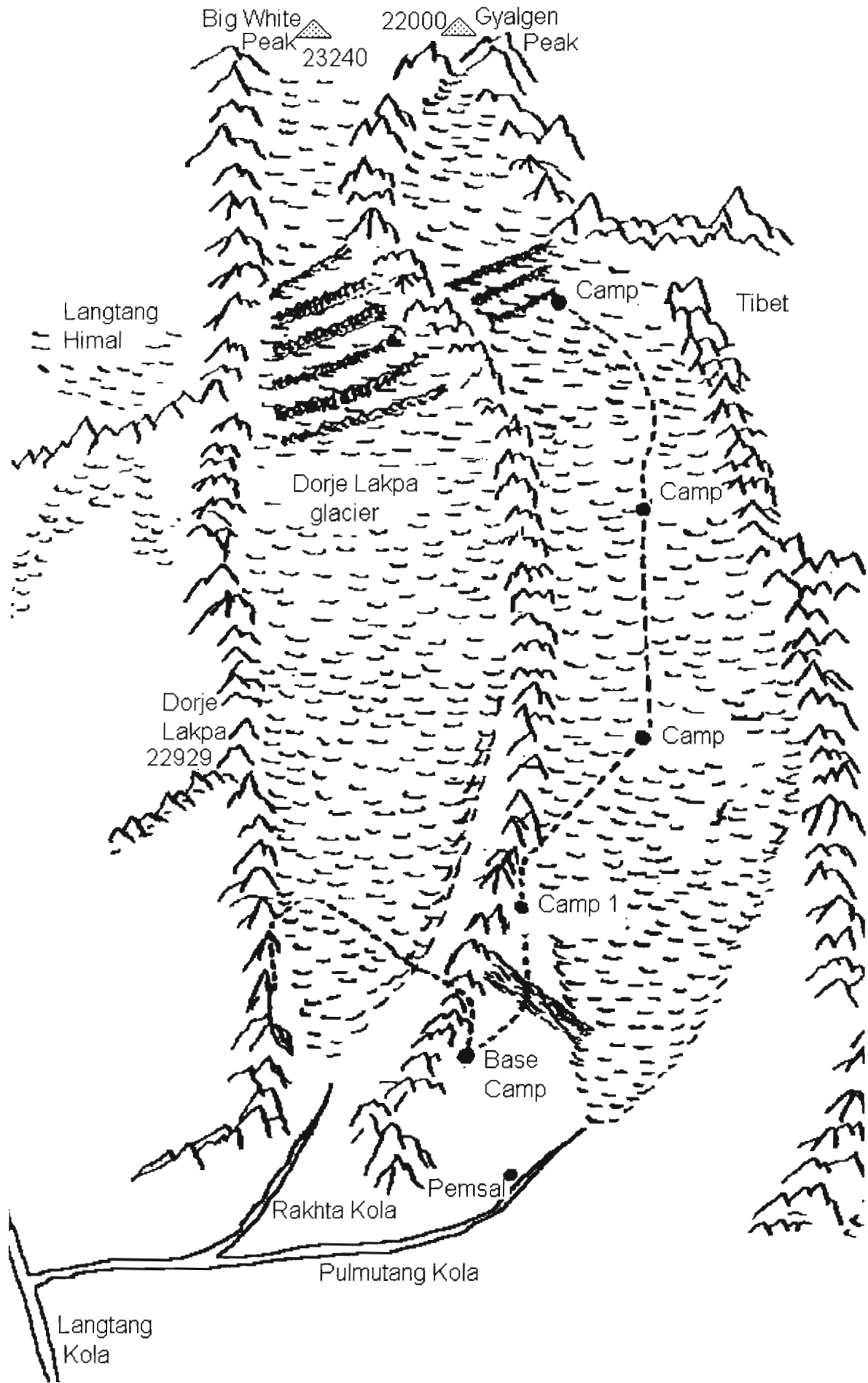
## Maurice Wilson

Extracts from notes made in Maurice's Himalayan Journal during the walk-in.

For the full report of the Club expedition see the 1958 Journal. The team were Crosby Fox, George Spenceley, Wilfred Anderson, Dan Jones, Arthur Tallon and Maurice Wilson.

April 13

Porters went rather better this morning. The track led through the jungle. Creepers were entwined everywhere and trunks lay in crazy fashion. Tree trunks were covered with moss and had to be walked on like 'walking the greasy pole.' Kukris were much in evidence, hacking a way. There were more flowers to be seen now and I took photos of some champions. In time, we reached the Rakhta Kola, the crossing of which was not too bad. A few poles were thrown across, though they were hardly necessary. Once over the other side the porters made it clear that they wanted to camp, and camp we did at 10,430ft. Camp fires were blazing all over the place and it was quite a job locating food boxes. Sherpas and Sherpanis were roosting everywhere. We have decided to use Ochrenis for the return journey and had a palaver with their head-man. I was given an interesting demonstration on how to make a fire using only a piece of iron, a stone and some cotton. They light their cigarettes that way. Only the men wear rings. Some wear bangles. They use a fan of leaves as a plate from which to eat.



April 14

Arrival at Base Camp, Pomba Serebu.

The porters were more anxious to get away than we were, this morning. Obviously they wanted to get to Base Camp and back to the valley the same day. After a pleasant walk through the woods we reached Pemsall (11,416ft). They are excellent pathfinders. Stopped for a brew, during which Crosby showed us his wedding pictures. Set off an hour later. At first the slope was easy but soon became quite steep. I managed to get into a rhythm, making height steadily and would probably have made the whole ascent non-stop. Alas, one man let loose a High Altitude Box N°6, which went crashing down the hillside, spilling out all its contents en route. Arthur and I stayed behind and collected what we could. The Sherpas made the man who dropped the box carry the kitchenware box, which was much heavier. The slope now became much harder. When we reached the top, Arthur, Andy and I had lunch. It was cold. Only about ten minutes further on we came upon the others. They had selected a camp site amid the snows and were levelling the site.

There followed much haggling about the pay. Initially, we offered each man R16, but eventually settled for R17 plus ten cigarettes. At first, only the Ochreni men accepted this, but when the Tempathang men saw us paying them, they soon crowded round. The finale came when we found that one man had been underpaid. We blamed Nima Lama but it wasn't really his fault. Whacking dinner and everyone cheerful.

April 15

Did not have a good night's sleep...too cold. Woke to find magnificent views and snow on the tents. This site is poor and we decide to move higher up. We are all keyed up at the prospect of moving into action. Dan and I are to reconnoitre a way to Camp One and I have to spend a good deal of time getting things together. Of course, I would have to catch a cold now and do not feel too good. Crosby and George have seen some Imperial Eagles.

April 16

Everyone up early and ready for the 'off'. Crosby and Arthur, George and Andy are to go surveying. Dan and I, with Sherpas, are to try to find a site for Camp One, on the Phurbi Chyachambu Glacier. All left camp at 6:50 a.m. on a fine morning. The leaders struck up a snow slope that proved extremely tiring. Eventually, Dan called down to say we were too high. I tried to traverse lower down but as soon as I stepped into the couloir, I was up to my thighs in snow. Crossed lower down in similar conditions. Very tiring. Still looking for the others when I heard a shout from Crosby's station waving me over to join them. Mingma came to meet me with some mint cake. Observed a curious phenomenon, plates of ice being whipped off the snow surface by eddies of wind, though it didn't seem very windy to me.



Maurice Wilson surveying above Camp Three



## The Sulphur Mines of Kawah Ijen John Middleton

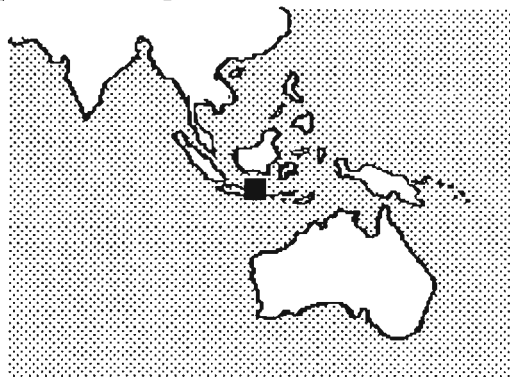
At the eastern extremity of Java is the hauntingly beautiful Ijen plateau. Its lower slopes are clothed in an almost impenetrable jungle whilst the plateau itself, at 1,800 m to 2,400 m, presents a dramatically different landscape reminiscent of the African savannah. Dominating the skyline are six volcanic peaks, some still showing signs of their inner torment. Across this land there winds a tortuous track worn hard by the feet of sulphur miners. It is a wilderness where adventures are to be had.

Our experiences began with midnight earth tremors in Banuwangi, our base and an atmospheric coastal city just beneath the mountains. In the mystical early morning light it progressed to a navigational challenge taking in banana, rubber, cocoa and finally coffee plantations before we were forced to abandon our 4 x 4 vehicle. A much smaller track continued into the dense jungle where for three hours we followed a steeply ascending route. It was a jungle full of ancient tree ferns, epiphytic plants, dripping mosses, orchids and of hidden noises. Next came the plateau with its two metre high grass then the final wearying scramble through red tipped vaccinium scrub to the edge of what must be one of the worlds most spectacular sites, the still active volcanic crater of Kawah Ijen.

Against the background of brilliant blue sky an enclosed abyss more than 1 km across and over 200 m deep lay at our feet. Precipitous, banded grey walls plunged directly into an almost luminescent turquoise blue lake over which floated ever moving wisps of steam from the hot, 55 °C, sulphurous acid of the lake. On the side immediately below where the path arrived is a small

yellow beach. Behind this is a steeply ascending slope from which issues, amongst many stinking steam vents, a copious flow of liquid sulphur. Steps have been worked down the lowest part of the cliff to give a precarious descent. On the beach, beautiful colloidal crystals of sulphur protrude into the lake whilst at eye level the ever present layer of mist divides the scene in two. On the hillside behind, the whistling fumaroles are surrounded by magnificent diamondesque like sulphur crystals tempting entry to their fiery interiors. Liquid sulphur erupts, almost boil like, from small cones to be captured by iron pipes down which it flows to a more level surface before solidifying. Here, it is broken up and loaded into wicker baskets fastened to each end of springy pole. Each basket hold about 40 kilos. The short, deeply browned and muscular workers carry these loads across their shoulders. Wearing trainers they toil up to the crater rim and descend ten kilometres to a truck waiting in the jungle. The round trip takes the whole day and for that they earn roughly three pence per kilo.

Whilst contemplating the scene, totally mesmerised, it is not difficult to imagine that the year is 100 BC and that these are Roman quarry slaves. Alternatively, perhaps this is a foretaste of Hades as we wait for our boat to cross the great river Styx. Anyway it is a scene that will live with me for the rest of my life and an experience that still seems unreal in its primeval magnificence.



**The Smuggler of Low Hall Garth**

**Maurice F Wilson**

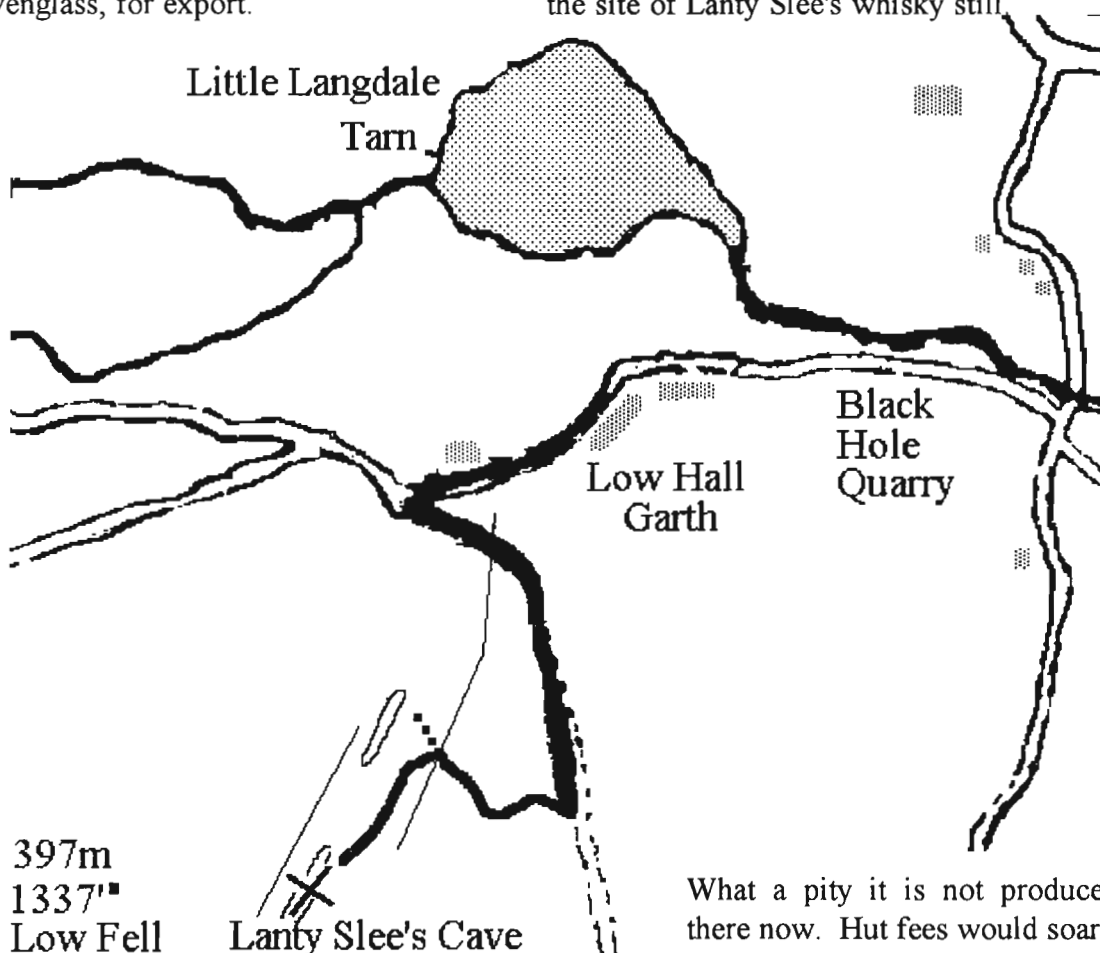
In the middle of the nineteenth century the smuggling of whisky, rum and tobacco was rife. It was prevalent in the North and South of Britain. Remember 'Jamaica Inn'? In Cumberland and Westmoreland, the main commodity was whisky. Moses Rigg was one of those very active in this trade and, probably, Moses trod which leads from Honister to Ennerdale was named after him. Certainly there was a small stone hut perched near the summit of Great Gable which I have twice, unsuccessfully, tried to locate. Its remains are likely to be near the exit to Smugglers Chimney.

However, the most famous distiller in the Lakes was Lanty Slee. He had stills in several places, notably at Lingmoor Fell, Red Tarn, Tilberthwaite Gill and Low Fell...a flank of Wetherlam immediately above Low Hall Garth. Much of his produce was surreptitiously sold locally. Nevertheless, he did a lucrative trade transporting much of his whisky by ponies at night over the Wrynose Pass to Ravenglass, for export.

Of course, it was vital to avoid detection by any excise men who were on the prowl. So, Lanty devised his own form of radar...an effective but cheaper method than our present sophisticated Early Warning System. He employed a dog which clearly indicated to him the approach of strangers, but did not bark.

According to Harry Griffin, Lanty Slee had a still at Hall Garth, but exactly where is not known. I have, however, several times visited the site of his still on Low Fell and if you fancy looking for it, here's how.

On leaving our Club cottage, walk up past the car park and join the track over to Tilberthwaite. Follow this track for a while and, at around 800ft, turn west off the track and go up the hillside on your right. This is Low Fell. Look out for three deep quarries close together and in a line. At one end of the base of the middle one you will see what was once a cave hewn into the rock. I remember it when it was open, but it is now blocked up. This ingenious and almost impregnable hideaway is the site of Lanty Slee's whisky still.



What a pity it is not produced there now. Hut fees would soar !

## OBITUARY GLADYS SELLERS

It is with sorrow that we report the sudden and unexpected death on 24th February of Gladys Sellers of the Lancashire Caving and Climbing Club.

For those members who may not be familiar with this thriving and active club the significance of Gladys cannot be over-emphasised. To describe her role is virtually to describe the post-war history of the club. She was president twice, Vice President for 28 years, Editor for 11 years and served on the committee for 45 years.

Gladys was a sound mountaineer, pot-holer and down-hill skier. She could be seen rock climbing to a high standard

at an age when even members of the YRC are beginning to think twice about it.

Perhaps Gladys was wider known as a guide book writer and contributor to the Climber and Hillwalker. Her articles on the testing of gear showed an objectivity which reflected her profession as a research chemist.

Gladys Sellers was a truly remarkable woman and her death will leave a gap, particularly in her club, which will not easily be filled. We send our sympathy to her relatives, close friends and to the LCCC.

H.R.



YRC mail has been subjected to drugs checks. Your editor has recently been in correspondence with the Dutch Alpine Club on matters relating to the 1988 Apolobamba Expedition and their trip to the same area this year. In return for the information supplied their leader sent, through the post, crayons and stencils for our children. The two parcels were intercepted by HM Customs and Excise, Dover, opened and checked for concealed drugs. It appears to have been a fruitless search.



## Apolobamba Expedition Report

The report from the 1988 Expedition is still in demand with about fifteen copies being sent to clubs or individuals each year. Due to this demand another fifty copies have been printed and are available at the old price of £5 to outside agencies.



## CHRISTMAS MEET - BLENCATHRA CENTRE

3rd to 5th December 1993

The weather forecast for Friday night promised winds from the Southwest rising to 50 mph with rain; the rain clearing the Lake District by morning and possibly moving in from Scotland by Saturday afternoon. Unlike the time when the forecaster missed the chance of a lifetime to announce that a hurricane was imminent, the forecast was accurate and arrivals on Friday evening were blown in on clouds of spray, making the turn from the A594 into Threlkeld doubly hazardous. The navigation began at that point for those of us who had not previously visited the Blencathra centre which the National Trust has converted from a sanatorium into holiday accommodation.

The Salutation Inn in Threlkeld became the focus for most people through the evening, the tiny snug being packed with YRC men driven from the central room by the log fire which was so hot that no-one could remain in front of it.

Anyone who awoke in the night heard the rain driving against the windows. I, for one, was fervently hoping that the weather forecaster was right otherwise it would turn into a most unpleasant day.

Coming down to breakfast one was impressed with a magnificent panorama, not the eggs bacon and sausages, but the one from the picture window showing the hills southward as far as the tip of Gable, with St John in the Vale in the foreground and Derwentwater and surrounding hills to the right. There were touches of snow on the highest tops highlighting the pictorial effect.

As usual, members and friends sorted themselves into like-minded groups and headed in various directions. When 43 members attend a meet it is impossible to track all the activities in detail. I can only write accurately of the party of five in which I was included.

On leaving the Blencathra Centre, the temperature felt reasonable, but the coldness of the wind was surprising as we walked along the Skiddow House track before turning up onto Lonscale Fell and heading over Little Man towards the summit of Skiddaw.

On this ridge we found a dusting of snow underfoot, just enough to make it seasonal. Looking back, the ridge of Blencathra above 2000 ft was covered with white from end to end.

It was here we met David Smith and Mike Godden making use of the short break from the kitchen to get a breath of air. We did not encourage them to hang about to admire the view over distant hills with glimpses across the Solway, but rather reminded them of their responsibilities to the other members and suggested that they should start back without delay to begin organising festivities. Between Skiddaw and Little Calva we had a short break for food and thermos flasks of tea sitting in the heather out of the wind, before detouring slightly for a view of Dash Falls.

On Great Calva it was decided to head for Skiddaw House and then make our way along the track back to base rather than going up Blencathra and finish in the dark.

It was a good day's walk; strenuous enough to be satisfying with good going underfoot, views most of the time, and a variety of interesting conversation.

Mulled wine had been announced for 6.30 p.m., and well before that members were sitting at the tables. The mulled wine began to bring out the stories of the day and others to do with YRC life. Several hilarious ones emerged, one on the verge of political incorrectness which has given us another source of humour. The politically incorrect one concerned a hoax perpetuated on the Secretary by one of our long standing members, and involved falsifying an application for membership, and was recounted with gusto and a high standard of mimicry.

Another story originated during the day when several senior members arrived at a swollen beck with water rushing high over the stepping stones. One who considered himself more able than the rest jumped across and, although built more on the lines of David than Goliath, manhandled a gate back to the others to help them across, only to find that they had already fallen in.

Through the dinner, the shape of the day and the image of the Yorkshire Ramblers' Club appeared:

"... Raven Crag but it was running with water so we moved round the corner ..."  
"... the fox just sat up there on Carrock Fell amongst the rocks watching the hounds below ..."  
"... flying Meteors in the 1950's ..."    "... when I got to the reference the script was in Latin ..."  
"... It was quite a small boat when I went to Antarctica ... the Americans do not co-operate ..."  
"... painting exhibitions ..."    "... pensions ..."    "... next expedition ..."  
"... Himalayas ..."    "... replacement for the Journal ..."  
"... Hobcarton End ..."    "... Newlands round ..."    "... Glen Etive ..."

After the Christmas pudding, cheese and biscuits, thin mints and coffee had gone down, eventually the conversation subsided to allow the President to propose the loyal toast. Then washing up could start.

For the evening's entertainment, John Devonport showed slides of the 1985 Saastal alpine meet. David Smith showed miscellaneous ones and Graham Salmon excellent shots from the Gouffre Berger. Chris and Alistair Renton advanced the technology and showed a video they had made setting out the history of the Club.

Sunday morning was dry but very windy and the members departed in their various directions; some to visit older members, some on the long drive South, some back onto the hills and rocks. Our small group spent the morning ascending Blencathra in a wind which threatened to blow us off the mountain, before descending by an easy route. On the way down we met two of the Club's officers on the way up, who told us yet another hilarious story of a committee member being left in a car park on the way to a committee meeting, and how, miles further on, only when he did not respond to conversation was it discovered that he was not asleep in the back of the car.

I am sure that I was not the only member to drive home in a happy frame of mind.

The meet report would not be complete without thanking everyone who made it a success, but particularly thanking David and Mike for the sheer hard work they put into the weekend.    J.H.H.

Attending:		The President - Arthur Salmon
Ken Aldred	Denis Armstrong	Alan Brown
David Brookes (G)	Derek Bush	Albert Chapman
Clifford Cobb	Alan Clare (G)	Derek Clayton
Arthur Craven	Ian Crowther	Robert Crowther
John Devonport	Eddie Edwards	Iain Gilmour
Mike Godden	Ralph Hague	David Hick
Jeff Hooper	John Jenkins (G)	Tim Josephy
David Laughton	Gerry Lee	William Lee
Harvey Lomas	David Martindale	Rory Newman
Peter Price	Chris Renton	Alistair Renton
Harry Robinson	Graham Salmon	John Schofield
Michael Smith	David Smith	Peter Swindells
Tony Smythe	Trevor Temple (G)	Philip Wilkinson (G)
Frank Wilkinson	Maurice Wilson	Roy Wilson

LOWSTERN  
7th to 9th January 1994

Friday afternoon saw the meet leader preparing chilli con carne, and the arrival of the first two pensioners, who immediately took advantage of the sunny afternoon to go see the waterfalls above Ingleton. They were disappointed by the lack of water in the stream, despite the floods elsewhere, but delighted by the colours. More members arrived during the evening and later into the night after the reporter was in bed.

The reporter was chosen in the time honoured manner. For a potholing meet it had to be a non-potholer. And in the same manner the invitation had to be accepted.

The potholing party came back on Saturday with that distinct, verbally obvious attitude that comes from having a good and successful day. The novices talked of their lack of strength and/or technique to climb ladders, and the experts pretended, as usual, that they didn't have to struggle. At least the club now has some younger experts who make this almost believable. This seemed to be a feature of the meet. There were fewer pensioners and the average age may have been as low as forty. The success of the day had been that all ten of the participants had bottomed Ireby Fell Cavern.

Most of the rest of the meet spent the day on Ingleborough which had lots of interesting snow. We cut steps, kicked steps and one member used crampons - "step-in" of course. One party reached the summit plateau four times and finished by traversing on steep snow just below the summit from North to South, returning to Clapham via Horton. The weather was cold in the wind on the tops, but fine until late evening when those visiting the New Inn had to face very heavy rain. But this was after a great meal.

Sunday started no earlier than Saturday, with the first member up at about eight o'clock., but this time the electricity had run out, so the day started with hunting for a fifty pence piece. There were noticeably fewer people for breakfast than had been at dinner. Some had slept elsewhere and one or two left early on Sunday. The first party out went for a short walk up Gragareth. The top was in thick mist, as it had been the day before, and the snow was all soft and unexciting. Few felt like a lot of exercise, but a party of three went digging in East Kingsdale. The clean and tidy appearance of all the others met indicated a restful day not to be investigated.

D. A. S.

Attending:

Alan Linford	David Atherton	Alan Kay
Arthur Salmon	Ms White? (G)	Alistair Renton
Claire Hewick (G)	Bill Todd	Bruce Benzley (G)
Eddie Edwards	David Smith	Derek Smithson
Ian Crowther	Ged Champion	Graham Salmon
Lisa Stanbury (G)	Joel Corrigan (G)	Jon Riley
Peter Price	Mike Kinder	Nick Welch (PM)
	Richard Josephy	Terry Long (PM)

## LADIES WEEKEND

8th to 19th April 1994

The Meet was based on the Eccle Riggs Manor Hotel, Broughton-in-Furness. Friday, for those who arrived early, caravaners in the main, was memorable only for heavy rain, hail, thunder and snow in higher places, with one brief sunny interlude around teatime.

Saturday started fine, with some blue sky and a covering of snow. After an interesting drive up the Duddon Valley, from Broughton, those participating in the nearest thing to an organised walk met at Hinning House Close Car Park more or less on schedule.

Somewhat later they were pursued by one family who, having spent the night at Low Hall Garth, attempted to cross to the Duddon valley by Wrynose Pass. Turned back by snow at the top they faced a frantic drive round by Coniston and Broughton.

The main party followed the Duddon downstream to Birks Bridge and then took to the eastern side of the valley over common land and water-logged farmland to Thrang, Tongue House and Loft House, re-joining the Road approaching Seathwaite. Here the party met its first major challenge in the form of the Newfield Inn, into which certain members were seen to disappear at only 1130 hours!

From hereon there were two groups following more or less the same course at about a forty minute interval. Passing High Wallowbarrow Farm and Wallowbarrow Craggs, the party returned up the west side of the valley to Grassguards. A few returned directly to the cars at this juncture, but most followed Grassguards Gill in order to climb Harter Fell from the south west, an undertaking not made any easier by the Forestry Commission. The first party was on the summit well before the heavy snow commenced, the second group not fairing quite so well. The descent from Harter Fell to Birks is steepish at the best of times but a covering of snow made things more invigorating. Some twenty-nine persons took part and more than half completed the walk. Other walks took place according to usually reliable sources but details were hard to come by.

Forty-three sat down to the Meet Dinner on the Saturday evening.

Sunday dawned and stayed fine, a brilliantly clear day with snow from about 1800 feet. Seven couples took part in an uncoordinated assault on Black Combe, a modest hill but exceptional viewpoint. Some started by way of Whitcomb Beck, others from a higher point further north. There were sundry encounters on and around the summit. Outstanding views of the Lakeland hills, Howgills and Pennines provided a fitting end to the weekend for those involved.

I. L.

Members and Guests:	Mike & Marcia Godden	The President, Arthur Salmon
	John & Janet Hemingway	Roy & Margaret Salmon
Dennis and Joan Armstrong	Ian & Una Laing	John & Pat Schofield
Alan and Madge Brown	Gerry & Margaret Lee	Geoff & Mary Schovell
John and Irene Barton	Alan & Angie Linford	Michael, Helen & Richard Smith
Derek & Yvonne Bush	Bill & Brenda Lofthouse	David & Elspeth Smith
Cliff & Betty Cobb	Nevil & Mary Newman	John & Barbara Sterland
Ian & Dorothy Crowther	Harry & Margaret Robinson	Herbert & Elma Wunsch (G)

## LOW HALL GARTH

28th to 30th January 1994

The annual meet at Low Hall Garth this year was a great success, even though there was room for improvement in the weather department.

In total twenty members attended and two members came for the day.

Most members arrived on Friday and, as usual, there was a shortage of beds resulting in the younger members having to sleep on the floor. When I arrived there was only a handful of members in the hut so off I went to the local hostelry.

Saturday we were woken by Andrew with cups of tea in hand. Most members did not rise too quickly as the weather outside left a lot to be desired. Breakfast was fully English and enjoyed by everyone. Due to the weather conditions, most members went on low level walks.

A party of six set off by way of Tilberthwaite to Coniston and Tarn Hows. Derek Smithson set out by himself to Carr Crag, Three Shire Stones and then Blea Tarn. The President, President Elect, Iain Gilmour and I set off towards Carrs but I had to retreat as my new plastic boots were giving me quite a bit of pain. The other three continued and went onto Coniston Old Man and then down to Coniston. The two David's also went to Coniston, while David Smith and Alan Linford attended to the water at the cottage before heading to Lingmoor Fell.

All the parties returned safely, the last back being the President, President Elect and Iain Gilmour. (It is said that Derek Bush holds the record for being the last back at Low Hall Garth.) The evening meal was excellent and we all thoroughly enjoyed it. Many thanks go to Andrew.

The rest of the evening was spent discussing the day, and a few of the members went down to the local pub and returned with Tim Josephy on his way back from the Cairngorms.

Sunday morning again saw Andrew with his cups of tea, which were most welcome. Breakfast was again full English. The weather was a slight improvement on the previous day but still pretty poor. Some members made for home early and others opted for low level routes. Our party, David Smith, Iain Gilmour, Derek Bush and I, went for a brisk walk round Whitbar Scar before heading home.

All in all, this was an excellent meet, although the weather was not too kind.

Thanks must go to Andrew for his excellent catering and organisation.

A. R.



Attending:

Arthur Salmon  
Derek Bush  
Derek Smithson  
David Smith  
Alan Linford  
Bill Todd  
Gerry Lee  
Raymond Harben  
Andrew Duxbury  
Iain Gilmour  
Eddie Edwards  
Alistair Renton  
Arthur Craven  
John Barton  
Cliff Cobb  
Ian Lang  
Trevor Temple (G)  
David Martindale  
John Sterland  
David Hick

Day Visitors:

Ken Aldred  
Tim Josephy

# GLEN ETIVE

18th to 20th February 1994

Although the majority of members and guests usually arrive on Friday evening, one member camped at Tyndrum on the Monday, in time for the blizzard on Tuesday. On Wednesday he was rewarded with calm sunny weather and superb snow conditions which tempted him onto Ben Lui. His move was then to Glen Etive and Ben Starav on Thursday, where he lost a lens from his sun goggles.

Another member camped at the top of Glen Etive on the Monday, experiencing weather similar to the Tyndrum single. High winds were experienced on Thursday and Meal a Bhuiridh and Aonach Mor were ascended during the week.

Thursday evening saw the arrival at Inbhirfhaolin of the usual early birds. The Glen was beautifully lit by the setting sun, highlighting the frozen river. The river bed stones looked like a collection of brown polo mints with centres of snow driven against them from the north east. However, the prospect of good weather on Friday was dashed when our "ace" forecaster drew attention to poor weather the next day.

The hut showed signs of considerable improvement works, and warmth was ensured from a new multifuel stove. The wall separating the small kitchen area had been removed and most of the room panelled. Apparently the intention is to convert the old wood store into a kitchen, leaving the whole of the down stairs room available as a lounge/dining area. A considerable improvement to that experienced in the past.

Friday saw seventeen members and one guest engaged in expeditions to Beinn Achaladair, Beinn Sgulaire, Stob Ban (Grey Corries), Sgurr Eilde Mor, and Bheinn na h-Uamha. Two members went skiing in the White Corries where it is written on the Fairy Winds that aials, moguls and other ethereal flights (of fancy) were possibly achieved. Well! After that lot, who knows what the next day might bring.

Saturday dawned showing signs of rain alongside the potential for brighter patches. Numbers had increased by six, and twenty three members and guests set out to experience the varied conditions of the day. Beinn Sgulaire was again ascended, and the party on Ben Starav found the sun goggle lens which had been lost on the Thursday. Other tops were Beinn Teallach, Beinna Chaorainn, Stob Coire nan Lochan, Aonach Beag NE Buttress, Crowberry Gully-Buachaille Etive Mor, and Carn a Chuillinn - Glen Doe. Two members travelled to Drumochter to nordic ski, but faced with gale force wind, extreme cold and a walk in carrying skis, drove back to Alt a mhuilin for a pleasant afternoon walk in the lee of Ben Nevis. Walking in Glen Etive was enjoyed, and with the area being squeezed between two fighting weather systems, some very strange cloud formations were observed.

Sitka deer were seen near the hut, and a buzzard was observed on a concrete post by the Fort William Distillery, apparently observing traffic on the A82. The previous day a large flock of Whooper Swans were seen on Lochnan Gabhar - Glen Gour.

Most members commenced their various journeys home after breakfast on the Sabbath. Superb views were experienced from Rannoch Moor across Black Mount to Stob Ghabhar where the snowfields shone brilliantly in the morning sun.

Twisting and SC Gullies were the target of two groups on Stob Coire nan Lochan, and another party ascended Beinn Dubhchraig on their way south.

Some members intended staying until Monday with plans to ski in the White Corries and ascend Ben Achaladair.

Altogether, twenty four members and guests enjoyed their weekend with good snow and ice conditions.

F. M. G.

Attending:

Denis Armstrong	Beinn Achaladair
Adrian Bridge	Stob Ban (Grey Corries)
Derek Bush	Aonach Beag
Albert Chapman	Meal a Bhuiridh
Ian Crowther	Bein a Chaorainn
Eddie Edwards	Carn a Chiullinn
Iain Gilmour	Beinn na h-Uamha
Mike Godden	Beinn Teallach
Richard Jones (G)	Ben Lui
David Handley	Ben Starav
David Hick	Aonach Mor
Howard Humphreys	Stob Core nan Lochan
Cliff Large	Beinn Sgulaire
Harvey Lomas	Beinn Dubhchraig
John McLean	Crowberry Gully
Doug McLean (G)	Twisting Gully
Dave Martindale	SC Gully
Peter Price	Sgurr Eilde Mor
Alistair Renton	SC Gully
Graham Salmon	
David Smith	
Derek Smithson	
Barrie Wood	
Daniel Wood (G)	