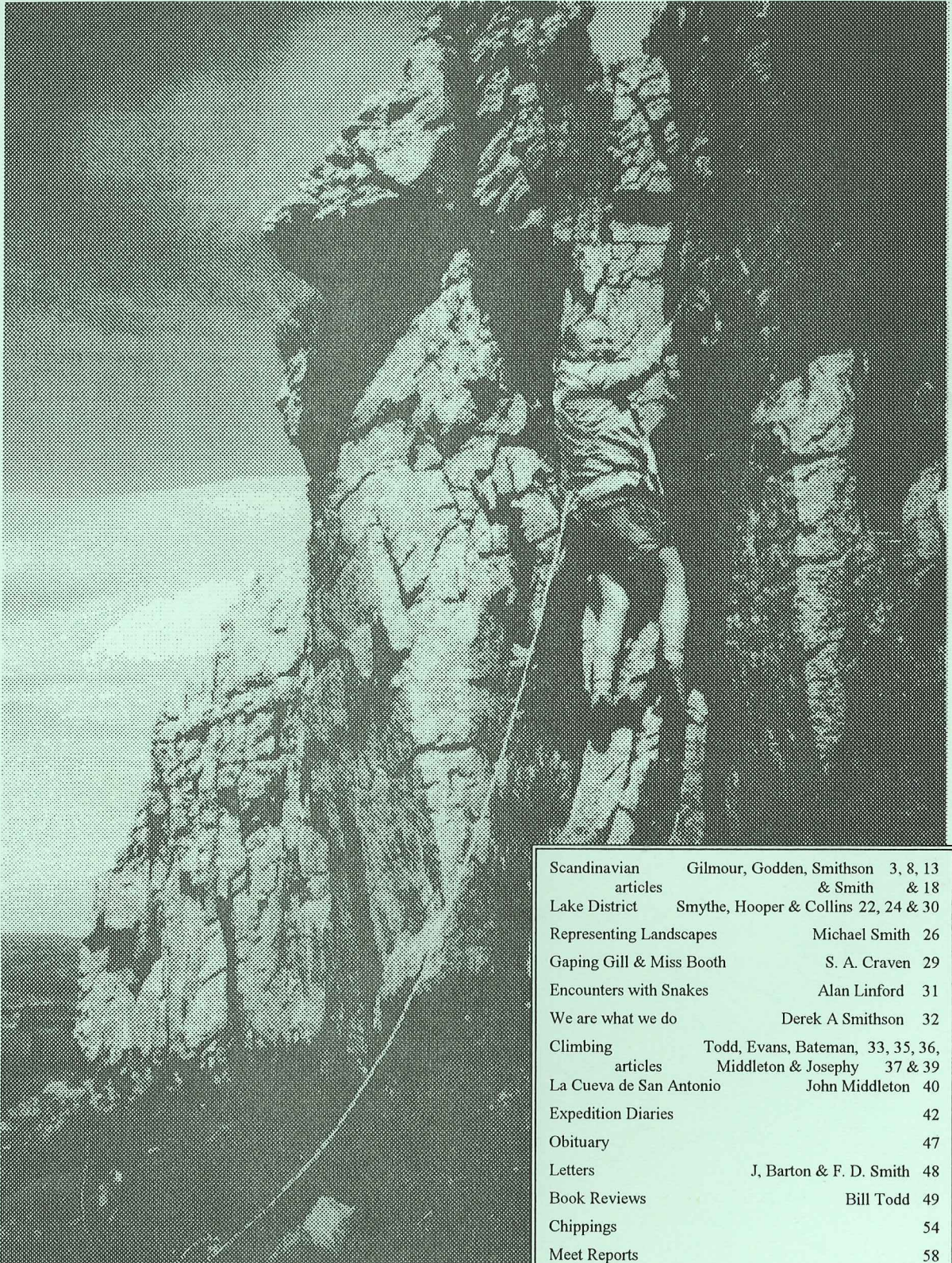


# Yorkshire Rambler



Photograph: Bill Todd on Fiddle, Raven Scar, Ingleborough taken by Jack Wilson

Scandinavian articles	Gilmour, Godden, Smithson & Smith	3, 8, 13 & 18
Lake District	Smythe, Hooper & Collins	22, 24 & 30
Representing Landscapes	Michael Smith	26
Gaping Gill & Miss Booth	S. A. Craven	29
Encounters with Snakes	Alan Linford	31
We are what we do	Derek A Smithson	32
Climbing articles	Todd, Evans, Bateman, Middleton & Josephy	33, 35, 36, 37 & 39
La Cueva de San Antonio	John Middleton	40
Expedition Diaries		42
Obituary		47
Letters	J. Barton & F. D. Smith	48
Book Reviews	Bill Todd	49
Chippings		54
Meet Reports		58



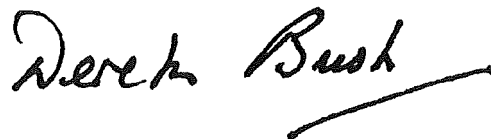
## Foreword by the President

For a person of no literary accomplishments writing this foreword is akin to taking an examination, i.e. writing your name and number at the top of the page, staring blankly at the questions and hoping inspiration will come.

However much is afoot within the Club. The expedition is imminent. The 1996 Summer issue of the Rambler will contain full reports. Tim Josephy will be in Patagonia at the time this is published. Will Lacey and David Laughton have been to Greenland. If I am using this space for some gentle coercion, so be it.

Meanwhile in this issue subjects range from Cecil Slingsby's letter to Greig, through Tales of the Unexpected (not by Roald Dahl) and the merits of snow shoes by one of our regular contributors to reminiscences of climbing in Snowdonia in the 30's.

All mixed together, I am sure they will make a good brew!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Derek Bush". The signature is written in a cursive style and is underlined with a single horizontal stroke.

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The opinions expressed in this publication are not necessarily those of the Y.R.C, its Officers nor those of the Editor. An information sheet entitled 'Notes for Contributors' is available to anyone considering submitting material for inclusion in subsequent editions.

# Contents

A Walk in the Hardangervidda	Iain Gilmour	3
Norway 1994	Mike Godden	8
Swedish Lapland	Derek A Smithson	13
Playing in the Snow	Derek A Smithson	18
Stolnostinden	F. David Smith	21
An Ennerdale Horseshoe	Tony Smythe	22
Tales of the Unexpected	Jeff Hooper	24
Representing Landscapes	Michael Smith	26
Gaping Gill and the mysterious Miss Booth	S. A. Craven	29
A good day up Coniston Old Man	Derek Collins	30
Encounters with Snakes	Alan Linford	31
We are what we do	Derek A Smithson	32
Climbing on Raven Scar	am Todd	33
A Day to Remember and a Lesson Learned	Arthur Evans	35
The Monch	Tim Bateman	36
Hot Rock - Spanish Style	John Middleton	37
Elidir Revisited	Tim Josephy	39
La Cueva de San Antonio	John Middleton	40
Expedition Diaries: Bolivia '79/ '88	Michael Smith	42
Nepal 1957	Maurice Wilson	43
The True Top of Tyke-land	mm Todd	45
Slingsby, Mountains and Music	Ray Harben	46
Obituary: Geoff Scovell		47
Letters		48
Reviews: Hands of a Climber		49
CPC Handbook & Record		50
Borneo Box-up		50
CPC, Gouffre Berger and CPC Record		52
Elderly Celebrity - Second Class		52
Chippings		54
Meet Reports; Eskdale	March!April	58
Snowdonia	May	60
Low Hall Garth	July	61
Lowstern	June	62
The Long Walk - Reiver's Ramble	June	63
Lowstem	August	65
Ladies' Weekend - Holmfirth	September	66
Joint Meet, RLH	September	68

## A Walk in the Hardangervidda

Iain Gilmour

Those who have been to Norway, may remember the striking scenery of the mountainous areas like the Jotunheimen, but there are many other areas where trekking from hut to hut can be an exciting and challenging experience. The Hardangervidda is popular with Norwegians, and has many remote huts spaced out at intervals of from three to eight hours trekking time.

The Hardangervidda is a mountain plateau, (possibly the largest in Europe), and is mostly at an altitude of 1000 to 1250 metres. Bounded by Sorfjorden, a branch of Hardanger fiord, on the Western side, and by the Hardanger Jokulen ice-cap to the North, the Vidda extends 80 km. to the South and 100 km. to the East. The whole area has innumerable lakes, rivers and patches of permanent snow. The Western side is more mountainous, but the East and South is more plateau-like. The height and latitude are such that the whole Vidda is above the tree line.

During 1991 friends in Shrewsbury suggested a combined trip, run by Mountain & Wildlife Ventures, to the Hardangervidda. I needed little persuasion and Sarah, bravely setting aside her misgivings as a result of a previous tough trip to the Jotunheimen, agreed to come.

The dates were Sunday 11th to Thursday 22nd August, flying from Newcastle to Bergen. We departed on Sunday afternoon from Newcastle airport, on our 18.05 flight. The plane stopped at Stavanger and we transferred to another plane for Bergen, arriving quite late. The airport bus driver, with typical Norwegian

courtesy, took us direct to our hotel, the Klosters Pension.

Our companions were a retired lady from Whitby and a school-teacher from Galway. Our guide was Chris Townsend from Grantown-on-Spey, author, photographer, mountain guide, and long-distance-walker (Pacific Crest Trail, Alaska, Pyrenees etc.)

We set out the next day by train to Finse, a very elevated point on the scenic Bergen-Oslo line. Before the train left, Chris rushed out and bought porridge oats, sugar, and five loaves of brown bread, to supplement a huge Edam cheese. Whenever it rained, Chris would remark how good the weather was for keeping bread!

The Norwegian railway trains are comfortable and have a frequent trolley buffet service. Most seats appear to be reserved in advance. As we approached Finse, the track ran almost completely through avalanche tunnels, so our views were only momentary. Dropped in the cold mountain air and cloud drizzle at Finse, 1222 m (4000 ft.), we shivered and walked briskly to the hut, where thermals and cagoules were quickly put on.

The Finse hut is very popular as a cross-country skiing centre, and can accommodate 120 people, while providing excellent meals. Many of the huts are staffed by students, who have taken a vacation job for the remoteness and the novelty of getting away from roads and normal civilisation. Finse was the base Scott used when training in preparation for the Antarctic.

The first day plan was to walk up to the Church Door, N.B. of Finse. An unfit party would have been a liability in these remote parts, and this was clearly a 'shake down' walk to assess

the competence of all six of us. The reason for this became apparent on the second day when we took over eight hours in drizzle and cloud across many snow fields, rock slabs, and suspension bridges to reach our second hut, Rembesdalseter. The Hardanger-jokulen with permanent ice-cap was hidden in cloud all day. (As it remained for the rest of the trip).

The Kyrkjedori, or Church Door, is a mountain pass in a fine mountain ridge known as the Hallingskarvet which would make a fine and testing cross-country ski route. Snow fields at the col gave us a first day taste of walking on snow and a view north to the other side of the ridge. We must have passed our first day test, for the next day, Wednesday 14th, we set out for Rembesdalseter. Our packs were considerably heavier because of packet food, bread, and cheese which we were carrying as an insurance for the self-service huts. (My share was elbs.) In fact the packet food would not have been necessary, but the bread and cheese was useful for lunches.

The route to Rembesdalseter was round the ice-cap and then to the South. In cloud drizzle we kept a careful watch on navigation but the route was well marked by cairns and red "Ts painted on rocks at fairly frequent intervals. We crossed two rivers by suspension bridge, one of them an interesting 10 metres above a white rushing torrent! Another point of interest was traversing a sloping snow field which ended 15 metres away in a snow cliff 6 metres high above a lake. Small icebergs floated around on the lake, giving a somewhat Arctic appearance.

On arrival at the hut we found a large party of Germans and quite cramped conditions. A formidable lady hut-

warden soon had us knocked into shape. It was apparent that she had little time for the band of German students. We ingratiated ourselves by cleaning up and chopping wood. The hut situation was exquisite on the edge of a lake, facing south.

The next day we had to traverse slabs, pass the end of a glacier, cross two rivers, and make a stiff climb over more sloping slabs. The route then descended, climbed again, and passed 1000 ft, cliffs with sensational views down into Simadalen. The walk down to Liseth took ages partly due to the slow speed of some members of our party. Our time was 10 hours, but the DNT time is an estimated 8 hours. We were now at a pretty low ebb after 3 days of hard walking and continuous rain. Fortunately the good food and a restful night in the Liseth hotel, (a private hotel/hut accessible by road), allowed us to recover sufficiently for the next leg to Hedlo.

Before we left Liseth, we strolled down to Fossli to see the Voringfoss where a river plunges down a vertical drop of 597 ft. We then set out at 11.30am for Hedlo. The route we selected was clearly obsolete, for the river-crossings were without bridges. Again in the rain, our progress was ominously halted when Noreen fell while crossing a river. This delay and various other stops to regroup the party, caused us to arrive at Hedlo at 7.00pm after another gruelling day.

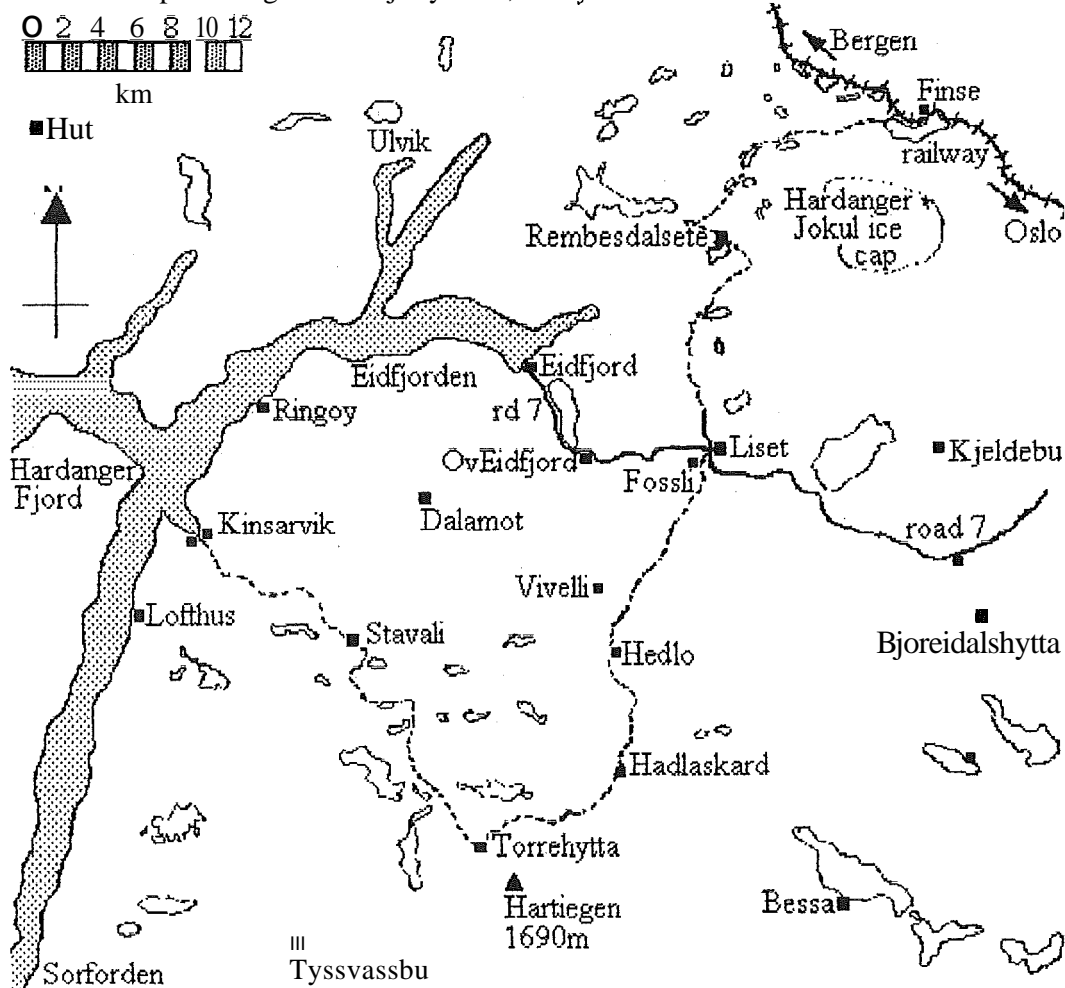
Hedlo is a privately-run staffed hut and we enjoyed a good meal which repaired some of the damage. Hilary, Peter, Sarah and I shared a splendid little self-contained hut. Lighting was by candle, and the main hut had a shower. Duvets and blankets are supplied in all the huts we visited. Hedlo hut is situated on the banks of the wide river Veig which

flows north, We were now in the true Hardangervidda after the more mountainous north, Paths are mostly over smooth glacier-rounded slabs of rock, with occasional peat, dwarf birch, scrub willow, grass, or simply tundra-type plants within 1 inch of the ground surface, The temperatures varied from about 5°C at Finse to 9°C on other days. In the morning at Hedlo the temperature was about freezing,

The stage from Hedlo to Hallaskard was a pleasant walk along the river valley, mostly over smooth rock slabs, We took about 3,5 hours in dry weather for the first time, The hut at Hallaskard had been rebuilt recently with most attractive new pine panelling. The warden had only just arrived, to relieve the previous incumbent, who had suffered mushroom poisoning! Three jolly men,

two Norwegian and one Danish, were travelling to our next hut to paint the red T's on the cairns, If you are accepted by DNT for this duty, you get an expenses-paid holiday, and free paint. The three painters put a net across the river overnight and we had visions of fish for breakfast, alas, the fisk for frokost was only a dream,

A hut nearby was being renovated by two elderly carpenters from Bergen. The hut had no windows, but when the door was open, one could see an inner partition with glass windows and inner door, The single room had two bunks, a sofa, and a tiny Jotul wood-burning stove, The hut was lined with mineral fibre and would be extremely cosy, These huts are used for hunting or for cross-country skiing and are presumably empty for much of the year.



Our food at Hallaskard, as at all the self-service huts, was dried food which we had carried in. These meals were Batchelors chicken curry, stew, or a macaroni cheese dish. After a day in the open they were all palatable. We supplemented with packet soups, reconstituted dried apple chips, and porridge.

The route to Toryhitten was a scenic walk fording two rivers, and climbing up to 1300 metres. There were large snow fields near the hut, a beautiful lake opposite, and superb views of Harteigen. Once seen, the outline of Harteigen is unmistakable; a flat topped sugar loaf shaped mountain with very steep sides. The top of the mountain is made of harder rock and hence Harteigen survived the general grinding down of the ice-age. We stayed in the principal hut, although some Germans were in the smaller hut 50 metres away. The warden was a charming medical student called Ingrid with a splendid laugh and sense of humour. The next day Chris, Peter, Hilary, Anne, and I set out to climb Harteigen, 1690 m. The route up is by a scree-filled gully with a few steps up a patch of snow ice. A short traverse is protected by hand-rails but these are hardly necessary on a dry day without ice. The view was sensational. We could see over sixty miles to Gausta in the S.B. and in the west we could see the ice cap of Folgefonn on the other side of Hardanger fiord. One could form an impression of the whole Vidda, and see the flatter S.E. as opposed to the more mountainous West. We met five British soldiers on a backpacking expedition (I suspect they were miffed to find tourists like us in the outback), and also our three DNT painters. The route from the hut was across a natural bridge of rock slabs which had bridged

the outflow from the lake. We saw a tiny lemming on the path.

We spent a second night at Toryhitten and this gave us a welcome break from the 'ever onwards' momentum of the walk. It is customary for those staying a second night at a hut to give precedence to new arrivals, but fortunately there were only a few newcomers so we retained our beds for a second night

The stage to Stavali was supposed to be quite a long one, so we made an early start. In fact the terrain was an easy ridge walk for most of the way and we made good progress. No reindeer were seen, possibly because they are further south at this time. It is interesting to know that the Hardangervidda reindeer are the only truly wild ones in Norway. (Presumably further north they are farmed and herded). We saw ravens being harried by hawks (merlins"), ptarmigan and sheep which varied from white to piebald to chocolate brown. The hut at Stavali was a welcome sight as we entered the valley, and we enjoyed drinking-water in the hut for the first time in several days. Most of our companions in the hut were German. This was surprising since in our previous Jotunheimen trip we had hardly met any. We were all in the same dormitory, as was often the case, and we ate our last packet meal (hooray)!

The final stage to Kinsarvik was basically downhill, but because of the steepness of the valley, we first climbed to the right into a subsidiary valley. As we progressed downwards we passed an amazing succession of waterfalls at first seen from a distance. We gradually came closer to the river. The descent was, as usual, over polished slabs of sloping rock, which cause no

problem for those in good mountain boots. As we passed the closest waterfall, the sunlight from behind the fall caused a superb back-lighting of sparkling water as the river dropped hundreds of feet. Those who have seen Niagara say that these falls were definitely as good a spectacle. The route carried on down the valley, passing an old power station, and eventually joining a road. Back at sea level on a sunny day, the heat was a surprising change after more than a week at altitude. An ice cream at Kinsarvik, a short wait, and soon we were on the ferry back over the fiord to Kvanndal. A semi-tame black otter played around the landing-stage and foraged on the foreshore.

The final part of the journey was by bus to Bergen. In good weather this is a very scenic trip. We stayed again at our old friend Klosters Pension. On our last morning, a tour of the fish market and the ships at the quayside was high on

our list. A bus to the airport and soon we were in flight for Newcastle.

In conclusion, we noted that the schools were going back on 20th August, and hence the huts became less crowded. The peak season is 15th July to 15th August. The hunting season starts around the 25th August, and the huts are then used by hunters, a very different type of clientele. Details of hut opening times are given in the DNT handbook or in 'MOUNTAIN HIKING IN NORWAY'. The weather is drier with less snow in the south and East, whereas the mountain areas like Hardanger Jokulen seem to attract cloud and rain. Food taken as a supplement was eight Yorkie bars and six Kit Kat. This was definitely needed to add to our rations. We were supplied with a bag each of 'Trailmix' which could be quite pleasant if fresh. The Norwegian bread lasted well, and the Edam cheese was also a good idea and quite palatable.

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Summary of the accommodation and Huts

Sunday	11th	Klosters Pension, Bergen	
Monday	12th	Finse	1222 m
Tuesday	13th	Finse	
Wednesday	14th	Rembesdalseter	960m
Thursday	15th	Liseth	724 m
Friday	16th	Redlo	945 m
Saturday	17th	Hallaskard	1010 m.
Sunday	18th	Torehytten	1340 m
Monday	19th	Torehytten	
Tuesday	20th	Stavali	1024m
Wednesday	21st	Klosters Pension, Bergen	

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Maps

The best map is Statens Kartverk "HARDANGERVIDDIA", on a scale of 1:200,000. We supplemented this with the 1:50.000 maps which, although not essential, greatly boosted our confidence.

Hardangerjokulen	1416 II
Myrdal	1416111
Eidfjord	1415 IV
Harteigen	1415111
Kinsarvik(?)	1315 I

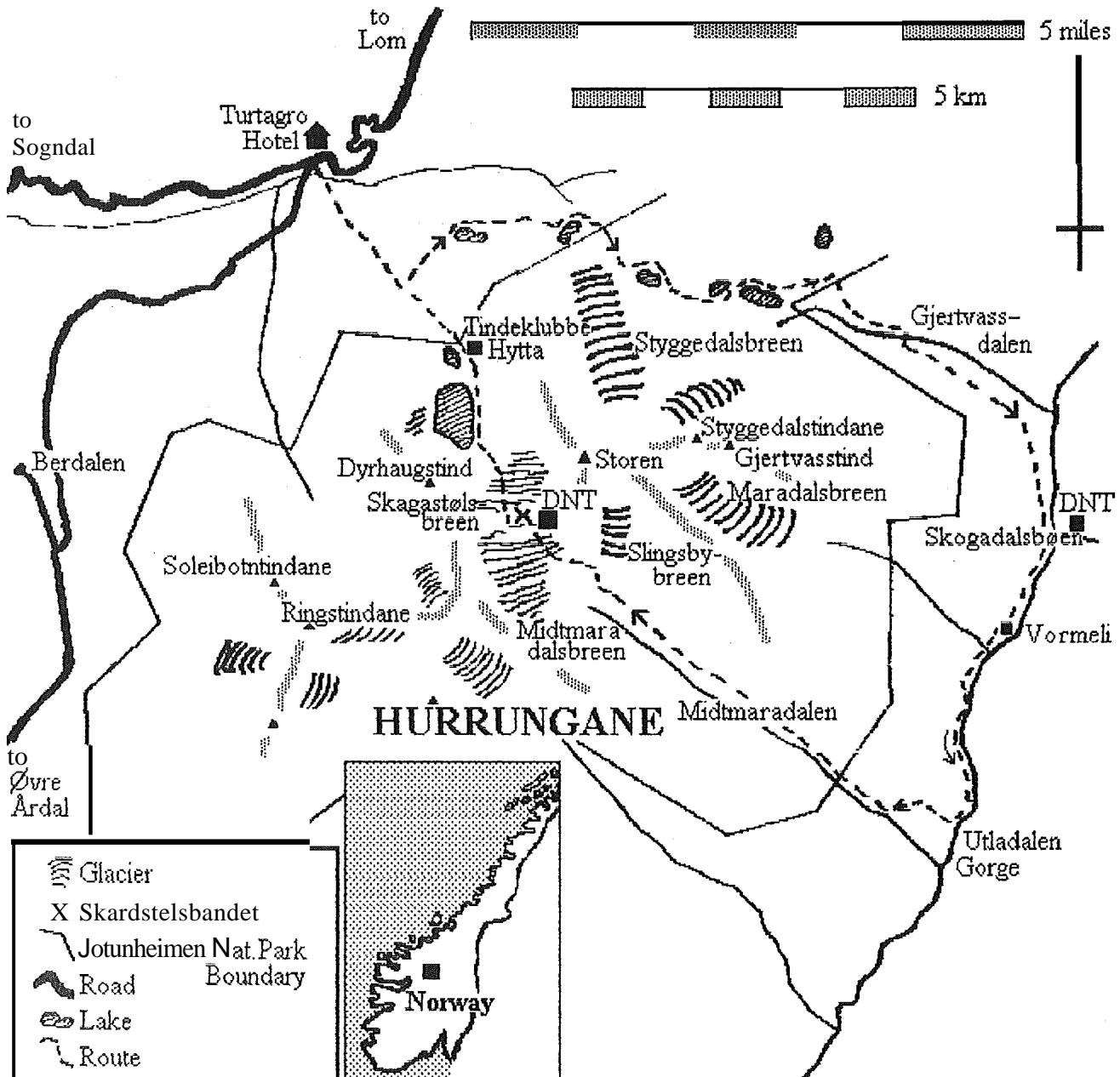


# Norway ... 1994

## Mike Godden

Overhearing on the Long Walk that Derek Smithson's companion for a

visit to Norway has had to drop out, and seeking a chance to test out his fitness after back surgery, Mike has offered to join Derek and take along his car. From Bergen they have driven to Voss then a little further to Saue and camped for the night.



### Tuesday 30 August

It was 0937 when we finally stirred. The weather was good although no sun and we had a late breakfast on our cabin, courtesy of Derek. After disembarking at Bergen we drove to Saue by Lonavatnet, just north of Voss, where we camped for the night.

### Wednesday 31 August.

The morning day dawned fine giving way to a sunny drive via the ferry from Vangsnes to Hella, and on to our destination at Turtagro. As we looked South East from the car park, Storen could be seen against blue sky, with other Murungane peaks to the right.

A magnificent view, but Derek had to go to the Turtagro Hotel to receive the key to the Tindeklubbhytta, our final destination. We made good use of some spare time to repack our food and equipment in preparation for the walk to the Hytte situated at 1344m. The walk was a very hot affair for me, but I was pleased to find J had no problems carrying the weight, and we eventually arrived at the somewhat imposing Hytte at 1600 hrs.

The building was large, quaint, and spotless with oil lamps, candles, three wood burning stoves, and an open fire in a large lounge/dining room. There was sleeping accommodation for 12 in 6 rooms, each with wash basin and water jug. It reminded me of home in the mid 1940's. The kitchen was also a dining area and the adjacent 2 bunk room made *it* convenient and cosy. The wood stove in the kitchen was very efficient, and water was heated on its top in a large container. Cooking was by a propane oven with gas rings.

Throughout the Hytte were Tindaklubb memorabilia, books and magazines. Derek left YRC information as our calling card. Food could be purchased from a large stock and the extensive cellar housed further supplies including wood. The outlook was over a small lake towards the precipitous face of Dryhaugstindane (2147m). A good evening meal of chicken in white sauce was enjoyed with all the trimmings, and after much worldly talk we turned in at 2200 hrs having decided to attempt Dryhaugstindane the next day.

Thursday 1 September.

Thursday morning saw us ready to start out in good weather at 0800, but Storen and *its* associated tops were in

cloud. We wondered if the fresh snow we had observed above 1700m the previous day would affect our progress. We crossed the river running from the lake and were immediately admonished by the Lemming colony on the far side. We were to be warned, screamed at, but not quite attacked, wherever we went thereafter by these possessive rodents.

There were many boulders to surmount as we gained height, and we were soon into the snow. The views were breath-taking and Derek was able to identify for me the surrounding peaks. As we gained height the snow became deeper and the frequency at which our legs disappeared into snow covered holes behind boulders increased. Eventually, at about 1940m we decided not to proceed further. The weather seemed to be deteriorating and progress was very slow. We descended using as many snow patches as we could, and having lunch on the way arrived back at the Hytte by mid-afternoon.

Adjacent to the Hytte were three tents which we had noticed the previous day, and Derek took the opportunity to converse with the occupants while J changed my wet (with sweat) clothes, and hung them to dry. It turned out the campers were Danish and had been climbing Storen the day before, not returning to their tents until the early hours of the morning. Derek then took a lone walk to reconnoitre a track we thought we had seen from Dryhaugstindane between our valley and Styggedalen. If it was a path it may have saved some time on our walk to Vormeli the next day. It transpired that the supposed path was in fact a break in the strata.

Friday 2 September.

When I got up, at 0600, I still felt tired - a bad omen - and at 0845, fed and watered we left for the Hytte at Vormeli in Utladalen, a journey of approximately 10 miles as near as can be calculated from the map.

We set off down the Turtagro path for about a mile then headed north east for Styggedalen. On the way we passed a deep stone shelter amidst some rocks but could not decide its purpose. In the distance we saw a lone walker, and took a line down to the out-fall of a small lake to cross the river. The lake was dammed but we were able to get across the river safely. Our path took us close to the end of Styggedalsbreen, a truly magnificent glacier, and we observed a party high on the steep snow slopes between Kolnosi and Skagastolstindane. We continued east over what seemed to be endless boulders, finally stopping for lunch at the side of a lake at 1470m. The tops of Styggedalstindane and Gjertvasstind were lost in cloud, but the long ridge from the east was visible and Derek recounted some of his exploits of a previous visit with a Norwegian. To me, the mountains were awesome.

On we went to a small cabin at Gjertvasshaugen, where we conversed briefly with a young Belgian couple, and then down Gjertvassdalen to cross the river. This took some time and retracing of steps until we finally found a safe crossing with our boots on. Our ski sticks were invaluable aids. Progress was then swift until we entered the wooded area at Gjertvassboen where the birch and willows caused progress to slow considerably. The one path had many twists and turns, ups and downs, but

was easy to follow once we had found it. I was about all in, and when the VormeliHytte came into view through the trees at 1630 hrs, I was greatly relieved,

The Hytte is an old farm house privately owned by a farmer at Skiolden, but run by the Vormeli Group who rebuilt the four bed accommodation in 1974-76. It is a pleasant compact structure, with its resident family of mice, one of which was tame enough to try and climb onto Derek's lap. Our food was cooked on the usual wood burning stove, and bed was gained early, as was "rise and shine" the following morning.

Saturday 3 September.

I had managed to dry my wet cloths the night before but did not look forward to the prospect of completing our circular tour via the Skardstelsbandet at 1758m. I still felt tired, and somewhat weaker in spite of a long sleep and good calorie intake. Since the previous Thursday afternoon, my body still had not taken in sufficient fluid to enable me to enjoy a good pee, despite the copious amounts of water consumed. I was beginning to get a bit worried and depressed,

We departed the Hytte at 0715 and set off down the Utle Gorge. After some 3 kilometres and over two hours later, we finally reached our lowest river point of 480m before we struck north west straight up the valley side to gain entrance to the hanging valley of Midtmaradalen. Our guide on the ascent was a "Church Spire" shaped rock above us, and after many rests we arrived at a beautiful still pond full of lush vegetation. Food was taken a

little further on and I was becoming dizzy.: I knew salt was the problem, although I had taken care to take in salt with my meals. There was only one way out of the dilemma, From that point I sucked my sweatband before wringing it out. It worked and the dizziness went. However, it made me more thirsty,

Midtmaradalen is 5,5 kilometres long from the true entry point to the head wall and glacier at its end, J began to wonder if I was going to make it over the pass, but Derek assured me that the head wall was easily passed to the right, and then it was a steady trudge up the glacier to the D,N,T Hytte at the Skardstelsbandet. We had not gone far when we saw a lone Reindeer. It was a magnificent male in the process of shedding the velvet from its antlers, no doubt prior to the Autumn rut. Its coat glistened, and it moved effortlessly like a floating ship, The incident stimulated conversation that bucked me up somewhat.

After a further stop, although J had no appetite for food, we started to climb up the valley side across more large boulders, with Slingsbybreen on our right. As we passed the Slingsby Glacier and started our climb, there were several thunderous falls of ice from the end of the glacier. As I had assumed, the route succumbed to our efforts easily via rock scrambles! climbs, and the crossing of a steep snow patch. I had to use my crampons to ensure my own safety on account of my gammy left leg, A rope was unnecessary, After a long pull up the eastern side of the Midtmaradalsbreen we arrived at the D,N.T Hytte at the head of the pass. With great relief, but some personal apprehension at starting down from the pass on soft snow over ice, we

descended and arrived back at the Tindeklubbhytta at 1730 hrs. Even the "Tiger" of the party admitted to being stretched, and I had gone dizzy again, We decided to stay the night at the Hytte again and proceed next day to Turtagro then to Ovre Årdal. My trousers were so wet I wondered if they would dry out that night, and I began to shiver with cold. It was then I decided J would not accompany Derek on the next three days backpacking.

I broke the news to him whilst we were preparing our evening meal, and he expressed his sympathy with my decision. His kind remarks seemed to lift considerably burden from my shoulders. We would now have to replan the remainder of the holiday, I had yet to come to terms with the realisation that, because of constant sweating and a weak leg which did not get stronger with sustained effort, J would have to adopt a new mental approach to my outdoor activities, or 'blow a fuse' in the process.

Sunday 4 September.

After breakfast we set off for Turtagro. The key was duly returned, and a very scenic drive via the mountain road to Berdalen and Fardalen took us to Ovre Ardal, and thence to the campsite at Ardalstangen. I booked a cabin for the next three nights and we sorted out our clothing prior to taking a most welcome shower. The weather seemed about to change for the worst, but optimistic that it would hold, Derek prepared for a three day trip from Eidsbugarden and I would stay at the cabin,

The plan was for me to take Derek to Eidsbugarden, some 40 miles away, and return forhim on Wednesday 7



September at 1200 hrs. The hairpin bends from Ovre Ardal into Moadalen were spectacular to say the least, and the 19 kilometre dirt road along the shore of Lake Tyin was a reminder of the Centenary visit. Derek was duly despatched on his walk along the north shore of Lake Bygdin in an easterly direction, to spend his first night near Heystakkane. He would then complete a circular walk via Geitho, Raudalen to Olavsbu, then via Raudalsvatnet crossing a high point of 1617m to the head of Ovre Mjolkedalen, spending Tuesday night in the area of Mjolkedalsvatnet.

Monday 5 September.

I had found that constant profuse sweating day after day caused a problem of dehydration and fatigue which was not recoverable overnight. I had also found that the weakness in my left leg together with some muscle wastage, had not improved over 3 days. The one positive improvement resulting from my back operation was that I had no trouble carrying a heavy pack. The day was spent drinking lots of tea, reading and sleeping.

Tuesday 6 September.

It rained all night and most of the morning, some of it heavy. Poor old Derek. The rain appeared to have stopped early in the afternoon and there was some evidence of the cloud base rising, so I put on my boots and headed for Hjelle in the car. There was still some intermittent rain, and a blister on my right heel was painful. At Hjelle I decided not to bother and returned to Ardalstangen for a walk round the shops.

Wednesday 7 September.

My body had finally stopped taking in fluid and was giving some out now. What a relief to get back to normal.

I packed, cleaned the cabin, and left at 0925 for Eidsbugarden arriving at 1030. No sign of Derek yet. I was thinking how desolate the place was and that I had not seen another vehicle or soul on the 19k dirt road when a small passenger boat arrived at the jetty and three motor coaches came down the road.

At 1200 on the dot Derek arrived. We had a brew and some lunch and set off on our journey south to Saue where we would stay on our last night in Norway. Although there was no rain, the weather had been dull and cold at 1100m, but improving all the time. Apparently Derek's walk had not been as exciting as he had hoped, and was quite easy. He did not get wet although there had been some rain. His final camp had been reached prematurely, signifying that perhaps extra distance may have been welcome.

Our car journey south took us via Laerdalsfjorden and a superb mountain road by Hornadalen and Hornsnipa to Aurland. On arrival at Saue, this time we took a cabin and prepared for the return ferry crossing.

We had enjoyed some good weather and Derek's itinerary had been well thought out. My worst fears had come to pass, and I had realised how much of a "wild man" of the hills my companion was, and how deeply he is involved with Norway.

None of us knows what the future holds, but I shall continue to pursue my outdoor activities to the full in spite of my runaway body thermostat. Still, I hope I shall not need a zimmer frame with adjustable legs for many years to come.

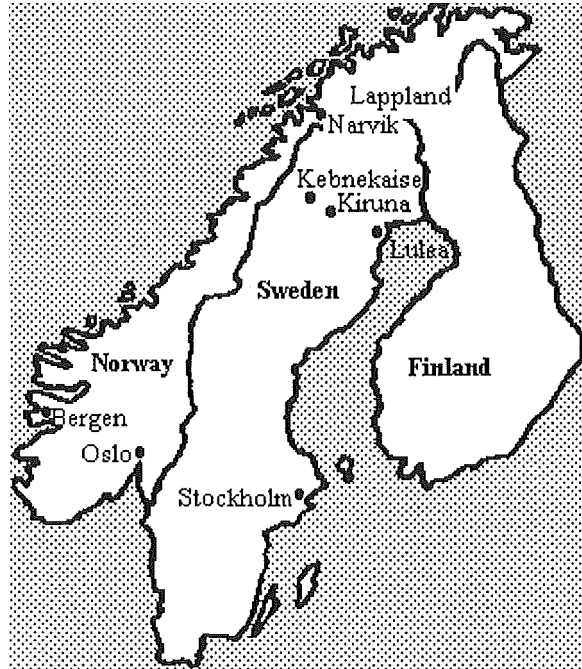
# Swedish Lapland

Derek A. Smithson

I wrote, 'Should we destroy all guide books and detailed descriptions of mountain areas so that all can have the pleasure of discovery' and even in 1976 I believed there was a case to be made. I wrote this when recording outings in northern Sweden about a mountain area that was so good I wanted my friends to know. When considering access from the L.I.K, I remembered that George Spenceley wrote an article on crossing from Narvik into Sweden. Spenceley had actually traversed the mountain I had only attempted and his article freed me to write my story, which never got finished, but which I titled, 'Three Weekends in Lapland or Sixteen Years After Spenceley'. Here it is.

During a four week period in September 1976 I was determined to have a closer look at the mountainous area near Kebnekaise, the highest mountain in Sweden. Lulea, where I was working, is a four-and-a-half hour drive from Nikkaloukta, which is a normal starting point for the Kebnekaise region. So I needed more than a minimum weekend, and I needed a new rucsac to carry the additional clothing and bedding I would require. The climate there in September is drier than Britain, but a lot colder. Above about 500m. it would snow rather than rain, but the snow would soften in the sunlight.

The first weekend had to be short, so I drove the 300km. to Kvikkjokk on the Friday evening. I knew there was



an interesting mountain close by. My previous attempt to reach it had been frustrated by the ice on the lakes having partially melted. I could have walked on the full ice-cover and in the summer season there are boats for walkers to use to cross these lakes which interrupt the Kungsladen (a long-distance walking route). This was my first attempt to use a boat so, of course, I missed it. Missing the first of the three daily boats meant a very short day on the mountain, so I abandoned my plan.

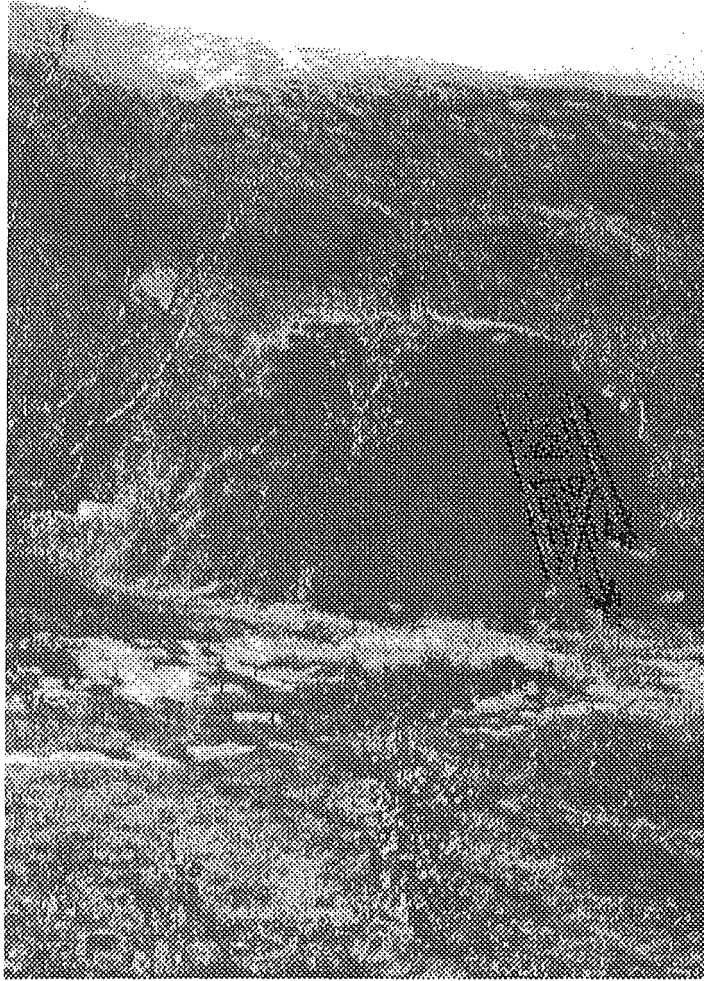
I set off walking along the bank of a beautiful river until the path began to fade. The scene would have suited a travel-agent looking for advertising pictures. A wide river with rapids, lined with a mixture of fir-trees and birch trees with a back cloth of mountains covered with new snow, all lit by sunshine from a clear blue sky. That was what made me follow the river. Then, walking by compass through the forest, I found a logging road which leads towards the mountains of the Sarek region, said to be the last great wilderness in Europe. Eventually the road came to a river I

could not cross even though the road continued on the other side. I continued walking along a faint riverside path until the character of the river changed completely and it became part of an elevated lake system. The path stopped where about ten boats were either moored or on the bank and I concluded that this must be the route to a Lap village only accessible by boat in the summer. I made an attempt to see more of the lake system but the dense undergrowth among the trees made this hard work and my view of the surroundings was very restricted,

My second weekend was also based on Kvikkjokk. The plan was to walk north along the Kungsladen to make a first visit to a Tourist Stuga (mountain hut). I was also testing my new rucsac which was my first pack frame with a waist band and I thought that would make weight carrying easier. The hostel at Kvikkjokk was full, but they managed to find a space for me for one night. It was sleeting when I got up on Saturday, but cleared sufficiently by nine o'clock for me to start. The walk was along a clearly marked path undulating gently through the forest. Where the ground is marshy there are split logs laid which stop one sinking in, but I was told that these logs are laid to conserve the land, not to help the walker. I met two hunters who carried both guns and cameras. One of them was Pell the owner of the hostel, whom I had met before but who spoke no English. We tried a little sign language and I was interested to see that they both carried rolled reindeer skins for mattresses. Pell was a Lap not a Swede. The trees changed from firs to birch before I passed the turn off to a Lap village and to the Sarek National Park. The

Sarek mountains are a full day's walk from Kvikkjokk and there are no stugas and few paths. I joined up with an English speaking Swede about here and there was now 6 to 9 inches of new powdery snow. We could see the hills over the small birch trees but with the low cloud the outlook was threatening rather than inspiring. When we stopped to eat we met two more Swedes who had been camping. Wearily we plodded on, through a gate in a deer-fence and down to the stuga beside the lake.

Only one part of the stuga was open, because it was out of season, but before we took our wet boots off to enter we went to chop wood that would dry in the hut during our stay and replace the wood that we burned. My companion also explained the sign boards which directed us to where we collected drinking water and where we disposed of waste water. The building that was open consisted of two similar rooms, each with three double tier bunks, a wood burning stove for both cooking and heating, and some pots and pans. The stove was very effective for both cooking and heating, including drying our clothes. We were very comfortable but only had hand torches for light, so we talked a lot and went to bed early. My companion had been a meteorologist who was planning to go to college to learn architecture, but at present was wandering. He was very good company and I was sorry not to be continuing north with him. The following day was sunny with big white clouds in a blue sky. The rain, late the day before, had beaten down the snow so that the return was quick and easy. My only problem was the new rucsac whose belt was never designed to support any of the weight.

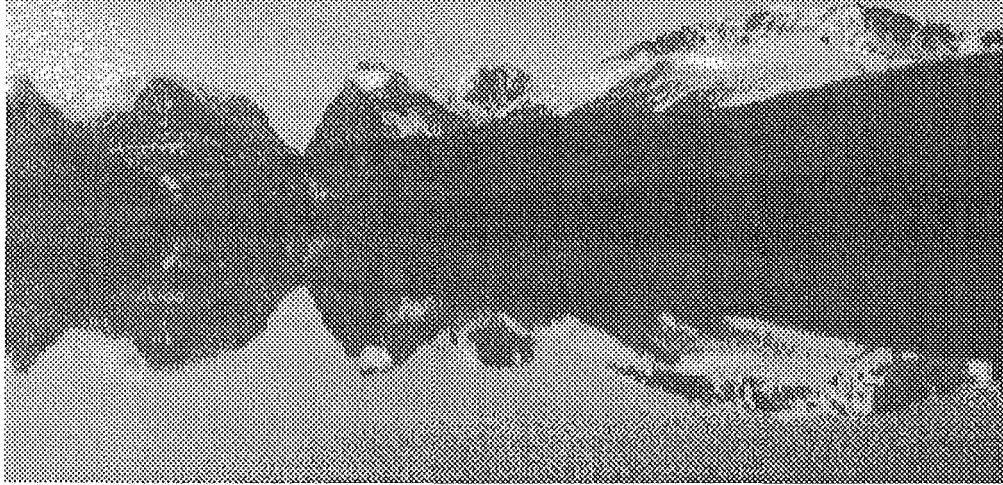


ALapp Hut

For my final trip I took two days of my annual holiday and stayed the first night in Kiruna, which is only about 70km. from Nikkaloukta where I would leave the car. From there it is about 20km. walk to the Kebnekaise Fjallstation along a flat bottomed valley. The forward view on this walk changes slowly, but always the mountains are beckoning. On this occasion the views were incredibly beautiful, for, to translate a Swedish saying, 'the mountains were on fire'. This means that the birch trees and the mountain shrubs had their autumn colours of rich reds and browns with occasional birch still yellow or green. To this was added a back-cloth of mountains with new snow on them and a clear blue sky. Just before the

fjallstation, I turned right up a side valley which rose steadily to take me past the foot of three glaciers and up to Tarfalstugan, a mountain hut. There was a research station at the foot of these glaciers, but there was no sign of life and I continued over the snow. This was a different world. All snow, ice and rock. The lake beside the hut was only lightly frozen at the edges, but it felt very, very cold. The hut had a furnished living room and two bedrooms, but as I was alone in the hut I only used one of the bedrooms. The stove was so effective that I had to open the door into the living room to keep cool. The next morning I was out by 07.00 into a bitterly cold wind, but with a clear sky. I spent over an hour stumbling





round the lake on a boulder-strewn slope and then reached the ridge of moraine at the edge of the glacier which led almost up to the saddle below the rock ridge I hoped to climb. The rock ridge led to the summit of Kebnepakte, 1990m., which is one of the summits of Kebnekaise. The route up the moraine was ideal and the short rock wall at the top only marginally harder, but on the saddle the wind was diabolical. It blew hard enough to upset the balance when moving, but in addition it was so cold that the brain felt numbed and I crawled down below the rock wall. Once out of the wind the decision to go down was unavoidable. The rock ridge looked like easy climbing, but it was definitely not a walking route and I was alone. I packed up and walked down to the Kebnekaise Fjellstation. There are easier routes from there.

The fjellstation is extensive. It includes a main building with a cafe, showers, sauna and bunks with sheets. There was a normal stuga and

additional hutments for the staff but the most unsightly was a barrack-like building which was said to be used as a mountaineering school and looked more like a military establishment. There were also a number of lap huts which are constructed of turf over a waterproof layer of birch bark. They each had a stove-pipe chimney and looked as though they would sleep about four people. The real luxury was electric light and beer at the cafe. Conversation with some Swedes in the stuga revealed that they also worked as consultants for the same client as I. Two of their party were totally inexperienced and were expecting to be taken up the most easterly of the two recognised routes, by the third member of their party. This route includes a short stretch of climbing, crossing a glacier and walking up a permanent snow field, a more interesting route than I was planning, so I was pleased to be asked to join their party. The Swedish leader of the party went and borrowed crampon for all of us, but only one ice axe, which left one of the Swedes

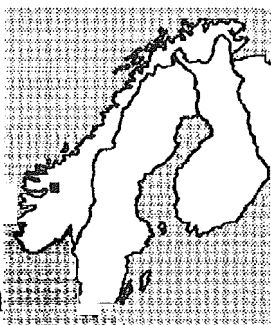
with only a staff I was made uneasy, early the next morning, by seeing our leader drink beer for breakfast, finding myself volunteering to carry a rope and finally our losing the path on the way to the small valley which is the true start of the route. Our upward progress was very slow with many stops for drinks, using an ingenious meths stove (my first sight of a Trangia stove). We roped up for the snow field which was hard snow at a steep enough angle to be interesting and to give that special joy from the snow, the sunshine and the view. Across the glacier we could see a snow ramp leading most of the way up a cliff which was topped by a lesser summit, Toppstugan. I got them across the glacier by the use of the phrase 'let's go and have a look', but the frozen snow on the steep ramp, the cliff, and the cornice stopped the party at the beginning of the snow ramp. My companions

waited patiently whilst I played on my borrowed, ten-point crampon, but the angle made step cutting desirable to relieve the ankles, and there was a layer of powder snow higher up, and there was the cornice, so I didn't go far. The party descended slowly and the great thirst could only be relieved by beer at the fjallstation. On the Sunday I had to return to Lulea, but only had a simple walk to Nikkaloukta so I went to do an easy climb on the local practice crag. This had all the looseness of a virgin crag with a layer of small stones on every horizontal surface. Perhaps there was not much practising done. The walk back was lovely and I met some children, about ten years of age, who changed from Swedish to English so that they could talk to me. I felt the stupid ignorant foreigner that I am. After all my travels and all my years I still only speak English!



## Playing in the Snow

**Derek A  
Smithson**



The hut, Avdal Gard, cost £5 per night, including bed, bedding, wood for the stove and all the pots and pans I could need. On its dresser were four YRC centenary mugs showing that it belongs to our Norwegian kindred club, the Ardal Turlag. In May 1995 their top huts were above the snow line giving immediate access to untold miles of untrodden snow and ice with little sign of man. I found that ski are not essential to wander in this deep spnng snow.

Norwegians ski as people born to it, but the lads of Yorkshire are not born to it. However there are snow shoes. Snow shoes reminded me of crampon. They appear to have all the answers to the situation, but experience shows there is a need for some technique and courage to get the best out of them, and the particular design of shoe is important. They need only normal boots, and an ice axe for safety in steep places. I set out boldly in the mornings, when my boot barely marked the frozen snow, but the maggot in my mind was 'How do I get back when the snow is of a depth to freeze my manhood?' When you throw your ice axe down, point first, and it almost disappears, and you are standing looking down on it, then you think you have solved it. I have also found that my speed on most snow is the same as my normal walk with no snow But these snow shoes are not the ones usually seen on sale in Norway and Britain.

A person's experience of new snow conditions is usually of interest. On reasonably flat, safe-looking snow-fields, I repeatedly heard a shushing noise, like a minor powder-snow avalanche and similar to snow crystal sliding down a frozen surface. I could see no reason for this to occur, but it made me nervous and uneasy. I stood still for five minutes by my watch to prove I was the cause of the noise and then, after a further startling example, I retreated. A Norwegian friend explained that this is a spring snow phenomenon, when the powder snow below the hardened crust flows among the boulders. The danger is that this sometimes leads to the collapse of the crust and the passing human falls into the powder snow which could be deep.

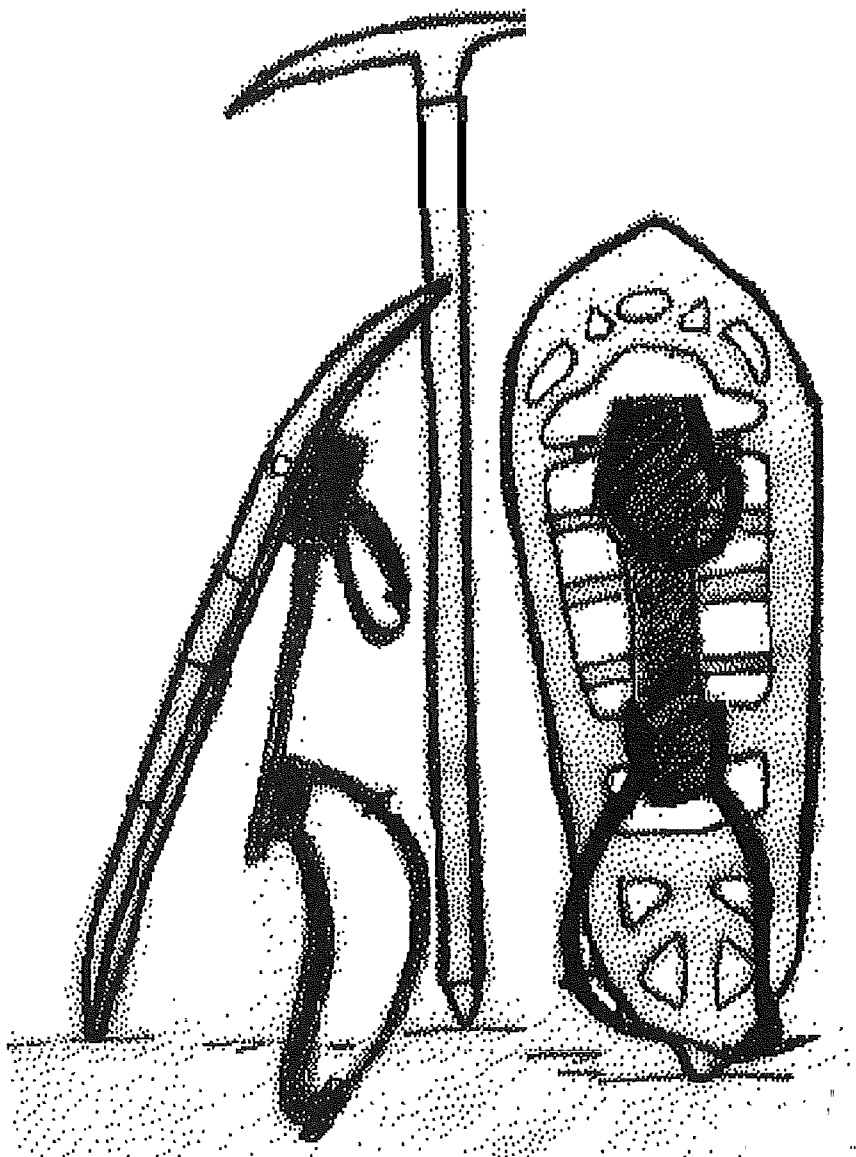
The spring snow has other notable qualities. The snow covers all the lesser boulders and bushes so that it is easier to make one's way, but it has to be accepted that, here in the mountains there is usually no guidance from previous human traffic. This I consider to be an advantage because I can deem myself the first person to make the journey. There were, though, times when a waymark stood above the snow to show that the Norwegians also knew the best way.

I spent my first morning in Ovre Ardal talking to two of the senior classes at the local school so that they could hear a native Englishman speaking. It was a sort of free for all with some very personal questions. After lunch I walked up to Avdal Gard (a renovated mountain farm) and as it was only 4.30pm with plenty of daylight left I decided to continue to the hut in Gravidalen. By 5.30pm I was in among the snow drifts without a clear path to follow and so I decided to

return to Avdalen, which is exceedingly comfortable for those who have the privileges of members of the Ardal Turlag. The weather had been cold and dry so with an easily lit wood stove and electric cooker I was very comfortable. I never had any clothes to dry during this trip except for socks wet from perspiration inside plastic boots. When talking to Petter Lovdahl, he referred to his time in Svalbard when one of his companions had to return to base camp to allow his feet to recover from the effects of plastic boots whereas Petter, who had cleaned and polished his leather boots nightly, remained dry and comfortable.

On my second day out it took me two hours to reach Gravdalen and, having checked the hut, I walked up the valley. I had hoped to see the approaches to the two passes at the head of the valley but there was a mistiness that prevented seeing detail at a distance. Late in the evening the sky cleared and I saw again the wonderful views from the hut. The sun was shining from a clear blue sky when I left the next morning and it was cold enough to need my fibre pile jacket and to walk on the surface of the snow. I worked my way onto Gravsalsryggen, to see the views reported by the 1992 winter party

when they were here, There were tracks of all sorts of animals that I could not identify, except the reindeer. It was a herd of about twenty reindeer that I saw early in the day. They did not move away immediately, but circled and turned to face me again a few times before finally moving off. My Norwegian friends said that they would be preparing to defend their young at this time of year. Fortunately, I approached them slowly. I stopped just before the main mountain, Stelsmaradalstinden, to give myself plenty of time to descend. I was pleased to have my ice axe on some of the steep sections where there was now soft snow sliding over





a base of hard snow. I might have managed without snow shoes, but there were techniques to learn. At the hut I was early enough to pack and continue to Avdalen,

After two nights in Ardal being looked after by Norwegian friends and shopping for more food, I walked up to the Ardal Turlag hut in Hjelledalen. Once more I was in glorious sunshine. The route suffered from snow drifts, before there was a full snow cover, but after establishing myself in the hut I walked up to the head of the valley to look at the routes I had planned. There was plenty of good snow and I met a couple who had skied from Sletterust and gave them tea in exchange for conversation. The next morning I set out early in the direction of Hjelledalstind, but I didn't reach it because I was frightened by the noises from the snowfield below my feet. I did however get some wonderful views, sunburn the back of my hands and explored the area near Morkaskardet so that I was sure of the start of the next day's journey. That day I satisfied a long standing desire to see into Morka-Kolddalen, by traversing into the valley from the skardet. The snow cover must have made the journey easier. I think the hillside is covered by scrub and boulders but all these were out of sight below my feet. My outward route included some steep hard snow which I was careful to avoid on my return. There was some interesting route-finding over the lumps and hollows to reach Andrevatnet. It nestles between Falketind and Hjelledalstind at the head of this pass between Vettismorki and Kolddalen: a great route in the clear sunshine, but not a long one because I stopped at the edge of the lake. The two beautiful sharp mountains have precipitous

slopes leading down to the edge of the lake just waiting to dump snow and rocks on passing Yorkshiremen. This journey gave me views across Utladalen to the Hurrungane, with Vettismorki in the foreground far below me, and a good look into Stelmaradalen about which I was curious.

My final day out was probably the best. I spent five hours walking out to Sletterust, where I caught the bus to Ovre Ardal. The night had been warm, the snow was soft at hut level and I wore snow shoes all day except when attempting to negotiate a cliff. This must be an area of rough hills with innumerable lakes and a waymarked route. But with the depth of snow this May few of the waymarks were visible, the small lakes had disappeared and very steep soft snow or cornices surrounded the larger lakes. At the higher levels where the snow was hard, I found a steep slope that I could only just climb with snow shoes on. Some waymarks guided me over a cliff that presumably has a path in summer, but I found impassable at that point. Another cliff had no waymarks so I had the fun of finding a way down it. Only with ski or snow shoes could I have crossed this area. There was a layer of high cloud giving a flat light that did not show changes of angle or texture of the snow, which made the route-finding absorbing, quite a high enough risk for a solitary traveller.

This is playing in the snow. I was never extended and with the long hours of daylight, always had time in hand. And the sun shone!



STOLNOSTINDEN - 2074 m  
F.D. Smith  
18th September 1992

JUL

The final sorte of the Jotenheimen contingent celebrating was an attempt on Maradalstyggen and Stilnostinden; three to each mountain. Alan and Angi Linford with John Sterland for the former and Iain Gilmour, Wayfarer Mike Allen and I elected to climb, taking in a close up encounter with the celebrated Vettisfossen Falls, on route to Stilnostinden.

All six of us drove up to Hjelle where we left the cars, A pleasant walk followed through the woods to the tiny village of Vetti which carries the name of the family still living there as they were in the time of Slingsby, Here the track divided; we took the right fork that would take us to Vettisfossen. This fabulous waterfall soon came into view cascading many hundreds of feet into the Utladalen valley below.

A steep ascent of 900 feet followed lifting us to a vantage point to see the start of the cascade which is one of great tourist attraction for Ardal. The path continues winding ever upwards over what can only be described as a massive bog that is Vettismorki, which is the source of the waterfall. For many centuries the loggers have used the waterfall as a means of transporting the logs to the valley below. Water freezing on its way down forms a cushion of icy crystals thus preventing damage to the timber.

Our accomodation for the trip was the DNT hut at Vettismorki, one of the dozen or so cabins there on any raised area in the marshy ground which contained the tributaries of the

upper river Morki-Kolddalen. The DNT had kindly provided us with keys for their huts along with free membership for the duration of our visit.

The hut was extremely well set up with four bunks, duvets and two spare mattresses, a good stove, gas cooking and high quality cutlery and crockery. Later we were joined by a Norwegian family, reserved at first, however once we broke the ice, were very friendly, to the extent that they offered the Club special terms for a well appointed cabin they owned to the south of the Jotenheimen that had 26 beds. Like so many Norwegians, they were quite familiar with the exploits of our second president.

The morning that followed was a trifle better than the previous one, but not good. The path meandered through the woods, often with streams on either side of the path or crossing it. But it was interesting and almost pleasant. The wooded area opened out into a clearing from where we might have been able to see our objective had it been clear of mist. A fight through dense bushes followed enabling us to reach the heavily mossed slopes leading forward to the sub-peak of Stolnosti.

In such a mist the most careful navigation was essential. Here, Iain's skill was demonstrated, a good man to have with you in these conditions. A series of small snow fields were crossed which did not coincide with anything shown on the map. Eventually we reached a very ancient cairn covered with moss. We suspected that it had been erected by Slingsby himself and clearly it is very seldom visited.

But had we reached the summit? My altimeter only showed 2000m, some 74m short. We spent about an hour searching for the illusive top, our route carefully paralleling an intimidating cornice six feet to our right. The white out conditions gave a very false impression; we discovered that we were not gaining height at all, rather the opposite. It was a relief that on return to camp when we checked the altimeter we found it had been reading low by the appropriate amount.

We retraced our tracks through the mist until we reached lower ground below the cloud base. Each of us took different routes back to the clearing above the bushes and at various speeds rejoined at the hut at Vettismorki. By this time we were very wet indeed and were delighted to find the hut occupied and that the stove was alight. After a quick meal and some degree of drying out we descended into the valley. The rain progressively lightened and by the time we reached the car we were no longer wet.

At the car park we were met by Alan and Angi, but no John. All was apparently well, John being back at the campsite. Alan with his customary thoughtfulness produced hot soup, what it is to have friends like him. But there was another reason for meeting us. He gave us the awful news that Roger Allen had had a fatal though unavoidable accident on Trollvasstind in the Lyngsalpene. As we drove back to Ardalsangen my mind was filled with the many happy and exciting times he and I had spent together in Scotland and in the Alps over the last thirty years.



## An Ennerdale Horseshoe

Tony Smythe

Ennerdale must be the least accessible of the Lake District valleys - unless you live in West Cumbria. One day in August 1995, I set off from my home near Kendal to make the comparatively lengthy drive round and do a good walk there.

It was near the end (as it turned out) of the long dry spell that summer and being out in the midday sun was proving to be if not mad, quite arduous. I, therefore, planned to do half my walk in the evening, kip on the route, and complete it early next day. I had in mind a circuit of Ennerdale about 24 miles, and packed a sleeping-bag, a litre of water, a packet of sandwiches and some oranges, etc and a spare pair of socks. The weather was so hot and settled I had only shirt, shorts and sun-hat, and a lightweight cagoule (not needed).

The obliging llama-rearing owner of Routen Farm agreed to mind my vehicle - the Forestry Commission car park is apparently a happy hunting ground for thieves - and I set off just after 5 p.m. It was still tropical and swarms of flies ruined my enjoyment of the lakeside and forest, but I eventually climbed into a cooling breeze below Haycock, the first summit and start of the long ridge route. Even at 7 p.m. I was able to strip off and dry my sweaty clothes in the warm evening sun as I ate supper. Thereafter the next two hours before nightfall were magical - an easy stroll along the boundary wall over Haycock and Steeple as the sun became an orange orb and sank into the haze-covered sea behind me. I started to

look for bivouac sites and settled for the grassy top of Pillar Mountain at 9.p.m. as it grew dark. Two other parties were there, one with a tent, but on the football-pitch sized summit the sense of solitude was *not* spoilt.

Bivouacs are always a gamble especially with such limited gear, but this one worked well. The ground was hard but dew was prevented by the light wind and I slept well. I left at 5.20 as it grew light and the high mountains around were differing planes of grey - Gable's top hat, the Scaffells - cardboard cut-outs against a pale rose-coloured band of *mist* with the Wasdale Head Hotel just visible down below in the dark valley. The silence was absolute.

From Black Sail pass I missed the route onto Kirk Fell, using instead a loose gully to the North with a delicate pitch round a jammed boulder that made me aware of the stale taste in my mouth. After that I was quickly down to the gap underneath Gable and to my dismay finding no water anywhere. Every pool or tarn was dried up, every bog crunchy and solid - there had been almost no rain for many weeks. At last I managed to fill my bottle from a dubious trickle. There was visible livestock in the water but I reckoned *it* was what you couldn't see you had to worry about! The sun was now popping up from the horizon and I had the nasty feeling that the hard times were yet to come. I wasn't even half way round. Gable was quicker and easier than expected, how wonderful to loaf on the top for five minutes with not a soul in sight. Then beyond Green Gable at Gillercombe I met a couple camping by a stagnant pool who kindly replaced my 'green' water with water filtered from their pool with a

halazone tablet popped in. "Ten minutes and you can drink it". He should have said "you may drink it" - *it* was so disgusting I still had half a bottle many thirsty hours later!

Brandreth seemed a bit pointless, easily bypassed by a good path, but Haystacks was a solid obstacle. A series of ever-increasing lumps to be struggled up from a low heather-in-bloom fly-infested altitude. I had seriously underestimated my food requirements and was having to play games - "you can have a toffee on top of that next one, not before". A conversation with a lady being towed by her large labrador resulted in the gift (despite my protestations) of a cheese roll and a tomato, and with this extra five miles-worth of fuel I knew that like Lawrence of Arabia I was going to make it. A bit humiliating though!

High Crag beyond Scarth Gap pass was the crux. A huge cone of slag-heap appearance to be tackled in the late morning with the sun on my back. It was a case of mind over matter, but after that, High Stile with glimpses of climbers in Birkness Cornbe, Red *Pike* and the Dodds were more bearable. Finally Great Borne (or should it have been Great Burn in the midday sun) and I was plodding thankfully back to the start, some twenty-one hours after I had set off.

With *hindsight* I should have started a couple of hours earlier the previous afternoon, and perhaps added a couple of hours walking by torchlight to enable a finish before midday. But it had been a rare experience. In good weather the hills are at their finest *in* those hours before dusk and after dawn, with the bonus of having them almost completely to yourself



# TALES OF THE UNEXPECTED

Jeff Hooper

Both of the events recorded here happened during annual Long Walks. It may be that oxygen starvation of the brain was responsible, or again perhaps it was the tiredness induced by rising at such an early hour. To me they were both real experiences and regarding the first one, I still have the evidence.

## 1 The Spanner

On June 17, 1978, I was well into The Long Walk, it was mid-afternoon and we had started at 4 a.m. As on so many Long Walks over the past thirty-odd years by this stage of events, I was on my own with the others having finally disappeared from view as I slowed down. I believe it was David Smith who was relentlessly going ahead; it usually was! The walk was the Seven Peaks from Whernside to Great Whernside and I was on Fountains Fell. I remember that it was brilliantly sunny and warm enough if one kept on walking but there was a strong cutting wind and one quickly chilled on stopping.

To try and pull back some distance on the others instead of following in their footsteps I took a straight line across the fell top to the point where I had seen them disappear over the edge. This took me over a level area of eroded peat where obviously people did not usually go. I was completely remote from fences, old mine workings or other signs of civilisation.

As I walked along looking at the peat I saw what I immediately recognised as the end of a 'Bahco' 6 inch adjustable spanner projecting vertically from the peat! The business end was buried in the peat and 3 inches of the handle was on show. It was all heavily corroded including the projecting segment, it must have been there several years and apparently the peat had been blown or washed away from it.

At home I cleaned it, soaked it in penetrating oil and brushed it with a wire brush. I have used it on a number of occasions and I still have it in my possession. I have an almost identical spanner dating from the mid-1980's, the only differences are a smaller hole in the handle and in addition to the inscription 'V-STEEL 6" BAReO 0670 SWEDEN' the modern one reads 'invented in Sweden 1892' as well.

What I want to know is how did it get into the peat on the top of Fountains Fell?

## 2 Cool Clear Water

Once more the Long Walk, but this time 20 June 1981 and again I was trailing behind the leaders and on my own. We had started walking from Low Hall Garth at 4am. It was the walk that had been planned by someone looking at the map and deciding that we should go along one side of Dunnerdale from fell top to fell top and then cross the River Duddon to Black Combe and walk back on the high ground on the other side of the valley, with scant regard to distance or paths. If we were lucky we might be picked up at the top of Hardknott Pass, if not we would walk back to

L.H.G. The only two finishers got back at 11 p.m.

The day had started mistily and damp but after we left Black Combe the sun came out. By then I had changed from shorts into breeches because I had been cold! On the lower ground the wind lessened and I was too warm. Earlier at the feeding point on the Duddon Bridge to Broad Gate road I had not had enough to drink nor had I replenished my water bottle. By late afternoon I was very thirsty and there was no water on the route. By now I had walked about thirty miles.

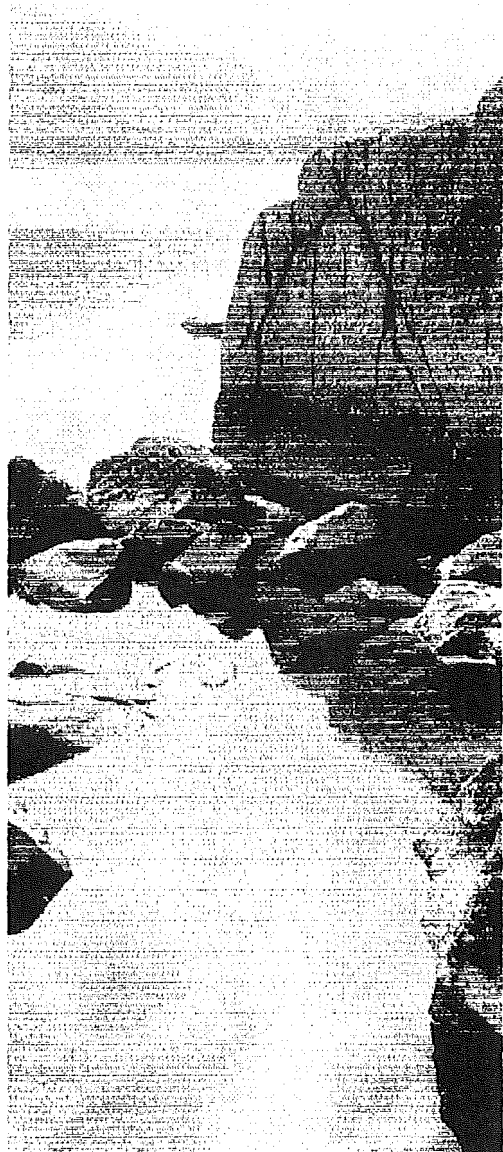
Across the moorland Northeast from Green Crag, Rafter Fell was the objective and as I walked across the dry grass it rose higher and higher with every step. Now very thirsty I began to look around to see if I could avoid the climb up Harter Fell in the sun and still meet the car at the top of Hardknott but to no avail.

Before setting off I had looked through Wainwright's guide of the area and suddenly it came clearly into my mind that the guide had said that just below the summit of Rarter Fell there was a rock face below which there always issued a trickle of water even in dry conditions. In my mind all the way up Harter Fell I could see the appropriate written page from Wainwright complete with pen and ink drawing. That kept me going during the half hour ascent.

Leaving the summit of Harter Fell for Hardknott, after a slight descent I saw on my left what I was looking for; a rock face with a slight overhang and from the lip of the overhang water trickled. Two or three mouthfuls of water revived me and I found the car waiting at the top of Hardknott Pass.

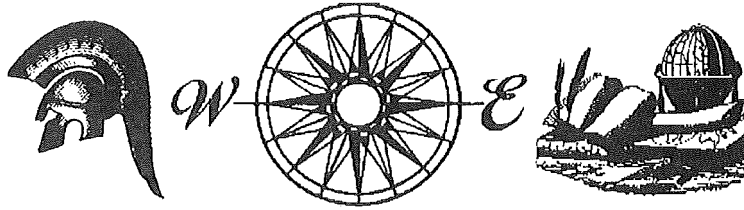
At home on Sunday evening I took Wainwright from the bookcase and turned to the section on Harter Fell to check what had been written. There was nothing there about water, neither in writing nor as a drawing! There was no mention of water near the summit. I looked up the other Harter Fell (Mardale) in case I had looked at the wrong one in mistake previous to the walk; again nothing. I checked Poucher's guide with the same result.

Can anyone throw light on to the mystery?



# Representing Landscapes

Michael Smith



Anaximander (c611-547 BC), is credited with inventing cartography, producing the first world map and thus giving Greek shipping a distinct advantage. Maritime cartographers are only interested in depths when they get small enough to impinge on their hulls or keels. For their terrestrial cousins though the representation of the varying heights of hills and mountains, and the depths of valleys and gorges as they appear on a topographic map, known as relief, is a thorny problem. Unless the relief is adequately represented, the map does not give a clear picture of the area it represents.



From various recent sources

Extracted from  
1:250000  
Srinagar  
USAMS 1954



In the earliest maps, relief was often indicated pictorially by small drawings of mountains and valleys, but this method is extremely inaccurate and has been generally supplanted by a the familiar system of contour lines.

Other ways of indicating relief include the use of colours, hachures or shading. Hachures, short parallel lines, are used to show slopes and are made heavier and closer together for steeper slopes.

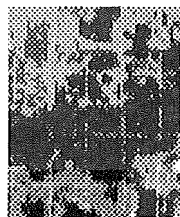
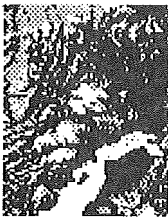
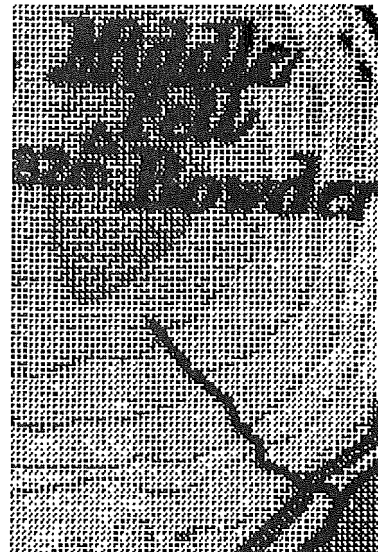


Extracted from sheet 28 of the OS one-inch series c1840

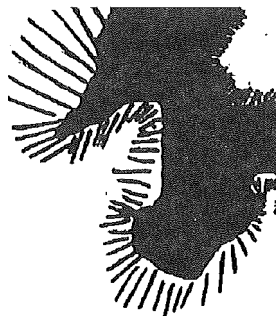
Shadings or carefully drawn hachures, are more easily interpreted than contour lines.

Some of our best maps use a combination of contours to give accurate elevations, and shading on south and east facing slopes. They give the impression, at first glance, of a landform illuminated from the north-east.

Bartholomew's National series  
1:100000 1976 Lake District



Parts of Alaska (us GS) & Venus (NASA) using shading and colour



From J E B Wright's  
Rock Climbing in  
Britain, 1958, depicting  
the rim of Ben Nevis

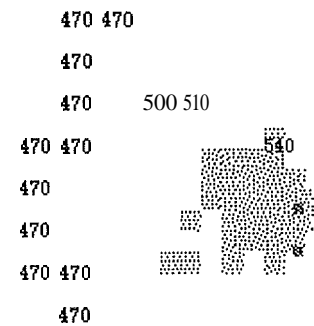
An alternative way of illustrating the lie of the land is through a pictorial representation of the ground as seen from a point in space, viewing the scene obliquely. Conventionally this is illuminated from the right hand side.

On occasions nature conveniently provides a suitable mountain from which to photograph or sketch such a view. Usually this is not possible and in such cases a similar effect can be achieved using landscaping! software on a computer. The remainder of this article outlines the use of such a computer program to produce an easily understood representation of land shape. Inevitably the representation is hampered by the absence of colour in the illustrations.



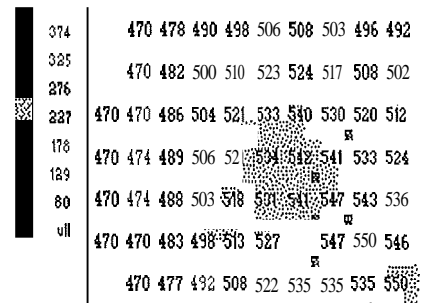
Start with a sketch map, in this case the land behind Low Hall Garth, and a few contours. These are scanned into a computer file and imported into the landscape program. This sketch is used as a background over which contours can be traced and spot heights set.

This enlarged example is a spot height and a contour near a peak. The grey areas are the sketch map marks of the background.



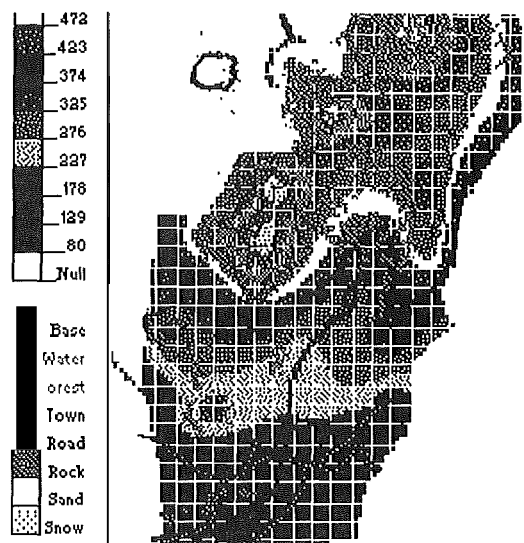
The computer is then set to interpolate the heights between the known heights. Obviously for this to be reasonably accurate the peaks, cols and a large number of spot heights need to have been marked in along with some contours to give the shape of the land.

Interpolation sets a height at every grid point, say 50m to 200m apart.

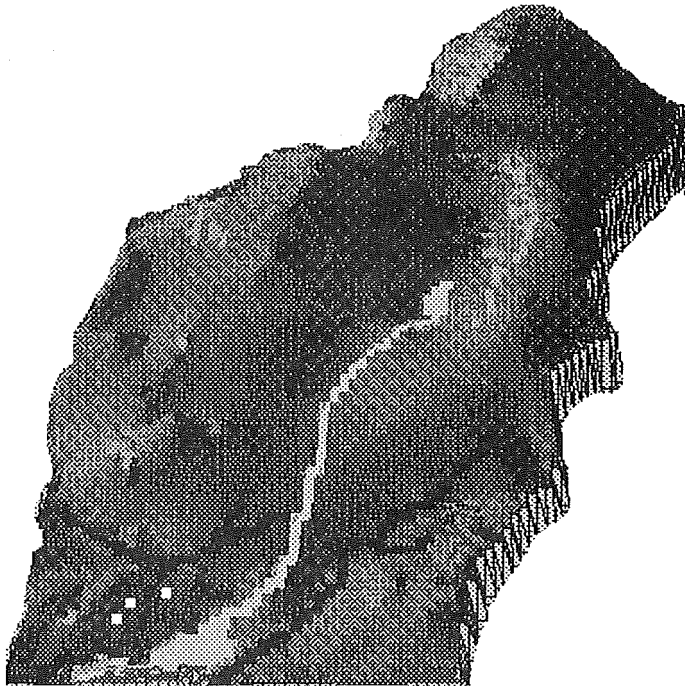


What started off as a sketch has now become a matrix of heights.

To these are added, for each grid point, the terrain type which can be set as rock, vegetation, building, road, snow, glacier, water, etc. Each of these carries a colour or colours. Where multiple colours are used these indicate the appearance when that terrain is lit from different angles or during different seasons. The most sophisticated programs also assign information on texture and movement for each terrain.



1 One such piece of shareware software is Landscape Explorer for Windows produced by WolleySoft, operating from Humblesknowe Cottage, Ramoyle, Perthshire, FK15 OBA. It costs £40 to register for full use.



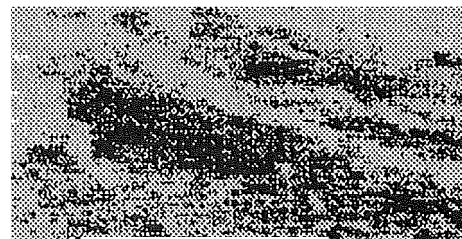
The view of this 'map' can be generated and the lighting, viewing position, season and scales varied.

Such maps can be generated not only from sketches but from data collected from satellites which measure directly the topography and land use. Their representation on paper, even in colour is a poor substitute for seeing the image on a screen. Add to this real time movement through the image and you have a whole new approach to route planning.

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It is a long way from Anaximander and his first world map to this virtual world. It was the Greek's failure to develop their technology on a par with theoretical knowledge and their wide-ranging speculations which limited them. We now have the technology, do we have the need and vision to use it in mountaineering?

Anaximander also postulated the origin of the universe as the separation of hot from cold, and dry from wet, in the primordial material, forming a cylindrical Earth, and held that all things eventually return to their original elemental state. So perhaps we ought to be wary of him and developments based on his work!



Enhanced view of a mountain on Venus. Where will mountaineering be by the time of our next centenary?



# Gaping Gill and the Mysterious Miss Booth

June 1906

S.A. Craven

The Booth family is legendary in the history of the YRC. The progenitor, Thomas Singleton Booth, was elected to membership in 1892<sup>i</sup>. His two sons, Fred Singleton Booth and Harold Singleton Booth, were very active members. The sons first attended a YRC. meet, at Gaping Gill, in May 1920<sup>ii</sup>. All three kept a keen interest in the affairs of the Club until their deaths.

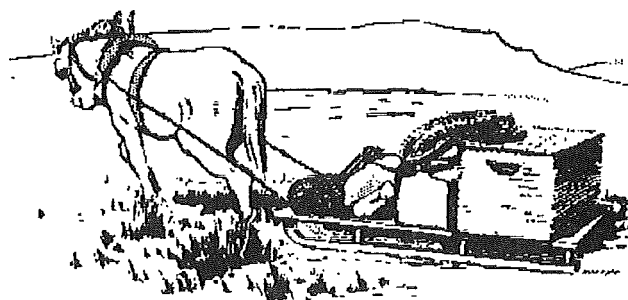
During the Gaping Gill meet of 5 - 7 June 1906, descents were made, inter alia, by Thomas Singleton Booth and by "Miss Booth<sup>t</sup>". By default I had always assumed that this "Miss Booth" was a daughter or other relative of T.S. Booth. Because she is not recorded as having attended any other YRC. meet, I did not regard the lady as being historically important.

The matter rested there for many years until the well-known former Editor of the Dalesman, Bill Mitchell, published his book about Ingleborough". In the publicity for this book, the author claimed that the first lady to descend Gaping Gill was "Miss Mary Booth who lived at Ben Rhydding", and that this information had been given to him by the lady herself!

The first lady to descend Gaping Gill was Miss L.E. May Johnson of Bradwell, Derbyshire. She attended a meet of the Leeds Ramblers Club in August 1904<sup>vi</sup>, and for some time used to go out with the famous Derbyshire caver and climber, I.W. **Puttrell**<sup>vii</sup>.

Mitchell's historical error prompted me to think further about the "Miss Booth" who descended Gaping Gill in 1906, Mary Booth, and her brother Harold, for many years lived near me in Margerison Road, Ben Rhydding. They were eccentric recluses, whom I never associated with the YRC. nor with Gaping Gill, despite several long conversations with the late Fred Booth. I well remember the Ben Rhydding Harold Booth as being a stooped, round-faced man - quite unlike the lean and erect Harold Booth of the YRC.<sup>viii</sup> who lived all his life in Leeds".

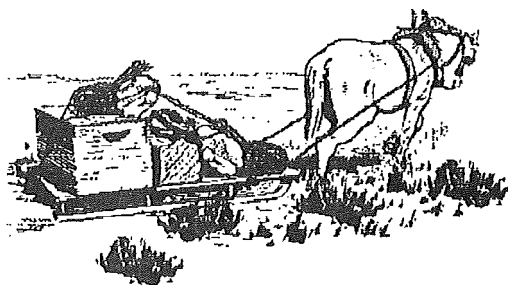
Who, then, was the mysterious Miss Booth who descended Gaping Gill in June 1906? She may have been Thomas Singleton Booth's daughter, Linda". Bearing in mind that Booth is a not uncommon surname, she may have been either a close, distant or no relation of the YRC. Booths. The eccentric Mary Booth of Ben Rhydding still has not been eliminated from the enquiry.



This matter is still not closed, and cannot be pursued any further at a distance of six thousand miles from Yorkshire. I will therefore be most grateful if readers can throw any further light onto the mysterious "Miss Booth".

I am grateful to members of the YRC. whose correspondence with me has contributed to the above article.

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- Anon. (1947) "In memoriam Thomas Singleton Booth" | YRC. 1. (24), 157.
- ii (Anon.) (1921) "Gaping Ghyll, 1920" | YRC. 4. (14), 237 - 244.
- iii Horn A.B. (1907) "Further explorations in Gaping Ghyll Hole" J. YRC. 2. (7), 202 - 210.
- iv Mitchell W.R (1994) "Ingleborough the Big Blue Hill" 120 pp. (Settle: Castleberg).
- v Craven Herald and Pioneer 25 Mar. 1994 p. 15.
- vi Toothill F. (1904) Leeds Mercury Weekly Supplement 24 Sep. p. 4. Botterill M. (1929) "Gaping Ghyll in 1904" J. YRC. 5. (18), 309 - 310.
- vii I am grateful to Johnson's nephew, J'W. Kay Esq. of Dronfield, for her biographical details.
- viii (Stembridge H.L.) (1985) "Harold Singleton Booth 1924 - 1982" J. YRC. 11. (39), 392.
- ix Letter d. 18 March 1995 Stanley (Marsden) to Raymond Harben.
- x (Stembridge H.L.) (1973) "Frederick Singleton Booth (1924 - 1972)" 1. YRC. 11. (36), 97 - 99.



## A Good Way up Coniston Old Man.

Derek Collins.

We left the New Dungeon Ghyll at about 8.30 am and climbed briskly to Stickle Tarn. One member needed a banana at this point then Jack's Rake was scrambled up in the drizzle.

Pavey Ark, Stake Pass, Angle Tarn, Esk Pike and Bowfell were enjoyed at a pace too fast for me. About here the sun came out and the day remained brilliant with some wind -perfect!

Due to this and the questionable banter, Crinkle Crag disappeared underfoot. It was so good all round we were on Stonesty Pike before the others pointed out that our route was not a good way to Wrynose Pass. Being used to this sort of thing, the absence was easily absorbed as we sunbathed for thirty minutes and then made a beeline for Red Tarn.

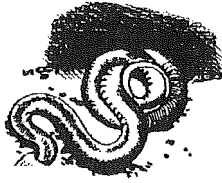
The most dangerous part of the day was in crossing the road (it was August) so we felt we needed a sleep in the sun. It was so good that fifty minutes after we started again Swirl How and Brim Fell were left behind and I was seriously contemplating theft from some nice people on top of the Old Man who both had 1.5 litre bottles of drink.

A good way down the Old Man is to aim, more or less, at the quarries just above the Walna Scar Road, which we did reaching the parked car 10½ hours after starting.

This is an excellent walk and the driving time between the two car points is only about 20 minutes.

## Encounters with snakes

Alan Linford



On the 1993 Alpine meet I encountered on the hills two vipers in one day, and on this year's meet one snake (not a snake but a slow worm actually, a lizard without legs) in the YRC camp. It seems snakes are becoming a regular feature in my wanderings. I suspect most members have stumbled across adders, my count must be at least two dozen. Two I have missed treading on by an inch or so - one on Skye and one on the North Yorkshire Moors; both on cold rainy days when snakes are sluggish: they hardly moved. I was wearing boots and canvas gaiters so the hazard was insignificant. Would the outcome have been the same had it been hot weather, with shorts and ankle boots the order of the day?

Boots and shorts were normal dress for walking in Nepal and Taiwan. In Nepal snakes, including cobras, were regular visitors in camp but I never met one on the hills. In Taiwan maps were not available and I made my own by following any track through sub-tropical jungle and arrow bamboo, encountering many snakes from 1 ft. to 5 ft. long; all moved away. I have clear recollections of a 5 ft. specimen crossing a path between me and the person following. There is a heightening of personal sensitivity! I once put my hand on a grass clump not inches away from a sunbathing snake. I walked into a green monster on Penghy Island (pescadores). We shot off, the snake into an aloe cactus and I downhill. That was the wrong action; You should stay clam and move away slowly. The illusion that snakes were non-aggressive was shattered whilst

ascending Mt. Roland in Tasmania. Angie and I (in shorts) had stopped for a brew. We moved off and within a few yards along the track (narrow with dense shrub either side) we saw a 5ft shiny black copperhead snake. "It will move," I said, approaching within 10ft. There was no chance of bypassing the reptile. We looked at each other for some time; I broke the stalemate by heaving a stick at it. The speed with which it rose about 3 ft. vertically - hissed, flipped over backwards and disappeared airborne into the bush, was astonishing; the blink of an eye. Fifty yards along the track we saw another one. I abandoned the ascent.

Whilst in Jasper Park, Canada, sat on a log having a brew with a fellow Rambler, snakes came up in the conversation, "no snakes in Canada" he stated. I swung over the log to dispose of the tea bags only to stand on a snake, instantly leapt away to stand on another one, then 3 of them; all harmless garter snakes just out of hibernation.

What do you do if bitten? You need the correct identification of the snake and the antidote. Shouting for Tarzan and his Stanley knife will not do much good. Keep as still as possible.

If in foreign parts it is worth checking what snakes are around, keep to wide open spaces and tracks, especially during the mating season when snakes are highly aggressive. They can sense ground vibration and will move away before you see them.



# We Are What We Do

Derek A. Smithson

I was sent a copy of the S.M.C. Journal because it contained a report on their president's attendance at the symposium of the Slingsby Institute. Their president obviously enjoyed the experience, as did the member of the F.&R.C.C. who has written a report in their journal. Last year's A.C. Journal carried a report of our doings in Norway and Michael Smith can tell you of all the interest engendered by the meet in Bolivia. We are holding a meet in the Himalaya this year and the mountaineering world will be interested, if we let them know in a suitable format. What we do on meets provides the image we project on the world. This decides our membership and our appeal, so let's stop our traditional introspective peering and go and do things. I find it difficult to accept that fiddling with the rules will make a really serious and lasting improvement to the quality of the club, and it is quality that counts. I'm quite sure a psychologist, particularly if he was American, could explain our attitude problem in enjoying all male society and the guilt that makes us keep discussing the position. I was once again guilty of standing talking in the bar with other members at the December meet, and being self-congratulatory. "What a wonderful club this is," we coo-ed. "What a great collection of friends, real friends." On another occasion, together with some of the more elderly members, we agreed that we did not dare to leave the club because its members seemed to live to such a great age. Then there is the divorce rate, which seems to be much lower than average. We do our wives and

girl friends a favour by leaving them to go to meets and things. To quote Emerson, 'Whoso would be a man must be a non-conformist.'<sup>1</sup>

Let us hope that the committee continue to arrange for a meet calendar that does not only cater for the popular and politically correct, that gives us meets of originality as well as tradition, that will attract the apparently egocentric, self-opinionated, generous-hearted males so commonly seen at meets.

Post Script: Continuing further into the S.M.C. Journal I was fascinated by some articles and bored by others. What I also realised is that if I hadn't been sent a copy I would not have found out. Do we want the Bulletin to contain the indices from Club Journals as they are sent to us and put in the library? Most of us don't want to give the full day necessary to browse in the library to discover all the interesting additions'.



Clapham Beck Waterfall

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<sup>1</sup> Conduct of Life, Self-Reliance,  
Ralph Waldo Emerson

<sup>2</sup> Editor's note: I would be pleased to receive reviews or abstracts of articles, journals or periodicals.

# Climbing on Raven Scar

(Or how to make a name for yourself without due exertion)

Bill Todd



The idea of the existence of a climbing crag on the SE flank of Chapel-le-Dale intrigued me. I have a dim memory of some time in the mid forties leaving my bicycle at Dale House Farm and climbing Ingleborough. I must have gone up Raven Scar which stretches south-west to north-east from GR 725754 to 734763.



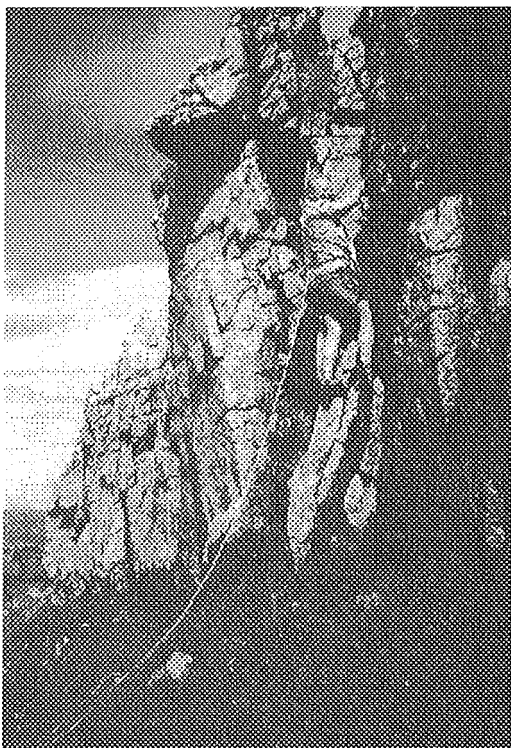
So when I got involved with the Yorkshire Limestone Guidebook Project I resolved to have a look at this relatively undeveloped crag. I am nowhere near good enough to do new routes on established cliffs because the only new lines left are hard. But with a crag the size of Twistleton and only thirty-four routes in the book there ought to be some neglected lines I could do.

And you can take it from me that it wasn't easy reconnoitring, there are about four tiers and the bottom and top ones are not continuous. The steep grass below the Central Area is more frightening than the climbs and a wall between here and South Crag stops a continuous walk along the bottom. The guide recommends that to get from Sough Crag to Central Area you go along the top wall and descend to the aforementioned steep grass.

Walking north from Central Area there is a reasonable path and there is an excrescence on the crag not unlike the mushroom at Twistleton. "Ha," I thought, "if one could get up that mushroom the rest of the way to the top would be easy." It must have



been twelve months later that I persuaded my trusty friend Jack Wilson to come with me and have a go. With a sturdy second safeguarding my skin I was able to climb the mushroom, overhanging but good holds, and the easy bit above.



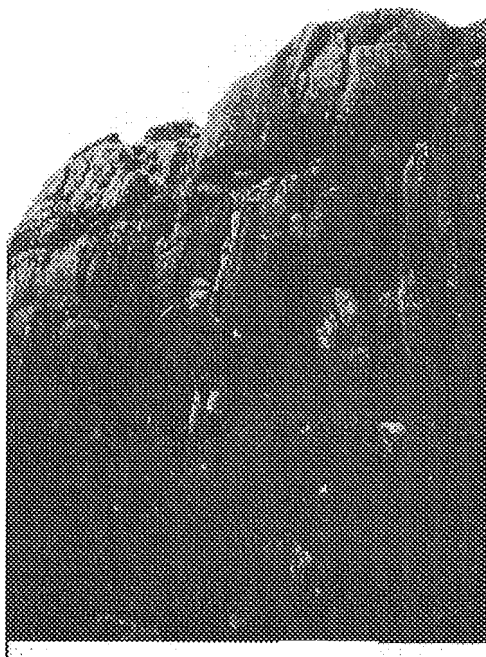
We called the first route "Fun" Diff. and the chimney "Fiddle" V. Diff. A bit further north you can cross a depression and a broken-down wall to a pleasant, south-facing buttress. This is "Pleasant Buttress" Mod. an easy climb for a lady.

Above the south crag are two metal ladder styles. Near the right hand or southerly one is a grassy/stony couloir. On it's left, 5 metres left of a sticking out dead tree is a small buttress with a crack system. This can be entered from the right and climbed with enjoyment. "Friday" Diff.

That makes four easy lines that our young climbers of today would hardly notice but they are good fun. There is a copy of the guide book in the YRC Library and if members do any new routes will they please send details to:

Dave Musgrove, 19a The Crescent,  
Adel, Leeds LS16 6AA.

Fifty metres south we found an easy way down and walking back north we saw an interesting looking chimney. I let Jack take the lead here thinking in my cunning mind that it was harder than the one we'd just done. Jack got so far up, put a runner on, and I'll swear his heart was not in it because he put a foot out to bridge and knocked the thing off that he wanted to bridge on. I had no alternative then but to have a go myself. As soon as I got the next move above Jack's high point his runner came off. So I scooted to the top as fast as I could before anything else came off. I was lucky.



The photographs illustrating this article are of Chapel-le-Dale from the scar and Fun, Fiddle and Friday in that order. All were provided by Bill.

# A Day to Remember and a Lesson Learned

Arthur W Evans



In the 1930s, occasional coach parties used to go from Merseyside to Idwal Cottage Youth Hostel during the winter months. How or by whom they were organised, I never found out.

Messages were passed by phone or word of mouth that a coach would be leaving Birkenhead pier head at 5.30 p.m. on Friday for Idwal, returning on the Sunday evening. The coach was always full of young climbers and the trips were very jolly occasions.

On one of these outings in January 1935 or '36, the weather was very cold and Llyn Ogwen was frozen over.

At Idwal, my bed was in the Hut and I had a very chilly night. Awake before dawn, I had the bright idea of going up to the Idwal Slabs and doing the ordinary route solo before returning for breakfast and the day's climbing.



After breaking the ice on the water-butt outside the hut for a perfunctory wash and shave, I left at first light for the Slabs and started up the climb.

At first things went well, clearing snow off the holds with my hands, but after about eighty feet the snow cover increased markedly. Ahead was a continuous snow slope with no sign of the underlying rock. After a few trial moves I found I could progress by kicking steps and punching holds for my hands.

For the next hundred feet or so it was straightforward. The snow was firm and did not ban up on my tricounis. The underlying rock was, however, glazed with ice and this increased as I moved up.

Higher up the snow cover began to peter out and was soon too thin to give a good foothold and brought me to a halt. I began to regret I'd left my slater's hammer behind and to realise that a retreat would, to say the least, be difficult.

The view ahead was not very encouraging; a glistening sheet of ice with occasional unconnected patches of snow, except that to my left there was a continuous narrow strip of snow which appeared to run all the way to the top.

It was a long stretch but after a few tentative kicks confirmed that it was

thick enough to give a foothold, I carefully moved across,

Progress then was slow but fairly steady and I finally reached the shelf below the Holly Tree Wall in a very relieved and chastened mood.

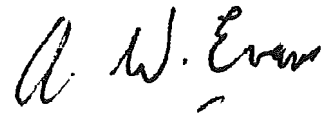
The shelf was thigh deep in softer snow and the easy way off on the left, was thickly buried and gave some difficulty. However, I was soon on easy ground and on my way to a much appreciated hot breakfast.

The conditions were certainly very unusual, more reminiscent of Scotland, but this was no excuse for such a stupid and foolhardy outing. If there had been any wind the story

might have been very different. I should have assessed the conditions ahead and retreated early on and, of course, should not have started without my slater's hammer.

I've often wondered since whether anyone else has ever kicked steps up the Idwal Slabs.

The slater's hammer had a certain popularity in those days in preference to the more cumbersome ice-axe and was an excellent and cheap tool for chipping ice off holds,



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## The Mönch

Tim Bateman

Having not had much sleep the night before, and a long day up on the Jungfrau, Alistair Renton and I were pleased to find the weekend crowds had departed from the Monch hut since we now had a bed for the night. The previous night had been spent on the floor, under the tables in the dining area, along with another thirty people of mixed nationalities.

The plan was to get up fairly early the next day, dash up the Monch and get back down to the Jungfrauoch for 10 a.m. so that we could make use of our cheap train ticket. This left us adequate time since it was only a short route followed by a plod back down the track to the station. We woke about 4.30 to hear the wind whistling outside. This didn't sound good but we got up regardless and went and had some breakfast. The only other person up was an English guide from Plas Y Brenin and his two followers. They too were headed for the Jungfrau.

By 5 a.m. we were off, headed for the foot of the ridge that lay about 500 yards from the hut. With thick cloud, darkness and no lights to follow we even had trouble finding this but when we did we started on up. As it gradually got light we caught fleeting glimpses of other mountains through breaks in the clouds. The wind wasn't as bad as it had threatened and as we turned onto the summit ridge the cloud cleared completely from the top of the mountain. Ahead lay a gently sloping snow ridge leading to the top, a well-trodden path worn deep into the snow all the way. We were lucky enough to be rewarded a clear view to the North whereas to the South a blanket of cloud covered everything except the very tops of the peaks. So far we still hadn't come across anyone else and so it continued until we were half way down and we met a few ascending parties.

By the time we reached the bottom of the ridge the cloud was back and the wind blowing. We made a quick visit to the hut and set off down to catch the train.

# Hot Rock Spanish Style

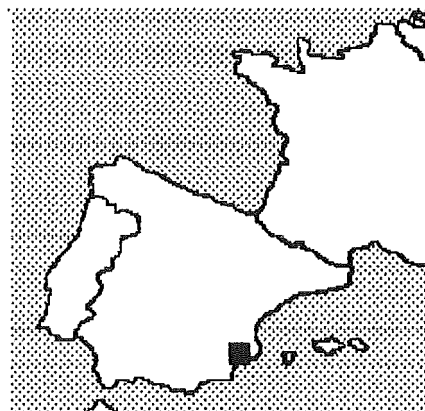
John Middleton

A review of some climbing areas in the Alicante region of Spain visited by the author earlier this year.

Within an hours drive of Alicante it is possible to find almost as much first class rock climbing as there is in the whole of Britain. - additionally, it is warm all year round, it is usually dry, the rock is invariably massively solid limestone, it is varied, and more importantly to us it is the domain of the sports climber.

Sports climbing uses the French grading system of technical difficulty which is roughly two places higher than our own e.g. English 5b equates to French 6a. In Britain sports climbs can only be found on indoor climbing walls and on the occasional loose quarry. In Spain they are on many major cliffs. The routes are usually of a sustained technical standard and follow a line of bolts at 9' to 12' spacings. This means that all that has to be carried is perhaps a dozen quick draws and because the protection aspect of the route is minimised the standard of climbing can be pushed up by one or even two grades. Most sports climbs start from around 5 (HVS Sa) and go as high as you can take.

SELLA. This is a beautiful series of secluded valleys just 3 km from the attractive village of Sella and 30 minutes inland from Benidorm (an excellent base for the region). There are currently around 100 routes but



there is potential for at least ten times as many. Cliffs are just one minute from the car and are generally 70' to 80' high on vertical walls. The climbing is truly dreamlike being on small sharp finger pockets and with quite amazing friction. We did about eight routes, each one seemingly better than the last but on reflection our favourites were "El Vuelo de la Maquina" (6b) and "Tu quien eres?" an easier option at 6a.

SAX. Another idyllic inland area 45 minutes from Benidorm and just 3 km from the attractive village and castle of the same name. Nearby is a salt lake, an exposed salt dome with excellent karst features and some short erosian valleys with beds of exposed gypsum. The climbing involves a steep five minute walk to the crag which consists of a 200' high face and an 80' pinnacle. The routes and rock is similar to Sella but perhaps not so sustained. Most climbs are numbered on the cliff and we particularly liked number 16 on the overhanging pinnacle (75' 6a+), and number 2 direct (140' 6a+/6a-). Other nearby cliffs are currently being developed.

BARRENCO DEL MASCARET. This is a spectacular gorge just 15 minutes from Benidorm and five minutes from the sea through which

both the Valencia to Alicante Autopiste and N332 roads go. The routes are up to 730' long and most have a considerable grip factor as the starting point is from one of the road bridges already over 100' from the bottom of the gorge! At the rather dismal bottom are several very hard short routes. We chose the excellent 7 pitch Via Sulfida with four brilliant middle pitches of 6a/6a-/6a-/5+ on amazing rock with heart stopping views.

**DALLE D OLLA.** This was the smallest cliff we visited with just about 15 routes on it. It is situated high on the Altea Hills Estate close to Barrenco del Mascaret. It was the crag we least liked due to the highly polished rock. Other climbers do speak well of it so maybe we were just getting tired by then.

**TOIX SEA CLIFF.** On the Toix massif between Benidorm and Calpe are four extensive areas of top quality sports climb cliffs whilst along one edge are the sea cliffs. These are most definitely adventure climbs (and are graded accordingly). The kilometre or so of climbs are reached from either traverses or abseils. We did the superb slightly overhanging El Dorado 1, a fine exercise in bridging (E2 4b/Sb/5b) and the strenuously overhanging arete of Via Missing Link, perhaps the hardest and most spectacular route of the week (370' 4b/5b/5c E3).

**PENON DE IFACH.** At one end of Calpe, next to several great apartment blocks is this incredible hunk of rock nearly 1100' high with routes almost all around it. These are again adventure routes and a normal English rack is required. The climbs have variable pitches on good but differing

rock. We did one route here (it took up most of the day), the ten pitch Via Gomez-Cano. Its overall grade is E2 and one true adventure pitch includes either aid moves through an overhang. The ninth crux pitch of Sc is also truly in another world as the key moves are carried out with 1000' of space below! It is best to carry trainers up the climbs as it is a good half hour down the descent path.

**PUIG CAMPANA.** If you are a traditional alpine climber then this is the crag for you. It is situated 30 minutes inland from Benidorm above the village of Finestrat and involves a 45 minute uphill walk (!). Climbing is on the impressive South Face and like most alpine routes includes some loose rock (the only loose rock we ever came across). There is a classic three star severe, the 1200' long Espero Sur Central which roughly follows a ridge but we did the 640' long 5 pitch Diedre Magico, E2 5a/5a/Sa/5a/5b. This follows a groove up the right side of the face and provides excellent situations particularly on the last pitch. In true alpine tradition the descent is by four long abseils complete with frequent rope snags. Several very hard sports routes have been put up on the wall just to the right.

These are places visited during a 7 day stay but there are easily as many recognised crags again and twenty times as much virgin rock. So, if you are fed up with Britain's freezing slush and lack of sun, give it a try, we are going back! Costs in 1995 for flight from Leeds, room, full board with car hire were from £225

The recognised guide book to the region, Coos Crags "Costa Blanca Climbs", is currently being updated.

# Elidir Revisited

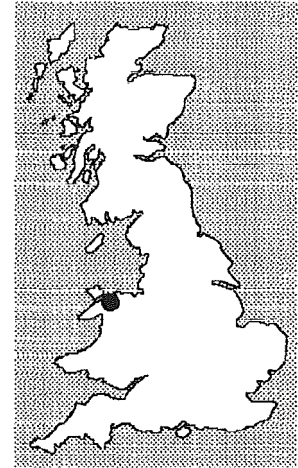
Tim Josephy

This visit to the crags and article were inspired by Arthur Evans' article in the last journal

"The indignities hang like smoke over a battlefield". So says Tom Leppert in the Ogwen Guide, of the CEGB road and dam that intrude upon the peace of Cwm Marchlyn Mawr. Yet it takes more than these to spoil such a wild and beautiful place. The elegant curve of Bwlch Marchlyn and the towering presence of Elidir itself are indestructible - and of course there is the Pillar.

From where we stood at the dam, the Pillar blended into the hillside, looking like no more than a buttress, steeper than the surrounding slabs. We started traversing in across scree and broken rocks but soon abandoned this for a sheep track near the lake shore. As we rounded the toe of the Pillar, Corrugated Cracks became visible stuck high on the east face and looking suspiciously innocuous. Only the top 30 feet or so could be seen and that looked easy. The guidebook tales of "mortifying struggles" and "intimidating chimneys" were obviously an exaggeration!

The first pitch from a platform one third of the way up the Pillar looked easy. A gently curving corner, it is easy, but not totally so - slightly off balance and sloping the wrong way.



So, you have to stop, concentrate and do it properly. The climb has given you a gentle cuff on the head and told you to pay attention. Chastened we climbed on to belay at the foot of Crack itself We gazed up at its full 80 feet rising in four storeys to the summit of the Pillar. Rippled rather than corrugated, the crack is body sized (a sideways body, that is) and conspicuously holdless; we began to wonder if perhaps the guidebook had it right. I had already laid claim to leading this pitch, so there was no backing down now. A couple of small holds out on the right got me launched, then it was a case of thrutching in the traditional manner. Standing on the first ledge was the next problem - it was big enough, but the rock above was bulging and holdless - an ungainly sprawl was the best I could manage. The next tier was the hardest. Completely holdless, violent caterpillar contractions and extensions seemed the only way to reach a wonderfully sharp edged chockstone at the top. Above, the crack soared - wider now and certainly imposing. Starting it required some commitment, but soon small holds appeared, enabling the fine situation to be enjoyed in comfort. Exhilarating climbing landed me on



the Pillar summit where I could bask in the sunshine and enjoy the sounds of my second being "mortified" in the chimney. Descent was by a rift in the bowels of the Pillar (where we got lost in true YRC caving tradition) to the breche, followed by an abseil down the East Gully.

Next on the agenda was Janos, the route that AW. Evans nearly did. The slabs are up on the right of the pillar, steep, quartz streaked and liberally sprinkled with overhangs. The route starts where all routes should - at the very bottom of the crag and goes pretty much straight up to the top, dodging the overhangs on the way. The climbing is superb, the rock excellent, the protection and belays virtually non-existent. Although never really hard, the climbing is sustained and exposed, needing a steady lead and plenty of confidence. We took a belay at 25 feet after the initial delicate slab (the globe flowers are still there) and after that we only found one belay and a couple of decent runners in the remaining 250 feet. To have led 150 feet of it, found no belay and then reversed it must have required a cool head and a lot of skill. AW.E., we stand in awe!

The routes:

#### CORRUGATED CRACKS

150 ft hard severe

first ascent AW. Evans &  
P. Smith 31.7.1937

#### JANOS

270 ft very severe

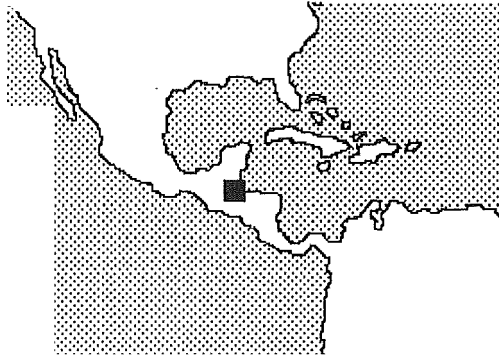
first full ascent A.II Moulam &  
C.T. Jones 1967.

## La Cueva de San Antonio

John Middleton.

We rubbed the sign and saw it said "Prince El Paraiso", we let out a great sigh of relief, we had finally made it. Two hours had passed since we left our cosy little hotel at the end of the road village of El Estor on the shores of Lake Isabel. Two hours of almost continuous four wheel drive, across a 50m wide and half metre deep river, over precariously balanced planks crossing lesser streams, through dense forest, around maize fields, and all the time in deep red mud. It may have been just 15km but it was certainly quite an adventure in its own right.

We knocked at the door and asked in our halting Central American Spanish for a guide to take us to the entrance of the French cave (discovered in 1992 and unvisited since). The Finca is a maize and coffee **farm** also situated on the edge of the lake and has several huts where visitors can stay - presumably they arrive by boat though! Rodriguez, the rotund and laughing **farm** manager obliged us and we promptly jumped into the nearby Rio Caquija San Antonio, a surprisingly warm river which shortly led into the forest. Around the first bend the reason for the unusual warmth became apparent when a streaming water fall entered our river from between the junction of the limestone and volcanic base rock. Once past this we entered a fantastically eroded gorge. Hand sized spiders ran along the boulders at stream level. Rodriguez assured us they were harmless but we were not convinced! Cascade followed cascade until eventually a still, bottomless



black lake emerged from between the giant portals of a cave.

We swam in, the entrance was perhaps 6m wide and 15m high, inside, the ceiling vanished from sight but we had to continue swimming for over 400m to a short cascade, more swimming, and a 6m high waterfall. Once this was excitingly negotiated the passage mushroomed into one of the largest and most beautiful imaginable. Yellow flowstone cascaded down all the walls and often also covered the floor. The roof was measured to 50m and the passage width on occasion exceeded 40m. Progress was rapid and in no time we had covered over a kilometre terminating in a 20m high waterfall. Awe inspiring! If we had brought ropes with us we could have entered via the top entrance, covered almost 4km of passageway, and descended 206m. What we did do was not difficult but it certainly was spectacular, beautiful, highly sporting AND we still had to get back to El Estor before dark.

For anyone who happens to be in this part of Guatemala then El Estor makes an excellent base. It has no tourist infrastructure as such but for us, after eight days of eating nothing but beans, rice, and tortillas in various forms, its fresh fish and meat are very welcome.

There is also a surprising amount to do here. Apart from known caves, local farmers informed us of considerable potential in the mountains; there is excellent walking; boats can be hired to visit the Rio Polichic delta swamp where I certainly had my best views of birds, monkeys, and plant diversity anywhere; hired boats can also get you to the Castillo San Felipe, some 25km across the lake - this was originally built to keep the English pirates out, from there it is not far to the Rio Dulce gorge, the Canbean, and the garifuna town of Livingston. Big game fish (Tarpen) abound in the lake and there is always the primary and secondary forest with all its excitements (danger!).

The limestone country to the north Coban, is also quite incredible with the largest and most impressive cockpit karst I have ever seen, major river caves, cave potential galore, and the amazing 600m long natural tufa bridge at Semuc Champey built over the foaming Rio Cahabon.

We had six punctures exploring this wild region from Lanquin and after bulk discounting managed to get our puncture repairs down from around £5 to £1.



# Expedition Diary

1979 & 1988 - Bolivia

**Mtchael Smith**

8 August 1979

On the journey to Huayna Potosi from La Paz stop at Milluni and buy additional supplies from the small shacks of the small but active mining community before going up the Zongo Pass.

A packing error results in shortage of tent pegs so we improvise with sun-bleached llama's rib bones.

9 August 1979

Weave slowly up the glacier over a small ice fall to camp on a plateau by the ridge. Nick feeling lousy, sick and tired due to the effects of the altitude.

Bright, full moon lights up the view across the altiplano with punctuating flashes of lightning and growling thunder from far over the other side of the range.

10 August 1979

Brew up at 4am and set off alone by 5.30 and gain the steep-sided snow ridge. Make two hours progress but decide that the undulating ridge is too long and risky alone. Return and break camp before portering out both sets of gear. Nick in poor shape.

11 August 1979

Breakfast at Eli's cafe and make a consolation visit to the botanical gardens and depressingly dilapidated zoo. Reflect on the failure to climb Huayna Potosi and hope that it will not affect our other planned climbs in the Real.



27 July 1988

On the journey to Huayna Potosi from La Paz pass Milluni tin mine, dilapidated and deserted, on the way up to the Zongo Pass. The recession in the mining industry has extended the La Paz 'suburbs' on the altiplano as redundant mine workers eke out what they can in the city.

Camp on dried grass just short of the moraine. The full moon's light streams in through the flaps we opened to avoid condensation as the temperature falls to  $-6^{\circ}\text{C}$ .

28 July 1988

Going very slowly up the moraine and scree to the glacier in  $2\frac{1}{2}$  hours. Heavy sacks, powdery snow on steep ground and less than a week since leaving home all combine to make us feel the altitude. Grateful to reach the hanging glacier where we are to camp. Just in the tent when an avalanche sweeps into our cwm from the ridge I was on nine years ago. The temperature falls below  $-12^{\circ}\text{C}$ .

29 July 1988

Two hours of melting snow and getting ready. We are not into the routine yet as this is our first trip out and we are making heavy weather of it. The route is dramatic, threading past seracs and over crevasses and we arrive at the summit cone to be defeated by the bergschrund at about 6000m. Descend steadily with David suffering: I assume it is the altitude and fear for the future climbing prospects.

30 July 1988

The stove plays up interminably this morning. Eventually patience runs out and we make do with what liquid we have and descend as quickly as we can to reach the pass by mid-morning.

David's front tooth now throbbing, painful with every pounding step of the descent and the area is swelling rapidly. We had to transport back to LaPaz.

Our courtyard accommodation has a disused dental chair but despite urgent enquiries we fail to rustle up a matching dentist, only the owner of the chair.

The remaining four members of the team return from Peru, tired from the travel and recovering from stomach problems.

David has to put up with pain-killers and anti-biotics. The whole side of his face is swollen and he must be having a wretched time. We are due to leave La Paz on Monday, it now being Saturday evening.

31 July 1988

With the help of a hotel receptionist we manage to locate the daughter of a dentist who assures us that her father will meet us at his surgery in the afternoon. We find the place, it is the half deserted old Hotel La Paz, while the rest of the team see to final provisioning we go in by the personnel door of the shuttered entrance. We communicate in Spanish with the dentist assisted by his delectable daughter's English when she is around. He proudly illustrates his diagnosis and proposed laser-aided treatment with the use of gruesome plates from weighty texts. Ninety minutes, \$200 and 24 Bolivianos later David is now much happier, has a detachable tooth and gradually lessening swelling.

On the eve of our departure to the Apolobamba we manage a heartier meal at Ell's cafe though Harvey is far from being on top form.



## Expedition Diary

1957 - Nepal

Maurice Wilson

April 25

Events are now becoming rather dull. We did the usual ferry trip from Base to Camp 1, today. I had about 25 lbs up and found the going a good deal harder. The snow still covered all the hillside and this slowed us up a bit. Crosby and George stayed at Camp 1, which leaves Andy and me at Base Camp. Spent the afternoon sorting out my kit for the coming week. The overboots are too difficult to get off, so I am trying another pair.

Heavy snow after 4.00pm and into the evening has covered the ground to a depth of 2 inches. Tonight, I am alone in the large tent.

April 26. Camp 1

A further three inches of snow fell during the night and everywhere was as white as a blanket, this morning. Did not hurry getting up as we had to do the journey only one way, today. Andy is busy photographing.

I left about 8.00 a.m. Felt much more tired today and went slowly. Waited for Pasang to come back to the couloir after he had dropped off his load, so as to see him across safely. Returned to Camp 1 after mid-day. Opened a High Altitude box ready for tomorrow's splitting of loads and then crawled into the tent. Rested a long time, but by 4.20 p.m. feel more lively. Camp 1 is an eerie place. It is pitched on the very edge of an ice-fall, with its attendant seracs on the one side and precipitous cliffs belching stones on the other. Indeed, stone falls, crumbling seracs and avalanches provide a constant source of music here.

### High Altitude Diet

Breakfast Porridge, Ryvita, Butter,  
Jam, Tea.

Lunch Bournvita, Ryvita, Butter,  
Cheese.

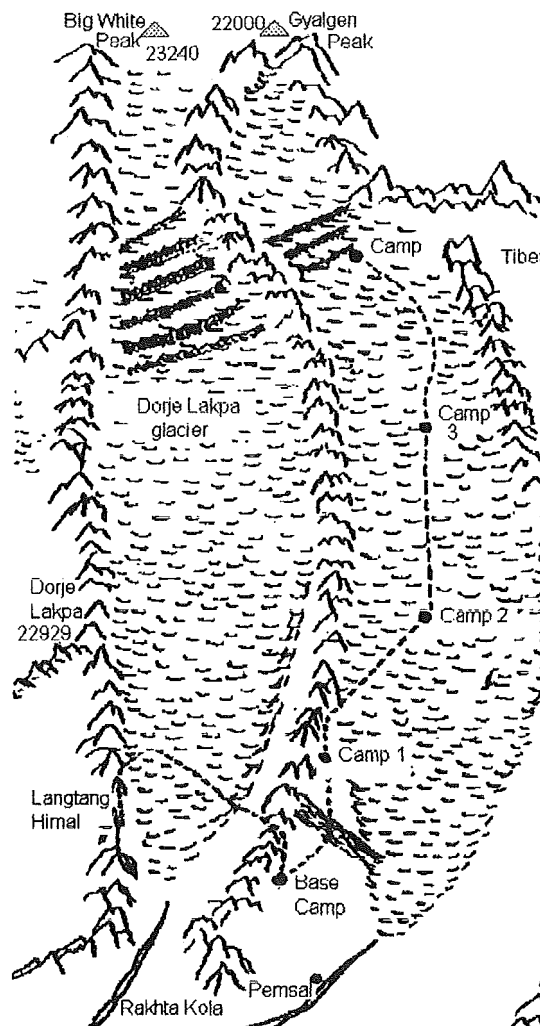
Dinner Pemmican, Ryvita, Butter,  
Jam, Shortbread, Bournvita.

The pemmican, without vegetables, is most unpalatable. I think of Scott and his men, in the Antarctic, who, poor devils, seemed to subsist on little else.

### April 27. Camp I

We got off to a good start at 6.15 a.m. and, after returning for my snow goggles, soon got up the rock pitch which was sheeted in a film of snow. On top we roped up and I took the lead, plodding along at my own pace up the glacier. It is quite a long way, even to Camp 2, but the ice is set at an easy angle and we made it with only one stop.

We found the tents still erected and a note from Crosby to say that he and George were returning for another load. So we thought we would strike camp for them. This we did, though the canvas was firmly frozen into the ground in places. Stones which had been placed on the sides to counter the wind were, also, difficult to dislodge. Finally, we got packed up and decided to take what we could up to Camp 3 and hand over to the others as they came down. In due course, we met George coming down with 'Myla' and Mingma. After a consultation, he decided to continue down for what little distance was left. Andy and I then trudged on up to Camp 3, Andy taking the lead. For this, I must confess, I was thankful as the snow was becoming soft. (Rather surprising, as in the Alps the higher you get the harder the snow.) It was tiring towards the end, but we



reached Camp 3 at 11.00 a.m. and delivered the goods. Crosby was rather surprised, but pleased, to see us. The wind got up while we were there, so we soon set off down. Fixed a 'marker flag' at the survey point. Wind intensely cold and I was thankful for my anorak. Retrieved sweater at Camp 2 and reached Camp 1 in the early afternoon. Some of the crevasses opening above the ice-fall. Soup.

### Pasang

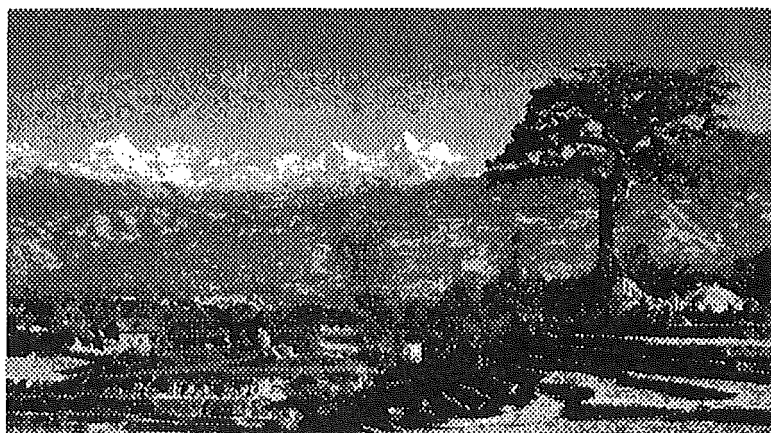
One of the better known characters about camp is Pasang, nicknamed 'Solid'. He was recommended to us in Khatmandu by Ron Barclay. Quite early it was obvious that he was a very strong lad. He carried the

kitchen equipment (heaviest load) all the way up to Base and has stayed on. To look at he is, as one member put it ... 'ugly'. Yet, he is always ready, willing and likeable. He married his brother's widow. (If a married Sherpa dies the obligations and rights

of marriage do not come to an end, but pass to the deceased's younger brother **if** he is willing to take her on and she to accept.)

Pasang's main claim to fame, however, is that he has seen a Yeti. He says he saw it at close quarters.

He describes it as being like a man but hairy, sometimes on all fours, sometimes on two legs. It has a voice like a man. He did not see it near Thyangboche. Four of the other Sherpas have seen footprints, but they say that there are not many Yeti to be seen, now.



## The True Top of Tyke-land

Bill Todd

When I was a youth I bought maps. They showed me where the high places were and how to get to them on my bike. So long before 1974 I knew that Mickle Fell was the highest mountain in Yorkshire at 2585'. I never got round to climbing it until this year. It's miles from anywhere, there is no light of access, and most important of all, it is an artillery range. But some of my mid-week companions had done it in 1991 so I decided to organise a repeat performance. I found out that the army would not be firing on the 27 June 1994, so six of us met at Hilton village that morning. Four had been on the previous ascent so I wasn't unduly worried that the cloud was down to c. 1500'. We walked up Hilton Beck, noting rock-climbing potential on Mell Fell and at the Pennine watershed turned south east by compass. As we lunched at around

2000' the cloud lifted and we got a view of our objective slightly north of east. It was a good job we had resisted the temptation to go too far south up Little Fell. In improving weather we hit the slope of Mickle Fell and found some rock to scramble on the way up. The summit plateau lies SW-NE and the highest point was at the north east end. The magnificent views included Cow Green and Cauldron Snout.

To make it a bit of a round we decided to come back over Little Fell at 2454' and it was half-way up here that Clive realised that in 1991 they had gone up the wrong mountain. The mist had been so thick that they had thought they were on Mickle Fell. Perhaps it had been a mistake to revisit. The slope of Burton Fell took us back to Hilton Beck to round off a good day.

Information:

Range Officer Brough 41661

Map O.S Landranger 1:50k Sheet 91

Distance walked 13 miles

Height gain 1919' 585 m.



# Slingsby, Mountains and Music

Ray Harben

You will have read earlier in the last Bulletin of the prolific letter writing of

W.C. Slingsby. He was in correspondence with the composer Edvard Grieg, who was of Scottish descent and born at Bergen in 1843. Reproduced below is the full text of a letter to Grieg, a copy of which is in the West Yorkshire Archives with the original being in the ownership of Jocelyn Winthrop-Young.

August 20th. 1900.

BEECH HILL.  
CARLETON.  
SKIPTON-IN-CRAYEN.

Dear Herr Grieg,

I venture to send you by this post some re-print copies of papers which I have written on Norway., as you were good enough to express an interest in one which Froken Bertheau showed to you at Turtegro.

They are however very light, & wholly unworthy of so great a subject as your glorious old mountains, which I love most sincerely & with an affection which deepens with each successive visit.

Please pardon me for saying that, when I hear or play your music, familiar scenes in your grand old north land are often recalled to my mind, & thus I enjoy a two-fold pleasure. I picture the stem & wild fjeld, the pure snowfields, the pine woods, the fjord,

the fogs, & the gentle beauties of nature, & I feel very grateful to the composer who has so beautifully & faithfully represented by music his country's especial charms.

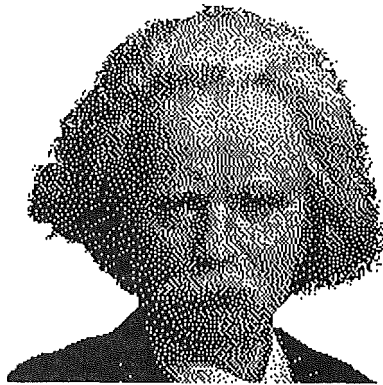
Pray excuse me for saying this.

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My eldest girl, Katharine, who has been already twice in Norway, hearing that I am writing to you has just said in her impetuous school girl manner "Do ask Herr Grieg to give me his autograph" & as the child has a happy way of getting what she wants from her father, I said I would do so.

I am writing a book on mountaineering in Norway, but find that it is a much more formidable task than that of climbing the mountains themselves.

Believe me to remain,  
Yours faithfully,  
Wm. Cecil Slingsby.



Edvard Hagerup Grieg, (1843-1907)

August 20th. 1900—

Dear Herr Grieg  
I venture to send to you  
Wm. Cecil Slingsby

## Obituary

Geoffrey Phillip Ashton  
Scovell  
1950-1995

Although Geoff was born in Surrey, he was brought up in Yorkshire, where he became fond of the outdoor life, and hill walking, in particular. In 1949 he took a Mountaineering Training course in Zennatt, where he learnt the elements of rock climbing and snow and ice technique. Upon his return to Knaresborough, he sought and joined the YRC, being especially active in the 1950's.

He was quickly introduced to pot-holing by his contemporaries and, with them, made descents of Gaping Gill, Nick Pot, Sulber Pot and Lost John's Hole. He was devoted to, and spoke frequently of, the legendary Ernest Roberts, with whom he descended Goyden Pot in Nidderdale.

In 1953 he returned to the Alps and, after a stroll up the Sparrhorn, traversed the Gisighorn from Bel Alp. At the Oberaletsch Hut, he waxed enthusiastic about a new petrol stove he had purchased and proceeded, unsuccessfully, to demonstrate its merits. At first, it wouldn't light and then, when it did, shot up in a ball of flame. When the laughter was quenched, he set out for and climbed the Nesthorn. This trip terminated with a traverse of the Byke Pass over into the Lotschental and then to Kandersteg.

Geoff was especially keen on rock-climbing and spent many enjoyable days on the Old Man of Coniston, Napes Ridges, the Langdale Pikes and Gillercombe Buttress. Nearer home,

he was a frequent visitor to Almscliff. In 1954, he climbed Observatory Ridge on Ben Nevis. Crossing to Sky, with two other members, he climbed the Window Buttress, Inaccessible West Face and Collier's Route on Alasdair, all in poor weather.

However, his happy hunting ground was Guise Cliff, with which he will be, forever, associated. He cleaned the routes he made and left as his legacy 'Climbs on Guise Cliff' in the YRC Journal of July 1965. A tribute to his work on this cliff is also recorded in 'Climbs on Gritstone.'

Geoff was one of the most cheerful companions one could have on the hills. He was immersed in them and talked of little else. He was, above all, a safe climber. Despite a long illness, he attended the Club Dinner these past few years. We extend our sympathy to his wife Mary, who has nursed him for so long, and his sons Martin and Rodger, of whom he was so proud.

M.F.W.



## LETTERS

Dear Editor,

I was not able to attend the 1994 Dinner and thus missed the Special General Meeting. As a loyal Club member I accept the majority decisions of the meeting, but as an average Club member I continue to struggle and argue.

I do not raise again the vexed question of women-in-the-Club, except I cannot resist mentioning the photographs of Slingsby I have recently seen, in a Norwegian publication, in which he is seen accompanied by a lady companion. Indeed in one photograph she seems to be hauling him up a rock face, but this is no doubt an illusion of the current age.

I turn away from this controversial subject to one which appears somewhat less controversial - the name of the Club. I say somewhat less controversial in that at least a need has been accepted for a change. We are now to term ourselves 'The YRC', followed in quick breath by the words 'A Mountaineering and Caving Club'. This is futile tinkering with the problem.

What was originally a touch of dry VictorianEdwardian humour to describe ourselves as 'Ramblers' has now become an embarrassment. I was reminded of this the other day when a rather rotund gentleman confided in me that he too had joined the local Ramblers. Not only is the title an embarrassment, I see it as a serious impediment to the furtherance of the Club, probably far more so than women-in-the-Club.

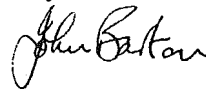
We are not the only body to suffer from VictorianEdwardian titles. The National Children's Homes have recently changed their title to 'NCH - Action for Children'. Anyone who has heard even such a skilled orator as their President, Lord Tonypany, trying to trip that convincingly off his tongue, will know that 'The YRC - A Mountaineering and Caving Club' is a nonsense to express, with an in-built failure to convince.

*'What does the YRC stand for?'*  
*'Well, it doesn't really mean what it says, we really are...'* *'Really?'*  
O recruitment here is thy sting.

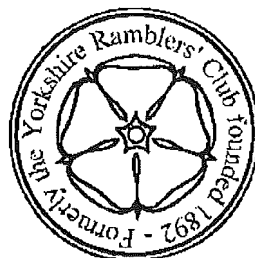
I suggest that we should call ourselves 'The Yorkshire Rock and Caving Club' - the YRC C for short. Wherever we print the title we should show in close proximity the White Rose emblem, surrounded by the words, 'Formerly the Yorkshire Ramblers' Club founded 1892' thereby showing in our new title more truly what we are and in the juxtaposed emblem our honourable ongm.

Well, this letter could wear away a few miles on the next Club Meets which, perhaps fortunately, my doctor says I may not be able to attend for some time.

Yours sincerely



Ilkley, July 1995



Dear Editor,

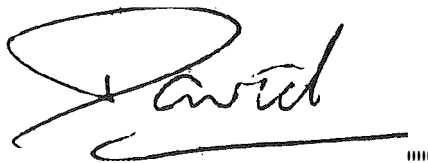
As a member of the Meets Sub-Committee I find it very disappointing that younger, active members rarely attend meets. I am aware of their remarkable activities outside of the meets which do not fail to impress me and to give me much pleasure to hear about.

The future of the Club depends to some extent upon the image presented to visitors at meets. Clearly the presence of younger members give a much better impression than just a group of pensioners, albeit young at heart.

I look back to my own golden days with the Club in the Fifties and Sixties and recall that we always tried to fit in the Meets in between our regular weekly activities.

Perhaps we are not selecting the most suitable meet locations but surely Bosigran, Llanberis and Derbyshire do provide a challenge. If not please tell us where we should arrange meets.

One other item for consideration, it would be wonderful to have younger members of officers of the Club. Shortly we need a new secretary and treasurer. Any Offers? My experience has been the more one does for the Club the greater the satisfaction and the greater the pleasure derived.



F D Smith  
Nelson, May 1995

Book Review by Bill Todd  
"Hands of a Climber. A Life of Colin  
Kirkus". Steve Dean  
Emest Press, 1993, pp. 278. £15.95.

On a joint meet at the RLH a year or two back some of us did the scramble up Browney Gill. After negotiating a rather awkward section over a deep pool I hung around to see if the old gent behind me needed any help. Nobody will be surprised to learn that Hal Jacob sailed over the pitch a lot better than I had.

I was surprised again to learn from this excellent book that Hal was climbing in the 1930s with other Wayfarers members including George Dwyer who was still practising as a guide when I was climbing in the 50s.

Everybody likes to read about people they know and senior members will enjoy the reference to E.E. Roberts and Frank Smyth's attempt on Chimney Route on Cloggy. This was finally done in 1931 by Kirkus and Menlove Edwards.

I was slightly apprehensive that his book would turn out to be a monotonous list of first ascents. Take courage, the book lives in every page. There are plenty of quotations (like "Hamlet") and they enhance the read. Most of us must know "Lets Go Climbing" and this book is just as good. It shows that Colin Kirkus was just as nice a chap as his own book indicates and of course, a perfect dynamo as a climber.

The photographs are most interesting and some would say the book is worth having for them alone.

In short the book is a jolly good read, well worth having, and my copy is not available for loan.

Review by Bill Todd  
**Craven Pothole Club  
Handbook & Record 1995**

Now I know why climbing equipment is getting so complicated and incomprehensible to superannuated former climbers. Climbers are tired of feeling like stone age savages when they see the technical expertise and sophisticated engineering tackle used by their caving colleagues.

The C.P.c. Handbook, in common with most clubs' gives the constitution, hut rules, and a list of members. It also includes a list of meet leaders responsibilities, eleven pages on the organisation of the Gaping Gill Meet, and fifteen pages on the construction and use of ladders and belays. This must all be familiar to our pot-holing members but I was far from realising just how much practical skill as involved. In my ignorance I thought that potholers just used ladders where climbers used ropes and everything else was about the same expect for darkness and not getting rained on.

The Record is a quarterly connection of meet reports, notes of future meets and other matters of interest. I found the meet reports interesting in spite of lack of knowledge. There was one above ground meet in March at Crianlarich where mountaineering took place. Quite a lot of information was given about the forthcoming trip to Pierre-Sainte-Martin which looks like a really good thing to do. Finally, the lighter side was represented by a tongue-in-cheek prospectus of the Great Sell Gill Expedition by former Y.M.C. member Dick Espiner.

In summary, a useful and entertaining addition to the club library.

Book Review **mn Todd**

## Borneo Box-up

*IfS. O.S. The Story Behind the  
Army Expedition to Borneo's  
Death Valley.*

by Lt. Col. Robert Neill  
& Mahor Ron. Foster.  
Century, pp. 266 £16.99.

Imagine the Company Sergeant Major at muster parade of "D" Company of the Royal Logistic Corps on a morning of 1994.

"Pay attention and answer  
your names those people,  
Corporal Smith"

"Sir"

"Lance Corporal Brown"

"Sir"

"Private Thompson"

"Sir"

"You will report to Company  
Office at 1100 hours for  
Adventurous Training.

Uniform and blankets will be  
handed in to the C.Q.M.S. at  
1050 hours and clearance  
certificates obtained. Major  
Foster will issue civilian  
clothing and expedition  
equipment.

In accordance with Standing  
Orders for Adventurous  
Training with effect from 1105  
hours the above Other Ranks  
will be addressed as Tom,

Dick & Harry. Major Foster will be addressed as Ron. All personnel will develop qualities of team spirit, courage, resourcefulness, adaptability and good humour and will be retained on Company strength for all purposes except rations."

The above scenario is by no means entirely imagination. Orwellian though it seems there really is an Army School of Adventurous Training at Ripon and a *Ministry* of Defence Document of Guidance. It is also apparently true that ranks are habitually dropped during adventurous training activities. Perhaps that is why the Lance Corporal who was the climbing and abseiling expert was allowed to get away, on the way up the mountain, with a display of petulant disobedience which in any normal military context would have landed him in close arrest.

This simple minded reviewer was under the impression that all soldiering was supposed to be adventurous and that it was the Parachute Regiment and the Commandos who specialised in tackling hazardous country.

I suppose most people know that an attempt was made to make the first descent of Low's Gully, a precipitous water course running off Mount Kinabalu. It proved much more than expected, the advance party consisting of five British NCOs had to leave the gully and got to civilisation through the jungle with difficulty. The rear party of two officers and three Hong Kong soldiers spent over two weeks in a cave unable to advance or retreat before they were located and rescued.

It appears that the expedition would have had a chance of complete success if the three Hong Kong soldiers had not been included. They did not want to go anyway and repeatedly applied to be allowed to go back. But the officers jollied them along into continuing with the assurance that they would be looked after. To be fair that assurance was made good. But surely if you are setting up a training exercise for troops who are not experienced outdoor types you don't choose a project that has never been done. In any case the Hong Kong soldiers were due for discharge within six months. Dare I suggest that when offered three places their O.C. had asked himself "Who can we spare?".

When the ascent of Everest in 1953 was being celebrated some people said "It wasn't climbing for fun, it was a military operation," alluding to the fact that the team leader was a serving officer. I cannot help feeling that this expedition would have been better if it had been organised on more military lines. While obviously and by a long way the second senior rank in the team Major Foster does not seem to have acted as second in command. He did not step in and take over when Co. Neill was incapacitated by a viral infection. Also no-one was placed in formal charge of the advance party with the result that Cpl. Mayfield assumed command and ran it to suit his own ideas.

This book is well worth reading and is more gripping than many fictional adventures. Although by the leaders it is well and objectively written in the third person. If you don't want to buy it, borrow it, it will make you think.

Review

by Bill Todd

Craven Pothole Club  
Gouffre Berger, August  
1994  
&  
Craven Pothole Club  
Record, July 1995

There are two good reads here even if you are not a caver. This is a very active club as the meet reports in the Record show and a lot of fun activity is enjoyed at all times of year. Apart from flash floods I suppose caving is exempt from the rigours of surface weather except when you have to strip in a blizzard as Simon Parker had to do on the Quaking Pot meet on 4th March last.

Caving meets have also been held in Belgium and Mallorca, a chilling taste of the future was experienced in Belgium. Some of the members went climbing on a road side Crag and were challenged by the "Belgian Rock Police". Did they have a Belgian climbing card? They got away with it by claiming membership of the BMC in the hope that the Belgian organisation was an affiliated body. A narrow squeak, some natives were sent off no argument.

The Gouffre Berger seems to have been a magnificent experience and the members' accounts of their individual achievements and reactions glow with enthusiasm. It's nearly enough to make me try an easy pot myself.

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Book Review

by Bill Todd

Elderly Celebrity  
- Second Class

Geoffrey Winthrop Young.  
by Alan Hankinson

Rodder & Stoughton, pp. 365  
£18.99.

In late 1958, after going up Ingleborough, my fiancée, Joan, and I went into the Hill Inn. I had to ask Mr. Kilburn if the picture on the wall was of the late Geoffrey Winthrop Young. It was, of course, and Mr. Kilburn volunteered that on his last sojourn at the Inn, Geoffrey had been failing.

There is a book that tells us the story of the life that began in 1876. I found it most interesting to read about a man who was a member (honorary) of the YRC for fifty years from 1907 to 1958, and son-in-law to one of our most distinguished past presidents, W. Cecil Slingsby. Before the first World War he took part in many first ascents in the Alps; his record in the war was exemplary, he did not fight but commanded an ambulance unit spending a lot of time under fire while organising the evacuation of wounded on the Italian front. It was here that he lost his left leg. After the war he continued to climb with an artificial leg and must have been an inspiration to others. During World War II he was elected president of the Alpine club and took a leading part in founding the BMC.



His contribution to the sport, and to education, would have earned him a decoration if not a title these days but he had to be content to remain plain Mr. Young. He was however received by the Queen, the present Queen Mother, in 1947. Not bad for a second class celebrity, his own description.

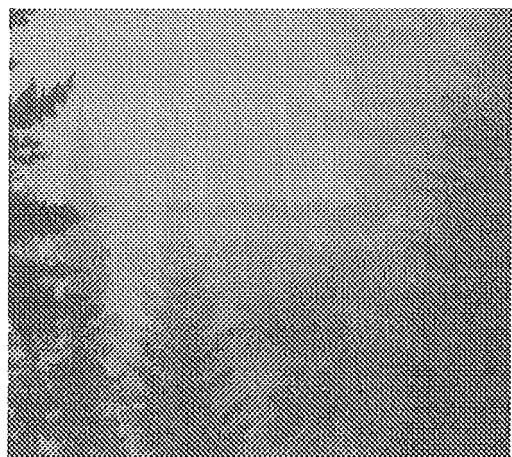
Geoffrey was an educationist as well as a mountaineer, in fact he had taught at Eton and served as an inspector of schools. He was conscious of the narrowness of existing secondary education and was an ally of Kurt Hahn whose school at Salem, Germany was a precursor of Gordonstoun and of the Outward Bound movement.

When the National Socialist government seemed to be threatening Salem, Geoffrey saw the then German Ambassador, Herr von Ribbentrop, in an effort to save it. Unavailing, of course, but at the conclusion Ribbentrop may have revealed more than he, meant to when he congratulated Herr Young, on having been born in England.

Geoffrey was not a prolific writer, but what he wrote was memorable. I first heard of him as author of "Mountain Craft", the definitive text book of mountaineering up until Alan Blackshaw's book. His pre-war climbs are described in "On High Hills" and "Mountains with a Difference" is an apt title for his post-war handicapped activities. I also enjoyed reading "The Grace of Forgetting" which is not about mountaineering at all but about his early youth and travels with his

diplomat brother in the Middle East. We should not forget his poetry either. "The Cragman" is in a lot of anthologies and puts a lot of the joy of climbing in a nutshell.

Although Geoffrey visited the Gritstone Club hut at Ribbleshead in the fifties I myself never came within a mile of meeting him. But it was interesting to learn from the acknowledgements that we had "Mutual friends", notably Bobby Files, Rawson Owen, Sid and Jammy Cross. It was also fascinating to learn that while staying at the OnG Geoffrey had insisted on going into the public bar and enjoyed the company there, including the mural, presumably, of Black Jack. I wonder if he saw in the convivial evenings then the democratic successor to his famous Easter parties at the Pen-y-Pass.



# Chippings

John Snoad has presented the Club with a framed copy of Slingsby's book plate.



The peak in the illustration is Stor Skagastelstind (Storen) in the Jotunheimen, Norway.

The Fell & Rock's library is held at Lancaster University and Temporary Readership is now available to researchers sponsored by the Y.R.C. George Watkins is the F.R.C.C. Librarian and it is suggested that members wanting to use this facility should make the application through our own Secretary.

The contents of their 73 journals have now been placed on a computer database and therefore the search for information in these is that much easier.

The Fell and Rock's documentary archive is housed in the Cumbria Record Office at Kendal. The archives can be consulted by appointment during normal office hours.

From the 73 F.R.C.C. journals it was expected to record some 2000 entries. The estimated time to enter these records was 75 hours. The Y.R.C. has published 40 journals. Is there anyone out there willing to take up the challenge to record on database our journal contents? It will prove to be a fascinating and worthwhile exercise. Please contact Raymond Barben who can provide further information.



This issue contains a lot of material with a Scandinavian slant. This calls to your editor's mind a book recommended by Ian Crowther for those who are whiling away a few hours at Lowstem. 'Two Eggs on my Plate' by Oluf Reed Olsen, 1954, starts with the invasion of Norway and follows the author's resistance activities until the bells of peace rang out in 1945. The tales of hidden radios, hideouts and chases in the mountains, false papers, direction-finding radio vans and being caught in a North Sea gale for over a week can be dipped into and are an effortless read. You will find the book in the library at Lowstern.

The title refers to the extra rations served to agents whose departure on active service was imminent.

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In the winter of 1890, shortly before the foundation of our Club, our soon-to-be Honorary Member, W. Martin Conway initiated a grand debate in British climbing circles through an address to the Alpine Club. He tackled the question 'Why do we climb?'

Some climb to get a better view, he stated, and this can be for scientific or artistic reasons. A further type of climber is curious, wishing to know what it is like to be there. His final type is the Alpine gymnast for whom exertion and skill are the pleasures.

He then moved on to what type of climbing is 'best'. To do this he examined not the motivation but the method. *Centrists* establish themselves in a hotel and return daily while others, *excentrists*, move from place to place at short intervals.

He denounced *centrism* asserting that the man who wanders "... is more easily able to keep his eye alert and his mind fresh for the appreciation of ... beauty."

Today our Club meets include some which encourage mountaineering from unusual bases though many are centrist in approach.

Conway avoided centrism with a vengeance. He wandered round far-flung ranges from the Andes to the Karakoram. During 1894 he traversed the Alps, over 1000 miles in 65 days, from the Maritime Alps to the Grossglockner including 21 peaks and 39 passes. Certainly excentrist.

Incidentally Conway threw in the assertion that the drive to climb is stronger in those whose homes are in flatter areas. In a deep valley they feel imprisoned and are impelled to escape upward.

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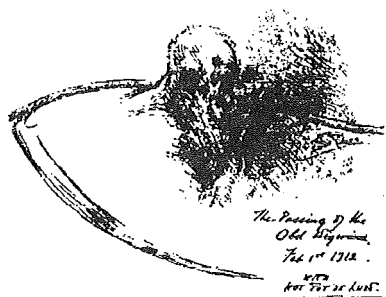
David Smith draws to our attention his first encounter with that much respected doyen of the Club, Ernest Roberts who told David that the editor of the CPC journal had actually spelt Gaping Gill, Gaping *Ghyll* (rhymes with *while*). Quite incorrect Roberts advised. Now there remain just 68 ancient (David's term your editor hastens to point out) members who had the good fortune of listening to the wisdom of that venerable Yorkshire Rambler.



In the recent issue of the Fell & Rock Chronicle, their guidebook editor advises his members that new editions of guide books will have the word spelt the correct or Robert's way, *Gill*. He was of course right as he invariably was. His spelling of the word comes from the Old Norse. The *Ghyll* spelling was little more than the fanciful creation of an 18th century poet, probably Wordsworth.

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Members who are cyclists, or given the tale of woe portrayed, those who have sensibly avoided cycling, may be interested in a Jeri Harrap's slim book recollecting her own introduction to the Barnsley cycling scene. The descriptions of Highland Youth Hostel tours in the rain will strike a chord with many members. 'Jeri's Journals, the diary of a rubbish cyclist' costs £4.25 (inc. p&p). Telephone Jeri Harrap on 0114-2864418 for details.



In response to last issues request for assistance in identifying the signatures on the 'Wigwam' sketch, Jeffrey Hooper has identified several as members.

- 1 G.T. Lowe, elected 1892, died 1942
- 3 Lewis Moore, elected 1892, died 1993
- 5 J.Towers, elected] 892, resigned] 893
- 13 Percy Robinson, elected 1906, died 1948
- 15 Frank Dean, elected 1892, resigned 1895
- 29 Alexander Cambell, elected 1903, died 1941. He is referred to, in the Journal, as being the pianist at the Annual Dinner, February 1903

Other signatories he identified were not members.

- 7 Witliam Carter
- 8 W. Scuriato
- 14 F.M. Currants)
- 17 Frank Atthaiss
- 18 George I Barley
- 20 ? Forbes
- 31 William Jones

Jeff had seen the sketch previously when classifying a two foot high pile of Roberts' papers. He believes the 'Wigwam' group to have been a dining or smoking club not directly connected with the Y R C.

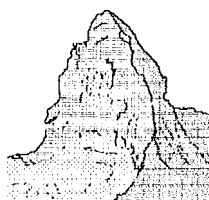
It has been suggested that the best and more important bits of these Bulletins could, from time to time, be re-published in a form similar to the Journals and sold to members at cost. The cost might be about £8/10. Comments please to the Committee.



Reacting to a study of the use of ski poles in a recent Bulletin (Issue 2, page 20) Derek Smithson thought it might be of interest to other members to see what was said on the matter over a hundred years ago.

“ When a man who is not a born mountaineer gets upon the side of a mountain, he speedily finds out that walking is an art; and very soon wishes that he could be a quadruped or a centipede, or anything except a biped; but, there is a difficulty in satisfying these very natural desires, he ultimately procures an alpenstock and turns himself into a tripod. This simple implement is invaluable to a mountaineer, and when he is parted from it involuntarily (and who has not been?) he is inclined to say, just as one may remark of other friends, 'You were only a stick - a poor stick - but you were a true friend, and I should like to be in your company again.'

A volume might be written upon the use of the alpenstock. Its principal use is as a third leg, to extend ones base line; and when the beginner gets this well into his head he finds the implement of extraordinary value. In these latter times the pure and simple alpenstock has gone out of fashion, and mountaineers now almost universally carry a stick with a point at one end and an axe-head at the other. ”



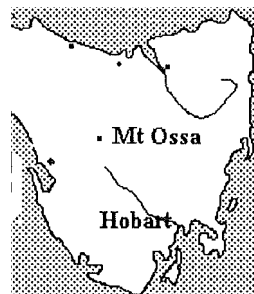
Derek's quotation is taken from 'The Ascent of the Matterhorn; Edward Whymper, published in 1880

David Laughton was very interested to see, in issue 3, Peter Lockwood's 'Newfoundland Notes' as he already planned a trip to Newfoundland and other Canadian Atlantic Provinces for June 1995. Unfortunately this visit did not provide much hill walking but he did meet Peter in St. Johns, saw much superb coastal scenery including several National parks and went out on three whale watching trips.

David certainly confirms Peter's final comment 'Newfoundland is worth a visit' and would add that the same applies to Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island.

Ian Crowther made a three day trip this summer starting on foot from Low Hall Garth and bivvying out the first night on Stake Pass and the second on Caudale Moor (above Brothers Water). He ended his unsupported tour at Ravenstonedale, North of Sedbergh. This might well classify Ian as an excentrist.

Harry Robinson spent six months avoiding Britain's driest and warmest summer for many years by going to Australia. He spent time in Glen Elg near Adelaide and Tasmania.



The latter is dominated by a continuation of Australia's Great

Dividing Range, South from the mainland. The highest point on Tasmania is Mount Ossa (1617 m / 5305 ft), located on a high central plateau, with many lakes and several rivers. Harry reports that the mountains are a higher and harder version of the Scottish Highlands and suitable for Club members to explore further.

Jon Riley is expected to be returning, in mid December, from his spell in Spain to be working in his own business.

Anyone interested in the following pieces of equipment should contact Derek Smithson who is, I think, willing to give them to any deserving home: Zenith SLR with no automatic features to go wrong or confuse; extra lenses and a light meter for the camera; 1957 Super Aldisette slide projector taking one slide at a time; numerous mountaineering slides; traditional Norwegian snow shoes.



# Eskdale

31st March-2nd April 1995.

Twenty-three members, one prospective member and two guests arrived in Eskdale at the Centre bunkhouse hired from Cumbria County Council. The original leader, Andrew Duxbury, had had to withdraw due to a family bereavement and Arthur Salmon stood in.

The weekend started unpromisingly for the writer - a bogging down in the field alongside the bunkhouse was followed by a visit to the wrong pub. Arriving in the YRC-favoured hostelry he overheard an intriguing snatch of conversation, "... she argues even when I'm agreeing with her". Later after falling down the step into the gents he was told by an older member who had done the same at some cost to his face and spectacles, "I'm delighted to hear it happened to you as well. It proves I wasn't drunk".

After a night of heavy rain Saturday dawned grey, misty but dry, the valley hauntingly beautiful if still short of daffodils after the long wet winter. Five members ascended Great Gable, four of them so deep in conversation that early on the path was missed, then rediscovered in the cloud by a steep climb up part of the mountain never previously visited (thus averting a headline in the Westmoreland *Gazette*, 'Ex-President of Famous Northern Climbing Club lost on way to Styhead Pass. Equipment a Disgrace Declared Rescue Leader ... ' etc). A clearance in the afternoon lured one Gable summiter into a traverse of Lingmell, only to be embarrassed by a return of the thick cloud. Ravens and Buzzards

were seen and attention was drawn to an abundance of loose comb-like pieces of yellow grass, one side trimmed straight, the other with roots. It was thought that they had been torn out by browsing sheep and as each member of the group could remember seeing them all his life it was clearly not discovery new to botanical science.

Scafell was a popular choice with twelve members climbing it in 4 separate parties, but all were denied a view by persistent mist, one of our most experienced members asking a young lady with two dogs if she knew where she was (shorthand for "can you help me, I'm lost" and twigged by the lady!) The President dropped his flask forty feet down a hole, converting it instantly into an ordinary water bottle, albeit a heavy one.

Members also explored the Hardknott Roman fort and climbed Harter Fell. There was an ascent of Easedale and return across the tops, but mention should be made of Ian Crowther's effort - Yewbarrow via Wastwater followed by Red Pike, Haycock and Seatallan and stoic refusal of a lift from Eskdale Green - and especially Rory Newman's twice broken-spectred Wastwater round of Scafell via Slightside, Ilgill Head, Middlefell, Seatallan, Haycock, Pillar in sunshine, Black Sail pass and back via Burnmoor in time for dinner.

Dinner was vegetable soup followed by a splendid beef bourguignon followed by superb apple crumble and custard. The meet leader, always a perfectionist, was however disappointed that his 'bargain sack' of potatoes which had that ability to remain hard in spite of much boiling and then suddenly going floury, were

more of a bargain for the supermarket than the consumers. Arthur and his helper Frank Wilkinson are also to be congratulated for their daytime dash over Hardknott and Wrynose to Low Hall Garth for larger cooking pots and repair of the water supply there while they were about it.

At dinner a new Club post of Official Obituary Writer was proposed, with this writer unaccountably offered the first appointment - a position he has gladly refused, even before the Committee gets to hear about it. There were ribald remarks about who would write the obituary for the obituary writer.

After dinner members of the forthcoming Himalayan expedition gathered to continue discussing their arrangements. An important recommendation was to be sure of using anti-malarial drugs if stopping in any Indian airport even for a short transfer.

On Sunday in improving weather 4 members and a visitor climbed Harter Fell.

It is believed all drivers managed to escape from the field for their homeward journeys. Maybe next time some will favour the nearby acres of hardstanding of the Eskdale Railway terminus car park, especially as the Pay and Display machine appeared to be terminally defunct and wardens absent at that time of year.

TS

## Attendance

The President - Derek Bush

Alan Brown

Ian Crowther

Eddie Edwards

Mike Fountain (O)

Mike Godden

Dave Hick

Jeff Hooper

Howard Humphreys

Jason Humphreys

Alan Kay

Mike Kinder

David Laughton

Dave Martindale

Kevin Naylor (G)

Rory Newman

Mark Pryor (pM.)

Arthur Salmon

John Schofield

David Smith

Derek Smithson

Tony Smythe

George Spenceley

Peter Swindells

Robin Swindells

Frank Wilkinson



# Snowdonia

12th-14th May

After the scorching hot weekend the week before I was surprised to be driving up to Wales in a blizzard with snow over all the mountains. The forecast for the next two days didn't look too promising either. The meet was being held at the Wolverhampton Mountaineering club hut near Llanberis, not the easiest of places to find as it was hidden up above the town of Deiniolen. A suspect grid reference also made the initiative test that much more interesting but did not stop nine members eventually finding the place on Friday evening.

Saturday started off with clear blue skies and warm sunshine. Two groups set off to climb various peaks on Snowdon while the rest of us set our sights on the Glyders. Starting from the hut David Hick and David Martindale walked off up past the dam while the other five of us drove round to Tryfan and started from there. We hoped to exchange car keys on the top somewhere. The walk up over the north side of Tryfan and Bristly ridge was done in glorious sunshine with no wind and a light covering of snow over all but the warm rocks. On the top of the Glyders we met up with the two David's as planned and continued on our way. The clouds had arrived by now and it was snowing slightly, but this didn't last long. We made good progress and arrived back at the hut quite early ready for several large mugs of tea. By now there were eleven members with the arrival of Ged Campion and Tim Josephy earlier in the day.

Shaun and Ralph then prepared the evening meal and as a consequence were put on the approved list of camp cook's for future meets. A short visit was then made to the local pub in Deiniolen where the regulars were having a whale of a time singing and dancing on the chairs. We had one drink and made a quick exit down to Llanberis.

Sunday arrived rather overcast in the mountains so we decided to go climbing down at Tremadoc. Due to a car boot sale being held outside Eric's cafe most of the climbers seemed to have driven on by leaving the crag relatively free. I quick coffee and a look round the various stalls and then we were ready for action. First we drove down the road to Craig Y Castell to do a few routes. The four of us first did 'Mensor'. Then David Smith and Tim Josephy joined the queue on 'Creagh Dhu' Wall just managing to avoid the falling rocks. Meanwhile Ged and I set off up 'Tantalus'. After this it was back to the cafe for a large fry up before tackling a few more routes on the main Crag. Tim recommended a route called 'Kestral Cracks' which although didn't have a star by its name was still well worth doing. Then finally to round off the day we did 'Belshazzar', at least we think we did as the description in the guide wasn't too clear. This was a somewhat contrived route which was good in places.

Another fry up at the cafe, jump started Ged's car and we were off home by seven. Thanks go to Shaun and Ralph for organising a very enjoyable weekend.

TJB.

Routes			
Mensor	VS	**	
Tantalus	HVS	*	
Kestral Cracks	HVS		
Belshazzar	HVS		
Creagh Dhu Wall	HS	***	
Valerie's Rib	HS	**	
One Step in the clouds	VS	**	
Meshach	VS	**	

Attendance:

Ralph Atkinson  
Tim Bateman  
Ged Campion  
Ian Crowther  
David Hick  
Tim Josephy  
Richard Josephy  
David Martindale  
Shaun Penney  
David Smith  
George Spencley

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Attendance (LHG)

The President - Derek Bush,  
Ken Aldred  
Tim Bateman  
Eddie Edwards  
Mike Godden  
John Martin (G)  
Shaun Penny  
Alister Renton  
David Smith  
Peter Swindells

## Low Hall Garth 7th - 9th July.

The hut wardens started the meet on Thursday and by Friday evening most of the cottage interior had been painted and fireplace had been replaced. This means that any member who fancies a stay in a comfortable Lakeland cottage need look no further than Little Langdale.

On Saturday most of us ascended Wetherlam by various routes before crossing over to Coniston Old Man where we were entertained by part of the Paragliding Championships. Seeing more than thirty paragliders lift off at a signal from a hunting horn was an impressive spectacle. Within a few minutes the competitors were on their way to Keswick, mostly by way of Grasmere and Dunmail but two favouring Red Tarn and Stake Pass. Afterwards we made our way over Brim Fell and Great Carrs where we were overtaken by other groups of paragliders taking advantage of the wind conditions to fly over to Wrynose and Langdale.

The two younger members on the meet apparently took a more serious view of the weekend as they had been over to Gimmer and had enjoyed climbing both Kipling's Groove and Bracket and Slab Climb. After dinner everyone visited the Three Shires where we met a further member and his guest who appeared to be getting some satisfaction from carrying their bicycles over the fells.

On Sunday the Gimmer exploits of the previous day had a dramatic effect on the President as he went off with David Smith to climb Gordon and Craigs Route on Dow Crag. However, the last word remains with Tim and Alister as they added Slip Knot in White Gill to their successes. A very satisfying meet. KA

# LOWSTERN MID-WEEK MEET

13th to 15th June 1995

A very good meet was enjoyed by a select band of six members. Four arrived soon after 2 p.m. on Tuesday and were soon off to geologise at the Norber erratic boulders, returning via the fell above to the Clapdale Valley and Long Lane down to the village. The weather, which had started in Teesside and the Peak District like bleak cold March, had brightened up enough to make an excellent half-day. After dinner we were joined by a fifth member with strange tales of the Three Peaks, Australian girls and pub landlords!

Wednesday continued cold and breezy but reasonably bright with excellent views. Gaping Gill was visited, Ingleborough climbed and a circuit made of Sulber Nick and the Moughton limestone pavements, returning through very pleasant lanes to Wharfe hamlet and dinner. The Wild Boar fell area was explored by another member. At dinner we had a very welcome second visit by our local member Albert, this time in resplendent mohair business suit; it made us all feel very shabby. After dinner the six of us walked to the village in splendid evening sunshine; we avoided the temptation of the New Inn, walking on instead to the Flying Horse at the station for a quick half-pint!! An impressive full moon was coming over the horizon as we got back.

On Thursday an early start was made, all breakfasted and hut cleaned before 8.30 a.m. The party set off in the direction of Bowland fells with the

weather fine and warm at last. We followed lanes to Keasden then a footpath to Burnmoor heading for Catlow fells. At this point the writer, who unfortunately had some afternoon business to attend, retraced his path to Lowstern and home. A reported new pot on Fountains Fell was also investigated.

Our thanks to Alan Linford for organising the meet and for the excellent meals we enjoyed (not forgetting to thank Angie). It was a splendid idea to have a mid-week meet, enjoyed by all present.

IG.L.

#### Members Attending:

Derek Clayton  
Ian Laing  
GerryLee  
Alan Linford  
David Smith  
Derek Smithson



## The Long Walk: The Reiver's Ramble 23-25 June 1995

This year's Long Walk broke new ground thanks to the First Moffat Scout Group who, with their tents and catering, enabled us to spread the walk over two days out and back by different routes, with a maximum total distance of about 50 miles.

After a cool early June, the weather had brightened during the week into what has turned out to be the beginning of this record summer. Driving up the M6 past the Howgills under a cloudless sky, anticipation increased as the border was crossed and the outliers of Burnswark and Queensberry passed, through Moffat to Annandale Head where Corehead Farm nestles under the hills of the Devil's Beeftub. There Mr. Williams indicated the extensive field available for our camp, with the ground firm all over for tents and cars and some shady trees to park under.

The Moffat Scouts soon arrived and served us a welcoming coffee. The early arrivals were just setting off to seek supper in Moffat when a Reliant Robin sped to a halt bearing the local press, so we piled out for group photographs before repairing to the Annandale Arms. On returning to Corehead we found a row of Icelandic tents pitched ready for our occupation.

With the close proximity of our base to the hills, reveille was later than customary on these occasions, at 5 a.m. and after breakfast served by our hosts we set off about 6 a.m. steeply up Great Hill. To our surprise and disappointment the tops were in cloud, however route finding on the first stage was simplified by the fence which links the tops, following the

Regional boundary between Dumfries & Galloway and the Borders over Hart Fell, Raven Craig and Firthhope Rig to Firthybrig Head. Here, the route turned east for a half mile to Lochcraig Head to descend off Nickies Knowe to the feeding point near the Megget Stone. Our party missed this turning, going over Molls Cleuch Dod to slope off Carlavin Hill, down in sunshine to the road, where David and Edith Stembridge had their frame tent for the support party, with welcome food and drink.

The sun was now out and the clouds gone (we've seen very few since!) as we climbed up Cairn Law and the south shoulder of Broad Law to its summit, at 2855 ft the highest point on the route, with an important radio beacon for the northerly airways. The ensuing walk was delightful in the sunshine, with easy walking in short dry heather and cloudberry, extensive views over the surrounding border hills and the trilling of golden plovers and curlews, over the Cramalt Craig to Fifescar Knowe and a short diversion to Dollar Law. Southeast then past Fifescar Knowe to Notman Law and Greenside Law towards Redsike Head. From there we were offered a choice of three routes, the longest continuing the main District boundary ridge to Dun Rig to descend the Douglas Burn to the A708 road. The fittest took this route to arrive in good time at the camp, pitched by our hosts between the A708 and Tarrow Water, near Dryhope Farm. Others took intermediate routes dropping off Blackhouse Heights down the Douglas Burn, or from Black Law over Deepslack Knowe and down the Dryhope Burn to the camp. I took the shortest way from Redsike Head, over Consleugh Head and Deer Law to drop down to the Kirkstead Burn, with a good bridle road down to

Dryhope Farm and the camp. By 8 o'clock all were down to enjoy a substantial dinner, with a selection of wines and beers available at cost, in the scouts' marquee. Supporters then kindly ferried those walkers who could stay awake to the nearby Gordon Arms, the remainder making straight for the tents, to which our overnight gear had been ferried during the day.

With a shorter route - maximum 23 miles, we were allowed a lie-in on Sunday morning, rising at 7am for a cooked breakfast in the marquee. By 8 o'clock we were following the Southern Upland Way on a pleasant path along the SE shore of St. Mary's Loch to the yacht club and the Tibble Shiels Inn. From there we followed a path rising above the Loch of the Lowes, up the side of Peat Hill to join the ridge on Pikestone Rig leading SSW to Peniestone Knowe. The route then swung west to join the ridge which parallels the A708, at Herman Law. This ridge gave a very pleasant upland walk over several 600 metre-plus tops: Trowgrain Middle, Mid Rig. Andrewhinney (is it Andrew hinney or Andre Whinney?) Hill, Bell Craig to Bodesbeck Law, whence a steep descent led to a col with a good track down to Bodesbeck Farm. This 15 mile stretch ended with a sting in its tail: heading down the slope towards the feeding point tent clearly visible, we encountered one of those tricky little bits of valley navigation to find the way past the farm and across the Moffat Water to the feeding point comprising the Stembridges and their tent with supporters.

This was reached at times between 1300 and 1540 by a total of 15 of whom 9 carried on the remaining 8 or so miles back to Corehead, up the shoulder of Nether Coomb Craig to Swatte Fell, whence some continued

over Hart Fell to finish by the headwall of Annandale and down the Devils Beeftub to Corehead, while others descended the Auchencat Bum to a 1½ mile road walk back up to Corehead. These fit folk finished between 1615 and 1905, meanwhile the six who had run out of time or energy or both were ferried back to Corehead, where we saw some of the earlier finishers arrive before we left for home.

Our thanks for a most successful and enjoyable weekend are due to: the Meet Leader Ian Crowther for conceiving and organizing this two-day walk; the members of the First Moffat Scout Group for providing tents, food and service, all excellent, not to mention their cheery company, at the two camps; David and Edith Stembridge for providing the tent, equipment and organisation for the two feeding points and Cliff Large, Roy Pomfret and Ian Crowther for support at the feeding points and for ferrying personal gear between the camps. R. G.

Those attending;

In support Ian Crowther (MeetLeader)

David & Edith Stembridge

Cliff Large

Roy Pomfret

Walkers: Denis Barker

Derek Bush, President

Albert Chapman

Iain Gilmour

Mike Hartland (G)

David Hick

Jeff Hooper

Howard Humphreys

Tiro Josephy

Alan Kay

David Martindale

Arthur Salmon

Graham Salmon

David Smith

Frank Wilkinson

# Lowstern Meet

19-20 August 1995

## *Weather.*

Hot and dry beyond the dreams of most of us.

## *Saturday*

The President and the Meet Leader were joined by Ian Crowther, the Josephy brothers and Nick Welch in a descent of Tatham Wife Hole. (See separate caving report by Richard below) Alister, Ged and Bruce did a digging session at Close Depression (this is a geographical expression not a clinical one).

Walking was the favoured activity for Ian Carr who inspected Norber boulders and for John and two Mikes who went up Long Lane subsequently covering Moughton Nab coming back by Wharf, Fiezor and Austwick.

A late arrival, your scribe, found some easy rocks to play on at the south end of Gragareth c. 685761.

## *Sunday.*

Richard and Nick went pot-holing again, (report attached) Ged and Bruce resumed digging and Ian Crowther went to buy gear for the Himalaya. Are prices lower on Sundays? Tim, Harvey and Derek went to Attermire where they climbed Fantasy, Flakey, Pythagoras, Alcove Slab, and A Climb.

Following an unsuccessful attempt to locate it on the March Lowstern Meet, Alan Brown reported to me that

the Crummuckdale Fossil had been removed. So I drove round to Crummuckdale, parked in the lane and walked up towards Beggar's Style. I spoke to the farmer who was reluctant to give me permission to climb because of vandalism and potential litigation. He cited a recent accident in Gaping Gill as grounds for his fear.

I was so impressed with his arguments that I didn't in fact climb but just checked up on the fossil which turned out to be OK and walked back over Norber.

After lunch there was time to go to Attermire where I watched Tim lead Pythagoras and begged a rope on Alcove Slab after Harvey had led it with great aplomb. A very enjoyable meet with the usual first class catering by Harvey.

B. T.

## *Caving Report*

We decided on Tatham Wife Hole under the Western scarp of Ingleborough for the Saturday. The hardest part of the trip was the steep walk up from the road in hot sunshine with full caving kit and tackle for the five pitches. There was a surprising and refreshing amount of water in the cave, including a duck requiring almost complete immersion. Most of the cave was negotiated without difficulty. However, a short but awkward traverse caused the president to go into a state of temporary immobility. This worried the rest of the party because the meet leader and chef for the evening was on the wrong side of the blockage and we were already looking forward to our dinner. We soon got moving again and

reached the bottom, about 155 m down.

It is always nice to emerge after a caving trip, but particularly so on this day, coming out into the hot afternoon sun with the limestone sparkling silver across the valley.

Only two cavers on Sunday: Richard Josephy and Nick Welch.

We did the through trip from Swinsto Hole to Kingsdale Valley Entrance, putting a ladder in place first for the climb out of the master cave. Again there was a surprising amount of water considering the drought, making it a very enjoyable trip (and nearly all down hill!).

R.J.

Attendance:

The President - Derek Bush

Meet Leader - Harvey Lomas

Bruce Bensley

Ged Champion

Ian Carr

Ian Crowther

Mike Godden

Mike Hartland (G)

Richard Josephy

Tim Josephy

Alister Renton

John Schofield

Bill Todd

Nick Welch (G)

## Ladies' Weekend

Holmfirth

1-3 September 1995

Members and their wives started to arrive late Friday afternoon with those members who live in the area arriving in time to join the walk in the Saturday morning. The Old Bridge Hotel is located right in the centre of what is now a bustling town.

At 9.30 hrs sharp on Saturday morning a party of 33, led by the President, started to move off in slight drizzle. After crossing the Old Bridge and skirting the cafe which provides one of the locations for scenes in the television series "Last of the Summer Wine" we mounted a staircase by a church into a lane and followed it climbing fairly steeply before descending into Holme Valley bottom, past Washpit Mill to Cartworth Moor and up to the reservoir by Hollin Hill.

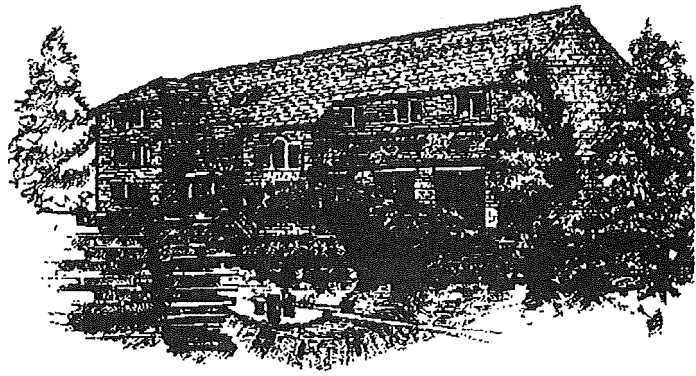
By now the sun was *shining* and with a clear sky we had good views of the surrounding hills. A considerable amount of renovation work has been carried out on old farm and mill properties along our route.

Our first stop was at Hades for a short coffee break. Moving on, we traversed a hillside before crossing over another reservoir by way of the weir at Netherby Braw, then down through fields to Holme, where Gerry and Margaret Lee had ordered sandwiches at the Fleece, a local hostelry.

After lunch, Arthur Salmon returned to Holmfirth to spend the afternoon with Shirley. The remainder of the party made their way up Meal Hill onto Issue Road which is a dead



straight track running WSW over Stopes Moor, providing, in the clear conditions; distant views of the York plain. About ¾ mile along the track we turned north onto a path down to Blackpool Bridge, then east to Digley reservoir via Nether Lane and Greaves Head. All three reservoirs circumvented in that day were to all intents and purposes empty, showing the effects of the dry summer.



Our walk then took us through several meadows by Flush House, Car Green and Hogley Green to Newlands, where refreshments were taken at the Inn. There-after, another 1½ miles of bridle paths led us back down into the valley and Holmfirth.

Gerry Lee's knowledge of the local topography provided us with a most enjoyable walk and a good insight into what the area has to offer. Margaret Lee brought up the rear and safely shepherded the stragglers back to base without anyone going astray. The basic walk was about 12 miles, plus or minus 2 miles, dependent on which variant one followed.,

Everyone assembled for dinner at 1930 hrs. At the end of a convivial evening Yvonne Bush, on behalf of the ladies, thanked Gerry Lee for having arranged such an excellent and enjoyable meet and on everyones behalf expressed our pleasure at seeing Shirley Salmon at the dinner.

Sunday dawned overcast and wet and because the caravaners had to leave their site by 1200 hrs it was difficult for them to take part in the Sunday walk A party of 14 including the

President drove to Langsett and, in drizzle mixed with heavy showers, walked through the woods alongside the almost empty reservoir. Then across the moor to the Little Don Valley with its Scotch Pines reminiscent of the Caledonian Forest.

The weather improved steadily and by the second stop for lunch by the river the party lazed in hot sunshine. After lunch the party climbed out of the valley on the Cut Gate track then turned across the moor to the reservoir and over the Dam back to Longsett. Farewells were said about 3.30 pm.

Attendance:

Dennis & Joan Armstrong  
 Derek & Yvonne Bush  
 Ian & Dorothy Crowther  
 Mike & Marcia Godden  
 Richard & Elizabeth Gowing  
 John & Janet Hemingway  
 Ian & Una Laing  
 Gerry & Margaret Lee  
 Richard & Sarah Lee  
 WilliamLee & Christina Buthe  
 Alan & Angie Linford  
 Bill & Brenda Lofthouse  
 George & ~~Irene~~ Postill *ISILLEN*  
 Coos & Joyce Renton  
 Harry & Margaret Robinson  
 Arthur & Shirley Salmon  
 Roy & Margaret Salmon  
 David & Elspeth Smith  
 Michael & Helen Smith

## JOINT MEET

15-17 September 1995 at R.L.H.

Amongst members arriving on Friday was one who, as part of his preparation for the Himalayan Expedition, had walked over from the Gritstone Club Hut at Thirlspot. Others were content to stretch their legs as far as the local inns as they were not training for anything.

On Saturday a group of five YRC members and five Wayfarers went round to the Dudden Valley and followed a series of crags, including Brandy Crag, to the summit of Harter Fell. A rope was used on a couple of occasions but mainly the route consisted of very pleasant scrambling on warm rock, away from the regular footpath. In the past there has been a tendency for the club members to meet over meals but a welcome change in recent years has been the increase in the number of 'joint' parties on the hills. A little time was spent on the boulders at the top of the fell, mainly in order to justify carrying the climbing tackle. Three YRC members spent the day on Gimmer Crag while others set off up Dungeon Ghyll to complete the Langdale Round, eventually descending from Pike O'Blisco.

The Saturday evening meal, prepared by the Wayfarers, ended with a birthday cake for one of the YRC members. The excellent cake had been kindly provided by the wife of a member but that didn't prevent our tame misogynist from enjoying his portion as much as anyone else.

Sunday's weather was as good as the previous day's and very few attendees declined a second day on the rocks or fells. A large party of YRC and Wayfarers, which eventually became three small parties, headed for Dungeon Ghyll where, because of the low water, it was possible to scramble most of the way without leaving the ghyll. The rock climbers went to Upper Scout Crag to enjoy the warm sunshine on the south facing rock. By mid to late afternoon members of the three clubs were returning to pots of tea taken in the car park of RLH, relating stories of this year's activities and making arrangements for future trips. Here we met a Wayfarer, an attendee of many Joint Meets of the past who had driven over from Filey in order to renew acquaintances. His travelling was surpassed, however, by that of a member who called in from Australia. Perhaps this is what this meet is all about.

K.A.

### YRC:

Ken Aldred	Mike Hartland
Alan Brown	Mark Prior
Cliff Cobb	Alister Renton
Ian Crowther	Tony Reynolds
Eddie Edwards	David Smith
Mike Godden	Bill Todd
Arthur Graven	Maurice Wilson

### Wayfarers' Club:

Mike Allan	John Jacob
Steve Auty	Keith Rigby
George Chambers	Dave Shufflebotham
Bernie Cook	Colin Smith
Bob Hughs	Arthur Watson
HaJacob	

Rucksack Club	
Neville Colville	Bill Ryecroft



The northern group of the Nepal expedition team about to leave Leeds on the 1st October 1995. From left to right they are: Ian Crowther, Rory Newman, Albert Chapman, David Hick, Derek Bush, David Smith, Graham Salmon and Alan Kay (Leader).

photograph by Christine Marriott