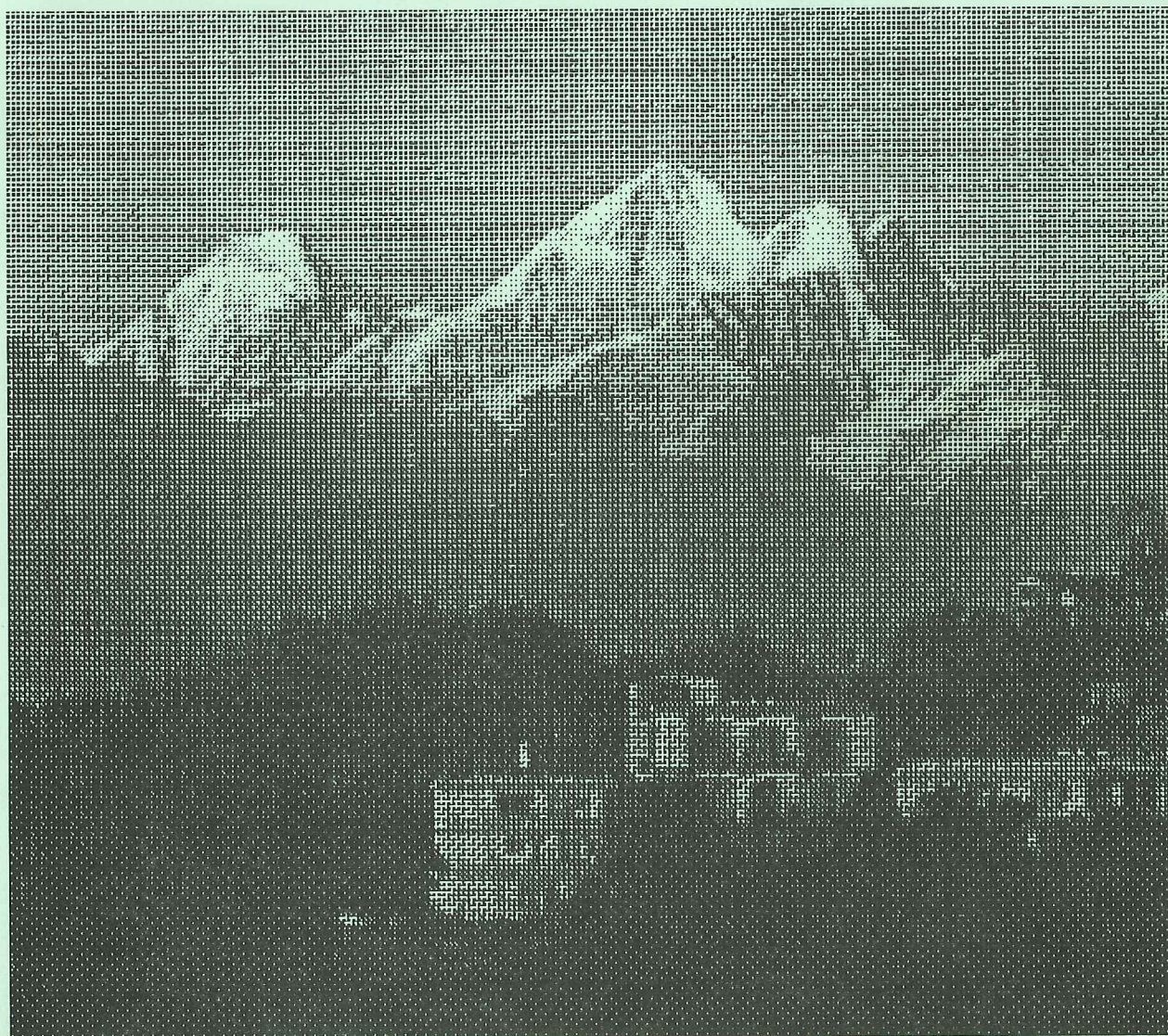


Yorkshire Rambler



Dorje Lakpa, Nepal

Dorje Lakpa Expedition	Ged Campion	The President's Report	Derek Bush
YRC Jugal Himal Expedition	Alan Kay	YRC Journal Contents List	Ray Harben
Paradise Maintained? - a poem	Ian Crowther	Reviews	Bill Todd
Ascent of Naya Kanga	David Smith	Edmund Bogg, the Leeds Savage Club & the YRC	S A Craven
Expedition Diary, Nepal 1957	Maurice Wilson	Obituaries	
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Eastern Greenland	David Laughton	Meet Reports 1995: Picos de Europa, Mallorca,	
Caverna Corredores	John Middleton	Inchnadampf, Crianlarich, Low Hall Garth,	
Cueva del Gato	Jon Riley	Swaledale, Blencathra	
A World Caving Update	John Middleton	Meet Reports 1996: Wales, Lowstern, Glen Etive	
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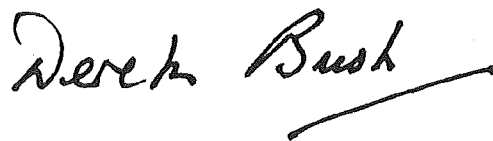
Foreword by the President

Puerto Rico to Nepal, Greenland to Chile our members have been there in recent months and have set down some of their experiences in this edition of our Bulletin.

Just look at these snippets... 'Humpback whales playing around the ship...' 'Ever onwards, ever upwards was the motto.' 'Splat! Several 10cm long spider legs twitched from under her fist.' 'Ropes fixed on the steeper sections up to camp two at 6100m...' The track was said to be 'uncycleable' so he cycled it. 'Wingovers, spiral dives and asymmetrics..' 'Pills to combat the effects of altitude..' 'Porter blown upwards and backwards...' 'Found a suitable boulder to shelter under for the night..' In cloud and snow a circuit of all the eight tops and three Munros of Craig Meagaidh was an interesting exercise in navigation.

It's not all activity though there are reflective thoughts on those miscellaneous topics like stress in leeches, naval architecture and ageism in the Guardia Civil which litter our conversations. Crinoids, buffalo, vultures, tripe, ice cream and chips all make an appearance.

Let's hope for a few days of poor weather or at least a wet evening or two, to allow members time to dip into this melange of typically YRC madness.



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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.

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Dorje Lakpa Expedition

An attempt on Dorje Lakpa (6966m) via the West Ridge by the climbing group of the 1995 Club Expedition to Nepal

Expedition Members:

Ged Campion	Expedition Leader
Stuart Muir	Deputy Leader
ROY Newman	Expedition Doctor
Graham Salmon	
Frank Milner	
Bruce Bensley	
David Hick	
Howard Humphreys	
Tim Bateman	
Pralhad Pockerell	(Liaison Officer)
Pemba Tsiring	(Sirdar)
Ang Phurba Lama	(Cook)
Pemba Tharke	(Head Sherpa)

Introduction and Background:

The YRC Dorje Lakpa Expedition was a Yorkshire Ramblers Club Expedition in the true sense. Apart from the Deputy Expedition Leader, Stuart Muir, all the climbers were Club Members.

The YRC has been no stranger to the Jugal Himal area of Nepal. In 1959 the Club mounted an expedition to climb Lonpo Gang (The Great White Peak 7,083m). Sadly, this expedition ended in tragedy when the expedition leader and a Sherpa were killed by serac fall on the Phurbi Chyachu Glacier.

Whilst there was talk of a further attempt on Lonpo Gang, it was generally felt that the idea of "settling a score" was not the best basis for a

club expedition in the 1990's. Nevertheless, club members on the 1957 expedition were able to offer their invaluable advice and knowledge on the area and it was finally Maurice Wilson, the youngest member of the '57 expedition now aged 85, who suggested Dorje Lakpa as our objective.

The History and the Logistics of the Approach:

It was therefore, our objective, to climb Dorje Lakpa (6966m) by the West Ridge. Dorje Lakpa has been attempted on six previous occasions and four of these managed to reach the summit via the west ridge. The summit has not been reached by any other route on the map. However, ours was to be the first British attempt. Expeditions have normally approached the mountain from the Langtang side. Only two expeditions have previously approached from the Jugal Himal side in the south, a German expedition in 1987 and an Italian one in 1989. The German expedition was successful in reaching the summit the Italian one was not. It was to be our decision to approach from the south since there were certain advantages from this side:

- 1 The walk into the base camp would be more interesting through a remote and relatively unpopulated area compared with the more popular Langtang side.
- 2 We would be able to gain information of Dorje Lakpa IT which is very visible and impressive from the Lingshing Glacier.
- 3 Our base camp would have a sunny aspect.

The disadvantages were the concerns about a suitable base camp site away from the dangers of avalanche and stone fall.

The Organisation:

Dorje Lakpa is a mountain that can only be climbed as a joint Nepalese venture and therefore permits and permission had to be obtained from the Nepalese authorities. It was Alan Kay, Club Treasurer and nominated Expedition co-ordinator for the YRC, who took care of the formalities. We all have much to owe to his careful planning and patience surmounting the hurdles of Nepalese bureaucracy. Rimo Expeditions acted as our Agents in Nepal organising the Liaison Officer, Sirdar, staff and base camp equipment. Malla Treks were subcontracted for use by Rima Expeditions. We were also interviewed by Elizabeth Hawley, long established Climbing Journalist based in Kathmandu.

The Equipment:

Most of our equipment was loaned to the expedition by club members. Additionally, three high level tents were borrowed from the Wolverhampton Mountaineering Club, and two loaned by the "Base Camp" shop in Ilkley. Radios were loaned by the West Yorkshire Scouts Movement and were to prove invaluable especially at altitude. Special high altitude food packs were carefully prepared in England to last 100 man-days on the mountain. Two sets of skis were loaned by "Base Camp" in Ilkley and "Climber and Rambler" in Bets-y-Coed, NOLth Wales.

The Journey Out:

The Team flew to Nepal on the 30 September '95 arriving in Kathmandu on the 1 October. The first few days were spent confirming arrangements, meeting agents, liaison officer and Sirdar. Some additional equipment was purchased in Kathmandu i.e.

snow stakes and ice screws chiefly because of their very tempting cheapness. A Government briefing took place on the 4 October. It was initially very difficult to convene this meeting because of our arrival had fallen during the festival of Dasain and consequently many Government bureaucrats were still busy celebrating! At the briefing there was confusion about the route our caravan would take to approach the mountain. However, following discussion and help from the Liaison Officer this was resolved.

The Approach to the Mountain:

On the 4 October we left Katmandu for Chatura only 60 kilometres north of the city and took three hours by motor vehicle. Porters were organised at Chatura and additional supplies were purchased by staff to sustain us during our outward leg. We decided to approach the higher ranges of the Jugal Himal by a series of ridge systems high above and to the west of the Balephi Valley. This it was felt would serve as a useful acclimatisation exercise rather than taking the route along the Belephi Valley directly to Tempathang Village and then suddenly have to climb 2,000 metres steeply to the top of the ridge system.

From Chatura our caravan took us through the village of Bangland up to the Rhododendron Forests and leech infested scrub of the Kamicharka Danda leading eventually to Panch Pokhari (five lakes). The monsoon was late this year and bad weather obscured views but our spirits were not dampened. Unfortunately however, our poorly clad porters from Chatura suffered in the wet conditions and the Sirdar experienced considerable industrial unrest on more than one occasion. From the sacred

lakes of Panch Pokari we left our trekking team, also members of the YRC and travelled the so called "five combs" high above the impenetrable gorges of the Balephi River to the eventual Confluence of the Balephi and Lingshing Rivers below the mouth of the Lingshing Glacier.

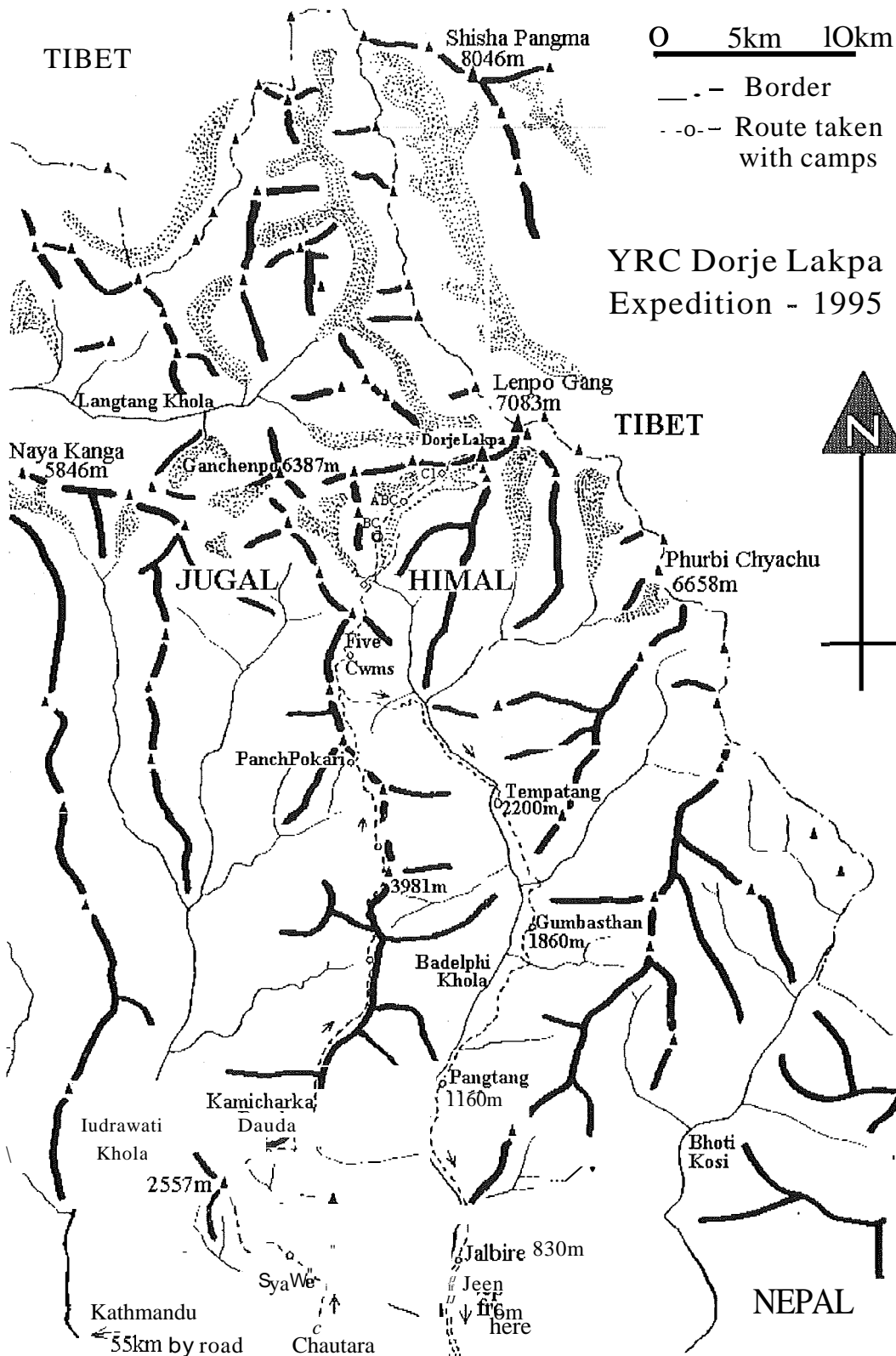
At the "Confluence Camp" on the 11 October 1995 we halted proceedings to search for a suitable base camp on one of the flanks of the Lingshing Glacier. We therefore made a comprehensive exploration of both west and east side. The west appeared safest seemingly absent of any avalanche threat from the slopes of D01je Lakpa II above. Unfortunately, though a number of good sites were discovered, access to the Glacier was impossible. The Ablation Valley on the east side however hosted a very promising site and access to the glacier proved relatively simple. Tins and other artefacts were evidences of a previous camp no doubt the German expedition of 1987. Although there was some threat of serac fall from the cliffs of Urkinmang (6151 m), it was judged that the camp site was of a generally safe distance in the event of any ice fall. Base camp was therefore established at 4500 m on Friday 13 October with marvellous view of D01je Lakpa from the crest of the lateral moraine of the Lingshing Glacier.

The Climb:

From base camp the Ablation Valley was followed to an eventual descent to the Lingshing Glacier gained from a diagonal traverse on steep loose moraine. The next section of the Glacier Tilman was described in 1949 as "a long stretch of rough penitential surface, huge craters and hillocks of stone covered ice". Forced on to the

medial morain, we discovered a perfect site for our advanced base camp - a grass hollow with two small tarns, a veritable oasis amongst the chaos of the Lingshing Glacier. At 4,700 meters and two and a half hours from our base camp, we had very clear views of our objective. Tilman's porters mistakenly believed this place to be Panche Pokhari when they crossed from the Lang Tang side to the Jugal via the east col in 1949. The labours of much ferrying from base camp saw the establishment of advanced base camp on the 15 October. From here we gained height on the medial moraine climbing steeply to rejoin the glacier at 5,000 meters. The chaos of boulders gave way to ice and snow making the going considerably more easy. Progress was threatened on the west by regular stone fall from the massive rock buttresses of Ling Shing Kanshurm (6078 metres). Although a number of crevasses were encountered, they proved relatively easy to cross. Camp 1 was established on the 16 October at 5,300 meters just below Tilman's East Col marking the start of Dorje Lakpa's west ridge. During these early days progress was often hampered by poor visibility and snow fall but late monsoon mists gradually gave way to clear and cooler weather.

The camp I was efficiently equipped by ferrying equipment from advance base. From here we ascended the gradual snow slope to the right of the ridge. Access to the ridge proper was gained via a 45° slope initially christened the Scottish Grade II. From the top of this, the ridge rose broadly at first and then more finally crested with large cornices overhanging the Langtang side of the mountain. We were mostly forced on to the southern side of the



Crest on steep ground sometime ice covered and sometimes poor quality snow. Ropes were fixed on the steeper sections and by the 24 October Camp 2 was established on the section of the ridge at 6,100 meters where the ridge levels out before rising sharply

again. At first this camp was sited too far along the ridge and precariously poised on the Crest. The following morning it was moved back into a less precipitous area. Throughout this period, teams had been continually visited by two large alpine ravens who

cunningly managed to unearth food and equipment despite considerable efforts to conceal supplies.

On the 24/25 October, exploration began on the ridge above camp 2. This was to be the turning point of the expedition. Much to our dismay snow conditions began to deteriorate substantially. Disturbing slab avalanche conditions were encountered on the south side of the ridge making a traverse extremely serious. The ridge reared up and could not be climbed at the crest because of the unstable nature of the cornice. There appeared to be no reasonable way forward. Expedition members discussed the situation fully, but with an absence of other routes on the 25 October that fateful decision that every mountaineer dreads had to be made - not to go on. With mixed feelings therefore, over the next three days, camps were dismantled and equipment was gathered together and a runner was sent to organise porters in Tempathang for our return journey. Base Camp was completely cleared up and non biodegradable rubbish carried out with us.

The Outward Journey:

On the 28 October, the expedition left the base camp and headed back south across the five combs via the "Confluence" Camp. From the Panch Pokhari area a steep track was taken in the direction of the village of Tempathang. This required a full days descent through difficult forest covered country. It was at this village that our Sirdar experienced considerable difficulty persuading the porters to continue on the outward journey. They had considered the descent the previous day too exacting and so there was some reluctance to continue immediately. However, an agreement was made and the caravan

continued to descend the Balephi Valley through Gompathang and finally the village of Jalibre where jeeps were hired to convey us to Balephi Village itself. Soon after the Village we reached the main road south to Kathmandu. The entire journey from base camp to Kathmandu took six days.

The Return:

Once back in Kathmandu arrangements were made for a debriefing meeting at the Government buildings. This however did not transpire. Instead the Liaison Officer requested that we filled in a form covering details of the expeditions conclusion. The expedition left Kathmandu to fly home to England on the 10 November.

Acknowledgements:

We thank the following for their generous financial support:

Foundation for Sport and the Arts,
British Mountaineering Council,
YRC members,
Mount Everest Foundation,
Barclays Bank,
Panasonic UK Ltd,
Skipton Building Society
and an anonymous donor.

The Wolverhampton M C provided three high altitude tents. The Base Camp shop at Ilkley also provided two high altitude tents. Climber and Rambler in Bets-y-Coed, North Wales and Base Camp in Ilkley provided ski mountaineering (which incidentally were not used). The West Yorkshire Scout Movement provided five radios that were used extensively from Base Camp.

Food was supplied at a discount by:-
Twinings Tea, Yorkshire Tea
and Asda Stores

The YRC Jugal Rimal Expedition, 1995

Alan Kay

Planning for the Dorje Lakpa Expedition and the related trekking expedition to the Jugal Himal began in December 1992, and after almost three years, work, including solving last minute problems, it seemed almost unreal on 1st October 1995 actually to be beginning the expedition, and boarding the coach for Heathrow.

The original reason for having a special coach had been quite simply to ensure that everyone, and the enormous amount of equipment we were taking, actually got to Heathrow on time. The enthusiastic "send-off" we received from spouses, partners, children and other YRC members certainly gave our departure quite a lift, and the "coming together" of the two teams in this way was, I think, felt by everyone; there was clearly a feeling of increasing excitement as we progressed down the country from one pick-up point to the next.

Formalities at Heathrow were dealt with without hitch, and this was the first of a number of occasions when dealing with officialdom, that as a large party we received preferential treatment.

The PIA flight had a stop-over at Dubai and we were able to wander around the magnificent airport building. Karachi was reached on time, transit arrangements went smoothly (again, 'group-power') and three hours later we were in Kathmandu.

Here we saw the enormous advantage of having a good local agent to help with customs formalities. We were met and ushered through Customs without the slightest problem or delay - our fears of losing two or three days with Customs problems had been misplaced.

We met Motup, our principal agent, outside the airport building, and at once took a liking to him - a small, though powerfully built man of 29, brimming with energy and enthusiasm. Thirty minutes later we were at our hotels, the climbers at the Kathmandu Guest House and the trekking group at the Tibetan owned Utse Hotel in Thamel - the beginning of a separation I didn't altogether care for.

Next day the 7 members of the trekking group went sightseeing round Kathmandu. Our first destination was Swayambhu Stupa. On the way we crossed the Vishnumati River, the river banks lined with piles of garbage through which a number of enormous pigs and water buffalo were rummaging. We looked in at a small monastery where Nepali families were meeting and worshipping. We had arrived in Nepal at the beginning of the Dasain Festival which lasts four days and during this festival it is traditional for families to visit their relatives. From the jovial atmosphere it was clear that everyone was having a good time, playing games, and generally enjoying one another's company, children and grandparents being much in evidence. A game similar to monopoly, but played on the pavement, noisily, and for money, was popular. It was fascinating to see the entire population intent on enjoying themselves.

Further along our way to Swayambhu I noticed that many of the houses, built of crude crumbling brickwork, had huge satellite dishes on the roofs - the dishes seemed to be made of little more than chicken wire. Against a backdrop of Swayambhu Stupa, which is on a site believed to be 2000 years old, were thus ancient and modern in juxtaposition.

The Stupa, by definition a domed structure housing the relics of a saint, is surrounded by 211 prayer wheels at shoulder height, and devout Buddhists circuit the stupa in clockwise direction, turning all the prayer wheels as they pass. Swayambhu is a superb viewpoint for the entire Kathmandu valley, and for this reason alone is a good starting place for a visit to Nepal; add the noise, smells and bustle, the monuments and the idols, the tolerance shown there between fellowmen, and it becomes an epitome of the whole of Nepal.

We made our way eventually to Durbar Square where a Sadhu, for a fee, allowed us to photograph him. We bartered with some traders for a few items for presents, and then made our way by cycle rickshaw to Patan. David and Albert, after much searching, and despite two punctures to their rickshaw, eventually found the Jesuit College they were looking for, and apparently were very warmly greeted by the chief Monk and given tea. The rest of us enjoyed further haggling for presents, crowned by Ian, at great length, buying a large wooden mask, for the adornment, wife permitting, of a wall in his house. That evening the "trekkers" joined the climbing group at the Kathmandu Guest House for dinner.

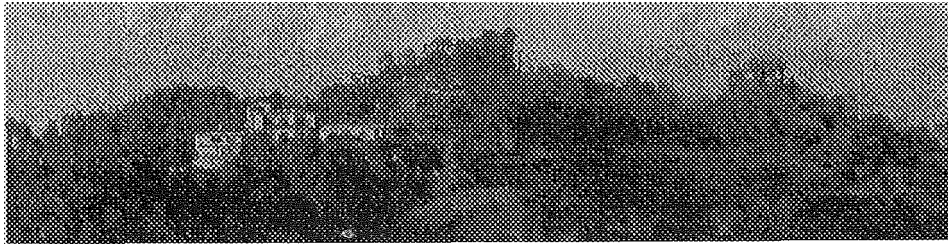
We left Kathmandu next day at 12-30pm. for a four-hour journey to the village of Chautari where we camped on the village games field, just outside the village.

What an introduction it was, though, to the Himalayas. The sky seemed quite enormous, gigantic clouds constantly undergoing delicate changes of colour as the sun went down, from brilliant white, through deepening shades of gold, and finally russet as the sun neared the horizon. When the sun was finally gone, quite imperceptibly more and more stars appeared than a city-bred Westerner would ever realise existed.

A building near the games field was occupied by the Save The Children Fund, one of many in Nepal, according to Motup. He said that the activities of this charity were working wonders, gradually increasing health facilities and health education in the countryside.

Next day started with a routine that we were to follow for the remainder of the trip - out of sleeping bag at 6am., Sherpas bring "bed-tea" then washing water, pack up personal belongings, and whilst we eat breakfast the tents are taken down and packed, and we begin walking at about 7am.

An easy pleasant path took us through some small settlements where the celebrations of the Dasain Festival were continuing. In two or three places huge swings had been made from bamboo poles and children, old as well as young, took enormous delight in swinging madly, almost to the horizontal position at each



Langtang range from

extremity of the swing. I believe that a good number of the passing trekkers would have given rupees for the chance of a go!

On the balconies of many of the houses maize cobs had been hung out to dry in the sun, and near most groups of houses, forming a giant leap for improved health, were water taps and shiny brass water carriers.

We had an early lunch near a dilapidated Chorten - a hot, sultry spot - followed by a short afternoon walk on a well used track, through forest to camp near a small settlement known as Lower Orkin. There was a small tea house which was well patronised by the porters, and the village tap was used by some of our group to wash out sweaty clothes. The tents were set up on a grassy "bealach" where valleys fell away on three sides; next morning these valleys were filled with mist which gradually rose and dispersed as the sun got higher and brighter - an entrancing sight in the clear air, and which stopped conversation for a while. Breakfast was porridge, fried "eggy" bread and tea, very good, but not so welcome for the members who couldn't eat either porridge or eggs!

In sticky humid conditions we continued along the route which is taken every July by pilgrims to Panch

Pokhari. The path was eroded into deep channels which occasionally made progress awkward, particularly for our porters. We also encountered our first leeches - rubbery little brutes that reached out from vegetation as soon as they could pick up human scent. They seemed almost to "sniff" us out, and then attach themselves to clothing or skin, before proceeding to suck blood. Although quite small before feeding, (anything from 1" to 3" long and matchstick thick), after sucking blood they can fatten out to 1" thick and 4" or 5" long.

The state of the path meant we couldn't avoid vegetation and therefore all of us were caught by leeches. Fortunately I managed to spot them and remove them before blood was drawn, but most other members were bitten at one time or another and lost blood. One leech which I spotted 6" below my crutch, and heading northwards, was despatched with particular urgency.

Our lunch stops, as well as the camping sites were dictated by availability of water, and we had to stop today for lunch at 9-20am.. A large eagle was identified on rocks nearby and later it flew around quite effortlessly.

We camped at Balua Karka, an opening in the forest and quite a damp spot which quickly became a quagmire when it rained heavily later that afternoon, with much thunder and lightning. The whole site was then running with water and in the mess tent it was 3¹¹ or 4¹¹ deep.

Our porters stoically put up with the extra discomfort, but trouble was brewing amongst the porters attached to the climbing group. These were local men, not particularly experienced at the job, but deliberately chosen so they could be easily dismissed when no longer needed. The porters with the trekkers, however, had been recruited by Mingma, our Sirdar, from Pokara, 70 miles or so away, and not only were they professional, experienced porters, they couldn't so easily quit when the going got rough.

Despite the flood conditions, the cooks and kitchen staff managed to prepare a good hot meal, and with thunder and lightning still crashing and flashing around we turned in, hoping for the best.

Next morning, as so often happens after a storm, the weather was perfect - blue skies, clear light, and views through the trees to high mountains, our first views of D01je Lakpa One and Two.

Continuing along the pilgrims trail, now not so eroded, and on a ridge top, we came across masses of blue gentians and other flowers I couldn't identify. Our two botanists, Howard and Rory, were running around from one find to another, however, like excited youngsters.

When the view opened out we could see Langtang Lirung (23739') twenty

or so miles away, totally covered with snow and ice. We were to see much more of this beautiful mountain, the highest in the Langtang, in the weeks ahead.

We met two children and subsequently a man and young girl, possibly his wife, who were driving cows along the path. Later a small flock of goats passed us going in the opposite direction, two very young goats being carried by the shepherd.

More and more blue gentians were in full flower and one area over 150 yards or so long was literally covered with them.

This part of the pilgrims route had been laid with large flat stones and progress was easier and quicker. Views opened up westwards towards the Helambu region, a more cultivated area with many terraces of rice. By contrast however, the Jugal now was steep, rough and tree covered with no cultivation possible, hence the absence of villages and scarcity of local population. Camp, at an altitude of 3360 meters, was near some stone huts which were roofed with bamboo.

Next day was Sunday 8th October, and we had been on the move for a week. A steep climb was followed by an undulating ridge walk, and on turning a slight bend, there before us were superb views of the entire range - D01je Lakpa 1 and 2, Phurbi Chyachu and Langtang Lirung, along with many others we couldn't yet identify. There followed a superb walk amongst rhododendron trees, more blue and occasionally white gentians, to camp at Nasem Pati, a site used by pilgrims and adorned with prayer flags. The tents were put up in a series of gullies - fortunately it didn't rain in

the night, otherwise there could have been problems. The climbing group camped a little higher, just over the ridge, a cold site during the night but with beautiful views eastwards next morning towards the Jugal peaks.

Our walk to Panch Pokhari next day was quite short - 3 hours - but was delightful; traversing the west side of the ridge before finally crossing it to arrive at Panch Pokhari. The site of these five lakes at an altitude of 14650' was similar in style to the Scottish Highlands, but magnified three or four times in size. There were two or three old stone walls erected for sheltering pilgrims, and now used by porters for the same purpose. The two groups camped beside separate lakes, a complete separation, for tomorrow we were to go our different ways. It was misty and cold so apart from George doing some bird watching, most of us retreated early into our tents. Altitude was beginning to have some effect and the short day followed by rest was welcome. Roy in particular had been going quite badly today, puffing and panting up every slope. He was diagnosed by ROY as having bronchitis and given a course of antibiotics which eventually cured him.

We met only five Westerners in the Jugal, two Germans south of Panch Pokhari, two Spaniards just south of the Ganja La pass and a gannulous Welshman who was staying at Panch Pokhari in a hut near one of the lakes. He rapidly told us his life history - perhaps he had been starved of Western conversation - but later he tried to stir up trouble amongst our porters and I was glad to see the back of him.

We joined the climbing group for dinner in their mess tent, a joint celebration for tomorrow our routes separated.

We were now at a point on the trek where we had to decide either to attempt Tilman's Pass West, a 17000' glacier covered notch in the ridge between Jugal and Langtang, or whether to cut across the grain of the Jugal to the Ganja La pass. Motup and our Sirdar, Mingma, were not at all keen to cross Tilman's, largely because they didn't know what it involved, but were prepared to go to the Ganja La. There was much heart searching on our part, mine in particular, as the crossing of Tilman's Pass West had been at the centre of my plans from the outset. We were of course still in the early stages of the trek, and had much food and equipment, and therefore many porters, and it seemed that Motup's fears centred on how they would contend with an attempt to cross Tilman's Pass West.

As an attempt at a compromise it was decided that next day Motup and David would go as far as possible towards Tilman West to see what the terrain was like, and Mingma and one of the Sherpas would try to find a route that might lead directly from Panch Pokhari towards the Ganja La.

Whilst these parties were out, and while George and Roy had a rest day, the remaining four trekkers, Derek, Albert, Ian and myself, accompanied by two Sherpas followed the route of the climbing group, firstly on to the ridge which encloses the corrie at Panch Pokhari, then northwards into the first two "cwms" which lie below and to the west of the rock peak known as Cathedral (approx 16450'). The views towards Dorje Lakpa 1 and

2 were excellent and we had a bird's eye view of Chintang and the valley of the Pulmathong Khola (the site of the 1957 base camp) as well as the upper valley and inaccessible gorge of the Balephi Khola. Mist gradually formed in the early afternoon, and wafted around in the slight breeze, tantalisingly obscuring the mountains briefly, then a "window" would appear as a hole in the mist, making the mountains even more ethereal.

During my early research for the trip, John Cleare had described the series of high cwms which lead to the glacier confluence below Cathedral as "simply delightful", and indeed they were just that. There was water and flat ground, shelter and superb views and they would have made good camp sites.

This was officially a "rest day" and we made the most of it, relaxing in the sun in the cwms and on the ridge, taking many photographs. When we returned to Panch Pokhari our Sherpas led us on a direct descent of the headwall of the come which provided good views of the five lakes below, but in the latter stages it degenerated into swinging from one thorn bush to the next, good fun, nevertheless.

Motup and David returned late in the afternoon, having walked hard all day. They had not been able to get a close sighting of either Tilman's Pass West or the Lingshing Glacier but in the circumstances we had to accept their advice that it was probably impractical to attempt the crossing with our full party of porters, Sherpas and trekkers bearing in mind the time at our disposal. It would have meant three camps each at over 16000' and Motup was rightly concerned for the safety of the porters who carry little in the way of warm clothing. A smaller party

would have been justified in pressing on, but it was clear that our route henceforth had to be towards the Ganja La pass. With the benefit of hindsight this turned out overall to be a better route than the crossing of Tilman's Pass West.

Next day our route involved backtracking to Nasem Pati before striking south-west towards the village of Yarsa. We had hoped, however, that before leaving Panch Pokhari, George would be able to follow part of our previous day's walk and thus have a bird's-eye-view of the mountains and valleys he had travelled through in 1957. This was not to be, however, as clouds were down, and furthermore, during the previous day of rest, whilst sitting awkwardly reading in his tent, George had damaged his back. I knew that his principal reason for joining the trek was to see again the area of his earlier exploits, and I was particularly sad that he was deprived of the best viewpoint of the area.

As we descended towards Nasem Pati the sun began to break through part of the mist, and I well remember seeing an area of grasses, wet with dew, illuminated by the bright low sun so that each blade of grass looked like a stalk of light. We soon got back to the long mani wall above Nasem Pati and after a short rest, pressed on downwards on a good track through delightful woods to stop for lunch near a side stream. There was light rain in the early afternoon, but we reached our campsite, situated on terraces above Yarsa at 3-30pm after an eight-hour day during which we had descended more than 8000'.

George had been in pain all day and he wisely decided that he should return to

Kathmandu for a few days rest and to get some physiotherapy treatment for his back. We were now at virtually the last point on our route where a convenient retreat to Kathmandu was possible, and Motup therefore assigned a potter and Laxman, one of the kitchen staff, to accompany George on the two day journey. George hoped to be fit enough to rejoin us in about ten days time in the Langtang Valley.

We were now down to an altitude of 6000', and the thicker air was relatively so rich in oxygen that it almost seemed "drinkable". During a lavish afternoon tea we ate lots of cracker biscuits smothered with "Jimmy Carter" peanut butter so named by us as Motup had told us of his trek to Everest Base Camp some years earlier with the erstwhile president.

On the following day, Thursday, 12th October, we continued downhill again, through the village of Yarsa. We met a number of villagers who were going about their work - either ploughing with oxen-drawn wooden ploughs, fetching water or carrying fodder for the livestock, and a short distance beyond the village, and downstream from a large waterfall, we found a water-driven grain mill being worked by two millers, one of whom spoke quite good English, and who insisted on showing David into his house and introducing his many relatives.

The remaining descent to a chain bridge across the Larka Khola was awkward and slippery, threading between series of terraces, and in the latter stages it was desperately steep. It was incredible that the potters, wearing "flipflops" and carrying heavy awkward loads managed so well.

Whilst we were resting beside the bridge, George and his small retinue of porters/assistants leisurely strolled down to the bridge, having found a much better path. It was hot in the valley bottom and some of the porters stripped to their underpants for a rare wash in the river.

Continuing on a good path, we rounded the southern end of the Thorke Danda to the banks of the Yangri Khola, and after climbing very steeply for 200' or so over a rocky bluff descended to a good spot for lunch beside a new suspension bridge. A few local children watched us eat, gradually edging closer as their timidity left them.

Our path was now steeply upwards onto the Thorke Danda, but George's path diverged here as he had to cross over the Yangri Khola to go towards Tarkeghyang, where he could get a local bus to Kathmandu. Our route up very steep zigzags for about 2000' took us to a campsite beside a deserted house, near to the village of Ripar.

We now began to appreciate the huge rugged terrain of the Jugal and understand why so few tourists venture there. The steepness of the hillsides is almost intimidating, and next morning our route continued upwards for a further 2000' or so to a kharka on the Thorke Danda.

None of the Sherpas or porters knew the area, nor whether it was possible to get from the Thorke Danda to the Ganja La Pass. Our Sirdar had fortunately found a local hunter, a delightful "old" man of 55, who assured us that the route was possible, and he was engaged to show us the way. He joined us at the kharka and

whilst we recovered from the effects of the steep climb, he placed some wild flowers in the kharka, offering a short prayer.

The Thorke Danda, our route for the next two days, was covered with a forest of rhododendron trees which restricted views somewhat. The ridge path gradually degenerated into a mud plod, and eventually we came across the cause - a small herd of cattle and yaks. Whilst we lunched here, sitting on a large tarpaulin, a monk dressed in his full robes of yellow and red passed by - in this area of little habitation I wondered where he might have come from.

We were back in leech country and the rubbery creatures came at us from all directions. Not having salt available to deter them, I hit one of them three or four times with a trainer shoe - this had absolutely no effect as it simply uncurled when I had finished hitting it and continued to loop its way towards me.

A few weeks after returning to the UK I read a newspaper article about the medical miracles possible with the aid of leeches - "leeches are very sensitive to stress of all kinds", wrote the author following a visit to a leech farm. He continued "<although medicine largely abandoned leeches in the 3rd quarter of the last century there is much work to be done in reviving the use of live leeches for plastic surgery the leech is a living pharmacy....its enzymes and other protelus from leech saliva could be used to treat heart attacks, strokes, embolisms, arthritis and glaucoma." Perhaps we should have had more respect for leeches, after all.

Our campsite for the night was at Dabre Kharka, a fairly flat site where the ridge opened out. There was an old stone shelter which was taken over by the kitchen staff and porters, and when they got their fires burning, smoke and steam filtered through the reed roof so much that it seemed the place was on fire. The huge cloud effects, after the early afternoon heavy rain were on a gigantic, Himalayan scale, almost as if the clouds were trying to vie with the mountains for size, brightness and beauty. This campsite was perhaps one of the most sheltered, luxurious sites we had.

We were away next morning at our usual time of about 7-15am, continuing along the Thorke Danda which at about 11500' was still covered with huge rhododendron trees. Availability of water was becoming a potential problem - one of the reasons the Jugal is not much frequented - and today when water was found at 9-15am. we had lunch! -- - but more importantly, the porters prepared and ate their first meal of the day.

We were now in the wildest part of the Jugal, the path was narrow, sometimes non existent. Morning mist was slowly curling around huge pinnacles on the ridge, sometimes briefly parting to reveal huge deep valleys to the east. The autumnal vegetation, still wet from yesterday's rain, was also saturated with deep colours of brown, yellow, green and occasionally bright red. Some of the red leafed bushes looked almost like the biblical burning bush.

Following our guide, and hoping he knew where he was going, we moved from rock to rock, tree to tree, up and down and round steep ravines and all

manner of obstacles. It was difficult enough for the trekkers, each carrying small 20lb rucksacks, but how on earth the porters managed with four times that weight I shall never know. Our two "table men" whose sole job during the trek was to carry a folding table and three chairs each, plus their own equipment, must have had a nightmare of a day. We all had enormous respect for our porters, but today and the next day they were nothing short of heroes.

Late in the afternoon, at an altitude of about 15500' the ridge widened out considerably, we were above the tree line and still with intermittent mist, and the scene was a bit "Scottish". Water availability was again a problem but on the west side of the ridge we came across a small spring of good water, and close by, a flat area for the tents; this spot was known as Dyag Kharka. The porters found shelter amongst some old stone walls about half a mile away.

The following day will long be remembered by us all, trekkers, Sherpas, and especially the porters. We knew we had to descend to, and cross the Yangri Khola, a drop of about 4000', and then establish camp on the west side as high and close to the Ganja La Pass as possible. The "path" quickly disappeared but the clouds were high and the line of the route was fairly obvious. Generally downwards at first, we had to climb over the shoulders of two large cones that looked rather like Skye on a grand scale, with huge black walls and pinnacles and much loose rock. I doubt whether these corries have been entered by Western mountaineers - they were certainly superb spots. Then followed a rough, very steep descent down a long narrow gully, through

thickets of bamboo, bushes and loose rock. From time to time the only way forward was to swing from one lot of vegetation to the next. This went on for about two hours, and towards the bottom of the valley, amongst more bamboo, we had lunch. We had "bottomed out" the valley at a point west of the peak 18276', and we therefore followed the river upstream for about two miles, crossing tributaries where necessary, and eventually crossed to the west side of the main stream at the confluence of two large tributaries, near two old stone huts which were probably used in summer by goat herders.

We waited here for the entire party to cross the river, either by boulder hopping or wading - it was fairly shallow but very cold and fast flowing.

With everyone safely across there seemed to be something of a "hidden agenda" amongst the porters, for they all sat around, with no signs of movement, but most tellingly of all, their faces clearly said what was in their minds. I realised we probably had a porter strike on our hands - we were at the most remote part of our journey, two hard days away from any form of help, and we were utterly dependent upon the porters for supplies and movement of equipment. At this spot was water - albeit glacier fed - and shelter for the porters, but ideally we needed to continue for another two hours to a much higher camping site. The onward route certainly looked intimidating, up a huge convex slope of moraine, the top out of sight. There followed a conversation between Motup and some of the porters which was subsequently translated for us, and slowly and reluctantly the porters got

up, picked up their loads and started uphill- to everyone's immense relief

They had told Motup they were tired - understandable, so was I, and I was only carrying a third of their load - and they wanted to pitch camp where they were - actually quite a good site - but Motup had pointed out that supplies for everyone, porters included, were getting low and it was essential to get over the Ganja La and into the Langtang Valley to reprovision within two days. He asked if they could do this without going on further today. The answer was clear to everyone, and the potential strike was avoided.

Climbing steep convex moraine is not good at any time, and at the end of a hard day, with 60lbs. or more to carry, the porters were exhausted, but kept going. My respect for these fellows increased no end.

Over to the east, in a valley between points 19170' and 19450' there appeared a huge waterfall, an entire river falling sheer over the lip of rock; the most spectacular part of the waterfall was, however, in the lower part of the drop, where vertically falling water hit a huge boulder and dramatically spewed up and out like a giant fountain. Regrettably neither I nor anyone else could get into a good position to photograph it, because of an intermediate moraine ridge, and the poor light.

Eventually after two hours we crested the moraine and found a good site for the camp on flat ground surrounded by peaks rising to 19000' or more, the perfect site for tomorrow's crossing of the Ganja La Pass. We were now very close to the more usual route to this pass which follows the Dukpa Danda, but we saw no signs of the route.

We awoke next morning to bright sunshine and could fully appreciate the glorious position of our campsite, surrounded as it was by jagged black rock peaks, most capped with snow, and a glacier falling from the upper valley. We delayed our departure to let the tents dry out and to give the porters extra rest, for they had another hard day ahead.

We took the opportunity in this beautiful setting to take photographs of the group ceremoniously drinking our Yorkshire tea, obtained for the expedition at trade price by my younger daughter Madeline, a member of the commercial division of Taylors of Harrogate, the producers of Yorkshire tea.

Our local guide, having done his job so well, now left us to return to his village, and there were moving little ceremonies and much hand shaking.

David became a drug addict today as for the first time he needed pills for diarrhoea, (the result of a porter fetching drinking water from a glacial stream), further pills to combat the effects of altitude (he'd taken Diamox two days earlier for the first time and as a result had been up eight times that night), further anti-malaria pills and finally a cod liver oil capsule - nine in all. Only three days earlier David had announced that in his 67 years to date, the only pills he had taken were twelve aspmns,

We moved off at the late time of 8-30am, heading for the crest of the Ganja La, about two miles away. There was much boulder hopping on the moraine, some of the boulders being as big as double-deck buses, so progress was slow and hard. We kept

well away from the eastern wall of the cone where there was much unstable scree, and after two or three rests we eventually scrambled up the steep final slopes of the pass at midday, at a height of approx 17000'.

All our early reading in preparation for the trek had mentioned the deep unconsolidated powder snow on the far, northern side of the pass, and we were therefore equipped to deal with it. However, to our enormous surprise, and with some relief, we saw on cresting the narrow pass that the valley on the far side was almost devoid of snow.

We spent some time at the pass taking in the view - we could see all the Langtang peaks, the peaks on the Nepal/Tibet border - Dome Blanc, Triangle, Pemthang Ri, etc., all over 22000' and beyond them Shishapanga, wholly in Tibet, at 26398', one of the 8000 meter peaks. Dorje Lakpa could not be seen as the intermediate ridges of Pongen Dopku (19450') and "Fluted Peak" (20954') filled the view in that direction.

We descended the steep headwall of the northern valley by means of a narrow ramp where the Sherpas had fixed a rope to help the porters down. Not for the first time did I wonder how they would manage, for the ledge was little more than boot wide for much of its length, and the drop on the tight hand was absolutely sheer for about 100'.

We descended the upper Colliie on loose moraine for about 300' and at this point our party divided. David, Derek, Ian and Albert, accompanied by Motup and Casi made their way up to a high glacier camp as a preliminary to climbing Naya Kanga the next day,

whilst Roy and I went down to camp at a much lower altitude at a site known as Yeshekupedakto, and thus have a needed rest the following day. I have to admit that when we parted, Albert's offer, made only partly in jest, to swap places with me, was tempting, but tinitis had made it clear for two or three nights that a rest day was needed. So after some three hours more of boulder hopping on loose steep moraine we arrived at the campsite, at an altitude of about 13000', where the air was rich with oxygen and where we could relax after four hard days trekking. A better place for relaxing could hardly be found, for the views across the Langtang Valley to Langtang Lirung and up the valley to Fluted Peak and beyond were wonderful. We were virtually in a "balcony" position, able to have the best views without moving from the tent.

The weather next morning was quite different, however, - it was bitterly cold, cloud was down low and threatened to stay low, and our thoughts were with our four colleagues attempting Naya Kanga. We knew they planned a 5-30am start and that even if all went well they had a 12 hour-day to get down to our camp. The poor weather obviously altered this time scale and meant that it was impossible for them to get down before darkness fell at about 5pm.

We were surprised therefore to see Albert, accompanied by two porters, descending the scree high above camp at 10.45am. and he duly reached camp at 11-30am. Back trouble had forced him to pull out of the climb but the news he brought was mixed He had watched the climbers on their route, apparently going well, but they had

delayed their start by one hour to ensure they had daylight as they negotiated a series of crevasses. This told us that even at top speed they would not be able to reach us today.

The remainder of the day was spent resting and eating, but mainly trying to work out the various possible routes and timing of our friends - all quite futile of course.

In poor weather at 4pm, one of the Sherpas ascended the steep moraine above in an attempt to meet and help down the climbers - he took with him a kettle full of hot lemon juice, knowing they would be cold and thirsty. In the fading light he was lost to sight at 4-30pm. We worried about their safety, but could do nothing until tomorrow - they were at least not without experience of benightment, though not at 19000'

An hour before dawn Motup reached camp, having descended in darkness. He had sprained his ankle whilst negotiating the difficult moraine, but he reported that the others were well. Sherpas were despatched to help them down and at 9am. they were seen beginning the long slow final descent. They arrived an hour later, Ian in front followed by David and Derek, all looking very weary, particularly the President. They were on a "high" at the success of their climb, but were hungry and tired; They could, however, only now be allowed two hours sleep as it was vital that we move down to the valley because the porters were now out of food.

One of the Sherpas who had gone up to assist the climbers had continued on to the site of their high level camp to retrieve the oxygen cylinder, stove and gas canisters, and he arrived back

down in our camp at 1pm. - another superhuman effort which made us feel like wimps.

Whilst David, Derek and Ian slept, Albert, Roy and I went out along a spur which gave an almost panoramic view of the upper Langtang Valley - we found Himalayan Edelweiss and a number of small white gentians, and of course took many photographs.

Later, our descent to Kyangjin Gumpa took us through glorious old woodland festooned with hanging lichen. A huge boulder, the size of two houses, was lodged in the bed of the Langtang Khola, and with planks either side linking it to the river bank, formed a natural bridge over this turbulent stream. From the boulder, looking upstream was a view of a peak, in perfect juxtaposition with the valley, the river and the other mountains, yet dominating them all with its splendour, and after much discussion and changing of minds we eventually identified it as Gangchempo - the peak aptly named by Tilman as "Fluted Peak".

At Kyangjin we camped amongst thirty or so other trekkers, very much aware that our journey through the wilderness of the Jugal was over. We decreed a rest day for the next day and therefore only climbed 3000¹ or so to the top of Tsergo Ri! Even if it wasn't physically restful, then mentally it certainly was - there was no pressure to move on, the weather was perfect, and our Naya Kanga team had views all day of their mountain from valley bottom to its summit. We met yaks, photographed yet more gentians, and from the summit - no mean height at 16500' - had some of the finest views of the trip. Although the summit of Langtang Lirung was a further 7500¹

above us we seemed close to it, and Nawang, one of our accompanying Sherpas pointed out the route of the previous year's Japanese attempt on the mountain - he had been a member of their Sherpa team.

We sauntered back to Kyangjin, drank gallons of hot orange juice and simply lapped up the relative luxury of it all. There was even a "shop" at Kyangjin, run by a very astute Tibetan lady.

Another lady - a New Zealander - correctly identified us as part of "the Dorje Lakpa group" and told us of her meeting with George three days earlier. He had been robbed of money and his trekking permit and had returned to Kathmandu to get another permit - at least, though, we had the good news of knowing that he was fit and well.

Our campsite was a thoroughfare for locals, Sherpas, porters and other trekkers and, inevitably, a few local children came and looked at us. Amongst them was a boy aged about nine years who was carrying his young brother; we learned that the nine year old was destined for a life as a monk, but his current skills were devoted to playing cards, which he usually won.

We were now in the final stages of the trek, but before leaving the Langtang Valley we wanted to go as far as possible up the valley towards the Tibetan border, and if possible see the north side of Tilman's Pass West. In real holiday mood we sauntered up the valley, passing the site of the disused airstrip, then following closely the Langtang Khola, to camp at Nubamathang, where there was an "hotel" - a stone building with a mat roof and which both outside and inside was rather like a yak hut. The walk so

far had only taken three hours, and so in the afternoon most of us went much further up valley to Langshisha Kharka (13400).

En route David couldn't resist climbing a huge boulder which must have fallen to the valley bottom thousands of years ago. Rather more recently fallen, however, and with further to go in the next monsoon, was a huge precariously balanced rock which was lodged temporarily in place in a steep stream bed which we crossed.

Where the valley turned slightly northwards, Langshisa Kharka was revealed to us, in the centre of an area where the valley briefly widened, with a narrow ravine at one end and the terminal moraine of the Langtang glacier at the other. It was a perfect "sanctuary", the feeling of "protection" being reinforced by the huge line of peaks which form the Tibetan border and which were now directly in front of us. The dominant peak was Pemthang Karpo (22408') which has the self descriptive alternative French name "Dome Blanc". Next along the ridge was the equally self descriptive Triangle Peak (21400').

Looking southwards we were able to see far up towards the Langshisa glacier, and could just make out the northern slopes of Tilman's Pass West. There was no snow on the moraine and rocks leading to the pass and it seemed that if we had been able to get to the pass from the south as originally planned, then no difficulty would have been experienced in descending to the Langtang Valley.

Hindsight is a luxury, of course, but whilst looking up to the pass from

Langshisa Kharka I was convinced, and I remain convinced, that the route we took across the Jugal to the Ganja La, and then down into Langtang, was better than our originally planned route.

We intended to return to Langshisa Kharka next day and if possible go up onto the Langtang glacier - rumour had it that snow leopard were still in the area. Unfortunately the weather was quite different next morning, and having already seen the area in perfect conditions, we didn't want to see it in anything less, and we therefore moved back to Kyangjin and then on to camp at Gore Tabela.

Whilst passing through the village of Langtang we met George and heard of his exploits since he had left us in the Jugal. He looked very fit and had obviously had a whale of a time despite the theft of money. It was good to have him with us again, and have the team complete for the remaining two days of exiting from the mountains.

We were now well into regular trekking country and met many other trekkers, quite a few from America and Germany. Passing through villages we saw water powered prayer wheels placed in the channels for irrigation ditches, thus providing both essential water and prayers for good crops of rice, sorghum or potato. Rather more unusual was a small wind driven prayer wheel, perfectly pivoted and with four small propellers to drive it round.

Continuing down valley, we had a very long day to Syabru, with much climbing up and down, including crossing a truly huge landslip which had probably fallen during the

previous monsoon and which must have blocked the river for a while.

Our final day was a short five hour walk to the roadhead at Dunche. This day, as our first, was a Nepalese festival day. On this occasion it was in honour of all the animals, which today were not allowed to do any work, and were garlanded in blight yellow and orange flowers. Lots of Nepalese also had similar garlands, and before long, so had some of the trekkers.

It was therefore a suitably relaxing end to the trek. We had crossed the wildest part of the Jugal, climbed a respectable peak (rated by Motup as harder than any other trekking peak he had climbed); we had a wonderful companion in Motup and a good team of Sherpas and porters. We had seen the way of life and happiness of the Nepalese, and we had worked through the one or two minor difficulties that inevitably happen on a trip of this length. Most of all, we seven trekkers came to know, understand and appreciate one another in a way that only a successful team can do.

The trekking party consisted of

Derek Bush

Albert Chapman

Ian Crowther

Alan Kay

Roy Pomfret

David Smith

George Spenceley

Constipation, Paraffin and other things...

the Expedition Doctor's Notes

Rory Newman

Expedition doctoring turned out to be easier than I had feared. Most of the work and nearly all the worry took place before departure. A lot can be done to avoid problems during the trip by advising and encouraging expedition members about sensible precautions and preparations.

There are awkward decisions to be made about what to take and what to leave behind. To some extent the area and activities affect this but there are also constraints of weight, size and cost. There's no point in taking drugs or equipment that nobody in the party is competent to use and it's impossible to allow for every eventuality.

For the Nepal trip I took the approach that I should be equipped to treat most problems that can be treated effectively on the spot without intensive technological support. I reckoned we could improvise splints, stretchers, neck supports and the like if needed. I'm afraid that given the difficulties of communication and evacuation from the climbing expedition base-camp I considered that very major medical problems or injuries would probably be fatal in spite of treatment. Therefore I didn't take appropriate treatments. I used the same rather nihilistic approach to equipping the trekking expedition by not giving them anything I didn't think that they would be able to use. Apart from the appropriate medications, etc., for a party away for six weeks, I'd taken specific treatments for altitude sickness, snow blindness and frostbite.

Either those decisions were correct or we were lucky as we had what we needed except perhaps a real dynamite treatment for constipation: a problem I had not anticipated in Nepal. I'd be happy to discuss what to take and how to organise doctoring an expedition with anyone else faced with the task.

Medical problems on the trip were mostly the predictable diarrhoea, coughs, colds, minor injuries, etc. plus mild altitude

sickness. The most exciting incident occurred early in the trip when a porter tried to encourage the camp fire with kerosene. The resultant explosion looked and sounded potentially disastrous and set off a ring of subsidiary fires. The porter was blown upwards and backwards but his only injury came from biting through his own bottom lip in surprise. The most serious problem encountered on the expedition was also kerosene related. Another porter, carrying a leaky container, walked all day with his shirt soaked in it while his pack rubbed. This removed most of the skin from his back - the equivalent of second-degree bum. I treated him with soothing antiseptic lotions, dressings, antibiotics and painkillers so that he was improving by the time he set off for home from base-camp wearing one of my clean shirts as I was running short of clean dressings. It was also interesting, though frustrating, to see and try to treat people in the remote villages on our return journey. It is surprising how far you can get with sign language and a little bit of interpretation. No real medical help is available in these villages as medical care is two or three day's walk away. Too far to bother for minor problems and still too far for seriously ill patients.

My general impressions of Nepal are that it is much the friendliest country I've visited and the place I felt safer there wandering about on my own in the cities, as well as the wilderness, than anywhere else. As with any 'developing' country, the real problems come where western and local cultures are juxtaposed.

The people in the more remote villages live a fairly hard life of subsistence farming but the older ones and the children seem satisfied and cheerful. The younger adults wonder what they are missing and dream of the supposed delights of Kathmandu. On the other hand, small children can wander about the countryside unmolested and without fear, so perhaps civilisation isn't all it's cracked up to be.

I ended up doing less medicine and more climbing than I'd expected and so enjoyed myself very much. If I get another chance I would certainly go back.

PARADIS MAINTAINED?

(dedicated to the memory of the late Dr. Roger Allen)

I fain would know the siren Goddess,
careless in Her wild dominions.
Now enticing, now rejecting
those who'd mountaineer.

We sought to know this awful Goddess
who, in frightful Nordic beauty
cast Her deadly glance upon us,
We who'd mountaineer.

And so I knelt before the Goddess
in Her shining Asian temple.
Now she smiled serenely on me,
I who'd mountaineer.

Think not to know this fickle Goddess
thronéd in her pale pavilions
Bitter sweet the thralldom is, of
he who'd mountaineer.

W. C. I. Crowther
November 1995

Ascent of Naya Kanga

17th October 1995

F.D. Smith

In the summer of 1994 a number of Y.R.C. members attended the funeral of a much loved friend, Frankie Waterfall, the wife of our member Sidney. It was here that the seed was born, Albert Chapman, my good friend of forty years, and my wife Elspeth conspired, the result was that I placed my name on the Clubs meet list for Nepal in October 1995.

Reading much literature on the area it appeared that there was a possibility that some of the trekking party might attempt Naya Kanga, a spectacular 19180 foot (5846 m) snow peak designated as a trekking peak. It was described in Bill O'Connors book, 'Trekking Peaks in the Himalaya' as PD Alpine grade and well within my own capabilities. It had the attraction of being one of the hardest of the trekking peaks.

Our expedition from Kathmandu started with a bus ride to Chautara a village of 2000 people 12 kilometres north east of the capital. It was good to get away from the polluted air and the fly-infested butchers' dens and the disgusting squalid rivers. The journey was to say the least exciting, as it twisted and wound round the mountainsides. Many times the road disintegrated into mud 12 inches or more deep or over huge stones or deep ruts. The landscape held our interest, we saw deep ravines, waterfalls, picturesque groups of houses and wonderfully terraced farm land not unlike the wine terraces of Switzerland but with cereal crops.

On arrival at Chautara it was great to see 16 tents already erected and two

mess tents complete with tables and chairs. Tea and biscuits were provided, preceded by what was to become a ritual hand washing in a solution of permanganate of potash. Having settled into our individual canvas homes we were next provided with bowls of hot water to wash away the dust and sweat of the journey; such unexpected luxury.

The chosen route to Naya Kanga was far from a normal trekking route, it took us broadly up the Chyochyo Danda (ridge) through many small hamlets like Orkin, Chang Samparphu and Nasem Pati to the holy lakes at Pach Pochari 14650 ft, the site of many Hindu and Buddhist pilgrimages. We might have been in the Lake District were it not for a prayer flag and the dilapidated roofless buildings.

On our first rest day Motup our 'Malla Trek' leader, a remarkably well educated and interesting Ladakhi and I were charged with exploring the route ahead with a view to crossing into the Langtang valley via the celebrated Tilman Pass West. The prospect of getting the porters up to the pass and down a possible steep snow descent was not good, though it was the clear aspiration of two of the trekkers. After four hours of hard and steep ascent keeping pace with an extraordinarily agile and fit sherpa, we were still quite a way from a sighting of either the col or the Linshing Glacier, the mist descended and light rain fell. It was with some reluctance that we had to advise the trekkers that Tilman Pass was probably impractical.

The following day we returned to Nasem Pati then southwest to Yarsa at 6000 feet before a spectacular crossing of the Indravwati Khola (river) and finally heading northwest to Ripar on the Yangri Khola at 6900 feet. The route took us through leech

infested paths, though weird moss covered and enormous rhododendron trees often draped with beautiful hanging moss. It took us up and down ridges losing and regaining two or three thousand feet with each ridge, Our remarkable porters, some carrying two of our bags each weighing in the region of 45 pounds plus their own sacks moved with remarkable balance along the narrow track, down steep mud slopes, or on rocky ground and most had either bare feet or wore flip-flops.

The next stage was along the Thorika Danda, but as none of the support party had any knowledge of the area, a local man was engaged by the sirdar to lead us through a very complicated terrain including an incredibly steep gully. How the table carriers coped was truly amazing. We had three camps at 13000 feet, 15000 feet and 16000 feet with views of the Yangri Khola as it wended its way towards our objective, the Ganga La, a pass 16800 feet which would take us into the Langtang Valley and for me, nearer to my objective, Naya Kanga.

Now the views were becoming more and more spectacular with the majestic snow peaks coming into our vision. We descended the northern slopes and were surprised to discover that there was no deep soft snow that we had been led to expect. Descending about 1000 feet or so, Albert, Ian, Derek and I along with Motup and a young sherpa, Kazi, headed for a level glacier to our high camp. Three porters and two sherpas arrived before us and erected four tents, two for the climbers and Motup, the other two for the rest of the party. A meal was prepared and we retired to our sleeping bags. Unfortunately Albert developed a back problem and had to pull out of the final assault.

It was a 5 am start for the day, and after a quick breakfast we roped up to cross the glacier at 6 am. Motup, myself and the President on one rope and Kazi and Ian on the other. Although crevassed we did not have any problems. Snow level had changed drastically since Bill O'Connor wrote his account. We then ascended a shallow rock gully which is usually a snow couloir to gain the snow boss and the series of ridges that would take us to the summit.

The slope was probably about 50 plus degrees; the snow was fairly soft but harder underneath in places. There was always a danger of windslab but fortunately it never developed. The rarefied air, however, did have its effect; we were only managing about twenty paces before each brief halt, but we were making progress. Bamboo cones collected on route through the vegetated areas were left a convenient intervals to enable us to return in safety should it become misty. The mist descended even before we had reached the final snow pyramid.

It was 1.30 pm when we eventually reached our objective, the easterly summit, the true summit was about 30 feet higher connected by the most slender of snow ridges that I have ever seen, falling on either side at perhaps 80 degrees. It would certainly have been foolhardy to have attempted to cross it and certainly it would have taken many hours to force a crossing. Motup had clearly decided that it was not sensible even to try, we concurred.

It was misty by now and photographs would be disappointing but we took the obligatory group shot before returning by the same route. I was not looking forward to the descent as the snow would have deteriorated. Derek lead off with Motup at the back

safeguarding us. The flag cones were a great help, several times Derek was relieved to see the next one ahead. It took just 2 hours to reach the rocks again. Motup thought we might save an hour by going straight down instead of returning via the glacier and risking crevasse difficulties.

The way down was over huge jammed boulders or loose scree, this was made more difficult as it began to snow. Motup and I went ahead to find the easiest route but it became increasingly hard and slower. Dusk was quickly replaced by darkness, time was moving on apace by 10 pm we decided that enough was enough and elected to bivouac. I found a suitable huge boulder to shelter under and we settled down for the night.

Motup was some way away looking for an easy descent and Kazi decided to join him as he did not have any extra clothes. Derek and Ian were not too happy with their situation but my own experience of being benighted in the Alps helped me to treat the situation with less anxiety. Hourly time checks were requested and eventually it was 5.30 am, it was now light so we decided to make a move.

Hardly had we been going half an hour than we were met by Norbu a remarkably conscientious young



sherpa with a teapot of hot lemon covered with a towel. Norbu had in fact been up on the ridge at 11.00 with hot drinks for us. But returned as Kazi had advised him that we were alright and that we would not have wanted him to risk injury joining us.

Kazi and Motup carried on down and reached the camp at 4.30 am very tired. Clearly we had made the right decision in staying put. Back down at the camp we were fed and as a treat the three of us shared a large tin of mangos. And so to our sleeping bags for a deep one hour sleep before the walk down to the Langtang Khola and on to Kyangjin and the Gyalisham Gompa. The path was extremely pleasant through beautiful woodlands and with superb views of the shapely Lantang Lirug and its neighbours. For the first time we saw trekkers, during the past two weeks we had only seen two Germans and two Spaniards.

Our return to Kathmandu was along the Langtang Khola through many picturesque villages, passing prayer walls and gompas to Syabru and on to Dunche for our final camp and a hectic bus ride to the capital. A remarkably competent piece of driving on quite impossible roads, negotiating oncoming vehicles with vital precision and in some places on non-existent roads. The whole expedition gave us fulfilment, it gave us time to reflect, it was a period of strenuous and sustained activity, a clear bond had developed between trekkers, sherpas and porters. We would all return home changed and more tolerant individuals.

Ian Crowther, David Smith and Derek Bush
with Naya Kanga in the background

Expedition Diary

1957 - Nepal

Maurice Wilson

April 28, Camp 1. We started rather later than usual this morning, as we had to move two boxes of food up to Camp 2. Indeed, the sun was already on the upper glacier before we reached it. We are becoming more adept at scrambling up the short rock pitch flanking the icefall. On the glacier, the snow was softening and I found the going rather slow, and we took at least half an hour longer than usual. Andy was willing to go on to Camp 3, but I didn't feel up to it. In fact, as we started to descend the glacier I realised I was not well and was very pleased to reach Camp 1. I think it was the porridge we had this morning which didn't go down too well.

In the afternoon, it became very dark and soon thunder and lightning were let loose. I was afraid it might loosen some of the rock above us but, fortunately, the storm only lasted half an hour. I don't like this camp site. Quite close, seracs are collapsing in the icefall, and crevasses opening up. Behind us, towers a cliff with stones and small boulders hurtling down from time to time. Andy has just looked in to say that the nearest stone stopped only 20 feet away.

April 29, Camps 1-3. For the first time, the early morning weather looked unpromising and the sky was overcast, the sun having a job to shine through. Nevertheless, we set out from Camp 1 at about 6.45am and, after the usual trudge reached Camp 2 in 2 hours. We had a rest here and then continued up to Camp 3. Again the snow was soft and the going tiring. We met Arthur and Dan on their way down.

We finally reached Camp 3 about 10.30 am in poor visibility and a very cold wind. Turned in and had some soup. My feet are very cold and I can't get them warm, as the lilo is saturated and the sleeping bag not much better. Snow drives in

through the sleeve whenever the entrance is opened. Andy placed some overboots under my feet by way of insulation and this has made a lot of difference.

April 30, Camp 3. This terrible day started with difficulties with the primus stove. As a result, we had little breakfast. Still, it was a beautiful morning and, in view of the behaviour of the stove, Andy and I decided that it would not be fair to ask Crosby and George to say here at Camp 3, as arranged, by way of support to us at Camp 4. Accordingly, we set off for Camp 4 with a box and a bag of food, expecting to meet them.

It was an interesting route through the icefall, finishing high on its right flank under some cliffs. There followed a most tedious traverse in soft snow, to Camp 4. We could see Crosby's party on the glacier way beyond, but they had not left us any note. I suppose they wanted to take advantage of the sudden change of weather. We left them a note and then set off back.

To our surprise, when we reached Camp 3 the stove burst into life, so we had a brew. However, we hadn't been there much more than an hour when George turned up with his dreadful story.

He, Crosby, Mingma and Myla had been passing beneath a hanging glacier when the snout of it broke loose. In seconds they were all hurled into a crevasse. Somehow or other, George managed to climb out. He scraped and dug for a long time but was unable to extricate the rope to Crosby or reach anyone else. We fear all are lost.

As soon as we could, Pemba and I set off down to Camp 1 where we found the others. Dan and Ang Temba set off, at once, to Base Camp for entrenching tools. I shared a tent with Arthur.

It was a melancholy gathering. We all felt so completely helpless and yet, praying for a miracle. The Sherpas chanted some mournful tune all night and I got no sleep.

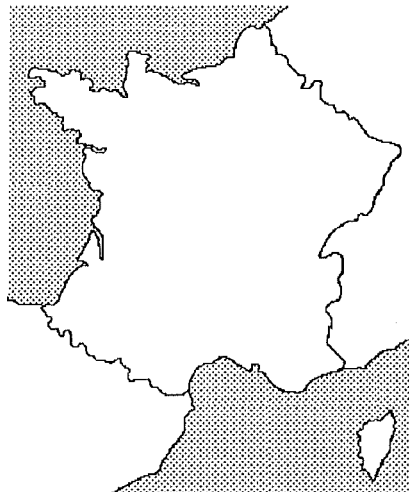
A Summer's Climbing Dream

Jon Riley

Whilst the club was meeting in the Picos de Europa, Claire and I left Spain and drove into France to sample some of the fantastic low level rock climbing. Although none of the areas that we went to are new, I thought it was worth writing about them in case you had never considered trying sport climbing in France. The first thing you need to realise is that many French people regard climbing as a sport similar to tennis or golf whereas many British people regard climbing as 'a way of life'. This difference in attitude leads to some differences in style, probably the most obvious example being bolting.

The French love bolts! Take for example the crag at Orpierre. The whole village is geared up for rock climbing, You buy a topo for 10 francs in any bar or shop and arrive at the crag 15 minutes later carrying only a 60m rope, 10 quick draws, rock boots, chalk bag and wearing your harness a pair of shorts, a climbing vest and sandals - no need for a rucsac, no spare clothing, biv gear, big boots, flares, whistles, maps, compasses and all the other parafinalia that escorts climbers everywhere in Britain!

Once you start climbing you realise how much fun sport climbing can be because you are not wobbling on the crux of a climb as your marginal protection falls out and shoots down the rope to your belayer. Instead you can confidently cruise the crux with a resin bolt at waist height. A popular misconception is that all sport climbers climb wildly overhanging routes flexing their enormous muscles

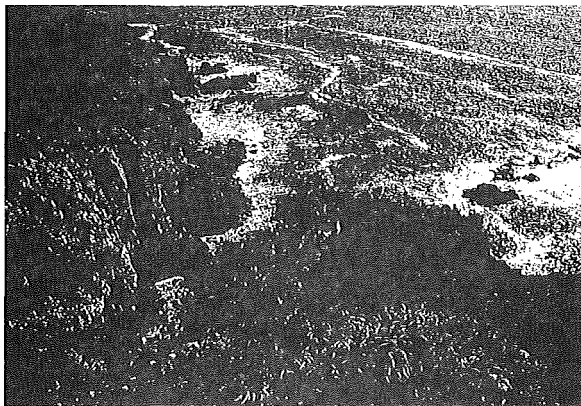


on 8a moves before hopelessly lobbing off into space - not true (most of the time). In fact in France you will find all ages and abilities climbing. We saw 7 year olds leading well bolted V.Diffs and whole families going out climbing together, retiring to the shady cafes in the village during the heat of the day and returning to the crag to climb in the evening.

I can hear you all asking 'Are there any draw backs to this climbing paradise?'. Well yes. Claire and I really enjoyed our time at Orpierre, we climbed 6 routes a day for a week non-stop, but by the end of that time we started not to care about the quality of routes, more the quantity, and I cannot honestly say I remember all the moves of anyone climb - it all sort of blends into one. Unlike say Botterills Slab or Gimmer Crack or Old Lace on Earl Crag, there are very few obvious lines, many of the moves are very similar and the bolts mean that you don't really get worried which tends to be what I remember most! However I wholeheartedly recommend a weeks climbing there whether you go to climb purely for enjoyment or to push your grade in a safe and friendly environment.

If however you want something a little more adventurous then may I suggest a gobsmaking route at Buis-les-Baronnies. As you drive towards the village your eyes are drawn to what looks like a clean wall of limestone about 300' high and a mile long, with pinnacles along the top similar to Bristly Ridge on Tryfan. However as you drive past the end of it you realise that it is about 2' wide! The route follows the crest of this amazing fin of rock. The Traverse Des Aretes is technically about VS 4b but the incredibly exposed position rivals many routes that I have climbed in the Alps. In all a traverse takes about 7 hours and descent is by abseil and chain handlines down the south face. As with all classic routes the CIUX is at the end and I suggest that you start early in the morning and carry lots of water because it is in the sun all day.

You only need a small rack of gear and a few quick draws as the CIUX has some bolts on it. We also found that a 60 metre rope was invaluable as we just reached the belay stances some of which were equipped with bolts and pegs. I will never forget belaying Claire, as she climbed up the knife edge arete at the start of the route with both of my legs dangling in space on either side of the crest as the sun rose up behind us, absolutely stunning.



Useful tips:

1. We found that Bill Birketts 'French Rock' was very useful, it gives an overview of the major sport climbing crags in France and although it doesn't list all the routes you can buy a topo when you arrive. Guide book available from David Hall at Base Camp (little plug there David, I will collect the commission later!).

2. You need to drink gallons of water so we used a Camelbak each, for anyone who has never heard of a Camelbak its a bag with a drinking tube that you carry in a pouch on your back so that you can drink whilst moving around, I no longer use a water bottle I put one of these into my rucksac and when I need to drink I just suck - no need to even stop! Brilliant for climbing long hot routes, it holds about 1.5 litres and the opening is big enough for ice cubes, amazingly enough the liquid stays lovely and cool. Base Camp may sell them, if not **try** a bike shop as they are very popular with cyclists.

3. Take at least 60m of rope. A 45/50m one is next to useless on many French crags. Indeed you can spot the British climbers as they are the ones dangling five metres above the next abseil point! Double 45m ropes are ideal.

If anyone requires any more information please contact me as I have a load of topos, guide books and pictures. I can really recommend it.

Eastern Greenland

David Laughton



Will Lacy and David Laughton spent the last two weeks of August, 1995 in the Arctic. They flew up to Longyearbyen in Spitsbergen where they joined a small Russian ice-strengthened ship, The Professor Molchanov. Their fellow passengers were a mixed bunch of Dutch, German, Austrian and 18 South Africans plus a couple of other Brits. - 38 in all.

Only one day was spent in Spitsbergen looking around Longyearbyen (rapidly developing its tourist industry) then crossing Isfjord for a long walk around the huge bird cliffs of Alkhomet. The ship then sailed for N.E. Greenland, a smooth crossing of two days SW aiming for Myggebukten on Hold With Hope. Unfortunately very thick pack ice, which had first been encountered half way across the Greenland Sea, prevented an approach closer than 30 miles. Now also in thick fog, it was decided to head south for Scoresby Sund (70 ON) where a satellite ice report showed more prospect of getting ashore.

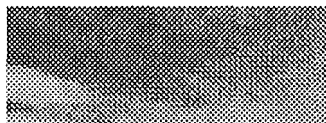
Scoresby Sund is the largest fjord in the world, 15 miles wide at the entrance and reaching inland some 200 miles as far as the Greenland ice cap. It was discovered by William Scoresby, a very successful Whitby whaler, in 1822. Although there had been a few very small Innuite (Eskimo) settlements on the banks of the fjord many centuries ago it was not until 1925 that the Danish government, then administering Greenland, set up a new settlement also called Scoresbysund on the north bank just

inside the entrance. This has now grown to some 500 people and given the Greenlandic name of Ittoqqortoormiit. As a current prominent citizen of Whitby Will Lacy is keen to develop a relationship between Whitby and Scoresbysund in recognition of Scoresby's (Senior & Junior) links with the town and the fact that they are second only to Cook in the town's historic links with exploration at sea. Will had taken with him presents from the Mayor of Whitby and proposals for closer links.

The ship did manage to enter the fjord after much banging and crashing through the ice but was not initially able to approach the village. However the fjord was navigable although littered with thousands of icebergs, ranging from foot wide blocks to ¼ mile long monsters. A week was spent exploring the fjord, landing at least once a day for extensive walks over the tundra and climbing some of the minor peaks. The scenery and the weather were magnificent. To the north lay the snow clad Stauning Alps and to the south the Watkin Mountains with huge rock walls, split by glaciers coming right down to the sea. There was also plenty of wildlife with musk-ox grazing on the slopes, Snowy Owls, Gyr Falcon, and many flocks of Snow Bunting plus Black Throated Diver, geese and many varieties of seabirds.

Before leaving the fjord another attempt was made to reach the settlement, the approach to which still looked impossible. However the very experienced Russian captain eventually forced a way through and in brilliant sunshine a landing was made. Accompanied by a Danish interpreter Will and David attended a meeting of the town council where Will presented the Whitby gifts and accepted gifts in return. 111e locals still live mainly by hunting; so far this year they have killed and eaten 60 polar bears as well as a number of musk-ox and innumerable seals. Unfortunately drink appears to be a major problem and at 5 pm the shop started to sell alcohol with the depressing sight of all ages coming away with cartons of beer and bottles of stronger stuff, several already drunk.

Farewells were said and the ship battled its way through very thick ice out to sea to drop off the passengers at Akureyri in northern Iceland. This last 33 hour leg was enlivened by five large Humpback whales playing around the ship for almost an hour. An overnight stop in Reykjavik then home accompanied on the plane by 45 youthful members of a British Schools Exploration Society expedition to Iceland.

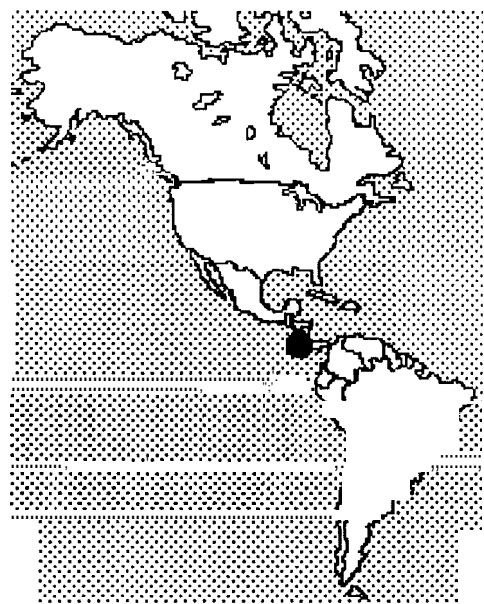


Humiliation at Caverna Corredores.

John Middleton.

Caverna Corredores is a highly sporting river cave situated in the impressive 300m deep Corredores Gorge some 4km north of the Costa Rican town of Ciudad Neily. The gorge is clothed in dense primary rain forest and is home to an abundant fauna including monkeys, Jaguars, snakes, and parrots, The cave has a surveyed length of 1700m and this together with the surrounding karst was investigated by the Americans in 1989 and Canadians in 1990. Our visit in 1995 (my son and me) coincided with the wet season making the forest, river, and cave doubly challenging. The tortuous route up the gorge requires prior knowledge and for this we were assisted by the 19 year old daughter of the owner of the small hotel were we stayed. Maybe the trip would be easier than we thought.

The derelict dirt road turned left and bumped steeply uphill into the early morning mist. We changed direction onto an indefinite track between the



long grass. We stopped abruptly. An extremely long but beautifully marked snake silently slithered across our path. "Mucho peligroso" (very dangerous) exclaimed Leticia with a big grin. We continued into the forest, dismissing any other ideas we might have had about dusky senioritas and long grass, determinedly looking down and treading faithfully in her exact footsteps. We negotiated fallen trees, swamps, plants with vicious thorns and others with disabling stings. Then came the river. A 20m wide torrent of foaming white water. Leticia and her friend Christina waded straight in and with much laughter arrived soaked but safely on the bank directly opposite us. We stumbled, slipped, slithered, and arrived half drowned many metres downstream. Five more life threatening crossings had to be undertaken before we landed on a small beach opposite the cave. Behind us was Caverna Alma, notable mainly for its small population of Vampire bats, whilst 50m upstream and on the other side, the powerful Rio Guaymi burst forth from the cliff down a 5m waterfall. We made one final and reasonably dignified river crossing before again being humbled on the 6m climb to the entrance. Here our ham-fisted attempt created much entertainment whilst the girls lithely swarmed up the vertical mud and tree roots.

The dry entrance was big, maybe 12m wide and 6m high and led into a well decorated chamber with two ways on. To the right an impressively large passageway gradually gave way to an extensive bat roost and associated stinking guano covered floor. Massive pseudoscorpions, cave crickets, cockroaches, and other nightmarish creatures scuttled everywhere. Suicidal bats aimed themselves

directly at us. We retreated calmly and in good order consoling ourselves with the fact that the survey said this passage didn't go anywhere anyway! The other large formation filled gallery gradually made a slippery, meandering descent to the main river, the Rio Guaymi. This completely filled the floor of a 10m wide superbly eroded tunnel. Downstream led quickly to a sump whilst to the right was over 500m of magnificent challenging streamway. At its end the passage continued dry but in a much smaller way whilst the river emerged sump like from the right hand wall. Out to impress, we swam straight in negotiating two small ducks within the first 30m before the passage again enlarged and our feet touched the bottom. We looked back and were amazed and very impressed to find Leticia and Christina directly behind us - they had never swum in a cave before let alone negotiate two ducks! More grand gallery followed and then the inevitable sump but just a few metres back a crawl invited inspection. We looked at it intently, the girls rushed straight in. "Arafia" (spider), Christina excitedly shouted from up front. We raced forward just in time to hear a loud "splat" and arrive to see several 10cm long legs and a squashed body beneath her fist! The crawl then progressed into a rift and looped back to join the dry section of the main passage. A highly satisfying and incident free return was then made to the entrance.

With not an undue degree of apprehension we followed our leaders down to the river wondering what our downstream techniques might be. They proved remarkably simple, just throw yourself in a deep bit, get swept away, and grab the first sizeable boulder to slow progress! Bruised and

battered and with a massive overdose of adrenalin coursing through us we eventually made it back and stumbled high spiritedly into Neilys nearest bar.

Some cave, some gorge, some river, some day, and most of all some girls! We definitely couldn't have made it without them or am I just getting old?

In Costa Rica, limestone and karstic features have also been recorded on the Santa Elena Peninsular (reasonable cockpit karst), around Venado (Caverna Vernado 1km plus), on the

Nicoya peninsular (mainly shafts into formation filled chambers - Santa Anna -240m), on the eastern side of the Gulf of Nicoya, inland from Quepos, and around Puerto Limon. We also visited the first three mentioned areas and enjoyed many more adventures amongst very friendly people. Potential for new discoveries is obviously considerable but none are likely to be of any great lengths or depth. There is a small active caving organisation in the capital, San Jose.

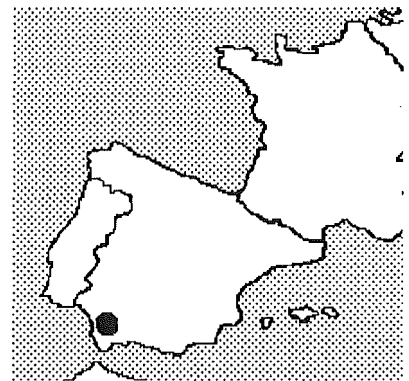
Cueva del Gato

Jon Riley

An account of a trip through a cave in southern Spain

It had taken us a lot of time to find out about this caving trip. Even after exhaustive information gathering in dreadful Spanish and sign language, we had very little to go on. We knew that it was a through trip of about 5 km with lots of swimming, some big caverns and pull-through abseils. We were pretty sure that we had parked at the correct exit, an impressive gash in the cliff face from which a small stream flowed. We had a vague idea of where the entrance was, though we hadn't actually seen it, for all we knew we could have been going into one cave and parking outside of the exit to somewhere completely different!

The entrance to the Cueva del Gato (Cat Cave) lies in the bottom of a steep sided gorge blocked at both ends, to the West by a cliff, similar in height to Malham Cove, with the cave



entrance in the shape of a slot, c30' wide and 90' high, in the middle of the face and to the East by a 200' concrete dam!

The Spanish had built the dam in the hope of catching water between it and the cliff face and the story goes that for a time it did hold some water, until suddenly the level dropped and the water disappeared into the ground, leaving the dam wall high and dry. It was only after several attempts at plugging the holes with everything from concrete to dynamite that the Spanish discovered this enormous cave, put two and two together and linked the disappearance of the water from the reservoir to the massive flooding of the river in the next valley!

whether the cave entrance has since been enlarged by man or nature we are still unsure. We think that the next stage in the history of the cave was for it to become a show cave of some sort, because as you walk in you follow a series of man made platforms and ramps. Throughout the cave you can see old timber walkways and platforms at the most spectacular formations.

After walking along in the enormous entrance passageway for about ten minutes we came to the first pool with a handline down into it and apparently no return once you let go! The water was extremely cold as we slid in and swam the few metres across the pool to struggle out at the other side, at this point three of our party decided that maybe caving wasn't such a great idea after all and turned back, leaving Stuart and me to carry on.

There really is nothing like caving with very little information as to what comes next to sharpen your senses and keep you excited and we had to make it up as we went along when we came to what appeared to be a dead end sump. We decided to double back a short way and soon found two very thin steel cables in the roof one above the other, spanning a 30' deep pit with an old wooden ladder on the other side. Unfortunately I was the lighter so I got the dubious pleasure of testing the traverse first. With my feet on the low cable and my hands and cows tails clipped into the upper cable I slowly edged across to the other side looking straight down into the pit, I reached the other side and waited for Stuart and then climbed the rickety ladder to find myself looking down into a chamber with the way on marked by a series of pools and pull through abseils, we had bypassed the

dead end. We felt a mixture of relief and anxiety because it had taken us half an hour and we had made little progress into the cave however it turned out that this was the only awkward piece of route finding.

After the abseils we found ourselves swimming in canals with similar proportions to Kingsdale Master Cave in static water with just the sound of our flaring carbide lamps to punctuate the silence. Really the only thing that worried us was getting trapped by some of the submerged walkway that we were swimming alongside. After about a kilometre of swimming, broken only by large boulders to rest on, the water abruptly ended and we found ourselves in a large perfectly circular chamber with a 15' high white stalagmite boss dead in the centre, certainly one of the most amazing formations that I have ever seen. The chamber was followed by some lower wider passages with sand and clay floors which then plunged into another canal section ending in a tall thin boulder strewn dry chamber with a wall that had been covered in calcite, it was perfectly white and reflected our light illuminating the large cavern. This was quickly followed by a final swim before smelling the outside world, feeling the heat of a southern Spanish summer and once again being in daylight.

We allowed ourselves to be taken downstream by the gentle current and almost caused an elderly Spanish woman to fall off a bridge at the entrance as she thought we were two dead bodies floating past! We met with the others at the cafe and they recounted the story of their trip back to the car in the back of an empty meat wagon who's driver had given them a lift. We realised that in fact the

trip had taken us about five hours and we had swum and waded for about 2.5 km of the 5km trip. In all it was a great through trip with some

challenging swimming and amazing scenery. Remember though to take a thick wetsuit!

INFORMATION

Location: The Cueva del Gato is found about four miles outside of Benacoan on the road to Ronda in the Grazelema national park in Andalucia.

Ronda which has stunning views of the gorge and is about 20 minutes from the cave.

Situation: The whole area is fantastic karst scenery, has enormous potential for caving and is relatively unexplored. The exit is found on the left of the road when heading towards Ronda, there is a small bar near the exit that has a large wall survey of the cave and from this you can find the entrance which is on the other side of Benacoan.

Travelling: I think the best way to get to this area would be to fly to Malaga and from there hire a car and drive to Ronda.

Season: The cave shows signs of catastrophic flooding and is not be a good place to get caught out, however this is southern Spain and floods of this size are very rare so a through trip is possible throughout the year.

Accommodation: This area of Spain has few regulations so you can wild camp just about anywhere. Benacoan has a Scotsman who resides in the village and rents out apartments for up to eight people at reasonable rates. If you fancy a touch of luxury you could stay in the Parador hotel in

Equipment: You need a harness with cows tails, a figure of eight or Stop to abseil on and a 35 Metre rope. A good quality, thick, full wetsuit is essential and if you are unsure of your swimming ability a buoyancy aid would be a sensible precaution.

A World Caving Update As At December 1994 J.R.Middleton.

Since 1992** world caving exploration has continued at a frenetic pace. Long caves have become longer, deep ones deeper, and many new ones have appeared on the scene. By the end of 1994 there were some 47 systems over 1000m in depth and 28 over 50km in length.

Spain dominates the depth charts with 10 over 1000m to be followed closely by Austria with 8, whilst the USA continues to lead the length listings

with 7 over 50km.. The only major upset to the British charts is the amazing arrival of 'Ogof Ddraenon' which was explored from virtually nil metres to over 20km in barely 3 months!

Another statistic is for Nohoch Nah Chich, 40km long, and the Cenote dos Ojos, 30km long, both only 5km apart and likely to be connected shortly in Quintan Roo, Yucatan, Mexico. Good, but not amazing you might say

until you realise that ALL the 70km so far explored is UNDERWATER!

Once again I must thank Tony Waltham and Claud Chaubert for

providing me with these lists and allowing the club to publish them.

**For 1992 see the YRC Journal Vo1.XI NoAO.

THE WORLDS LONGEST CAVES.

1 Mammoth Cave System	560km	USA, Kentucky
2 Optimisticeskaya	183km	Ukraine
3 Holloch	156km	Switzerland
4 Jewel Cave	144.8km	USA, South Dakota
5 Siebenhegstehohlen System	126km	Switz.
6 Wind Cave	113.3km	USA, South Dakota
7 Ozernaya	111km	Ukraine
8 Gua Air Jernih	106km	Sarawak
9 Lechuguilla	106km	USA, New Mexico
10 Fisher Ridge Cave	104.5km	USA, Kentucky
11 Sistema de Ojo Guarena	97.4km	Spain, Burgos
12 Reseau de la Coume d Hyuernede	90.5km	France, Pyrenees
13 Zoluska	85.5km	Ukraine
14 Sistema Purification	79.1km	Mexico
15 Ease Gill Cave System	70.5km	England
16 Hirlatzhohle	70km	Austria
17 Raucherkarhohle	70km	Austria
18 Friars Hole System	69.2km	USA, West Virginia
19 Organ Cave System	60.5km	USA, West V'na
20 Red del Silencio	60km	Spain, Picos
21 Toca da Boa Vista	60km	Brazil
22 Reseau de l Alp	56.7km	France, Alps
23 Kap-Kutan-Promezutocnaja	55km	Turkmenistan
24 Reseau de la Dent de Crolles	55km	France, Alps
25 Mamo Kanada	54.8km	Papua New Guinea

22 Akemati	1226m	Mexico
23 Schwersystem	1219m	Austria
24 Compleso Fighera Corchia	1215m	Italy Appenines
25 Veliko Sbrego	1198m	Slovenia

BRITAINS DEEPEST CAVES

1 Ogaf Ffynnon Ddu	308m	South Wales
2 Giants-Oxlow System	214m	Derbyshire
3 Daren Cilau	213m	South Wales
4 Ease Gill Cave System	211m	Yorks Dales
5 Gingling Hole	210m	Yorks Dales
6 Penyghent Pot	196m	Yorks Dales
7 Gaping Gill System	195m	Yorks Dales
8 Ireby-Notts System	183m	Yorks Dales
9 Peak-Speedwell System	182m	Derbyshire
10 Meregill	181m	Yorks Dales
11 Poll na Gceim	181m	Clare
12 Reyfad Pot	179m	Fermanagh
13 Longwood Swallet	175m	Somerset
14 Long Kin West	174m	Yorks Dales
15 Swildons Hole	167m	Somerset
16 West Kingsdale System	165m	Yorks Dales
17 Dale Head Pot	165m	Yorks Dales
18 Ogof Agen Allwedd	160m	South Wales
19 Nettle Pot	159m	Derbyshire
20 Tatham Wife Hole	158m	Yorks Dales

THE WORLDS DEEPEST CAVES

1. Reseau Jean Bernard	1602m	France, Alps
2 Lamprechtsofen	1550m	Austria
3 Gouffre Miroida	1520m	France, Alps
4 Shakta Pantjukhina	1508m	Georgia
5 Sistema del Trave	1441m	Spain, Picos
6 Boj Bulok	1415m	Uzbekistan
7 Puerta de Illamina	1408m	Spain, Pyrenees
8 Lukina Jama	1390m	Croatia
9 Sistema Cheve	1386m	Mexico
10 Ceki Jama	1370m	Slovenia
11 Sneznaja-Mezonnogo	1370m	Georgia
12 Sistema Huatla	1353m	Mexico
13 Reseau de la Pierre St Martin	1342m	France, Pyrenees
14 Siebenhegsthohlensystem	1284m	Austria
15 Reseau Berger	1278m	France, Alps
16 Platteneck-Bergerhohle	1265m	Austria
17 Sima T27	1255m	Spain, Picos
18 Tocca de los Rebecos	1255m	Spain, Picos
19 Abisso Paolo Roversi	1249m	Italy, Appenines
20 Sistema V Ijukhin	1240m	Georgia
21 Abisso Ulififer	1230m	Italy, Appenines

BRITAINS LONGEST CAVES

1 Ease Gill Cave System	70500m	Yorks Dales
2 Ogof Ffynnon Ddu	50000m	South Wales
3 Ogof Agen Allwedd	33000m	South Wales
4 Daren Cilau	27000m	South Wales
5 Kingsdale Cave System	24000m	Yorks Dales
6 Ogof Ddraenan	20000m	South Wales
7 Gaping Gill Cave System	16500m	Yorks Dales
8 Dan yr Ogaf	15000m	South Wales
9 Peak-Speedwell System	14000m	Derbyshire
10 Poulmagollam Poulelva	13000m	Clare
11 Slaughter Stream Cave	12000m	Gloucestershire
12 Ireby-Notts System	11100m	Yorks Dales
13 Mossdale Caverns	10500m	Yorks Dales
14 Doolin St Catherines	10000m	Clare
15 Langcliffe Pot	9600m	Yorks Dales
16 Swildons Hole	9100m	Somerset
17 Ogof Craig y Ffynnon	8600m	South Wales
18 Little Neath River Cave	8200m	South Wales
19 St Cuthberts Swallet	7100m	Somerset
20 Reyfad Pot	6700m	Fermanagh

Under a Canopy in Tenerife
February 1996
by Peter Price

On the first day we woke to find that it had rained during the night and now there was a low cloudbase. The wind was a strong easterly. A site was chosen and after checking out the landing area we drove to the top. 'Blown Out!' - just like Pendle. Later, on our way home we decided to look at the training site luckily it was about 100ft below cloudbase so we all had a flight or two here before heading off for a restaurant.

The next day 'base was still low at around 4000ft, just clearing the top of the mountain that dominates the Los Americas skyline, El Conde, so it was decided that the two more novice pilots would fly the 'training slope' and the rest of us would go higher into the mountains. I elected to fly last after ensuring a clean launch for everyone then setting myself up.

During the launch I found that I'd snapped a brake line so decided to fly straight down the valley and, if I had enough height, cross to the valley with the landing fields. About halfway down I encountered a very smooth large thermal which I cored. My aim on this trip was to put into practice all I had learned about thermals. Using everything I'd read or been told I found that very soon I was at cloudbase. I mentioned my line break to those who had already landed and my position to make sure I had a chance to gloat later in the pub.

With my line repaired courtesy of the paraglider first aid kit, we were taken back to the launch site for the early afternoon thermals to sort our stomachs out.

Daren Williams, an experienced pilot, went first and had headed off to the

light around the corner to a known thermal source (a set of very large rock spines) and reported that there was lift available, so I followed. We lost height indulging in photography then the lift became harder to find so we started scratching. After a while I'd lost so much height that I couldn't clear the ridge to get to the landing area so to minimise the walk out I set out on a final glide down the valley I was in towards the motorway,

At about 150' agl I encountered the familiar feeling of my canopy pitching upwards, damping the inevitable dive I couldn't believe my vario (nor could the dogs who must have been deafened) 14 - 16 up and large I **started** a long slow 360° eventually tightening on the core. On seeing this Daren, who was also low (about 800ft above me), headed into my thermal. He mustn't have damped the dive forward on entering the thermal enough as the next thing I saw him falling groundwards with a full frontal **deflation**, recovering at around my start point. By this time our take off became visible and everyone flying was heading in my direction. It seemed that the only way was up and I soon made cloudbase at about 5400ft. Looking below me I could see the melee of pilots circling below.

I took the plunge and headed across the valley to the mountain expecting to get hammered. However I only lost about 600ft which was soon replaced on the face of Conde. After about 30 minutes of popping in and out of cloud, most of the pilots had made base or headed off for the beach to impress the tourists. I decided to head off for Los Christianos as last year an instructor had impressed us all by doing this then spending the early evening soaring the sea cliffs there. Following a compass bearing in cloud I soon realised it is a long way, and

very lonely compared to ridge soaring. Daren had followed the BEACH setting on his compass for 20 minutes while not being able to descend from the cloud and found himself emerging over the sea at about 5100ft giving him plenty of time to impress the tourists on the beach with wingovers, spiral dives and asymmetrics eventually doing a pinpoint landing, between the nicest females on the beach, to a large round of applause.

At about halfway I was down to below 4000ft but I still had the motorway, powerlines and a town to cross so keeping the speed bar full on I headed for what I'd been told could be a source of thermals, a small hill just before the motorway it worked and I was soon back up at base. Arriving with over 5000ft over Los Christianos blew my mind I'd never left the ridge before let alone flown over tower blocks. After a while I'd had enough and decided to call for a retrieve.

'Can you pick me up please. '

'Yeh sure. Where are you?'

'The sea cliffs! '(smugly)

Losing my height over hotel pools was fun, first a left hand spiral losing around 1500ft then a right handed spiral to unwind myself, of about 2000ft it was then that I noticed my drift was away from the sea cliffs, checking this with the boat anchored out to sea I realised that landing would be fun. In my excitement I had flown up wind all the way and now I faced all the rotor coming in over the cliffs. I'd committed myself to land here so I gently 360°^d until I encountered a 60/70% asymmetric. This was dealt with but it didn't seem right, everything was too quiet. I looked down to see an already large hotel getting larger very fast! Quickly running over the manoeuvres in 'Instability' in my mind I'd just got to

'Big Ears' when I thought I'd better do something quick, first I tried large brake on both sides - nothing, then I tried a large input on one side - the wing started slowly at first to turn so I thanked the Lord (audibly, I found out afterwards) and set up the landing and landed safely a few minutes later. It all happened very fast and I only lost around 600ft but every second felt like an hour.

The trip continued to be a very steep learning curve for everyone, even a 'Sky God' like myself

Tenerife is an island of contrasts. The South is barren, almost desert like, with the climate influenced mainly by the sea breezes. The North is green, moist and in general more windy. The South is a major tourist destination with the resulting availability of package deals and English speaking locals

Unlike the Alps there are few restrictions on free flight. Spanish law insists on a reserve, there is no flying within the National Park (Mt. Tiede) and it's advisable to contact local pilots. Landing out can mean a long walk out, and/or an evening, extracting 'Prickly Pear' spines out of various extremities (Someone even had them penetrate the soles of sturdy flying boots!)

The take off points are all high (even the 'Training slope' has a top to bottom height of over 1700ft and it is possible to get away from here and cover vast distances) and most are top driveable. Of the other sites I'd flown the year previously one was closed due to some German pilots upsetting the land owner and the launch site of another had been moved due to complications with a land owner, emphasising that communication with local pilots is a good idea,

The added bonus of Tenerife is that out of seven days there is a good chance that all would be flyable.

Our group of eight consisted of two instructors, two newly qualified pilots and four others of varying experience including myself. We had all independently decided to go with 'Airborne' as they sorted everything out from flights to retrieves, also it was possible for those without varios, radios, reserves and the like to rent them.

Canopy:- Swing Prisma (large)

Experience» CP + 45 hours

The President's Report

as presented to the 103 rd AGM

All YRC years are special, but 1995 was doubly so because it was the year of the Himalayan Expedition. At the time of writing this report news has just come through that the climbing team are safely off Dorje Lapka and back in Kathmandu. The news is that the team did not reach the summit, a decision having been taken that snow conditions were too dangerous. Any first feelings of disappointment are soon dismissed. The safety of all the members is paramount and the climbing leader Ted Campion and his advisers are to be complimented on making a very sound mountaineering decision. Recent events this summer elsewhere in the mountaineering world bear out this judgement.

I feel it is not my place to report either on the Trek or the Climbing Expedition. This task quite lightly belongs to the Climbing Leader and Alan Kay, our Trek Leader and co-ordinator of the whole expedition. There are many people to thank and these acknowledgements will be made as the various reports unfold. However I feel, as I am sure the whole Expedition members do, that this trip would not have got off the ground without the work of Alan Kay who researched it, organised it, did a huge amount of fund raising and also twisted the arms of his employers not only to give a generous donation, but also to waive numerous banking charges which normal expeditions would have had to bear. The Club owes Alan a huge debt.

Finally, it is a great credit to this Club that we were able to send 14 members, 1 prospective member and a guest to the Himalaya. Let us build on this success and, through the publicity it will generate, it should help to stimulate the recruitment of active new members.

To return to more mundane club affairs. The average meet attendance of 21.4 was only slightly down on the 1994 figure of 22. This level has been the norm for the past few years. This year was probably helped by the long hot summer which in turn helped to raise the climbing standards of some of our younger members. It gave me great pleasure when on the LHG meet in July Tim Bateman and Alistair Renton came in rather late for dinner to announce almost casually that they had climbed Kipling Groove on Gimmer, the climb that used to be the test piece of all the hard men of the 1950's and 60's.

Another most enjoyable meet was the Long Walk organised as a two day event in the Southern Uplands by Ian Crowther. The two overseas meets in Mallorca and the Picos d'Europa were also highly successful and seem set to be repeated in the not too distant future. The one cloud on the horizon is the decline of the Spring Bank week in Scotland.

The Club must decide very shortly if a change away from Scotland is desirable, or indeed if the meet should be moved from a busy holiday period. Finally, my thanks are due once again to all the meet organisers who put so much effort into making our meets so successful.

Considerable time, effort and money has gone into the improvements at

both our huts in 1995. This applies particularly to Lowstem where at considerable cost the electrical installations have been put right and at the last Committee Meeting approval was given for the installation of storage heaters, a de-humidifier and extractor fans to eliminate the humidity problem. The Hut Wardens will report in more detail, but at last LowStem will be a cottage of which we can be truly proud.

The Y.R.C. Bulletin is now well and truly off the ground thanks to the efforts of Michael Smith, our Editor and of course all the contributors.

One very interesting article was Arthur Evans's account of the Corrugated Cracks and Janus climbs on Elidir Fawr in 1937. This was in Bulletin No. 3. Then in Bulletin No. 4 Tim Josephy describes how he repeated the climbs and is full of respect for such a lead before the 2nd World War using Alpine line, wearing tricouni shod boots and with no protection. As Tim writes, A.W.E. we stand in awe! Both gentlemen are here tonight, if they haven't got together yet I am sure they will. These two articles alone convince me that the principle of a six monthly bulletin is the road to go down.

Last year we debated at length the issue of women in the Club. This caused many of us a lot of agonised heart-searching. The debate was conducted in relatively good humour. I think it was right to bring it out into the open. The decision was made and at the first Committee Meeting after the E.G.M. it was agreed that the subject should not be raised again unless there was a real groundswell within the Club and it came from the younger members.

All members will have read in recent circulars of the difficulty we are experiencing recruiting officers of the Club, particularly for the key posts of Treasurer and Secretary. Discussions will take place later in the meeting when the Secretary will outline how he would like his duties to be split. This is in line with how other Kindred Clubs operate. However, without volunteers coming forward all suggestions are worthless and this is a heartfelt plea from a President, who has himself served time, for members to come forward and help in any way possible. If these posts cannot be filled satisfactorily, and I support both incumbents in their determination to leave their posts next November, then the result for the Club will be a huge drop in standards in the management of our affairs.

The other major disappointment has been our failure to recruit new members. 1995 saw only one new member join the Club. There are at least four prospective members in the 'pipeline' and hopefully they and others will help to boost next year's membership.

Membership now stands at 185. There were two deaths in the year, Geoffrey Bates and Geoff Scovell and two resignations, Steven Goulden and Andy Wells. Membership is broken down as under:

	1995	11994
Honorary Members	6	6
Life Members	64	65
Ordinary Members	114	116
Junior Members	1	1
<u>Total</u>	<u>185</u>	<u>188</u>

C. D. Bush, President

Contents

All forty Club Journals, 1899-1992, are listed below together with an abbreviated summary of contents.

1 1899 - The Formation of the Club (Bellhouse). The Northern Playground of Europe (Slingsby). Dent des Bouquetins by East Face (Calvert). Mountaineering without Guides (Pilkington). A New Mountain Aneroid Barometer (Whymper). The West Wall of Deep Gill (Robinson). The Caves and Potholes or Yorkshire (Cuttriss). Gaping Gill Hole - Part 1 (Calvert).

2 1900 - The Growth of Mountaineering (Walker). Keswick Brothers' Climb (Puttrell). Mountaineering in Norway (Slingsby). Long Kin Hole West (Ellet). Gaping Gill Hole - Part 11 (Calvert).

3 1901 - Ancient Kingdom of Mourne (Moore). Swiss Holiday (Anderson). Walk in the Tyrol (Bligg). Southern Greece (Barran). Two Explorations in Ingleborough Cave (Green). Easter Holiday in the Scottish Highlands (Slingsby). Scrambling on Derbyshire Rocks (Barton)

4 1902 - A Run through the Dolomites (Coolidge). Camping Out (Scriven). Personal Reminiscences of Great Climbs (Mathews). Solitary Camping on Scafell (Lund). Record Fell Walk (Broadrick). Rowten Pot (Swithinbank). An Expedition In the Range of the Grand Muveran (Corbett).

5 1903 Morteratsch Sattell (Conway). Two New Climbs on Scafell (F. Botterill), A Night In a Pothole - Lost John's ("Silent Member"). Alum Pot (Lowe). Gaping Gill Hole (Cuttriss). Early Explorations in Ingleborough Cave (Green). Slanting Gully, Lliwedd (F. Botterill), Savage Gully (F. Botterill),

6 1904-5 Winter Mountaineering in 1883 (Jackson). A Fortnight in the Eastern Alps (Brigg). The Kleine Zinne from Cortina (Calvert). The Horungtinder (Green). Slogen (Raeburn). Jockey Hole and Rift Pot (Booth). Geological Features of Rift Pot (Broderick).

7 1906-7 Some Reminiscences of Skagastoldstind (Ulten). Further Explorations in Gaping Gill Hole (Horn). Gaping Gill Hole (Plan). North West Climb, Pillar (Botterill). Limestone Caverns and Potholes and their Mode of Origin (Dwerryhouse), Scoska Cave, Littondale (with plan) (Hill).

8 1907-8 -, Some Alpine Variations (Wintthrop Young). Speleology (Martel). Some Caves and Potholes County Fermanagh (Broderick). Gaping Gill Again (Cuttriss). Mere Gill Hole (Roberts).

9 1909 - Alpine Flora (Farrar). S.E. Arete of the Nesthorn (Lowe). In Northern Siberia (Cuttriss). Log of the Bertol (Botterill). Caves In Yamaguchi (Gauntlett). The Florence Court Caves, Co Fermanagh (with plan of Marble Arch and District and Polla Sumera) (Broderick). Gaping Gill in Flood (Rule).

10 1910 - In Praise of Good

Things (Schuster). Gaping Gill (Farrer). Concerning Guide Books (Benson).: Easter in the Black Forest (Greenwood). Car Pot (Broderick). Sunset Holefkoberts). Gaping Gill Spout Tunnel and Rat Hole (Rule)

11 1911 Helm Wind

(Benson). In Old Tracks (Brigg). Climbing at Ilkley (illustrated) (Greenwood). The Cave of the Dragon, Majorca (with plan) (Hill). Sleets Gill and Dowka Bottom Cave (Plan of Sleets Gill) (Hastings). Swinsto Cave and some others (Broderick),

12 1912 - On the Grigna

(Farrer). Aurora Borealis (Benson). Attempt on Kamet (AM. Slingsby). Sinai: A Desert Ride (J. J. Brigg). The Siege of Mere Gill (with plan) (Roberts). The Stream Bed of Fell Beck above G.G. (plan showing Spout Tunnel and Rathole) (Broderick).

13 1913 - Clapham Cave

(with plan) (Hill). The Cave of the Wild Horses (Baker and Kentish). Noon's Hole (with plan) (Baker & Wingfield). Siberia in Winter (Cuttriss). A Spofforth Pinnacle ("Columbus Junior"). Gaping Gill in 1913 (Rule).

14 1921 - A Shikar Trip in

Tehri (O. I. Addyman). In the Tracks or the Rubber Men (Frankland). Scawfell, Pisgah Buttress (W.Y.B.). Mountain and Sea (Botterill). Concerning Arran (Benson). Gaping Gill in 1920. Flood Entrance (D.

Burrow), Flora and Fauna (Lovett). Cave Exploration.

15 1922 - Central Buttress,

Scawfell (Frankland). Mountains and Sea II (Botterill). Snow on the Fells (Seaman). The Mountain Ramparts of Seas (Roberts). Swildon's Hole and Mendips (Bonner). The Leek Fell Potholes (with sketch map). Goyden Pot (with plan of Labyrinth). Cave Exploration.

16 1924 - A Brief Visit to

the Jotunheim (C. E. Burrow). A Glimpse of the Dauphine (Woodward). Les Ecrins and the Meije (Wright). Longkofel by the N.E. Ridge (Smythe). Mountains and Sea III (Botterill). Fox Holes, Clapham - A Rock Shelter (with plan) (Broderick). Diccan Pot, Selside (Brown). Little Hull Pot, Penyghent (Roberts). Oxlow Cavern, Castleton (with plan) (Humphreys). Cave Exploration.

17 1927 Peaks &

Porterage in the Pyrenees (G. R. Smith). Across to Andorra (Wright). Food & The Mountaineer (Crcighton). Concerning Classification (Benson). Some Severes (Barker). Camp at Loch Curuisk (Barker). Esk Buttress, Scawfell Pike (Frankland). Juniper Gulf (Griffiths). Ginging Pot (Hilton). Clearing up in Gaping Gill (Anon).

18 1929 - A Raid on the

High Atlas (Brown). West Buttress of Clogwyn du'r Arddu (Smythe). Notes of a campaign in the Alps 1927 (Smythe). Some Peaks by the Lake of Como (Wright). Gaping Gill, Whit & September ("Gantryman"). Gaping Gill in 1904 (M. Botterill).

19 1930 - Corsica in May (Roberts). The Outer Hebrides (M. Botterill). Some Notes on Sauerland (Ellis). Three Summers in the Club (Whitaker). About Nothing in Particular (Benson). Lost John's Cave (Foley). Gavel Pot in 1885 (Hastings).

20 1932 - In the Adamello and Brenta Groups (Sale). A Novice's Holiday at Saas Fee (Shaw). A Trek in Northern Rhodesia (Woodman). June Days in Ross and Skye (Reed). The Caimgorms (Riley). The Eisreisenwelt (Puttrel). Cave Exploration.

21 1934 - Forty Years On (Lowe). A Glimpse of the Drakensberg (G.S.Gowing). Mount Ophir, Lahore (Lowe). Six Days in Dauphine (OakesSmith). The Roman Wall of Hadrian (Lowe). Goyden Pot, Nidderdale (Yates).

Rumbling Hole, Leck Fell (Roberts). St. Michael's Cave, Gibraltar (Brodrick). Caves in Dove & Manifold Valleys (Yates).

22 1936 - A Fortnight In the Lepontine Alps (Evans). Round Sutherland (Roberts). Mountains of Yorkshire (Crawford). The Royal Grotto of Postumia (Puttrel). The Ginging Hole Accident (N.C.P.C.). The Underground Course of the Monastir River (G.S. Gowing). County Clare - A Brief Diary (Bartlett). Sam, the Ingleton Plumber (F. W. Stembridge). These Latter Days (Washfold Cave, Mere Gill, Gaping Gill) (Roberts).

23 1938 The Giant (Davidson). Days Around the Susten

Pass (H. L. Stembridge). Snow Over Pillar Fell (Reed). Mountain and Sea IV (Botterill). Lochs Morar, Mourn and Nevis (Goggs). The Chislehurst Cave Myth (Bonner). Three Easters in Ireland (Bartlett). Ireland re-visited (Gowing). Dan-yr-ogof and the Welsh Caves (Roberts).

24 1947 - Edouard Alfred Martel (Roberts). Some Mountains of Cape Province (Elliot). A Note on the Theban Hills (Evans). Route Z Brig-Grindlewald (Evans). Omul - Getting Fit for War (Watts). A Happy New Year. High Level Midwinter Bivouacs (Nelstrop). The Enniskillen Gondoliers (Roberts). Cave Exploration.

25 1949 - Return to the Alps (Watts). First Visit to the Alps (Chadwick). Cyrene Underground (Stringer). Summer Camp in Lewis (Matheson). Almscliff Key to Climbs. 5 plans and sketches (Stembridge). Floreat Hibernia (Stembridge). Potholes of the Ulster Border (6 sections) (Holmes). Car Pot Breakthrough (Brindle). Cave Exploration.

26 1952 Norwegian Holiday (Holmes). Late Summer in the Alps (Fox). A New Type of Club Meet (Chadwick). Club Cottage (Burrow). Tales of Old Langdale (Griffin). Thadentsonyana Basutoland (Jorgensen). Ulster the Seventh Time (Roberts). Mount Etna (Rusher). Letter from Scotland (Reed). Cave Exploration.

27 1954 - Some Potholes in Leitrim, Eire (H. L. Stembridge). The 1911 Ascent of Gardyloo Gully (Roberts). Gaping Gill Explorations August 1951 - May 1952 (Parker).

Loubens and the Deepest Pothole (Roberts). Zennatt and Chamonix 1952 (Fox). Two Climbs on the Chamonix Aiguilles (Fox). The Ascent of Mount Victoria (Kelsey). The New Generation (Spenceley). A Northern Bogtrot (Griffin). Holes In the Ground (IPunch^l). Climbs on Guisecliff (Scovell). Dr Johnson and the Mountains (Brook).

28 1957 - South Georgia (Spenceley). Fairy Hole Cave, Weardale (Jones). Bird Watching in the Hills (Stonehouse). The Anglo--French Expedition to Labouiche (Patchett). The Seven Peaks Walks (Large). We Can't All Be Explorers but - (Lacy). Praraye (Watts). The Lakeland 3000's (Anderson). Mount Arrowsmith Vancouver Island (Devenish). Brimham Rocks, an Interim Guide (McKelvie). The Brenva Route (Fox). Some Letters from the Past (Brook).

29 1958 - YRC Himalayan Expedition - Introduction (H. L. Stemberge) England to Katmandu (Tallon). Katmandu to Base Camp (Wilson). The Big White Peak (Spenceley). After the Accident (Anderson). A Bearer of ill Tidings (Spenceley). Base Camp to Katmandu (Tallon). A Doctor in the Himalayas (Jones). The Injured from Base Camp to Katmandu (Jones). Equipment, Medical and Food Reports. The Summing Up (Spenceley).

30 1960 - Clapham Cave - 1946/1959 (Patchett). Lonely in Lapland (Spenceley). 1957 Expd. to Monte Marguaries (Linford). Traverse of the Eiger and the Monch (R. Gowing). Lost John's Cave 1959 (Stemberge). Enniskillen Whitsun 1959 (Hanis). A Pyrenean Journey

(Large). Reminiscences Part 1 1902 - 1909 (Roberts),

31 1962 - Skiing in Norway (Harris). Rosenlauri and so to Tatra (Bell). La Haute Route 1960 (D. W. Stemberge). Knoydart Reconnaissance (Stirling). First Impressions of Newfoundland (Lockwood). A Traverse or the Lenzspitze (Wilkinson). Mountains, Beaches and Sunshine in Corsica (Tallon). The Cascade Mountains (G.A.Salmon). Reminiscences Part II- The YRC (Roberts).

32 1964 - Mountains & Indians in Peru (H. L. Stemberge). In the Footsteps of the Fianna (Crowther), Avalanche (Baume). A Shambles amongst the Alps (F. D. Smith, Allen, Vamey). Icefield Ranges of the St. Elias Mountains (T.H. Smith). Dolomite Introduction (Henderson). Gullies (Woodward). A Day on the Matterhorn (R. Gowing). Skye, the Ridge (Harben). Kilnsey Crag (Moorhouse).

33 1966 - Fuji-San (R. Gowing). Knoydart (Swindells). The British Expedition to the Edelweisserhuttenschach (Judson, Middleton). The Northern Alps of Japan (R. Gowing). Climbs in the Eastern Alps (Moorhouse). Land of the Magic Carpet (Watts). Pen y Ghent Pot 1964 (T. W. Salmon). With a Scout Troop in the High AtlastMarr). Carlsbad Caves, New Mexico (Reynolds). Reminiscences Part 111 (Roberts), Oxlow Caverns (Middleton).

34 1968 - Three-Quarters of a Century (The Presidents). Antro di Corchia, Apuan Alps (Arculus). Climbs in the Clapham Area

(Richards). A Fionn Loch Diary (Stirling). Some Climbs in Turkey (Spenceley). The British Speleological Expedition in Turkey 1966 (Middleton). Turkey Again 1967 (Middleton). First Descent of the Melon River Gorge (Middleton). Hadrian's Magic Stones (Patchett). Further Rambling in Japan (R Gowing). Cave Exploration in South Wales (Judson).

35 1970 - The Watkins Mountains Expedition (Spenceley). Underground in the Lebanon 1968 & 1969 (J. R Middleton). High Adventure (T. Smith). Return to Corchia 1969 (Edwards). Fellsman 1969 (Hooper). Midnattssolens Land (Humphreys). 1969 Speleological Expedition to Umbria (Judson).

36 1973 - Iran: A Caving Adventure Extraordinary (J. R Middleton). Ghar Parau 1972 (Lomas). Land, Sea and Skye - The Whit Meet 1972. The Reseau Felix Trombe (J. R Middleton). Damavand and Alan Kuh (Edwards). 1972 The Year of the Push (J. R Middleton). Jiekkevarri '71 (Bugg). The Gouffre Berger (Edwards). The Golden Age of Yorkshire Potholing (Swindells).

37 1976 - The Hard Way to Lalibella (Spenceley). A Journey through the Semyen (Medley). Yorkshire Ramblings in California (Goulden). Those Blue Remembered Hills (Farrant). Nova Scotia and the Drakensberg (Smithson). Becking Pleasures (Clayton). Messrs. Dawson, Townend & Co. - Pioneer Potholers (Craven). The Greatest (H. L. Stembridge). First Alpine Route: Gran Paradiso (Lomas). Sulitjelma 1975 (Bugg).

38 1979 - A Long River Through a Lonely Land (Spenceley). The Ogre (Rowlands). The Los Tayos Expedition (Whalley). Outdoors in South Australia (Reynolds). Doing the Donalds (Farrant). Radio Broadcasts by J. W. Puttrell (Harben). Trekking to Toubkal (M. Smith). Spitzbergen (D. Mackay). Arabian Chippings (Lovett).

39 1985 - Wasdale Diary (Hooper). A Tale of Two Chimneys (Sale). Rambling Alone (Aldred). A Day In the Cascades (Farrant). The Munro Meet 1983 (Swindells). Himalayan Trek (T. A. Kay). Cave Diggers (Lomas). YRC Reflections (G. S. Gowing). Two Continents by Canoe (Spenceley). An Ornithological Panorama (Papworth). Introduction to the Alps (Goulden). Bolivian Reconnaissance (M. Smith)

40 1992 - Centenary Year. - The Y.R.C. 1892-1992 (Craven). Cololo, an Ascent in the Apolobamba (M. Smith). Karakoram Trek 1989 (Kay). Farthest North & South (Lacy). Norway 1991 (Armstrong). Mount Albert Edward Diary (White). 'I Know the Beggar" (Hooper). The Rediscovery of Cwm Dwr IT (Campion). Some Notes on the World Caving Scene 1992 (J.R.Middleton). Lets Go Paragliding (Smythe). A View from the Bridge (Farrant). Extracts from Alpine Meets (F.D.Smith). Club Proceedings 1979-1991.

Ray Harben
Hon. Librarian
January 1996

REVIEWS

Bill Todd

Craven Pothole Club Record

No. 40. October 1995

Here is a bumper (54 page) issue. Lively accounts of caving adventure in the UK and abroad predominate but there is a timely and thoughtful article about conservation and, as usual, an account of a mountaineering meet. Abroad includes Sarawak and Transylvania and the climbing meet took place in Skye. I was delighted to learn that there is an easy (relatively) way to Sgurr Alastair from Sgumain.

The biggest news on the UK potholing side is the discovery of a new extension in Gaping Gill. The exact location is not given but the account conveys all the thrills of exploration.

Letters From the Lakes

W.R. Mitchell

Castleberg, 1995, pp. 172 £5.99

&

I'll Walk Where I Will.

An Anthology for Ramblers,

compiled by Roy Allen.

The Rambler's Association, 1995, pp. 58. Available from: 18 Furness Avenue, Sheffield, S17 3QL.

Yorkshiremen will be familiar with Bill Mitchell's name as long time editor of the "Dalesman". Since his place there was taken by David Joy he has not been idle. In the forward by Hunter Davies we learn that this book was written after a serious operation from which Mr. Mitchell has happily completely recovered. He has been kind enough to present a copy to the Club.

It consists of a series of essays on various aspects of Lakeland. There are none about climbing as such but plenty about the countryside and about people. A gentle gossipy book this with no derring-do and no unpleasantness, a senior citizens' book rather than a young tiger's.

Mr. Mitchell's encyclopaedic knowledge certainly filled in some gaps 'in mine, in particular the confusion I was in over two names, Heaton Cooper and Collingwood. A Heaton Cooper was the artist father of the better known W. Heaton Cooper and W.G. Collingwood, secretary to John ("greasy pole") Ruskin, was father of R.G. Collingwood, Oxford historian and joint author of "Roman Britain and the English Settlements" in the Oxford History of England. W.G. also wrote one of the best historical novels about Lakeland, "Thorstein of the Mere".

We learn something about Mrs. Heelis (Beatrix Potter) and Harriet Martineau. In the chapter on photographers as well as the great Abraham brothers we hear about Joseph Hardman of Kendal who used to photograph the glamorous nurses of Westmorland County Hospital in a mountain setting. Funny enough after three weeks being looked after by them in 1953 I developed a desire to do something similar but didn't get anywhere.

I am sorry that Mr. Mitchell has conformed to the current fashion of calling Mill Gill "Stickle Gill". I see no reason for altering a name which has served for centuries and I resent the arrogance which assumes the light to do so. Another small carp is the reference to "Matthew Arnold, Headmaster of Rugby". Surely Doctor Arnold of Rugby was father to Matthew Arnold, Poet, and incidentally grandfather to Malcolm

Arnold, composer. A talented family, why weren't they members?

This is a good book to have on your shelf and take down when you have half an hour to spare. It is full of interest and the black and white illustrations are surprisingly effective.

"I'll Walk Where I Will" has only an indirect connection with Benny Rothman of mass trespass fame. The title is a quote from a verse by Ewen McColl which is printed in full on the title page. The book is divided into sections for particular districts and aspects of walking. The quotes are from a variety of authors from Shakespeare through Emily Bronte to Mike Harding. Most of them are to the point and the question of access is by no means overlooked. There is a copy in the YRC library and its well worth a look.

Wainwright. The Biography.

Hunter Davies,
Michael Joseph, London, pp.355,
£16.99

I have long been fiercely resentful of the assumption that every red blooded English-man knows about football. We get no further than page six of this book before the author is expecting his readers to know what the 2-3-5 system is and how it differs from the 2-2-6 system. For heavens sake if you pick up a book about Wainwright you may expect a knowledge of Lakeland to be required not football.

The information that Wainwright 'followed' Blackburn Rovers all his life did not enhance my opinion of the man. I suppose people who know about football appreciate skill and dexterity displayed on the field but when good performance is only applauded from 'our' team I part company.

But persevere with the book even if you are not a football fan. In fact don't start it if you want to be your own man for the next five or six hours because I found it very difficult to put down. My own view of Wainwright before reading this was of a man who let his love for the Lakeland Fells consume all his spare time either walking them or writing about them. This naturally caused his wife to feel like nothing but a neglected skivvy and cost him his marriage. Most of us have seen this happen.

But the truth seems so strange as to be bizarre. This was no white hot young love getting married without further thought. It seems that he married because she was the only girl who accepted his embraces. And I can appreciate that because I still remember the time when NO girl accepted mine. Another reason driving AW. into early marriage was a drunken father at home. Plainly they could not afford to get married because their honeymoon was two shilling seats at the local cinema after which they moved into the house previously shared by Ruth and her sister.

Ruth's motivation was perhaps more straightforward, Alf had a secure white-collar job in the Town Hall and was a "good catch" but when it transpires years later that "she would never have married him if she had known he had red hair" one wonders what sort of courtship they had. It seems that all their courting went on either in the dark or with AW. wearing his cap, or both.

So instead of a man getting obsessed with the Fells and ruining his marriage we have a man climbing the Fells to get out of the house. No wonder he never got a car; he was

happier trundling home on a slow bus than getting home in good time.

Having claimed that his famous guide books (thank goodness I was finding my own way round Lakeland before they came out) arose purely out of his love for the Fells and that he desired no personal gain or publicity we arrive at the 1980's when for a period you could not turn on the TV or open a colour supplement without seeing Wainwright. But all the money went to animal charities so I suppose that made it all right. I saw one of these programmes myself; "Animals cannot speak up for themselves" said Wainwright, Certainly they cannot speak but the other side of the coin is that they do not have consciences and need not worry about over population, the third world or the next ice age. No, I cannot agree with a man who puts the animal kingdom, in his will, before his own son.

But read the book. I think it gives a fair assessment of a man who used his considerable talents to make his mark and did his best to play fair according to his lights. Largely because he realised how lucky he had been I cannot dislike him. I used to be envious of the considerable time he must have spent on the hills but he missed out on a lot of the other good things of life.

The Last Hero. Bill Tilman.
A Biography of the Explorer.

Tim Madge
Hodder & Stoughton, 1995,
pp. 288, £18.99

What do you think of a man who, after falling off Dow Crag, finding himself the only member of the party able to move, crawls down to Coniston to get help? His action saved the life of one of his two

companions and he had to be physically restrained from going back with the rescue team.

You might think he was a bit of a hero, you might also wonder how all three climbers managed to fall off. Did none of them have an adequate anchor? Fair dos, Tilman wasn't leading, but a mountaineer of his experience ought to have been tied on.

This seems to have been the pattern of a lot of Bill Tilman's life. Tough, careless of danger, and sometimes careless in his approach to hazardous enterprises, for example getting 'Mischief out of Las Palmas harbour (p.212).

Mr. Madge tells a good story about this man who was born in 1898 and left school to join up for the Kaiser's war. After the war, having been wounded and decorated, he went to East Africa to grow coffee. It was here that the successful partnership with Eric Shipton was started. They climbed Kilimanjaro, Mount Kenya and the Mountains of the Moon. When Shipton decided that the 1933 Everest expedition had been too cumbersome he and Tilman set up a series of lightweight trips which achieved among other things the first penetration of the Nanda Devi Sanctuary. Tilman took part in the first ascent of the mountain a year later.

World War II found Tilman in khaki again. After active service in Iraq and Africa he found his metier leading guenilla operations behind enemy lines in Albania and Italy.

Mr. Tilman senior's death before the war had left Bill with a private income so he was able to resume his mountain explorations without the worry of having to earn a living. His books must have helped of course, I think "Two Mountains and a River" describing his 1947 adventures

is one of his best. Even the preface is a little gem.

In his mid fifties Bill found he could no longer perform at high altitudes so he took up sailing. He bought an old Bristol pilot cutter, christened her 'Mischief', and embarked on a twenty year career of sailing round such places as Greenland, Spitzbergen and the Antarctic. As he got well into his seventies he experienced increasing difficulty handling his crews.

By this time there was more than one generation gap between this first war veteran and the sort of footloose young men who would be at liberty to take six months off to go sailing. The footloose young men of the seventies were not inclined to kowtow to this silly old buffer who kept making a mess of things and thought he was doing them a big favour.

In fact, of course, they were doing him a favour because the boats he used needed a crew of four or five. One wonders why he didn't get a good one man craft and do a Chay Blyth.

Mr. Madge writes well and has had a lot of help from Bill's niece, Pam Davis. He has done a good job in putting all the information together though I found his layout by activity rather than chronology a bit confusing.

I get the impression, nevertheless, of a certain lack of 'empathy?' between biographer and subject. Mr. Madge is at pains to point out that Bill's 'sense of deference' to members of the Royal Family for instance was not 'odd'. Tim, everybody except the bolshies had it in the 30s and 40s too. It is still there now in a perverted way otherwise the antics of some of its younger members wouldn't sell so many papers.

Another sign of those times is that people didn't use first names outside family. It is sometimes remarked on that the two boon companions Shipton and Tilman addressed each other as just that. The story goes that when Shipton asked Tilman to call him 'Eric' Tilman's reply was 'It's such a silly name'.

I don't buy this. Firstly because Bill was too much of a gentleman to poke fun at a friend's name and secondly because I am convinced that to Bill the use of first names belonged to the nursery, 'Play nicely with Eric, Billy'. I suggest that what Bill meant to convey, whatever he said was 'It's such a silly childish habit'.

But read this book. It will tell you a lot about the man that is worth knowing. High jinks in Africa, groping for bullets on the tent floor to shoot a buffalo at dead of night. By the time they found them the buffalo had gone.

Thoughts on the war, Bill went and fought, of course, but he had this to say about some of those who stayed behind, 'I dislike those people who go to the country (to escape the bombing) and stay there; it will not do the monied people any good after the war.' He knew what he was on about there, Clement Attlee and Co. saw to that.

Every reviewer must find a hole to pick, even a minor one. An author with Mr. Madge's impressive list of qualifications, yachtmaster, pilot, climber etc., ought to know that Stornoway is not in the Shetlands. It was on Lewis in the outer Hebrides last time I was there.

On a more important issue I do not agree that HW.T. was the last hero'. He did well in two wars; so did millions of others. He climbed and explored; so would have hundreds of

others if they hadn't had to earn a living. In fact when Bill was starting his sailing working class mountaineers such as Don Whillans were taking up mountain exploration where Bill had left off.

No, Bill Tilman would never have described himself as any kind of hero. If you don't believe this read his own books as well as this one.

The Scottish Mountaineering Club Journal 1995.

Volume XXXV, No. 186.

There is something for everybody in the 225 pages of the S.M.C. Journal. We have reports of accidents, new routes, club activities and of course obituaries. On the lighter side there is a new Sherlock Holmes adventure (how many of you knew that Norman Collie was Sherlock Holmes' cousin?), and a funny about the Mad Monk of Dundonnell. The Letterewe Accord is reported fully and might yet show the way forward in reconciling the interests of various land users.

The ten colour photographs are all first class and represent mountaineering all over the world.

This is the first S.M.C. Journal I have studied in detail and I am impressed by the way clubs and mountaineering have been organised in Scotland. We all know the S.M.C. was founded just before the Y.R.C., but the Junior Mountaineering Club of Scotland was formed in 1925 specifically to accept and train novices, and retains a sort of filial relationship with S.M.C., in that its activities are reported in this journal, now in the Club Library for your enjoyment.

A special issue of the 'The Bulletin' of the South African Spelaeological Association, number 34, 1994, pp136 is to be placed at Lowstern. The issue is given over to a comprehensive study of the Management Problems at Cango Caves

Lakeland Rocky Rambles.
Geology beneath your feet.

Bryan Lyan,
Sigma Leisure, pp. 282, £9.95.

Until I got this book I thought I knew something about geology. It is truly said, however, that humility is the beginning of wisdom and after doing the first one of the 'rocky rambles', Haystacks, with the book in hand I am certainly humble. Juliet and I chose a clear March day to do the walk which goes through Warnscale Bottom taking in the waterfalls of Warnscale Beck to Dubs Quarry. Here we lunched and completed the walk by Little Round How, Blackbeck Tarn and Haystacks, to Scarth Gap. The book takes twenty-two pages including drawings to describe the walk and the things you can see and is a mine of information. We had it cushy, we didn't have to worry about the botany (Mr. Lynas is not narrow minded) because it was winter. Nevertheless by the time we got to Little Round Row with clag coming in the the West in the middle of a winter afternoon we felt it best to close the book and finish the walk. We will certainly have to go again to see the things we missed.

There are ten rambles described including Coniston Fells, Langdale Pikes, Helvellyn and Blencathra. Appendices include a glossary and a timescale. I wish I had had this book fifty years ago and I will certainly not go back to Lakeland without it. The style is racy and amusing, it is a good armchair read as well.

If you are the least bit interested in how the hills we love were formed get this book it is well wOrth the modest price of £9.95.

The Relationship between Edmund Bogg, The Leeds Savage Club and the YRC

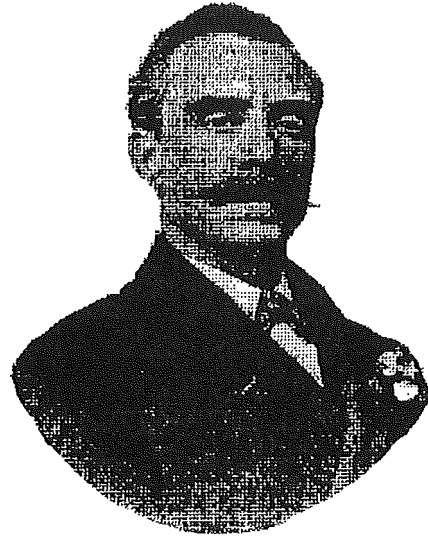
S.A. Craven

The late Edmund Bogg was a popular and prolific writer a century ago. With his artist and other friends he tramped all over the northern Pennines gathering material for his well-illustrated books. His first book, *"A Thousand Miles in Wharfedale"* was published in hardback by subscription in 1892. Subsequent books were financed by advertisements. As the years passed, his standards fell. By the 1920s he had re-worked much of his material, and re-published using poorer quality paper and paperback binding. No doubt these later, cheaper, editions brought the countryside to a less affluent and increasingly mobile working class population.

This paper records and comments on Bogg's connection with the Yorkshire Ramblers' Club. It is not intended to be a critical appreciation of Bogg's literary talent. Suffice it to say that he was a romantic writer. His contemporary topographer and local historian, Harry Speight, is considered to be a more reliable authority.

Bogg supplemented his literary earnings by running a wholesale and retail business supplying artists' materials at 3 Woodhouse Lane and Guildford Street, Leeds. By the 1920s he had moved to 3 Wade Street, Leeds. For many years he rented the Manor House at Castley which he used as a holiday homel.

Bogg gathered around him at his Castley home and on his field trips a group of artists, journalists, writers, musicians and craftsmen from which he formed the Leeds Savage Club².



Frontispiece from "From Edensvale to the Plains of York"

In those halcyon days before television and radio people had to entertain themselves. The Leeds Savage Club, modelled on the earlier club of the same name in London, enabled the members to do just that. Inter alia they accompanied Bogg on his lengthy tours of the countryside, and several contributed drawings and photographs to illustrate his books.

Bogg has the dubious distinction of being involved in the first cave accident in the Yorkshire Dales. On 12 September 1891 he organised a concert for about forty friends in Dow Cave near Kettlewell. Owen Bowen and Albert Haselgrave left the main party with only one candle between them. When the light failed, Haselgrave fell about 5 m. into the stream, injuring his face. This story appeared in the local newspaper¹, and was repeated by Bogg at least four times². A somewhat less sensational account was written by an eye-witness 76 years later¹.

This early incident may have caused Bogg to reconsider his attitude to caves which, unlike the works of Harry Speight, rarely feature in his books. Four of his collaborators, George T. Lowe, Percy Robinson, Fred Leach and

Frank Dean, subsequently joined the YRC which had been founded in 1892. It is not clear whether Lewis Moore (elected 1892) joined the YRC before or after his association with Bogg. There is no record of Bogg's financial arrangements with the YRC members. Owen Bowen received £2 per week plus expenses for his artistic work, so it is not unreasonable to assume that the YRC members were also remunerated.

In his first book, *A Thousand Miles in Wharfedale*, Bogg dismissed Stump Cross Caves in five lines⁷. Nevertheless, George Lowe obliged with ten lines in the appendix to that book⁸. Twelve years and a thousand miles later Stump Cross had been dismissed in one line!"

The timing of George Lowe's first contribution is significant. He visited Stump Cross Caves during an Easter before October 1892 i.e. well before the YRC was formally constituted on 6 October 1892. At that inaugural meeting Lowe was elected President.

Lowe, writing under the banner of the YRC, contributed a chapter on Upper Nidderdale to Bogg's undated *Edenvale to the Plains of York*¹⁰. Inter alia he took the readers to Tom Taylor's Cave, Eglin's Hole, Goyden Pot and Manchester Hole. For many years this was the best available description of the Nidderdale caves. Of the paperbacks, Lowe is acknowledged for his assistance with *Wensleydale and the Lower Vale of Yore*, but there is no indication of the full extent of his contribution¹¹. He also provided seven illustrations for Bogg's *The Old Kingdom of Elmet*¹², two for *Lower Wharfedale*¹³, and five for *Higher Wharfedale*,¹⁴

Bogg's biggest book was his *2000 Miles in the Border Country, Lakeland and Ribblesdale*. This tome went out of print in less than a year (1898: 1200 copies), and was immediately re-published in two parts - *A Thousand Miles ... in the Border Country* and *A Thousand Miles ... Lakeland and Ribblesdale*. The identical pagination indicates that re-publication was intended at the typesetting stage. George Lowe contributed a chapter about the Northern Cheviots (illustrated by Fred Leach)¹⁵, while Lowe and Lewis Moore wrote about the Roman Wall¹⁶ and Climbs in Lakeland (also illustrated by Fred Leach before he joined the YRC)¹⁷.

Messrs. Lowe and Moore were not the only YRC members who were involved with Bogg's publishing efforts. Percy Robinson supplied many illustrations for *Richmondshire-s*, *Two Thousand Miles in Wharfedale*¹⁹, *Edenvale to the Plains of York*²⁰, *The Border Country-*, *Lakeland and Ribblesdale--*, *A Thousand Miles in Wharfedale-i*, *Higher Wharfedale-*, *Lower Wharfedale*²¹, *The Old Kingdom of Elmet*²⁶, *Wensleydale and the Lower Vale of Yore-*, and *Picturesque Fell Land*²⁸. Robinson was a late arrival at the YRC from the Bogg fraternity, being elected in 1906. This search of the Bogg books revealed that Frank Dean (elected 1892, resigned 1895²⁹) was another major illustrator.

The relationship between the members of the YRC and Edmund Bogg was to a certain extent symbiotic. Although the YRC was founded in 1892, it did not publish its Journal until 1899. In return for the contributions to his books, Bogg provided a medium for the

publication of some early meet reports! and cave explorations, be they original or repeat. Thus in Bogg's books can be found accounts of early YRC meets at Dow Cave¹, Gaping Gill and Rowten Pot (illustrated by Samuel Cuttriss-J, and Hell Hole³². As soon as the YRC Journal commenced publication, the members' contributions to Bogg's books declined. Despite this unofficial association of Bogg with the YRC, only four of his books were mentioned in the YRC Journal, and none was reviewed.

Acknowledgement

I am grateful to Don Mellor of Farnhill who drew my attention to Edmund Bogg's association with the Leeds Savage Club. The Club is mentioned in Bogg's books.

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 - 5 Bogg E. (1904) "Higher Wharfedale - The Dale of Romance" pp. 322 - 323 (Leeds: James Miles).
 - 6 Bogg E. (1904) "Picturesque Fell Land" p. 66 (Manchester: John Heywood).
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 - 8 Bowen O. (1967) "Owen Bowen: The Artist as a Young Man" *Dalesman* 29.465.
 - 9 Bogg E. (1892) "A Thousand Miles in Wharfedale" p. 173 (London: Simpkin, Marshall, Hamilton, Kent & Co.).
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 - 12 Lowe G.T. (n.d.; post-1892 & pre-1898) "A Rambler's Reminiscences of Upper Nidderdale" pp. 185 - 191 in Bogg E. "From Edenvale to the Plains

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- of York" (Leeds: Edmund Bogg). * Noted in 1. YRC. (1922) 5. (15),69.
 - 13 Bogg E. (n.d. pre-1899) "Wensleydale and the Lower Vale of the Yore, from Ouseburn to Lunds Fell" (Leeds: Edmund Bogg). * Noted in J. YRC. (1899) 1. (1), 90.
 - 14 Bogg E. (1904) "The Old Kingdom of Elmet" pp. 15, 17, 19,46,74,164 & 222 (York: JOM Sampson).* Noted in J. YRC. (1903) 2. (5), 95.
 - 15 Bogg E. (1904) "Lower Wharfedale: The Old City of York and the Ainsty" pp. 135 & 162 (York: John Sampson).
 - 16 Bogg E. (1904) "Higher Wharfedale: The Dale of Romance" pp. 10,36,179,204 & 218.
 - 17 Lowe G.T. (1898) "The Northern Cheviots from Berwick to Otterburn" pp. 153 - 166 in Bogg E. "Two Thousand Miles of Wandering in the Border Country, Lakeland and Ribblesdale" (Leeds: Edmund Bogg)* Noted in 1. YRC. (1922) 5. (15), 69 reprinted (1898) pp. 153 - 166 in Bogg E. (1898) "A Thousand Miles of Wandering in the Border Country" (Newcastle: Mawson, Swan & Morgan).
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 - 19 Lowe G.T. (1896) "Climbs in Lakeland" pp. 161 - 169 in Bogg E. (1898) "Two Thousand Miles of Wandering in the Border Country, Lakeland and Ribblesdale" (Leeds: Edmund Bogg) reprinted (1896) pp. 161 - 169 in Bogg E. (1898) "A Thousand Miles of Wandering along the Roman Wall, the Old Border Region, Lakeland, and Ribblesdale" (Leeds: Edmund Bogg).
 - 20 Bogg E. (1908) "Richmondshire" pp. 13, 19, 23,282,290,488,552, 566, 568 & 590 (Leeds: James Miles).
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 - 24 Bogg E. (1898) "Two Thousand Miles of Wandering in the Border Country, Lakeland and Ribblesdale" pp. 9,26,40,46,47,53 & 90 (Leeds: Edmund Bogg) reprinted (1898) "A Thousand

Edmund Bogg) reprinted (1898) "A Thousand Miles of Wandering along the Roman Wall, the Old Border Region, Lakeland, and Ribblesdale" pp. 9,26,40,46,47, 53 & 90 (Leeds: Edmund Bogg).

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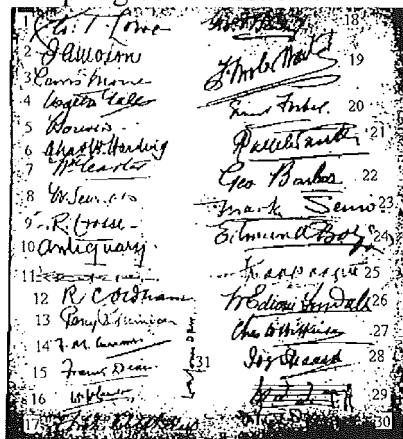
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31 Moore L. (1898) "High Ribblesdale" pp. 231 - 243 in Bogg E. (1898) "Two Thousand Miles of Wandering in the Border Country, Lakeland and Ribblesdale" (Leeds: Edmund Bogg) reprinted (1898) pp. 231- 243 in Bogg E. (1898) "A Thousand Miles of Wandering along the Roman Wall, the Old Border Region, Lakeland, and Ribblesdale" (Leeds: Edmund Bogg).

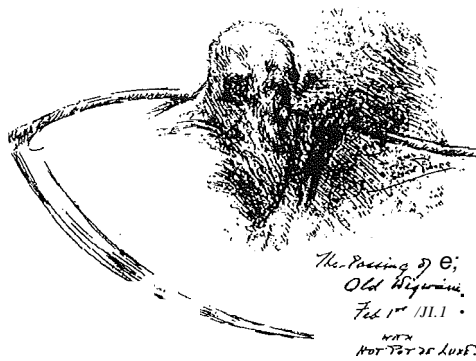
32 Bogg E. (1904) "Two Thousand Miles in Wharfedale" pp. 492 - 493 (London: John Heywood).

In an attempt to decipher the signatures on the card (The Yorkshire Rambler Issue 3, page38) which prompted this discussion of the Savages, David Smith has added his efforts to those of Jeff Hooper given in Issue 4.



The result is this, still incomplete, list.

1. George T Lowe,1892-1942, a founder member.
2. J A Moxon
3. Lewis Moore, a great member 1892-1933
4. Walter Yale
5. Joseph Towers, 1892-1893
6. Charles W Harding
7. William Carter, not a member.
8. W. Scuriato, not a member.
9. ER Cross
10. Antiquary
11. Jester
12. R C Oldham
13. Percy Robinson, 1906-1948, 'inventor' of communal catering in the Club.
14. F.M. Cunan(s) , not a member. Though there was a S.W. Cuttriss in 1894,
15. Frank Dean
16. William H Lamb, there was a Percy H. Lamb in 1894.
17. Frank Atthaise/ss, not a member.
18. George I Barley, not a member.
19. F. Miles Waite suggests F.D.S
20. Ernest Forbes
21. R? Smith, there was a Ralph Smith 1892-1904
22. George Barber
23. Mark Senior
24. Edmund Bogg
25. Still unknown
26. W. Edwin Tindale
27. Charles W Wilkinson
28. Joseph? Sheard
29. Alexander Cambell, 1903-48 also pianist at the 1903 Annual Dinner.
30. J Fred Symonds?
31. William Jones, not a member.



Obituaries

Geoffrey Booth Bates

Geoffrey, who has died ages 93, was born into a West Riding family engaged in quality worsted yarn spinning at East Ardsley. He was educated at Mill Hill school and eventually joined the family business. Partly as a result of his travels to Scandinavia on mill business he became proficient in eight languages.

He was interested in the countryside and its pursuits and when he joined the Club in 1960 he was able to share his interests with men of similar outlook and sympathies. Geoffrey was a good shot and a keen fly fisherman. He was an extremely good goer on the hill and seemingly indestructible in any kind of weather. Intimately acquainted with North West Scotland as a result of many family visits and Whit meets he had climbed all the mountains and hills of any note in Coigach, Assynt-Coigach and North West Sutherland and fished innumerable hill lochs and lochans. He also knew the Yorkshire Dales and North West Yorkshire in some detail and had made use of the Dales Rail service for many linear walks in those areas.

After leaving the mill in the early 60's Geoffrey had more time for his interests and was very active in keeping his land in good order in the Lake District and the Goole area where he planted many trees. He was a JP in the Dewsbury area and a member of the Bradford Straddlebugs and the Bumsall Angling Club.

Geoffrey, a most kind, very private man; a delightful companion on a hill and a staunch friend, was devoted to his family. He married Mary Holroyd, who predeceased him. They had three daughters.

S.M.

Alton Hartley

Member 1972 - 1996

We must sadly record the death on 16th March of Alton Hartley, aged 84.



With his retirement in sight, Alton came late to the Yorkshire Ramblers yet with his quiet self-effacing manner he quickly established a permanent place in the affections of those many who were lucky enough to know him. His life-time love of the hills found its expression not in hard routes or gruelling Munro bagging but in a deep, almost spiritual awareness of all that could be seen, felt and sensed. Some will remember an especially vivid meet report but it was in his poetry and articles, which were published from time to time, that he grasped and recorded the real significance of his experiences.

He preached in Methodist Chapels in the thirties and served in the Royal Corps of Signals during the last war, surviving the notorious Burma Campaign from start to finish. After the war he worked, until retirement, in the Public Health Service.

In 1988 he suffered a stroke which left him with impaired speech and mobility but he continued to show a keen interest in all YRC activities, and contributed handsomely to valuable fixtures and fittings at Lowstem.

It is typical of this gentle and kindest of men that he should leave his body for research with no formal memorial services to mark his passing. His wife, Kitty, who nursed him so diligently throughout eight difficult years is naturally honouring all his wishes.

A. C. B.

LETTERS

Ilkley
October 1995

Dear Editor,

I have read, with great interest, the article 'Gaping Gill and the Mysterious Miss Booth June 1906'

I knew Miss Mary Booth quite well. Her father, Harry Blamires Booth, was a Bradford Wool Merchant who came from Ryhill, south-east of Wakefield and called his house in Ben Rhydding 'Ryhill'.

Mary Booth, whilst somewhat eccentric, travelled the world and her house, which I visited, was stacked with papers, books and mementoes of her travels including Cambodia. She was about my age and could not possibly have made a descent of Gaping Gill in 1906, more than two years before I was bom!

I am sure, therefore, that she can be eliminated from the enquiry.

Who was Mrs Boyes?

With kind regards,

Sincerely



Arnold N. Patchett

Dear Editor,

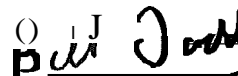
May I crave the hospitality of your columns to comment on John Barton's letter.

There used to be a 'Yorkshire Cfunbers Mountaineering Club'. Some of its members are now in the YRC, others joined YMC when it changed its title from 'Junior Mountaineering Club of Yorkshire'. So why not call ourselves 'The Yorkshire Ramblers Mountaineering Club'? We would still be the "Yorkshire Ramblers" but whenever the club's name had to be written or cited at length our mountaineering aspect would be quite clearly conveyed. I feel for our cavers but to include caving or pot-holing in our name would in my submission make it too unwieldy. After all Craven Pothole Club mountaineers and Gritstone Club does, or did, explore caves and you don't find many potholes in gritstone.

Of course, it might upset the YMC if we adopted my suggestion and here I had better come clean and admit that what I would really like to see, and not just because it would save me a subscription, is a merger. This would solve our name problem and mightily alleviate our demographic problem at a stroke. Unfortunately I can see two massive objections. First, it would be difficult to persuade the YMC to take on a club with so few assets. Second, it would mean bringing women into the new merged club, though it doesn't seem to have done the Alpine Club any harm.

On the subject of ladies, I understand that the voting at the Special meeting was 60-40 against their admission. Would it not be equitable therefore to have 40% of the meets open?

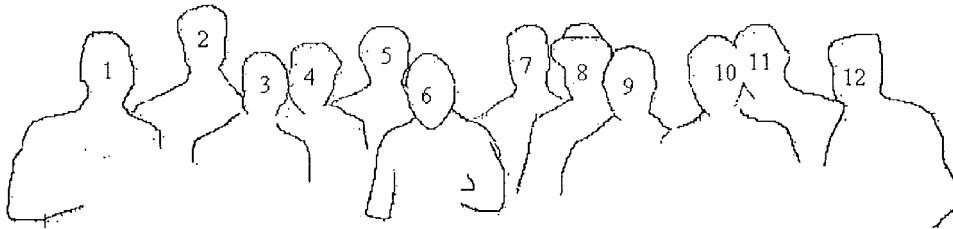
Yours sincerely,
Bill Todd.



Chippings



Irish Potholing Meet, Whitsuntide 1949



This photograph was taken by John Barton at Florence Court near Enniskillen shortly before everyone departed on the last day.

John identifies the following:

- 1 C.E. Burrow the then President
- 2 P.W. Burton
- 3 Tyas Craven Pothole Club
- 4 I.T.H Godley
- 5 C. Chubb
- 6 Mr Barbour of Florence COUlt
- 7 Stanley Marsden
- 8 E.E. Roberts

- 9 Goodwin
- 10 Sam Bryant the lony driver
- 11 I.E. Cullingworth
- 12 H Annstrong

Missing from the picture are thought to be W. Booth and HG. Watts.

For the story of the meet see Ulster: The Seventh Time by E.E. Roberts in the 1952 Jounal, Vo1.VII, N° 26. The account of tills busy meet refers to the experimental use of 100ft (30m) nylon ropes.

A plea from today's group of Club cavers who are exploring new areas underground, Jed Campion and Graham Salmon. They require scaffolding, clips, swivels, right-angles and the like. Any lengths, any condition, any quantity. They will collect it. All you have to do is contact them.

Also, for the purpose of pulling small loads, not seeming people, they are offering to help you out by taking old ropes off your hands and putting them to good use. Any old ropes will do hawsner-laid or kemmantle.

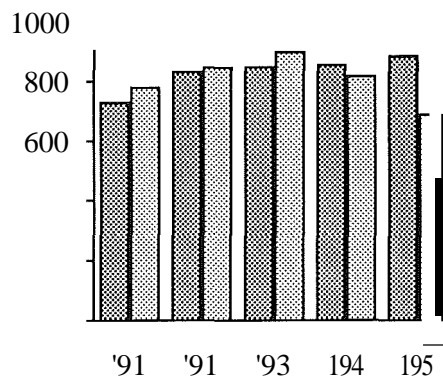
Arnold Patchett was at the centenary celebrations at Gaping Gill. He attended, dressed as a gamekeeper, as a guest of Dr John Farrer and was filmed by Sid Perou. Later he made a three week trip along the full length of Chile and to Easter Island.

Members are undoubtedly aware of the hazards of mountaineering. What, though, of the dangers inherent in not going climbing in the great mountain ranges but staying at home instead. Rory Newman, while on the Club expedition in Nepal, had his car mangled into a twisted heap of metal by an out-of-control lorry. The lorry, carrying twenty tonnes of plate glass, reached the bottom of Blue Bank, Staithes, turned on its side, and careered into a car park. Thankfully no-one was injured. Stick to the mountains: it's safer.

Repotted at the 1995 AGM from the BMC by our representative, Bill Todd, were the restoration of Rylstone Cross and news that the traditional parking spot for the Ben, by the Golf Club, is not longer available.

Our Huts Secretary, David Martindale, presented to the meeting figures for the last five year's use of our

huts as measured by bed nights.



The Guinness Book of Records has contacted Will Lacy for details of his trips to the poles, the North when aged 82 and the South at 84. As the oldest person to achieve this his feat will be recorded in the next edition.

Maurice Wilson has presented to the Library his copy of "The Complete Mountaineer" by George D. Abraham. Inside the front cover of the book is a letter from George Abraham to Maurice dated 31st August 1954 making arrangements for a visit to see him which was one of many that Maurice made. Also inside the front cover is a very interesting note stating that "This is to certify that this copy of "The Complete Mountaineer" was previously in the library of the late Frank S. Smythe." signed THOMAS J GASTON.

Maurice has also given to the Club a further letter from George Abraham dated 26.10.55 and this will go into archives. The letter was written when George was in his 90s and mentions the extremely bad weather conditions in the alps particularly after he had left Zennatt in July.

*Yours sincerely
George D. Abraham*

This letter will join the others from famous mountaineers now lodged with the West Yorkshire Archive Services in Leeds, reports Ray Barben.

YRC 'Alpine' meet Picos de Europa July - August 1995

Compiled by John Devenport

The venue

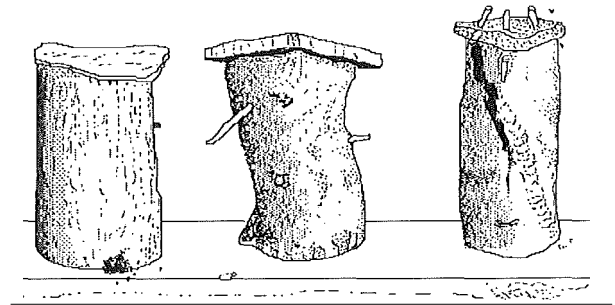
The meet was based about 2km from Potes, about 80 miles from Santander on the east side of the Picos de Europa. The Picos are perhaps the finest and most compact set of ridges, pinnacles and gorges of hard carboniferous limestone in Western Europe and form the highest part of the Cantabrian mountain range in northern Spain. The Picos are split into three distinct massifs by deep gorges running north to south. Potes was an excellent base for access to the Central and eastern massifs and the Cordillera Cantabrica to the south. It is a region of Karst topography, underground rivers, resurgences, deep caves, gorges, steep valleys, sharp peaks and long steep rock faces. The higher mountains reaching up to about 8,700 feet are quite different to most other ranges visited by members of the club, being almost totally void of water, quite a problem in the extremely high temperatures that were experienced during our stay.

The lower pastures and alps above the gorges offered lush vegetation with abundant fauna and flora. Probably the highlight of the trip was the particularly varied bird life, with many species not found in the U.K., most notably the birds of prey and especially the Griffon Vultures that were a memorable companions on many days in the high mountains.

The very steep sided valleys meant that reaching the higher levels involved a considerable slog, or use of the comparatively cheap telepherique

from Fuente De, at the end of the Liebana valley. However, long queues were sometimes experienced for the descent to the valley at the end of the day.

Potes was a bustling, attractive old town, with plenty of character and characters. The Monday morning market was well worth a visit, where the usual range of market fare could be purchased, plus pigs, sheep, chickens and a wide range of other livestock. Shops and supermarkets provided a very cheap source of provisions and local produce. The local specialities included cider, a wide range of cheeses and chorizo sausage.



Old hollowed tree-trunk beehives in use in a village above Potes

The campsite

Our base was on the well appointed campsite 'Las Isla Picos de Europa' in Turieno, about 2km west of Potes, in Cantabria. (Tel: (942) 73 08 96). The staff made us feel most welcome during our stay, and many of us took advantage of the cooling pleasures of the swimming pool during the oppressive heat in the afternoons. Thanks must go to Alan Linford for finding us such a good base.

The climate

For much of our stay, the weather was generally fine, clear and very, very hot, which meant that copious supplies of liquid needed carrying on a trips into the waterless landscape of

the high mountains. Being so close to the Atlantic northern coast of Spain, the area was subject to mountain mists and summer storms.

Maps and guide books

The most useful guide book to the area was 'Walks and climbs in the Picos de Europa' by Robin Walker and published by Cicerone Press (£10.95).

Maps were somewhat more problematic, with many inaccuracies and deficiencies noted. However, probably the most useful were the following two maps:

1:25,000 Los Unielles Y Andara (Macizos Central Y Oriental de Los Picos de Europa)

1:75,000 Picos de Europa - Mapa Excursionista (Miguel A Adrados)

Getting there

Apart from a long drive through France, most members travelled to northern Spain, either by Brittany Ferries from Portsmouth to Santander, or by P&O Ferries from Portsmouth to Bilbao. The most convenient was undoubtedly the latter, which was only a couple of hours drive through spectacular gorge scenery to Potes.

The attendees

Ken Aldred	John Medley
Steve Beresford	Alistair Renton
Christine Beresford	David Smith
Ken Bratt	Elsbeth Smith
Alan Brown	Michael Smith
CliffCobb	Helen Smith
John Devenport	Richard Smith
Iain Gilmore	Fiona Smith
Sarah Gilmore	Derek Smithson
Mike Godden	Bill Todd
Marcia Godden	Juliet White
Alan Linford	Martyn Wakeman
Angie Linford	

The Picos by bike by Martyn Wakeman

Watching the snow falling outside of my window, it seems strange to think that last August we were in the middle of a heat wave. Then to go cycling somewhere even hotter seemed to indicate the onset of cerebral dementia or something a mite more interesting than a week in Skegness!

I had a problem. How exactly was I to transport myself and a mere 'sprinkling' of gear to Potes, somewhere in Northern Spain. All cars seemed full and not fancying a battle with Spanish public transport, I decided to saddle up my bike and find an excuse for an extension to the holiday. This proved to be a smart move, as 'The Picos by bike' proved to be one of the most varied and interesting parts of my summer. After a few frantic phone calls and a gear dump somewhere in Yorkshire, my gear was on its way in David Smith's caravan, and I could hop on the ferry to Santander with my mountain bike loaded up with four days worth of delightful Soya mince and noodles together with lightweight bivvi/camping gear.

Rather than extensive planning, I mused over a contourless Michelin map of Northern Spain and plotted a pleasant looking route around the coast and through the mountains to Potes. I would cycle as far each day as I fancied and bivvi wherever looked suitable, to arrive just as the main YRC party descended on the campsite.

Cycling in Spain proved to be both a delight and a new experience. I stormed off the ferry and visited Cabo Mayor lighthouse for a view of the harbour before winding my way along the coast road to Santillana del Mar, a

traditional 'National Trust' style Spanish village, full of nick knock shops and very photogenic. Continuing on to San Vicente de la Barquera for an afternoon nap, I had a fairly easy day finishing at a secluded campsite at Pechon overlooking a sea bay. This was gained by a steep winding road, which exercised low gears for the first time.

The local Spanish holidaymakers seemed impressed by my Goretex bivvi bag as I feasted on huge tomatoes, the dreaded Soya and noodles, and luscious nectarines. The evening was spent skimming stones before a well earned kip after the sun had gone for the day.

The next day's target would be Cangas, which looked pretty easy on the map, but this did not show contours! Being a 'green' scenic road, it wound along by a river through a gentle gorge. Worried about dehydration and the weight of canying too much water on the bike, I had gone into camel mode, drinking all I could in the morning, and going for only two bottles on the bike. Just before lunch time as the sun blazed down, I was low on water, and needing a rest when a hill, or rather a pass, which did not register on the map. I thought I would combust, it was so hot! The exchange of pesetas for water and nectarines in a shop like someone's living room at the top was very welcome, as was the fantastic free wheel down nearly all the way to Changes.

Some mountain biking up a rough stony track lead me to my tourist stop for the day, the Cueva del Buxu. These are supposed to be caves with wall paintings, but the exterior ones revealed nothing and the rest were held off by a locked door. With only the local flies for company, the main

peaks of the Picos could be seen shimmering in the distance, inspiring me to read more of the guide book and plan strategic bags for the two weeks ahead.

The process to cool down at the campsite consisted of a cold shower and a rinse of my sweaty rags before drying in the sun. The campsite was noisy, with lights on all night, and it even had the cheek to rain! An early start to gain miles in the morning cool before the sun became too hot became a wise move as today was the 40 mile climb into the mountains, from sea level passing over several cols to a high point of 1450m. A day to remember, a road winding around a river into a steepening gorge, eventually with walls of rock each side and peaks soaring above, beckoning to be climbed. The road was rough, pock marked with holes from rock missiles, and as the sun bumed down in full anger, the tar melted with 'Panaracer Smoke' tyre marks visible in the worst patches. Lunch was a two hour feast of goats cheese, a whole fresh loaf, two litres of water and more nectarines in a strategically placed rural Spanish village.

Ever onwards, ever upwards was the motto for the day but the heat was incredible, with sweat pouring off and rests in the woods by the road necessary to cool down once every hour. At last, the summit, or rather the first col, was gained followed a few more uphill bits before a tyre humming kamikaze dive down the other side, losing height very quickly, braking very hard at comers to avoid meeting my maker earlier than desired.

A lovely campsite with just some basic loos and the mandatory cold shower was found a few kilometres before Posada de Valdon. This was in a field surrounded by a tiny village out of a

time warp, tumbling houses with no glass in the windows, women dressed in black, carts full of hay, with a backdrop of the harsh rock peaks of the Picos.

Next day, I could either ascend two more giant passes and come into Potes from the south, or try a Land Rover track which I had spotted on a large scale map. This track was said to be uncyclable, so with all the more reason to give it a bash I set off. The first pass was gained via a narrow and steep road out of Posada de Valdon which gave way to a modern road which led to the top. Engaging first gear I spurred my wheel off the road and onto the track, which would save road miles and prove greatly more interesting. The track did prove great fun, a monster slog, but I eventually arrived at the top at 1800m, with an awesome view of the massif and the valley down towards Potes.

The descent down the other side proved one of the best of my life, 800m height loss down rough Land Rover tracks (the latter one later ascended by the Nissan 4 x 4 tourist party) twisting and turning over the hard dry track, dodging boulders and pot holes. Stops had to be made due to the temperature of the rims decomposing the brake blocks, and even with oil/air front suspension, the descent was eyeball wobbling as I hammered down to the cable car at Fuente De before chasing a coach down to the campsite.

An amazing start to the holiday, a real adventure for me being in a foreign land and not speaking a word of the lingo and totally reliant on my bike not falling to pieces. Just feeling free to cycle where I fancied amidst glorious surroundings, sleeping under the stars and soaking in the real Spanish culture.

Ascent of Pico Tesorero (2570m)

by Iain Gilmour

When Alan and Angie Linford suggested a look at a nice hill somewhere over on the left, two willing members, John Devenport and Iain Gilmour, joined the party. One hesitates to detail the first part of the trip, for from our campsite at 1,100 ft. we motored to Fuente De at 3,600 ft. and then took the cable car to 6,017 ft. Our cable car rose through cloud into brilliant sunshine and cool air, and the views over a cloud sea were reminiscent of flying.

The landscape around us was a vast arena of limestone peaks with jagged outlines like Sgurr nan Gillean, but of a warm golden colour. Between the peaks lay hollow depressions, called hoyos, with a strange almost lunar appearance. There is almost no vegetation, due to the altitude and over grazing by the few sheep and native rebecos (a small deer like animal with thin backward curving horns). The lack of water necessitates carrying two or three litres for a long day.

Some three miles from the cable car station, we reached the Veronica Hut at 7,600 ft. Near this hut, a band of different rock had weathered to expose thousands of fossils including tubular worms (crinoids) which had existed on ancient sea beds.

At this stage Alan casually mentioned that we would be alright, as he had a rope in his rucksack. Could it be that our look at the peak might require climbing gear, rather than spectacles or binoculars? There was no need to be apprehensive, for the South West ridge of Tesorero gave a splendid scramble over warm and dry rock with plenty of holds and no difficulties. Good grimping rock was the verdict.

Tesorero, 8,430 ft., is a splendid viewpoint for the whole of the Central Massif and incidentally, is the junction point of three provinces, Asturias, Cantabria and Castilla-Leon.

Returning by the East ridge and viewing a spectacular rock arch on the skyline, we descended to the col at 7,700 ft. Two of the party made the twenty minute dash up Torre de Horcados Rojos by the walkers path. Our return to the cable car was memorable for the sighting of four Griffon vultures soaring on the afternoon breeze and thermals. Looking at the hills is a splendid pastime.

Pico de Grajal Abajo (2248m)

by David Smith

Midway through the second week of the meet, Iain suggested that we have a day on the hills together, joined by Steve with an objective high above the tiny village of Lon. We had contemplated walking direct from the campsite but after second thoughts we went by car giving us a 520m start. Our tired feet were to be very glad of this by the end of the long day.

Lon straddles the hillside with picturesque old houses joined by steep rough concrete roads. Quite soon the road degenerated into a dusty track leading upwards, first through woodland providing shade from the merciless sun, then across two small newly cut meadows before opening out into a deep valley. A layer of cloud had to be passed through before we emerged back into the sunshine.

The cotton wool cloud totally obscured the valley. The mountain peaks look like islands in a billowing sea, the Cantabrian mountains contrasting sharply with the cloud

layer. Our path followed closely the Rio Buron before opening out into a playa. Much of the vegetation was extremely prickly and no help in the ascent, the rough texture of the rock on the other hand was a great asset.

A little higher the river divided, we followed the course of the Canal de las Arredondas in which flows the Rio de la Vega in wetter times. The rocky canal took us to the deserted zinc and lead mines of Mina de las Arredondas above Le Campa. To gain respite from the sweltering heat we penetrated the workings for 100 yards or so, an arrow pointing the way out marked the junction of two passages. Later we discovered that Derek and Martyn had put it there during their search for water a week earlier.

Refreshed by the cool air we moved carefully up the course of the canal over steep and very sharp rock to the 2193m col. It was a mere 55m below the easily gained summit of the grand sounding named mountain, Pico de Grajal de Abajo. Had there been mist and had we walked 2 metres beyond the magnificent cairn, we would have plunged 2000 feet down the precipitous northern edge of the mountain into the Vega del Hoyo Oscuro. How different the mountain must look from the north facing side?

We enjoyed the views, we took pictures and we rested in the sunshine before our descent to Lon. We had ascended 5,700 feet to make the climb, it was a great day in the mountains, but with good weather, good views, good health and good company, what more could any man want.

Lone mountain climbing may suit some, but for my part let me share the experiences and the pleasures with like minded friends.

The Eastern Massif

by Martyn Wakeman

Having already climbed several peaks in the Western massif I jumped at the chance to accompany Derek Smithson on one of his legendary expeditions. One of the greatest joys of being in the mountains is camping or bivvying up high where the grandeur and solitude of the mountains can really soak in. We therefore accompanied the 'Last of the summer wine' in Alan's Landy to the village of Lon and departed on our way with bivvi gear and enough food for three days, slapping greedy insects off our legs. We walked through the wooded lowlands to emerge onto a lovely grassy prominence, above which the peaks soared and the rest of the route could be seen. This would have made an excellent base camp for attacking this area if supplies could be helicoptered in!

Captivated by the scenery, we took a wrong turn following a stream bed until a huge chockstone blocked our way. The following ascent of a steep grassy bank, which felt near vertical, was hair raising and decidedly dodgy, especially with a big pack, but we soon retraced our steps onto the correct route. A climb through scree led to a lunch stop of bread, goats cheese and jam before continuing up the miners track to the Mina de las Arredondas. People who slogged up here each day deserve respect - they were hard in those days. Here was supposed to be a mine shaft where water could be collected from a drip in the tunnel roof, and we mused on the likelihood of this as we searched for the appropriate mine shaft.

After some exploring, it was time to don Petzels and grovel in the gloom for about 100m before finding a pool

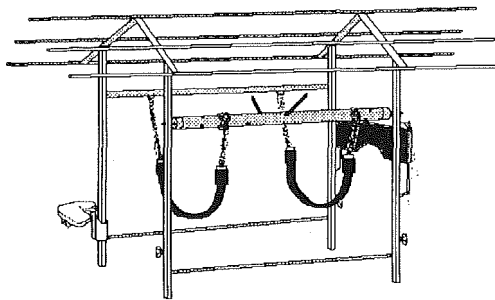
of water from which to fill our bottles. This appeared to feed from melting snow, but was probably laced with whatever metal they used to mine. Cliffs rose above us, and the contrasting green of the valley woodland could be seen providing a grand stance to spend a happy evening. Tails of past mountain trips were exchanged, and the wonder of snow shoes explained before a long leisurely tea finishing with Derek's super luxury lemon crunch pudding. Two slugs appeared as we wriggled into bivvi bags for a splendid night's sleep, escaping the fug of the valley. When we awoke, low cloud swirled around, but after several brews it began to clear. Packs on, we climbed up to the ridge in the cool of the mist before leaving un-needed gear cached for the return. The ring of peaks that form the backbone of the Andora Massif provided an excellent days scrambling, culminating in the Morra de Lechugales (2444m), a towering prow of rock like a ships bow, with views of the western massif and the valley below. Traversing back, we discovered why the 'La Rasa de la Inagotable' had that particular name. Traversing around its rocky terraces, we avoided scaling its cliffs which would make an excellent day in their own right.

After regaining our sacs, we climbed La Junciana and Pico del Sagrado Corazon where the cast statue of St Carlos glimmered in the sun and vultures swooped overhead. An enormous wing feather from one of the birds was found and added to our motley appearance, sticking out of my karrimat.

The descent down scree of Canal de San Carlos revealed numerous pot holes which begged for exploration, but time was pressing and we

continued down the track. This is where the fun really started as the map and ground didn't agree despite determined efforts to make them do so! After a bit of a faf, we basically headed downward by wandering along tracks and paths through the woods towards the valley. Attempts at communicating in Spanish farmers resulted in confusion, but at least their dog didn't eat us. Slowly the tracks merged into bigger ones and we found signs of life in a small village nestling in the woods.

When confronted by a local lady as to our activities, she seemed awe struck that we had visited the St Carlos statue and we extracted ourselves from her presence before we were any later home. A simple walkout back to the campsite then resulted and satisfied explorers could take off their boots, rest their feet, fill their stomachs and tell tales to their companions. Thank you Derek for your company and for an excellent two days!



These contraptions were seen in several of the villages on the hills round Potes. Two villages had older, wooden versions. Each contraption is large enough to restrain a horse, cow or donkey, possibly while veterinary or shoeing work is carried out. The top rails may support a shelter.

Flowers of the Picos de Europa

by Cliff Cobb

High summer is not the best time for alpine flowers, but we were very agreeably surprised at the wealth of flowers encountered, particularly in the higher, completely arid mountain areas.

A typical example; while lunching among the jumble of rocks immediately below the Veronica cabin we saw a beautiful example of campanula thriving in a tiny crevice, its roots no doubt penetrating feet (or metres) into the rock.

A further notable point was the occasional sudden change in geological formation, with a corresponding change in the flora.

Two special memories for me - the wide expanse of the 'merendera' on the edge of the Vega de Liordes valley, and secondly the superb steel blue thistles (*eryngium bourgatii*), lit be the brilliant sun, a colour I believe impossible to capture on **film**.

One disappointment was the absence of any gentians, presumably due to the predominantly calcareous rock, although other members did see trumpet gentians (*g. acaulis*) in one of the surrounding valleys.

List of flowers

Achilles erba-rotta	Simple leaf milfoil
Arabis vochinensis	Compact rockress
Campanula	Various
Crepis	Hawksbeard
Dianthus	Various
Doronicus grandiflorum	Large flowered leopardsbane
Erica	Various
Eryngium bourgatii	Pyrenean eryngo
Geranium	Various
Geum montanum	Alpine avens
Iris latifolia	English iris
Linaria origanifolia	Toadflax

Lithodora oleifolia	Shrubby gromwell
Lithodora purpurocaerula	Blue gromwell
	Now Buglossoides
Lunaris redivivar	Honesty
Merendera montana	
Parnassia palustris	Grass of Parnassus
Pinguicala	No flowers but typical pale yellow/green foliage
Petasites albus	White butter-burr
Potentilla cinerea	Grey cinquefoil
Potentilla fruticosa	Shrubby cinquefoil
Rhodiola rosea	Roseroot
Sepervivus montanum	Mountain houseleek
Silene acaulis	Moss campion
Viola pyrenaica	Pyrenean violet

Although not identified, we almost certainly saw saxifrages and possibly androsaces among the many yellow and white flowers amongst the grass and undergrowth.

Rambling in the Picos

by Alan Brown

It was disconcerting to discover back in March that the Plymouth / Santander ferry was fully booked throughout July and August needing space for caravans or trailers. However, the longer Portsmouth to Bilbao ferry fare included cabin accommodation so this, coupled with the shorter motoring distance for Northerners, made the cost roughly the same. A good motorway between Bilbao and Santander enabled us to reach the Potes campsite in three and a half hours.

Derek wanted to be off on a three day trek as soon as possible, so day one came with a 05.30 reveille. The village of Lon, some ten minutes west of Potes was clearly asleep as four walkers and two backpackers set off up the River Buron heading for the Canal de las Arredondas, Best avoided during very hot weather intoned the guide book, but very hot weather was a prominent feature of this meet, so

gammg height early had a special appeal. It was our first exposure to typical Picos de Europa terrain. Steep-sided 'dolomite-shaped' mountains with jagged ridges, seemingly inaccessible in all but a few places. The steepness of every approach brought the ridges closer so we were constantly aware of the grandeur of our surroundings.

Day one also gave us an early awareness of the profusion of alpine flowers and plants, which in turn, attracted the greatest variety of butterflies most of us had seen, details of which are listed later. The backpackers slowly pulled ahead whilst the rest of the party absorbed the spectacular mountain scenery of the Arredondas, an experience we were to enjoy throughout the next fortnight,

At 1,200 metres, Las Cabanas provided an acceptable turning point for our first day, the nine hour trek coupled with the heat being a good initiation for the days ahead.

The crowded campsite reflected the national holiday period, yet apart from the routes served directly by the cable car, we met very few kindred spirits on the hills. On two occasions we attracted other walkers who mistakenly believed we could be relied on to finish a promising route in an orderly fashion. Aniezo, 10 kilometres east of Potes was the starting point for a steep ascent to the Ermita de Nuestra Sra de la Luz - a hilltop church a couple of hours from the village - where we casually noted a party of five Spaniards and two Swedish walkers. The circular route continued north-west along a good path, which then curved sharply south, disappearing into a steep heavily wooded valley. Whilst reasonably sure of our general direction, the scarcely

discernible path soon disappeared altogether, and it was at this juncture that we discovered the Spaniards and Swedes confidently attached to the rear of our party. The angle of descent called for much hanging on to trees and branches, but the thick undergrowth eventually gave way to open meadows, where recently harvested hay allowed an easier stroll down to the village. Profuse thanks from our continental friends ended another good eight hour day.

The Canal del Embudo is traversed by climbing 950m from the cable car station at Fuente De, via 38 unforgiving hairpins, warned the guide book. The valley below and the vertical south wall of La Padiorna to the north provided breathtaking views, the torture ending with arrival in the Vega de Liordes, a high alpine meadow surrounded on all sides by high mountain ridges. A circular route home over the southern ridges looked altogether too demanding so we headed due north encouraged by a taciturn Scot who knew the area and understood our intentions. Here again we were joined by a middle aged couple, dressed for an easy day in the country, who were dissuaded from the southern route. They were a game couple willing but not used to the scrambling necessary over the Sedo de la Padiorna and the Canal de Santa Luis. Their inadequate water supplies caused further delays but the top of the cable car was reached in time and our guests happily plied us with cool drinks before the drive back to camp.

Whilst many days were spent on the arid limestone area to the north west of Potes, some time was enjoyed in the more varied area to the south and south-west. Here the limestone masses were replaced by shale valleys with large whaleback ribs of limestone

forming higher rock faces above. A number of isolated hamlets and small villages depending upon agriculture were another difference from the barren area above Fuente De. It was two of these villages which we visited, taking the road by tunnels driven through solid rock to bypass some very steep limestone faces. \on a shelf at the head of the valley, the further of the two villages appeared to offer an ideal holiday situation for the artist. A small church, an inn and delightful pantiled houses had an air of restfulness in the mid-afternoon sun. A small group of children played quietly. Perhaps it is uncharitable to suggest that their lack of boisterousness was the result of the high temperature. The variable bedrock supported a wider range of flora than the solid limestone to the north, for the shale provided not only a different chemical base but it also appeared to retain moisture within the rock. This resulted in both calcareous and acid loving plants as well as large trees which were completely absent from the former area. A couple of footpaths winding along the upper reaches of the valley gave us a series of platforms for views of the villages and lonely farm houses, whilst the village inn was a welcome halt before returning to the campsite.

Finally, and with the assistance of a four wheel drive car taking us over spectacular mountain country to the starting point at Cain, we traversed the Cares Gorge - Spain's answer to the Grand Canyon. Much smaller of course, but very impressive, albeit the most popular tourist route in the whole of the Picos de Europa.

This was a fine Alpine Meet, where few actually missed the snow and where exposure to only a small area of Picos de Europa territory wetted the appetite for more.

Butterflies and moths observed in
the Picos by Alan Brown

Apollo	Large Copper
Blues - various *	Large Fritillary *
Brimstone	Marble White
Burnett Moth	Orange
(Six spot)	Underwing
Camberwell	Painted Lady
Beauty	Peacock
Cleopatra	Ringlet
Clouded Yellow	Scarce
Common Heath	Swallowtail
Common Heath	Tiger Moth
Gatekeeper	Tortoiseshell

* There are 44 varieties of Fritillary and 42 varieties of Blue. The author regrets that precise identification cannot be confirmed,

A long day in the Picos

by John Medley

It is traditional for the alpine meets of the YRC to produce at least one mountain sequence sufficiently diverting and eyebrow raising to require individual report. This time it fell to the Old Gentlemen to provide it.

From El Cable, the top of the telerifiqu above Fuente De, it is a pleasant excursion to Pena Vieja summit, whither four of the maturest Members on the meet made their way in the mounting heat of the morning of Saturday 29 July. one goes westerly up the path towards the Cabana Veronica, then hard right up the gully to the Col Canalona and back eastwards along the ridge, then bearing left up the slope to the top of the mountain. It was leisurely and pleasant; lunch on the summit.

Back to the col, where thoughts arose about an alternative route back. Although it was understood that precise information could be extracted

from the maps, it seemed reasonable to consider dropping down to the road through the Aliva area whence back to El Cable in good time for the last cable car at 21.00 hours. Best available advice (in imperfectly understood Spanish) was not to go straight down from the col but to follow on below the ridge a little way in a northerly direction and pick up what traces of tracks there were. This worked quite successfully; there were numerous cairns about, which tended teasingly to discontinue in awkward places but which were eventually connected with a large painted snow-pole in the middle of a heavily cratered area. from there the route seemed to go slightly uphill, then downwards again, following still capricious intermittent cairns and treacherously be-pebbled rock that at one point precipitated a damaging tumble.

Eventually the slopes ran out to an edge, with the valley floor and road in tantalising view less than 100 metres below, but here progress stopped, one member of the party being unprepared to be committed to the only possible route that presented itself. So back to the col, there should still be time to climb up, cross the ridge and catch the last cable car.

The snow pole was regained in reasonable time, but then there was trouble. Indications of paths lead in all directions, but one (uncaimed) was chosen which approached the high ground to the north, perhaps remembering the difficult terrain opposite and the original high level detour from the col. The ridge was eventually gained but a considerable distance from the col, with many obstacles between. It took a long time to come down again and work across, eventually arriving at a little snow slope from which the col was known

to be readily accessible. But it was already nearly dark, with cloud building up in the high valleys below. All hope had gone of making El Cable in time; the aim now was to get down to the Refuge de Aliva and telephone reassurance before anybody noticed a certain empty Landrover.

In vain! The party admired the lights of 'civilisation' just below the mist and stumbled, first into young campers playing games with lanterns on poles, and then into a parked Garda vehicle that had been sent to look for confused old gentlemen reported lost in the mountains. The driver was very kind, but made it clear geriatric escapades should not be exacerbated by attempting to explain in Spanish. Most of the meet seemed to have tumbled up at Fuente De to assist; it was a happy occasion though embarrassing to some and by 0200 hours everybody was in camp and in bed.

Bird watching in the Picos

by Alan Linford

Bird watching in the Picos can seriously damage your determination to achieve the days objective. There is so much to watch that delays are inevitable.

Once again, Alistair's series of mishaps provided a benefit, his early morning arrival having overnighted under a hedge with a broken cycle, delayed a start to climb El Cveimon - a vantage point to obtain an overall perspective of the Central and Eastern Massif. Not a pleasant walk in the heat of the day, but rewarded with gentians on the alp, a first view of a Griffon Vulture and, our return, a close view of a pair of Black Woodpeckers in the holmoak forest.

The walk down to San Aniezo is awful, but again a reward with a very close view of Short Toed Eagle - we did not know what it was at the time and had to consult the guide book to confirm the sighting. This proved to be the start of a bounty of bird life: Linnet, Red Kite, Black Kite, Black Redstart, Com Bunting, Snow Finches, Wheatears, Choughs, Juvenile Robin, Buzzards, Eagles, Rock Thrush, Hobby, Juvenile Kestrel, Tree Creepers and Rock Thrush,

We searched extensively for the Wall Creeper but failed to spot it, a lot of screeching as the Hobby swept across the cliffs but no sighting.

It was the Raptors that held the attention, the Egyptian Vulture and Eagles only students - the master of the air is the Griffon Vulture. In the Cares Gorge we counted twenty - ten circling in a small valley - then approaching closer a sighting at 200 metres of a group of Griffons feeding on a carcass. The carcass had been torn into two with a group on each, fighting between themselves, the group hierarchy clearly visible. It is not only the huge wingspan which attracts the attention but the depth of the wing needed to provide lift for the giant body (and ugly head). On the traverse of the Pena Remona (2,247m) we were above a group of circulating Griffons, again at close quarters. We witnessed the efficiency of this large wing, the control movements of the primary feathers and the air flow over the wing the lifting of the feathers in the depression zone. What a marvel of natural engineering.

Despite trips into woodland areas we leave until our next visit sightings of Capercaillie, Tree Pipits, Owls and Nightjars: all reported in the area.

Peaks and Passes - Two people's adventures in Northern Spain

by Bill Todd and Juliet White

You couldn't move for Yorkshiremen in Spain this summer. Apart from when we visited the camp site and were hospitably entertained, and when we walked with Ian and Sarah we met them in the supermarkets, on the cable car, in the car park and several lots in the Cares Gorge. This was our first days walking after arriving on the meet a week late and will no doubt have been competently covered by other members.

The following day was uneventful; we drove to Fuente De and because there was cloud on top went for a walk up the track to Collado de Pedabejo. Returning from this at lunch time we took advantage of improving weather to go up the Teleferico. We hadn't been there very long when cloud came down again after a tantalising view of the big peaks. I can foresee the embarrassing question at my next slide show, "Did you climb it?". "No", "Why not?". "Bad weather". "It looks alright on that photo". "Yes but it got misty". "A likely tale".

This was Wednesday 2 August and Juliet insisted on treating it as a rest day because we hadn't climbed anything. So the next day we went up the highest peak in the Cordillera Cantabrica.

On Saturday 5th we did a classic walk, the circuit of the Pena Remona. This involved following our Wednesday track right up to Collado de Pedabejo and crossing it into the Vega de Liordes. This is a delightful green basin with horses and campers and after walking across it in poorer weather we descended the famous zigzags from Collado del Embudo.

Juliet did a nature walk on Sunday with Teresa Farino, the local expert, while I conserved my strength to climb a peak. So, 10.25 a.m. found us leaving the top of El Cable in good heart to attempt Torre de Los Hocardos Rojos. But the weather got worse and worse, and at the zigzags it started raining and blowing, so we scuttled into the Cabana Veronica for hot soup which proved to be a life saver. By the time we'd finished our soup (100 pesetas per cup) a queue had formed in the hut entrance so we had to go out into the storm and eat our lunch behind a boulder. An attempt to explore towards Hocardos Rojos met with more wind and rain in our faces so we beat a retreat.

We heard from neighbour, Dolores, about a fatal accident on Sunday 6th involving people from Santander. We gathered that a land rover had gone over a cliff while on the way to a fiesta on top of a mountain. This was our second day with Mike, our host and guide, and we left it to him to show us a good day out. Driving through the Vinon, we parked his land rover under Pena Jumales and set off up the track to Madaja Trulledes. On a bend we met three fellows. It turned out that one of them was the son of the man who had been killed and he had come up with a friend and a local shepherd to see the actual location of the tragedy. It seemed that the long wheel-based vehicle had not been able to take the bend in one, and reversing to get round, had run down the very steep track and over the edge before the driver could re-engage first gear. After due commiseration we went on up to the Majado where we had lunch. After this Mike took us up a very steep pass, the Collado de San Carlos to about 2000 metres, while I stayed on the pass to take photographs. The

return journey saw better weather and we saw a wall creeper and a guinea fowl.

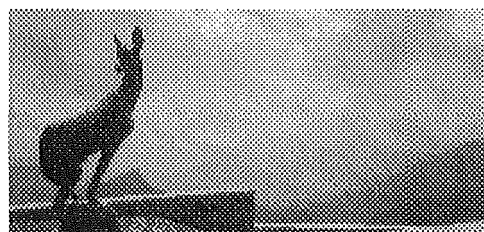
Friday August 11th was the day your idle scribe got his second and third summits. Mike was our guide again and we motored through Hennida and turned left to the village of Beges, where we bough cheese. After this Mike took us over the north-east shoulder of Agero Bis (1349m) into a misty wood. "I've not been this way before" he said as we picked our way through the beech trees, "but we should come out on the ridge you can see from the guest house". Of course we did and came out of the clouds finding some limestone to scramble on before hitting the top and crossing to the slightly lower Agero at 1330m, Today was notable for the weird shapes assumed by the cloud sea below us and for the view of Pena Ventosa across the Deva valley. Mike knew a grassy descent route to Beges.

Pena Ventosa looked interesting and Mike advised us to tackle it from the south east, so the following day, Juliet and I drove to the nearby village of Solarzon and walked up into the fields. Yes, the peak looked reasonable; between the steep south face and an area of limestone slabs was a harmless looking grassy gully which led onto the ridge, from where it may have been possible to tackle the steep final tower. So above an awkward stretch of bracken and broom we climbed a scree slope then got onto our chosen route. What a shambles it was. Scree under grass and more broom, loose rock, Juliet was in front. "What do I do if a hold is loose?" "Put it to one side and see what's underneath it" I replied. As these things do, it seemed to be going to level out in a few yards but it never did until we struck the ridge some

time after 2pm Westward was the summit tower, looking a bit like Sgurr Alastair from Sron na Ciche, and eastwards was the ridge looking a bit like Crib Goeh, Over lunch in the hot sun we discussed what to do next. It was too late for a serious attempt on the summit and Juliet was not keen on reversing what we had just done, neither was I. So we took the only choice left and followed the east ridge just below the crest until we came to a green track sloping through the slab area. This was evidently the normal way up to the ridge because we found a toffee paper on it. We were glad to get back into easy ground but not too chuffed to see a couple strolling along the ridge beyond where we had left it in bathing trunks and bikini respectively.

Sunday 13th was our last day and Mike engaged our interest by mentioning a "user friendly crag". This was on the lower slopes of Agero and has the same name. Here we spent a pleasant, if roasting, day climbing on V. Diff rock and abseiling. A good finish.

For our stay, Casa Gustavo proved quite wonderful, at £25.72 per person per day full board, with all of the beer or wine you wanted at the evening meal which was very good; 3 course, but served quite late (about 9 p.m.) for an early bed and early start. Continental breakfast (plus cereals and fruit) was 9 a.m. but we could get it earlier on request. On one such occasion, Mike came running out with our packed lunches as we were driving away.



A great big pile of stones - Pena Prieta in the 80's by Juliet White

Picnic lunch had been among Pena Prieta's cast-offs. Ten to twenty foot lumps of nut brittle (sorry, conglomerate) thrown across an upland lawn divided by tiny streams and known as 'The rock garden'. A leisurely lunch. The two small boys in our party and Bibi, the dog, entertaining us with bouldering fun and games. Towards two o'clock we said goodbye, six going up to the lake, and Bill, Mike (our host and guide) not forgetting Bibi, who takes a mountain climb as exuberantly as your average city pooch would take a scamper around Clapham Common, heading for the top of Pena Prieta.

I've never climbed on such user-friendly rock as the first stretch. Hand-sized pebbles set in rock with pebble sized hollows for your feet. Thus we set off up the north-eastern ridge of our mountain. It should have been a piece of nut-brittle cake, but it was hot, hot siesta time. Did I eat too much lunch? Is this altitude sickness? I didn't like these reminders that I can't stay twenty-five for ever. So concentrate on getting those heavy arms and legs to take you upwards. One tricky exposed neck to negotiate and then the gradient eased.

"That was the hardest bit. The rest is straightforward" said Mike. So with my usual inward reservations about what an experienced mountaineer describes to me as "straightforward" I contemplated the unbroken upward curve of grit and gravel ahead of us. Ugly and gritty underfoot, but what views were starting to open up. Cordillera Cantabrica stretching into infinity in three directions. My very first view of one of those much read about mountain ranges. Turn round and at our backs stands the craggy

backdrop of the Picos. But keep going, there's walking to do, a 6.30 rendezvous at the Land Rover with the rest of the party, and many more stony delights ahead.

Soon we were at the trigpoint at Mojon de las Tres Provincias (2497m), the boundary marker for Leon, Cantabria and Palencia. Time for drinks and to take in at greater leisure this glorious view of the world from 7000 feet plus; the Riano reservoir, crazy limestone fault castle, real forests dense enough to shelter bears, clouds in the valleys, and the great wall of Atlantic cloud to the north that we saw so often during our stay in the Picos.

The way ahead, the other half of the horseshoe leading to Pena Prieta turned out to be a long trail across black and rust coloured angular stones like ballast on a railway track, ugly and laborious to budge on. "Il faut souffrir pour voir le bel". Forget the pebbles and look at the valley clouds and the hills to the hills east glowing pink and gold as the sun gets kinder.

Peace of mind is a good thing when you're climbing, but at some stage on the way up your mountaineering apprentice has to summon the courage to ask the question "How do we get down?" "Two ways really" said Mike. Can you scree run? It would be quicker and more fun. I'll hold your hand."

Well if Mike and Bill thought that I could cope, pride dictated that I should smile gamely and be prepared to tackle yet another first in my mountaineering apprenticeship.

Not much time to linger at the top of the Pena Prieta. Similar vast views as we'd seen en route, except that now we could peer down almost vertically to the Rio Frio summer pastures,

where our walking had started, to the Rock Garden where we had picnicked, and to the lake, where we could see the rest of our party, splashing, chasing and bathing.

I did do the scree run. Teetering like a toddler, this granny lurched through the clattering pebbles holding Mike's hand, while the dog scampered around us and descending muscles starting to plead for walk's end. Bill and I finished the gentler gradients of the scree so slowly that Mike had had

time for a swim in the lake before we caught up with him.

Then there were no more stones. Perfect green pasture with delicately positioned musk mallow, bell flowers and purple merendas, Grazing cattle, goats and sheep as before. Just one thing had changed. While we were up on the mountain, the easy mile or two from the Land Rover to the picnic spot had surreptitiously quadrupled. Honest they did. It's not only Einstein who could tell you about relativity!

Picos Experience

(5 August 1995) by Bill Todd

The rain in Spain falls mainly in the hills,
We found out yesterday on our descent.
The grassy plateau bright with sinuous rills,
And varied with the occasional mountain tent
Gave onto a steep zigzag down and down
To reach the Fuente valley far below.
We took it cautiously with careful step,
Like Agag placing fine each heel and toe.

When suddenly the heavens opened wide,
'Twas more than just a little summer shower.
On narrow path we could not turn aside
There wasn't even room for a wild flower.

So exercising all our craft and skill,
We doffed our sacks and took out our cagoules
And donned them on that steep and stormy hill.
The rain then stopped, we felt such awful fools.

Multi-day tours in the Picos

by David Smithson

This was my first summer meet in Continental Europe with the YRC. Martin Wakeman documents of an initial two day traverse of the Eastern Massif but after that I was left to travel alone. Should I "read" something into that? My routes were a four day traverse of the Central Massif and four days pottering around Vega de Liordes, an alpine meadow at a height of just under 2000m, where horses and cattle graze all the time and where Spanish chamois, rebeccos, have a daytime feed. A very lovely place to be, without too many visitors and much cooler than the lower valleys.

After a hard journey from El Cable to Bulnes, i.e. from the south to the north of the mountains of the Central Massif I had an exhausting day going through the Cares Gorge and up the road to Cordinane, all in intense sunshine. Bulnes has no road access, but two delightful little gorges, an auberge, a bar and a camp site. The Cares Gorge has the same lack of real atmosphere as Dove Dale on a bank holiday, but on the next day I enjoyed great variety. I walked out of Cordinane with four litres of water because I could not guarantee getting water in the next 24 hours. I had cooked my evening meal by the public fountain and bivouacked just out of town where the path approaches a serious looking cliff. This is a region of serious looking cliffs and many of them look more and more impossible the longer one looks. I settled to sleep hoping the mist would get no wetter and that the route would show itself in the morning. The route appeared as a path ingeniously winding up and around the cliff. This was followed by

a dripping birch wood and then an alpine meadow with at least two tents and no signs of water. I sat and read for a while hoping the mist would clear and when it didn't, I took the straightforward Canal de Asotin. This led me above the mist and through a series of alpine meadows with their multitude of flowers and butterflies on bright green grass, which contrasted to the stark grey rock. The day finished fairly early with my arrival at Vega de Liordes with an almost perfect bivouac site. Martin Wakeman had given me some instructions on bivouac sites and cooking muesli, which will perhaps change my life style. I had made a simple bivvy bag from some cheap waterproof breathable nylon and first used it with Martin who is a bivvy addict. I didn't use my tent in the mountains at all.

Later, I discovered that the journey from El Cable to Vega de Liordes is not so easy or simple as I expected. This land of sharp rock with innumerable holes, hollows and gullies is difficult to traverse, but most routes have occasional cairns. The cairns appear to comfort one when on a route but are not so obvious and frequent to allow relaxation. I met a Dutch couple who followed cairns and found they had transferred routes without noticing. On my first visit to Liordes I had made an attempt on Tone de Salinas with the idea that I might be able to traverse onto Tone del Hoyo de Liordes. I was distracted by some cairns and struggled up a scree slope which seemed to lead nowhere except a chockstone. On my second visit, I walked to the top of an adjacent pass, Collado de Remona, but found no sign of a recognised route up Tone de Salinas or up Tone Pedabejo. I enjoyed a scramble across the rocky mountain side to the bottom



The view from the Refuge Diego Mella towards the western massif. DAS

of the ridge I originally intended to try before the cairns redirected me. I now felt the cairns might be pointing to this ridge, but after some easy climbing I came to a pitch beyond my courage and descended to have lunch at my bivouac. Tone Pedabejo had appeared impossible from the pass, but now I saw a back door up the grass slope near my camp. It worked, and after getting to the top of Tone Pedabejo, I managed to traverse back onto the next peak in the direction of Pena Remona before the mountains became too difficult. There is obviously a lot of fun to be had playing on these mountains and the guide book shows that there are recognised routes up for those who demand success. After this I made a visit to the hut on Collado Jermoso which is magnificently situated. There, a lady told me that the cows on Vega de Liordes have a reputation for eating tents, clothes and provisions and she considered I'd been very lucky having no problem. There is a cabin where people can leave gear safe from the cows. She also told me

of the notice at the telepherique up to El Cable warning one of the existence of bears.

Needless to say there are lots more walking routes of quality and plenty of mountains other than the ones I was on, but for much of this I would recommend having a companion. I totally neglected the lower valleys and would suggest cooler weather would make them more pleasant and the use of a car make them more accessible. The sharp rock made the fingers sore but provided an unbelievable friction grip for the feet of anyone who does not usually climb in Skye or similar places in Norway.

On my penultimate day a flotilla of cigar shaped alpine storm clouds appeared and I took the precaution of sleeping in a hut. There was no storm where I was, but the evening mists were worse than usual, and for my final there were clouds on the high mountains and a cold wind that made me think about getting gloves out. As I started to descend the interminable

zigzags to Fuente De, a rebecca stood on a promontory **watching** me leave, a vulture soared high above the spires of rock, around me were flowers and butterflies, and beside me a line of impassable cliffs.



Tour 1

El Cable - Horcados Rojos - Vega Urriello - meadow above Bulnes

Bulnes - Cares Gorge - Cain - hillside above Cordinanes

Asotin - Vega de Liordes

Vega de Liordes - attempt Tone de Salinas - Fuente De



Tour 2

El Cable - Colladina de las Nieves - Vega de Liordes

Vega de Liordes - attempt Tone de Salinas - Tone Pedabejo - Liordes

Liordes - Sedo de la Padierna - Pico de la Padierna - Collado Jermosa - attempt Torre del Llambrion - Refuge Diego Mella

Refuge Diego Mella - Sedo de la Padierna - Fuente De

Three days **into** two

by John Devenport

The best laid plans often need revising, particularly in mountainous areas such as the Picos de Europa, as Michael Smith and myself found out. Neither of us had ever been to such a mountain landscape as the incredible limestone deserts of the upper parts of the Picos, with their peculiar features and absence of water, and it was evident that navigation in **anything** other than perfect visibility could be a major problem. The object of our planned three day **trip** was to see some of the sights of the Picos, namely the Cares Gorge and the main symbol of the mountains of this part of Spain, the Naranjo de Bulnes.

Helen transported us to the start of the Cares Gorge at Cain, an incredible car journey in itself, with the road at one stage seemingly petering out in a farmyard, but it eventually led into the start of the gorge. After a welcome cup for coffee at a small cafe, the two of us set off in overcast weather into the deep, deep gorge forming an amazing natural barrier around the western / north-western edge of the Central Massif. The path is an amazing feat of engineering, cut into the sheer sides of the precipitous rock walls, following the line of an aqueduct dating back to the 1940's. Two bridges across the gorge provide spectacular viewpoints to the river many, many feet below. The **rim** of the gorge and peaks rising into the clouds, were many, many feet above. **It** is evidently a very popular route, as it is very easy walking along the mainly level path, and about half way along, after lunch and an excellent view of an eyrie, with an eagle feeding its young, we opted for a steep descent down a scree path into what we thought was the bottom of the gorge, to get away

from the crowds. Even when we reached the low point, we were still a considerable distance above the river.

Interest in the gorge decreased as it opened out somewhat as we approached Poncebos, but our destination for the day was Bulnes, so we turned up a side gorge, the Canal del Tejo that lead us steeply up to the village. By the time we reached the ancient hamlet, the clouds were light down and it was starting to drizzle. Accommodation was found in a dortoir attached to one of the three inns (not bad for an almost deserted village only reachable on foot!). Although it was now quite wet, it was still warm, so we sat outside the bar, eating the standard platter provided by the inn to everybody requiring food, namely ham, egg and chips. We really pushed the boat out, (well, we were on holiday) and also had cheese, wine (lots), coffees (several), and then breakfast the following morning, but despite this excess, got change out of £30 for the two of us, including the accommodation. If only Swiss mountain huts were as cheap as this! Whilst sat in the bar, we exchanged tales with fellow travellers from several other parts of Europe, and were also joined by the local mules which came to see what was going on.

After a comfortable night, we woke to find that the cloud was even lower, the drizzle harder and there was absolutely no wind. So no chance of a quick improvement to the weather. After spinning out breakfast as long as possible, we decided not to try and find our way to the Urriellu Hut, under the Naranjo de Bulnes, because of potentially very serious navigation problems through inhospitable terrain in minimum visibility. Even if we did reach the hut, there was no guarantee that we would be able to get back to

Fuente De the following day, so opted to return via a lower, but much more circuitous route via Invernales del Texu, near Sotres and the Valle del Duje, in the cloud for virtually all of the way, with only tantalising glimpses of the peaks and precipices above. The first part of the route followed a very narrow path through dripping vegetation, rather like walking in a sauna. I wasn't sure how effective the waterproofs were in such high humidity; the few Spaniards that we saw used capes rather than cagoules. We'd heard all sorts of tales about the inaccuracy of the Spanish maps, particularly where paths and buildings were concerned, but we had no problems, managing to follow the vague path and locate every building along the initial part of the route in the thick, swirling mist.

From near Sotres we turned south along the jeep track, which proved to be a most interesting walk, passing through the deserted hamlet at Vegas del Toro, then across a large flat meadow at Campomayor, where we had excellent views of a pair of Egyptian vultures, many other birds of prey, large numbers of horses, a running track denoted by a line by numbered stones, and most amazingly of all, two pairs of goalposts, high in the mountains and literally in the middle of nowhere!

A quick descent down the jeep track brought us into Espinama, just in time to buy some much needed drinks and ice creams, before the last bus arrived to transport us, a day early, to the camp near Potes, much to the surprise of those in camp basking in glorious sunshine. Of course, the next day was another glorious hot, clear day, such is the way in the mountains!

A fleeting visit to Naranjo de Bulnes by John Devenport

After the disappointment of not seeing the Naranjo de Bulnes at close quarters on my multi-day trip, I decided to try to make a quick visit from El Cable to the Urriellu Hut, nestling in a privileged position beneath one of its great walls. Setting out in clear and slightly cooler weather, I was accompanied almost as far as the Veronica Hut by Michael and David, but they had other objectives for the day, so from then on it was a solo trip.

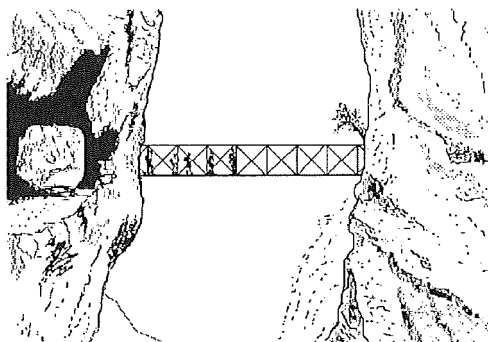
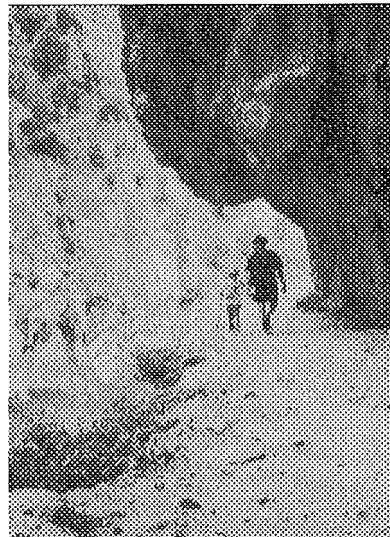
From the Horcados Rojos col, it was a traverse eastwards then a steep descent down the broken, slabby slopes following the line of fixed cables, complete with highly frayed wire strands, which proved to be more of a hindrance than a help. The long descent took me into the first of two huge hoyos (hollows), linked by a vague, intermittent path, which confirmed my concern about potential navigation problems in such awkward terrain should the visibility be less than perfect, and probably justified our change of plans during our multi-day trip.

A group of about six rebeco caught my attention crossing the barren slopes of a hoyo; it certainly must be a hard life eking out an existence in such inhospitable terrain. After the second hoyo, a col is gained by a steep step, from where the massive face of the Naranjo de Bulnes suddenly comes into view. The short walk down to the Urriellu hut took ages, with many interruptions for photographs of this imposing mountain. The large, modern hut was thronged with visitors admiring the spectacular setting.

Time was getting on, and it was quite a way back to El Cable, so I turned

my back on the Naranjo, with only one or two wispy clouds high in the otherwise clear sky. Then in an instant all my worst fears about navigation problems were realised. From nowhere, I was suddenly engulfed in thick cloud just above the hut, and thought I was going to have real problems getting back in the mist. Fortunately the mist cleared as quickly as it arrived, and the return to El Cable passed without further incident, but with added interest of a long scramble up to the final col at the side of the fraying cables.

The trip was a fitting end to my visit to the Picos, an area of quite unique mountain landscape, but it also served as a sharp reminder of the potential difficulties the unwary traveller could find themselves in such inhospitable terrain.

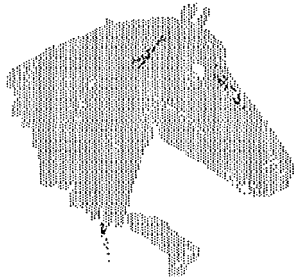


The Cares gorge

Archaeology in the Picos

by Michael Smith

The objects of the Club include Archaeology and this was not neglected despite the majority of this report concentrating on the mountaineering and natural history aspects of our visit to the Picos de Europa.



A visit was made to the caves at Ribadesella on the coast. In the Cueva de Tito Bustillo the control of public access to four hundred visitors a day protects the prehistoric cave painting. This was far higher number than most other controlled caves: Altamira allowed only 30 and visits had to be booked years in advance. Several doors along the caves blasted modern entrance tunnel maintained a steady temperature of 10°C and humidity of 98%. A path of 540m through the original cavern leads to a junction and a prehistoric living area. Here, low on an overhanging wall, is painting of a horse which despite damage by flooding remains clearly visible. The solid shape is a dark red and, for me at least, surprisingly large at perhaps two metres long.



A little further on is an area containing several paintings. Stag, hind, several horse, reindeer and possibly something

like a cow. The largest horse varies in colour from sienna to purple and black others are simple outline drawings. In some engraved lines emphasise the colour.

It was interesting to compare these painting with the rock outcrop engravings seen at Alta in Norway on the 1992 meet. Those were dated at about 6000 years old and were carvings, some of which were painted in an red ochre colour.



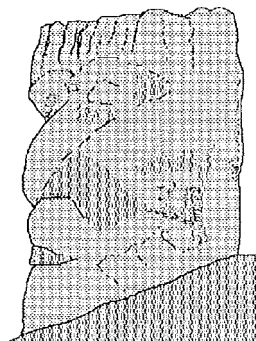
Alta Petroglyphs, Hjemmeluft

The Tito Bustillo cave paintings were created over a period between 15 and 20 thousand years ago,

The main cavern contains plenty of decorative rock features throughout its length. Colours range from the pristine whites through ivory to greens and reds. The calcite features are varied and impressive as the cavern is wide and tall. The streamway is now some twenty metres below and visible in places.

A short drive away, high on a hill side are a couple of prehistoric rock carvings. The information we obtained about them was sketchy.

They are about a metre tall, cut into a slight overhang above a small ledge on a ten metre tall grey limestone outcrop (Pefia Tu) on a ridge. Now protected by an iron cage



they previously suffered the addition of many adjacent modern carvings, mostly crosses. The carvings are Bronze age or Neolithic and may be funerary or sacrificial.



Much further to the West, inland from Navia on the crest of a ridge was the Castro de Coafia, probably the best preserved of the prehistoric Asturian 'towns'. Occupied in the late Iron Age and early Roman period it is a well fortified habitation with very solid stone walls, circular, oval and rectangular buildings and large stone troughs. Served by a long aqueduct the village was supported by mining, transport and working of gold.

Under Roman occupation the Asturians provided troops for many parts of the empire including Hadrian's Wall. They must surely have noticed a marked change in the climate there compared to their homeland.

The proximity of the Picos to the rugged coast, towns and unspoiled villages of Cantabria and Asturias means that there can be much more to a visit there than walking, climbing and caving. The Celts settling in the North, the Romans taking two hundred years to dominate the area (though leaving the Picos well alone), Visigoths taking over Galicia, Christianity with its monasteries and then Industrial Revolution have all influenced the area.

Memories of the Picos by AB

Friendly people at the camp site who went out of their way to be helpful.

A young dog, apparently dying of thirst, being refreshed in best John Wayne style, from a bush hat full of water.

A middle aged couple who were so impressed by the navigational skills of YRC members that they insisted on buying the drinks at the cable car station.

An ex-president who insisted that pear peelings and core soaked in sardine oil was part of the normal diet.

The entrepreneurial skills of a young guest on the meet who could **run** a second hand car business during the course of a restaurant meal.

Two members who provided a large number of locals with a new spectator sport: - leg breakage repair watching.

A local member of the Guardia Uncivil who seemed to think that three score years and ten equates to old age.

Members wives who provided hot soup to a group who arrived back at the camp a little late, following a slight geographical error. (Incidentally, this was the same group who so impressed the middle aged couple noted above!)

Two young members who reached the campsite on bicycles. What can we do to win this battle of one upmanship on our next meet?

The worried looks of passengers on the ferry who overheard two naval architectural members discussing the gross instability of the ship.

Female persons on the meet who appeared quite normal and, in fact, were excellent company. (I realise that this statement may cost me my epaulettes and sword.)

Four gourmet members who couldn't tell the difference between ham and tinned tripe.

Puerto Pollensa, Mallorca

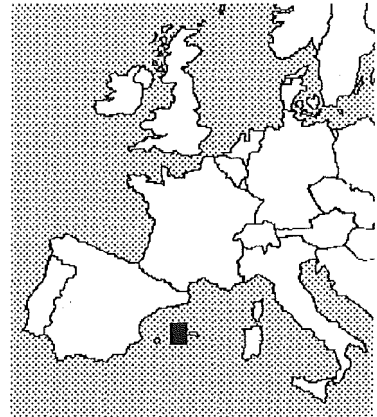
22 / 29 April, 1995

This account covers all the main routes undertaken during the meet and should give a good impression of how the week developed. However the party had no intention of keeping together the whole time and as a consequence perhaps some of the activities have been missed out.

Organisation was the minimum that would unite the group into joint activity, **if** that was what they required. All but one couple were in the same apartment block and so it was easy to go next door and find out what was happening or to have multi-patty conversations from the balconies. Each evening at at seven a joint informal meeting was held in the reception lounge to sort out transport for the following day, which then led into groups forming for visits to restaurants. Some cooked for themselves in their apartments instead. In the morning at a time decided the previous evening, patties would meet-up in the reception lounge before starting for the day's venues.

Shopping for supplies was easy with small self-service stores nearby open when we returned from walks and refrigerators in the apartments.

Car hire could be organised locally on a daily basis **if** required. Hire cars generated one or two misfortunes: one member parked in the wrong place overnight and had his vehicle impounded resulting in a hefty penalty, another found his car one morning with a smashed window.



We were all indebted to the member and guest who had a knowledge of Spanish.

During the first few days telescopic ski poles were in evidence as walking aids but later on it seemed they were used less often.

None of the party were in their first flush of youth, some were into their second (or perhaps even third) blooming, but what a flourish!

Evening meals were easy to find from 800 pesetas (approximately £4), for the menu of the day including wine, to what ever level of extravagance one wished to pay.

Sunday.

In the afternoon all the patty started an easy walk along the Boquer Valley. Some people diverted on to short cuts, and others extended it to Cala San Vicente but all marvelled at the serrated edge of Serra del Cavall Bernat on the north-western side of the valley. Ornithologists with their telescopes and cameras set up on tripods, were all along the route. The YRC's main sightings were of a Blue Rock Thrush at Calla Boquer and a Hoopoe just outside the town.

In the valley one or two rock climbers were on the crags and the sight of them incited some members to clamber up house sized boulders which lay on the edge of the track.

Back at base the first member into our private swimming pool reported that it was warmer than Loch Laggan. Three others followed his example and found it refreshing. Honour satisfied, the showers were found to be nice and hot.

Monday,

Gerry Lee had intended to lead a walk to the Puig Roig, but a change had to be made because of restricted access,

The revised walk started at the Ermita de la Victoria. Six people went by car to the start, the remainder chose to travel 20 minutes by bus to Alcudia and walk about 5 kilometres via the Mal Pas coast road. Wild gladioli were prominent in the fields, as were the carob trees. The Ermita had a cool restaurant with terrace and a sea view. Whilst four of the driving group set off for the Atalaya de Alcudia, the walkers from Alcudia made a break on the terrace for beer, or orange drink, which was made from fresh oranges. The main group intended to ascend the Pefia Roja but as has happened before in the YRC, the conversation was so interesting that no one saw the route.

When the main group finally decided that they had lost the track, they met the four returning from the Atalaya and it was decided that the main party would visit the Atalaya also, and then carry on to the Playa Baix. After the Atalaya and the views there was a lunch stop on a limestone outcrop looking over the sea. A steep hillside was then descended on a well graded

path in a series of zigzags to the Coll Baix. On the descent it was possible to look down several hundred feet into the brilliant blue waters of the bay and see, under the water, the white bubbles created by the waves on the beach being dragged swiftly out to sea by the strong undertow,

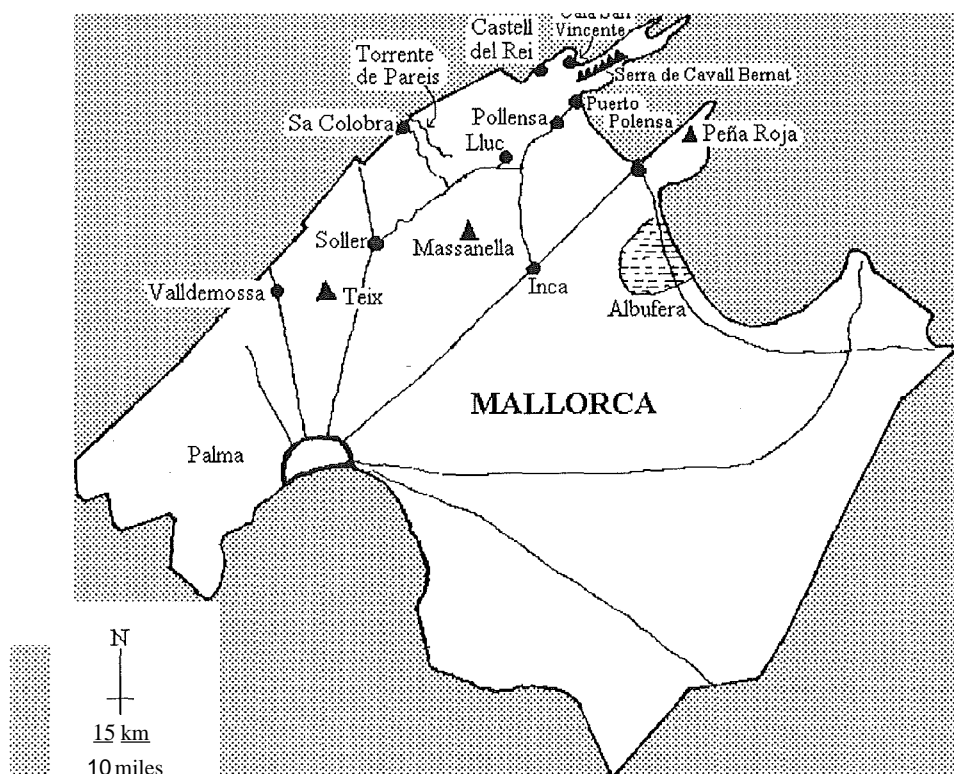
From the shelter at Coll Baix, all of the party but one made their way down to the beach under most unstable looking cliffs,

The lone lady made her way back along the return route the others were to follow on their way back to Alcudia. Neither the lone lady nor the others had foreseen a fork in the road and true to that well known law, one party took one road and the followers the other. This led to the lady being rescued by a group of Germans met earlier, on the Atalaya. Contact was again made when the lady's husband was spotted from the Germans' bus,

The rest of us had a pleasant walk back to Alcudia to wait for the bus to Puerto Pollensa, admiring the honeysuckle, broom and poppies flowering by the roadside.

The car party drove to Formentor and found swimming conditions warmer than in the pool.

Bill Todd and Juliet White drove to Mirador de Ses Barques encountering hundreds of cyclists on the way. They had trouble locking the car and after attempting improvements, found that now they could not shut the door. By the time phone contact with the hire car firm had been made, from Soller, Bill and Juliet were short of time to complete the objective of Sa Costere. It was an interesting walk with lots of flora, fauna and rock formations. On



return, calling at Balitz de Baix farm for orange juice led to a lift back to the car in the farmer's Land Rover.

Tuesday.

The objective of a majority of the group was the ascent of Teix followed by the Archduke's Walk, with short cuts if required. Car transport was shared to Valldemossa and after coffee the group set off. It was quite chilly in the cold wind and there was concern whether or not clothing was adequate. People were seen wearing gloves later. As we left Valldemossa interesting terrace formations were seen cut into the hillsides for agriculture, and there was a good view above the town roofs, of the monastery .

At the shelter where we stopped for lunch there was a large party of Germans with whom we indulged in mutual language practise.

The summit of Teix (1064 metres) was reached after a plateau followed by a short steep scramble on the limestone. The conditions were cold, a strong damp wind was blowing with mist in the distance. Most people were wearing jackets. During our eating, photography and banter, it was noticed that yet another party of Germans all had little cards and the leader was stamping them on the summit with the official rubber stamp. Not wishing the YRC to be outdone I asked in my best German, and obtained, the summit stamp in the front of my copy of 'Walking in Mallorca'!

The line of ascent was retraced a short distance to start on the Archduke's Walk. The weather brightened and the sun came out giving us glorious vertiginous views over the sea some 400 metres below for the rest of the walk. It was generally a good path,

on the edge of high cliffs with appalling drops in places. Not the place to turn ones ankle! The paths were constructed under the direction of Archduke Ludwig Salvator of Hapsburgo-Lorenca last century. Artifacts such as stone seats or mined buildings made focal points, a thrush-hunters bread oven was seen, as was evidence of past charcoal burning. It was a walk which allowed one to appreciate the meaning of Mediterranean blue and aquamarine green. Return to Valldemossa was via a clearing in the woods with a central well with numerous tracks radiating, care had to be taken to follow the correct one.

Some of the party shortened the walk and fitted in Chopin's quarters in the monastery at Valldemossa, where he composed the Raindrop Prelude.

It was a splendid day out with memories of views across the island, of Manessella and Puig Roig, of thousand year old olive trees, holly oaks and moss covered pine trees. Rosemary was growing everywhere with bluer blooms than at home; miniature cyclamen, stonecrop and other alpins were around, as was Yorkshire humour. 'Shrouds have no pockets' was one gem heard. One member was so moved by it all as to recite what he could remember of 'The Ballad of Idwal Slabs'!

Thanks to Alan Brown and Clifford Cobb should be recorded, for leading us to such a fine day out.

A second party under the guidance of John Barton including some of the ladies went to Valldemossa to view the splendours of the ancient town.

Wednesday.

The ascent of Massanella (1367 metres) from Coll de Batella was the aim for Wednesday. Gerry Lee was to lead the party. The walk started about 150 metres along the road, from where we parked the cars opposite Col de Sabtaia restaurant and led through woodland gaining height quickly. The path became indistinct at one point as it was possible to climb anywhere between the trees on stony ground. The track was quickly found again and at a height of about 800 metres a marker stone directed us on rough paths to the top. A bit of rough going on limestone with a final steep ascent over bare rock took us to the top. On the way up, there were magnificent views over most of the island to the south. In the near distance superb mountain formations were seen like plugs of rock surrounded by 300 metre high vertical cliffs with vegetation on the tops.

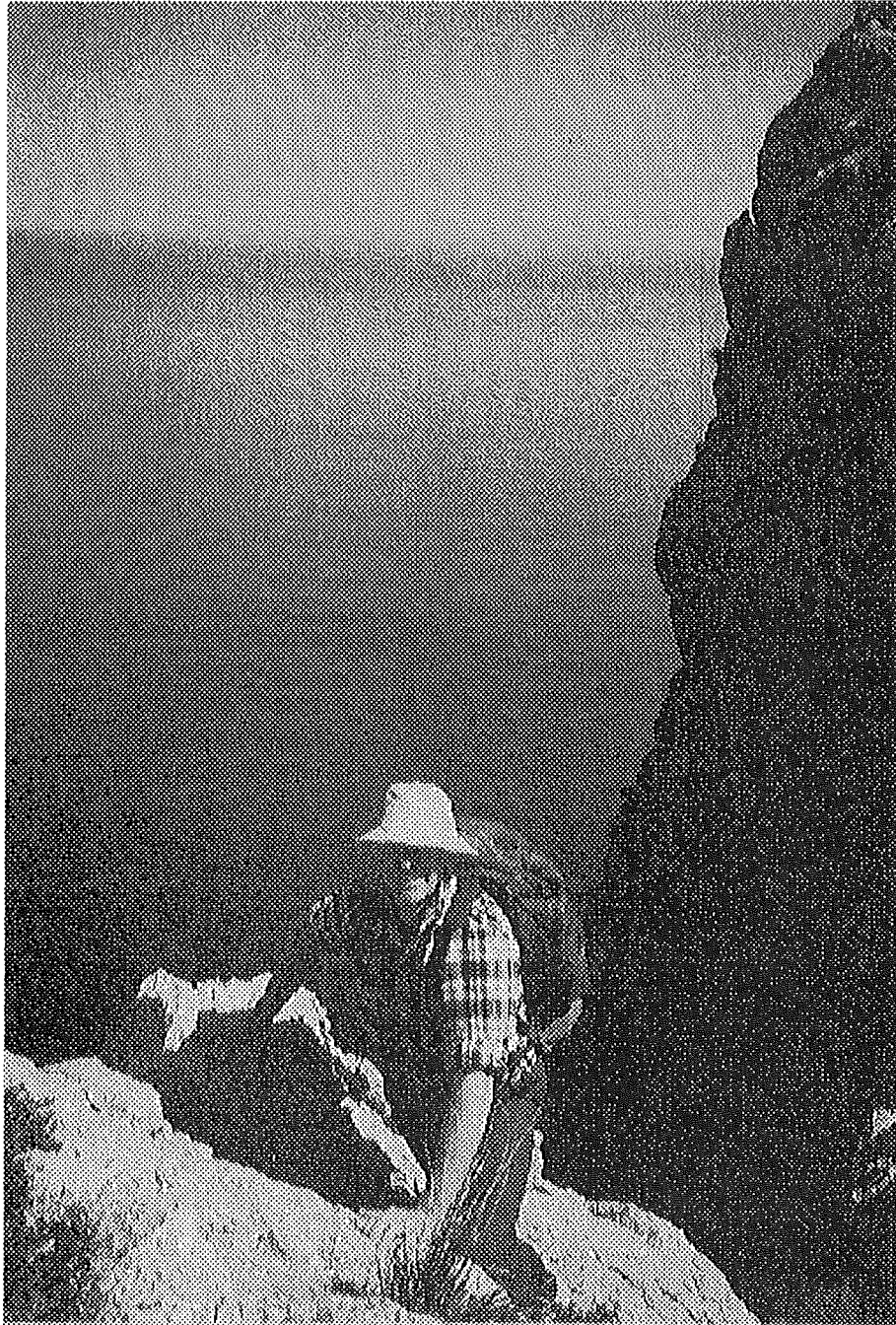
To one side of and just below the summit was a deep pothole with typically fluted sides. At times it has been used to store snow.

The weather was generally brighter and warmer than the previous day.

Lunch was eaten just down from the summit sheltered from the wind where there was a good view and the return was by a different route to the 800 metre point.

On the way down an interesting well was investigated bringing out all the YRC's potholing instincts. It was signed Font de S'Avenc and a twisting flight of steps led down into the rock for about ten metres to a cavern with three water basins constructed to catch the trickle. A high aven rose behind the water supply. Flash photography was brought into use.

JelfHooper on the Cavall Bemat (photo Bill Todd)



High on the mountain, setterwort (stinking hellibore) was identified, other saxifrage and cyclamen were seen, and blackbeny and ivy at the spnng.

Wednesday evening was the time set for a meal with a difference.

A party of eleven made their way to Martin's Bar. The speciality was leg

of lamb roasted whole. Prior to the lamb the party was served with five successive starters, meat balls in sauce; chopped liver and potato frit Mallorquin; mixed vegetables cooked in fennel with other herbs; mussels, and finally battered courgettes. With great ceremony the legs of lamb were brought to the end of the table, the knife sharpened and Martin calved the lamb and sewed the party. Dishes of

fresh fruit were placed on the table for desert.

Coffee followed and when we thought that it was over a delicious ice cold liqueur made from green apples was presented, compliments of Martin.

Thursday.

A bright sunny day. There was a divergence of ideas. One group drove to the Albufera for birdwatching and their list is given at the end of this report. One couple visited Soller. Another pair drove to Valldemossa to visit Chopin's quarters which they had missed on a previous visit, whilst one lady enjoyed the local scene and was fascinated by the way palm tree trunks were trimmed. I had always believed that the trees grew naturally with a smooth round trunk exhibiting the pattern of triangles where the leaves had grown, but on our return from the Cavall Bernat ridge we too had seen the trimming and shaping operation.

Seven of us decided to traverse the Serra del Cavall Bernat between the sea and the Boquer valley and for me it was one of the highlights of the week which I would have been loath to miss. Because I have not experienced rock ridges for many years I found the exposure awesome, my companions had no such qualms and to see how the older members moved on that ridge was a good recommendation for a life in the YRC and encouragement for the others.

The group was: Alan and Angie Linford, Clifford Cobb, Alan Brown, Bill Todd, Arthur Craven and me.

After a short walk from Puerto Pollensa along the Boquer Valley the route went up the side of the ridge over broken ground to the coll in the ridge about half way to the seaward

end, at the foot of the most prominent tower. The length of the ridge we tackled is approximately one kilometre.

On reaching the coli, without pause Alan Brown, closely followed by Clifford and the others shot up the tower on the edge of the ridge with a vertical drop of 352 metres into the Cala San Vicente. The limestone was exceedingly rough with a spiky surface, rougher than gabro, except at the two most exposed places where it was smooth with few holds; so I was told. I took a ledge route on the Boquer Valley side of the tower which led diagonally upwards.

The next section of the ridge is so thin that a window has been formed through the rock, over the top of which the party walked. The guide book recommended doing that and then climbing down at the end and reversing direction at a lower level to reach the point where one could see the view of Cala San Vincente through the window. After watching the first member climbing down with a good view of the sea between his legs, I and one other returned and found another route on the face, which enabled us to arrive below the window before the main party. An estimate of the window size is eight metres wide by five metres high. The view from there over the bay is stupendous and one by one people climbed to the photography position. Various routes were next used to regain the ridge which involved either awkward short climbs down or awkward little traverses but the group reformed and had a magnificent view of the tower from the other side. On a branch of a scrubby tree high on the cliff face above us, an Osprey was perched,

although its chicks could be heard calling for food, we did not see it fly.

It was the warmest day and the hot sun on the rock was nicely bearable. After scrambling further on the ridge a halt was called for lunch on a flat yellow horizontal slab. It was a perfect viewing platform over the bay towards Alcudia. As we ate, sea planes flew over head and landed skimming over the blue water, leaving a long white wake before mounting onto dry land at the dock.

There was a second small window at the top of the ridge in rocks which overhung the sea and looked somewhat unstable.

At one point on the ridge we could look directly at our swimming pool and pick out the individual balconies of our apartments.

Towards the final tower was a highly exposed part where I remember Angie walking as if on a tight rope. It was the same shape and slightly narrower than a ridge tile on a house roof for about two metres.

On the final tower we sat and soaked in the sunshine and the view whilst planning the best route down to the Puerto Pollensa - Calla San Vicente track. An improvised flag left by previous walkers was re-erected on the summit.

The walk back was hot and dusty and the first group of four decided on cool beer by the pool side interspersed with refreshing plunges. The final three found a bar selling beer by the pint and after completing a round, arrived back with happy smiles on their faces.

For the remainder of our stay the flag could be seen from our apartment balcony.

Fliday.

Cars were again organised; a minor exercise in logistics as the walkers were to start at Sa Calobra on the coast, and finish at Esdorca, inland. By road the two points were connected by 13 kilometres of continuous hairpin bends, reminiscent of Norway's Stalheim Gorge but not quite so steep and much longer. Thanks are due to Ian Crowther for leading this.

From the bay car park we went through a rock tunnel under the 300 metre high cliffs into the gorge of the Torrent de Pareis where it meets the open sea. There was no water running down the route of the Torrent and we started on flat level sand walking inland. The gorge is narrow with consistently high (300 metres), unbreachable cliffs for the whole of its length with the width blocked by boulder chokes and rock outcrops at intervals. It made me think of potholing but without a roof. At one time I was reminded of the main cavern of Reyfad. The limestone here was a complete contrast to the unweathered spiked surface of the Serra del Cavall Bernat, in the gorge the surfaces were water worn and smooth.

I cannot remember all the individual scrambles and climbs. There was the one which required long legs to span the walls of the chimney with no real holds. Another, where a large smooth egg-shaped chock stone had to be surmounted with the holds always two inches beyond my reach; the one where after a scramble one had to crawl upwards through a hole, after

removing ones rucksack, I remember following Alan Brown in jumping across a one metre gap from the top of a smooth boulder two to three metres high to land on an inclined holdless slab slightly higher. Ian produced belay slings and line at one point, and some of the party were assisted by strategically given, pulls or pushes. It was great fun and easily the most strenuous day of the week.

The end came when a path was found, coming down on the left which we had to go up to the road. After the height gained in the gorge in the previous four hours, it was felt that we could not be far below the road. In fact it took just over one hour of continuous ascent on a well graded zigzagging path to reach the road and a cool drink in the restaurant.

Saturday.

The last day. We were not to be collected for transfer to the airport until 5 p.m. and so most people took the chance of walking through the Ternelles valley to the Castell del Rei, a route which is only open on Saturdays. The bus was taken to Pollensa and the walk started between gardens with their own water reservoirs, gradually climbing to the estate entrance with a guard on the gate. Height was gained imperceptibly, on a good dirt road which wound through the trees, until the Castell del Rei was seen above us and 491 metres above the sea. Access to the castle was not possible as it is being restored. During our lunch break on the edge of the cliffs in the near distance two black vultures appeared. They were in view long enough for those with glasses to have a good look at them and close enough for those without to see them clearly.

A bus was caught back to Puerto Pollensa earlier than originally intended with the idea of having large ice creams on the front at Hotel Mirador. A temporary split in the party was made when thirst got the better of some members and shandies were ordered and the others went in search of the ice creams.

A very successful meet leaving happy memories and renewed friendships.

IH.H

Flowers, Shrubs **and** Trees:

We are indebted to Betty Cobb for compiling this list of a small selection of the very large range of flowers to be found on the island. The Common names are given beside the Latin ones. The book used for identification was "The Flowers of Britain and Europe." by Oleg Polunin.

Acanthus mollis	Acanthus (Bear's breech)
Allium ursinum	Ransomes
Anchusa officinalis	Alkenet
Asphodelus aestivus	Asphodel
Borage officinalis	Borage
Carpobrotus	Carpobrotus (Red
acinaciform	Hottentot)
Centranthus ruber	Red valerian
Cistus monspeliensis	Narrow leaved cistus
Citrus limon	Lemon tree
Citrus sinensis	Orange tree
Convolvulus	Bindweed
Erinacea anthyllis	Hedgehog broom
Geranium sanguineum	Cranesbill
Gladiolus segetum	Field gladiolus
Hieracium pilosella	Mouse-eared
	hawkweed
Ipomoea hederacea	Morning glory
Knautia arvensis	Scabious
Papaver Rhoeas	Corn Poppy
Reseda lutea	Mignonette

Ornithology:

Cliff Large, with Cathie's assistance produced the bird list. He writes:
"In June Parker's book, 'Walking in Mallorca' she states that 'Even those with a minimum interest in birds are likely to find this interest stimulated by the number and variety of birds to be seen on nearly every walk.' This was true on some of the lower walks but on high hills hardly any birds were seen. One of the suggested days out was a visit to the Albufera, a large wetland nature reserve with bird hides. It was an excuse for a lazier day after a few days walking but only three of the party made the visit. It proved very interesting with many different birds present.

The most spectacular bird sighting was left to the last day at Castell del Rei. Whilst having lunch a pair of black vultures were soaring around the cliff tops about a quarter of a mile away.

The birds listed have been split into two groups; those seen on walks and those seen in The Albufera. Most were personal observations, Some in the second group were seen by others in the party. Some of the common birds found at home have been omitted from this list."

Sightings on walks:

Black Vulture	Hoopoe
Black Wheatear	House Martin
Blackcap	Marmora's Warbler
Blue Rock Thrush	Osprey
Chiffchaff	Rock Sparrow
Crag Martin	Shag
Crossbill	Stonechat
Goldfinch	Swallow

The Albufera sightings:

Black-winged Stilt	Pochard
Cetti's Warbler	Purple Gallinule
Common Sandpiper	Purple Heron
Coot	Red-crested Pochard
Curlew	Reed Warbler
Gadwall	Ringed Plover
Great Tit	Sandpiper
Greenfinch	Sardinian Warbler
Harrier	Serin
House Sparrow	Shoveller
Kentish Plover	Spoonbill
Little Egret	Spotted Redshank
Little Grebe	Squacco heron
Mallard Marsh	White-headed Duck
Moorhen	Yellow Wagtail

Logistics:

The party flew from Manchester to Palma and stayed in self catering apartments which were definitely above the standard of the usual Club Hut!

The guide books used were:

"Walking in Mallorca" by June Parker,
"Landscapes of Mallorca" by Valerie Crespi-Green.

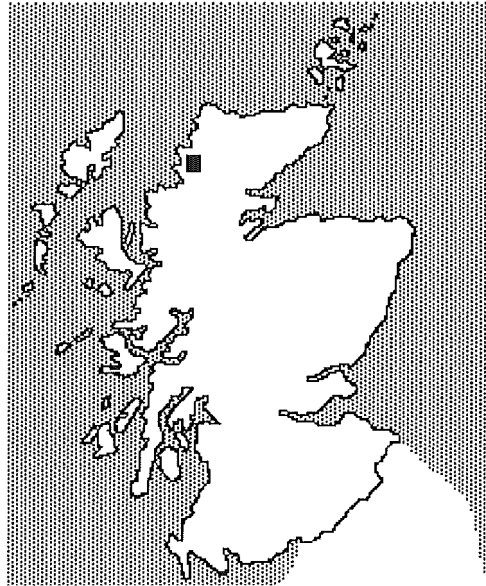
Attendance:

Dennis and Joan Armstrong
John and Irene Barton
Alan Brown
Clifford and Betty Cobb
Arthur Craven
Ian and Dorothy Crowther
Mike and Marcia Godden
Jeff Hooper
Ian and Una Laing
Cliff and Kathy Large
Gerry and Margaret Lee
Alan and Angie Linford
Bill Todd and Juliet White

Spring Bank Holiday Meet. Inchnadampf 27 May - 3 June 1995

I have not been a regular 'Whitsuntide' meet attender as there have always been other pressures. Inchnadampf has been visited by the club several times indeed I attended the 1982 meet briefly while caravanning with the family at Ullapool. I will always remember my first meet in the area, before joining the club, when a bus was hired in Inverness to tour the West Coast. I was determined to join the meet this year but was not anticipating drawing the short straw and being volunteered as meet reporter.

Back in 1957 I had never been in northern Scotland, and the area left a big impression on me. The mountains of course are unchanged but their isolation has undergone change. It is now possible to class them as a long weekend break from London, and a modern day trip to compare with the one in 1957 would be to perhaps the Atlas mountains. Another change has been from meet circulars to the Bulletin. So inevitably I put this job off and now, while actually missing a YRC meet, and sitting out the hottest summer for centuries, I am trying to remember why a small amount of rain had such an effect on the meet. The meet leader had arranged for us to camp within a stones throw of the back bar of the Inchnadampf Hotel. Cooking with the midges and the rain proved unable to compete with the bar meals on offer in any cases, and there was really no place where one could wander off with a shovel. The early



morning facilities purchased from the Hotel raised a few complaints. Back in 1957, I don't recall even visiting the Hotel, as there seemed to be no time between the mountains and a much needed sleep.

The weather preceding the meet had been good by all reports but it worsened as the days passed. Almost everyone arrived on the Saturday and Quinag and Canisp were bagged by early anivals enjoying cloud and blue sky with light showers. Sunday and Monday were similar with good views from the tops but not without the scattered showers. Quinag and Canisp were again visited but usually by driving as close as possible, unlike the two early arrivals who had insisted on round trips from camp. Three members, suspected as Munroists, disappeared for these two days to do Ben Hope and Klibreck. A Corbett or 2 fell to another member. On Monday night, the rain set in in earnest and continued into Tuesday morning. Since two moderate days had been scored, the mountains lost their attraction to be replaced by the

flesh pots of Ullapool and bird watching on Hanna island. On Tuesday evening again came the rain which lasted into Wednesday morning and the start of the exodus. Two members were drawn back to the real world. I joined a party to partake of Alan Linford's hospitality in his caravan at Knockan just ten miles away. As the meet was not designated as an open one, Alan cannot be listed as a full attendee, but he still managed to give me two full sheets of bird sightings which I have unfortunately misplaced. In the afternoon, it was fine and a walk up to see the local caves passed a few hours. At this point there was really no comparison between 1957 and 1995, and I made a pledge to do something on the Thursday come hell or high water. But what actually happened was that the morning was again wet and everyone to a man left me. With hind sight it is easy to see that the rain was only at Inchnadampf. It was nearly lunch time and in cloud. I drove down to Lochinver and into the sun, and as near Glen Canisp Lodge as I could get. The walk into Suilven and back took me 7 hours, and I ticked off all the tops, unfortunately in a brief interlude when the mist was down. The whole ridge was clear before and after I reached it. Back in my solitary camp, and back into the poorer weather of Inchnadampf, I again set my sights on doing something on the Friday, and even though the morning was misty I set off for Conival and Assynt. The whole trip was in mist and some light rain, and at one time I thought that I had the mountain to myself. However, I was just slightly ahead of the crowd and on retracing my steps met several parties who, unbeknownst to me, had had me in their sights. While

discussing the poor conditions with a couple from the north of England they commented that come the following Monday, and even before lunchtime, we would willingly swap the office conditions for the slopes of Ben More Assynt despite the rain. How true! Back in camp by 4 p.m., alone, and not even wet enough to change, I finally closed the meet and left to stay overnight with relatives in Arrochar.

As you can appreciate, my comparisons with 1956 were rather depressing. Perhaps the attendance was affected by the other more exotic meets on this year's calendar. I can only hope so, because Scotland has continuous marvels to offer, and the most memorable days in the mountains are not always those when the sun shines. I only hope this report does not upset Maurice Wilson too much. He had set his sights on Suilven, but was cheated by the weather.

FW

Attendance

Cliff Cobb
 Maurice Wilson
 Frank Wilkinson
 Alan Brown
 Arthur Craven
 Denis Barker
 Ken Aldred
 David. Smith
 Roy Pomfret
 Tony Smythe
 Harvey Lomas
 Eddie Edwards

Crianlarich Meet

30th Sept. 1995

Scottish meets normally attract a good attendance, but this one suffered from competition from Nepal. It was indeed surprising to put one's head round the door of the Ochills M.C. hut and see the only other two members sitting in front of a roaring fire.

The OMC are rebuilding their cottage, With a rearwards extension which doubles the size and adds badly needed washing facilities. With the work still incomplete, we made do with a solitary tap, and slept in the carpeted loft.



DAS

The meet organiser delegated the meet report to the other members, and a spin of a coin decided that the member from Middlesborough would provide the coal, and the lad would write the meet report,

On Saturday, Derek and Cliff set off for Cruachan, and climbed from the power station up to a top, and thence to the summit. The forecast wind and heavy showers arrived about midday, coming from the South West, and the completion of the horseshoe was left to another day.

The lad drove to Craig Meagaidh, and climbed all 8 tops and 3 Munros in a clockwise circuit with plenty of excursions to outlying summits. Snow was coveting the high plateau of Meagaidh, and cloud made finding the cairn an interesting exercise. Unlike on Cruachan, the bad weather took much longer to reach the East, and a good day was snatched in spite of a depressing forecast.

On Sunday gales and torrential rain made any further excursions a pointless exercise in masochism, so we all went home.

It is interesting to reflect that the journey from Yorkshire has become so much quicker in recent years. One can leave the Leeds area at 4.00 pm, and be in Crianlarich before 10.00 pm, having eaten well on the way.

We thanked Cliff for again organising the meet, and we look forward to the next one.

Attendance:-

Cliff Large

Derek A. Smithson

Iain Gilmore

Low Hall Garth

Mid-Week Meet

10 - 12th October 1995

The track to Low Hall Garth appears to get narrower and the potholes deeper as the years go by. Nevertheless, nine members were able to take advantage of a Lakes mid-week Meet, and found the cottage in excellent condition, though some surprise was expressed at the availability of a telephone and the laying of tarmac outside the cottage. Double yellow lines have not yet materialised.

Taking advantage of the fine weather on Tuesday, several members took short walks, including one over Boardale Hause and Beda Fell, returning in fine autumn sunshine along the shore of Ullswater. Members sat down to a fine meal in the evening, followed by a visit to the Three Shires (Inn, not the Stone).

After a fairly leisurely but gargantuan English breakfast, parties dispersed to the well-known haunts, though the weather remained overcast and breezy all day.

Pike O'Blisco and the Carrs, the Wetherlam/Carrs Round and the

Crinkles were all visited, though one party inadvertently visited Upper Eskdale via Long Top. They took care however, not to miss the quite excellent repast and slide show in the evening.

Thursday dawned rather wet and remained so for the day. After another fine breakfast members were in no hurry to venture out, though Tilberthwaite and its environs were visited. Around mid-day most members reluctantly drifted away into the mist of the afternoon.

All concluded what a fine innovation this mid-week Meet had been, and hoped for a repeat performance.

Our thanks are due to Alan whose enthusiasm extended far beyond the excellent cuisine he provided to the general bonhomie of the Meet.

T. E. E.

Attendance:

Eddie Edwards
Mike Godden
Geoff Hooper
Ian Laing
Gerry Lee
Alan Linford
Bill Lofthouse
Chris Renton
Harry Robinson



Swaledale Meet

27th - 29th October 1995

The shortage of water in North Yorkshire could be well understood by the 26 members who walked the dry fells that autumn week-end. The weather was glorious, both on the Saturday and Sunday. Below is recorded the routes followed by those present.

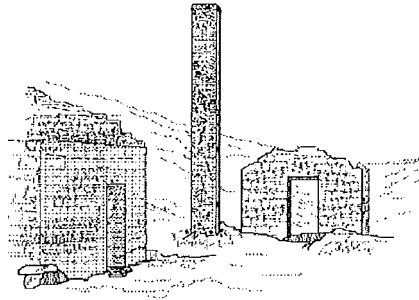
Congratulations to Alan Brown for encouraging so many of us to be at the Punch Bowl Inn, Low Row, since it could have been a depleted attendance considering the large party of men scaling the Himalayan heights. Other than the two or three guests, everyone present had more than a few grey hairs!

The Inn was an excellent base. Peter Roe, the landlord, made us welcome and supplied all our needs. It was good that we could celebrate Harry Stembridge's 93rd birthday at the Saturday evening dinner. Afterwards, David Laughton's slides of the Kamchatka Peninsula and his commentary were much appreciated.

Here are the routes followed by those present:

Saturday

Three Swaledale Peaklets: Reeth-Framlington Edge via Langthwaite (no comfort stop allowed) over Calver. Then crossed the Swale River at Low Whita bridge up Gibbon Hill, returning to Reeth by various routes (Dennis Armstrong, Frank Wilkinson, Derek Smithson, Derek Collins, Mike Hartland [potential member], Jim Rusher).



Smelt Mill, above Surrender Bridge, Hard Level Gill

Marrick Abbey: via Framlington Edge and Southwaite (David Stembridge, Bill Lofthouse).

Great Shunner Fell: Lovely Seat **returning** via Muker (Raymond Ince, Richard Gowing, Bill Todd, Alan Brown, Arthur Craven).

Nine Standards Rigg: from County Boundary Road (Maurice Wilson, Cliff Cobb).

Pub Crawl: Low Row to Langthwaite (Red Lion opened especially early - excellent beer), Framlington Edge to Hurst (pub closed for 17 years), via road to Reeth (Black Lion - indifferent beer), return to Punch Bowl Inn, Low Row - excellent (Derek Clayton, Trevor Temple [guest], Denis Barker).

Tarn Hill: to Nine Standard Rigg and back (Conrad Jorgensen, Ken Aldred, John Schofield).

Gunnarside Gill: Melbecks Moor (David Laughton, John Wright).

Melbecks Moor: Low Row via Langthwaite up Mill Beck past Old Gang Mine to Gunnarside Gill. East edge of Swale valley via Swinners Gill, Gunnarside to Low Row (Ian Laing, Gerry Lee).

Sunday (only recorded routes)

Great Pinseat: via Surrender Bridge, Healaugh Edge, return via Friarfold Rake, Lead mines, Healaugh (David Stembridge, Arthur Craven, Richard Gowing, Derek Smithson, Bill Todd, Alan Brown).

Great Shunner Fell: and return to Muker (Dennis Annstrong, Jim Rusher).

P.S. Congratulations to John and Pat Schofield on becoming grandparents. Samuel John was born during the Meet, hence John's early departure,

PRESENT:

Ken Aldred
Dennis Annstrong
Denis Barker
Alan Brown
Derek Clayton
Cliff Cobb
Derek Collins
Arthur Craven
Richard Gowing
Mike Hartland (PM)
Raymond Ince
Conrad Jorgensen
Ian Laing
David Laughton
Gerry Lee
Bill Lofthouse
Jim Rusher
John Schofield
Derek Smithson
David Stembridge
Harry Stembridge
Trevor Temple (G)
Bill Todd
Frank Wilkinson
Maurice Wilson
John Wlight

North Wales Meet 26-28 January 1996

Held at the
Chester Mountaineering Club Hut
Llanberis

The Chester Mountaineering Club Hut is a small, pleasant building situated on the lower slopes of Snowdon, near the Mountain Railway. Readily accessible from Llanberis, it is a relatively easy find for those armed with a post war map. However, those consulting Medieval Grimoire in search of its location will have less success.

Several Club members arrived early on the Friday of the meet looking for the solitude of the weekday hills. One member scrambled in the Aber Falls area, finishing atop the ancient cairn of Drosgl. Another climbed a deserted Tryfan by its snow-clad north ridge.

A small amount of snow fell overnight and after a hearty breakfast, combined with the usual procrastination and refusal to accept responsibility for the day's outcome, a large presidential party set forth for Snowdon, by way of the Llanberis path. On joining the railway track at Clogwyn Station they met with a fierce wind, blowing powder snow into every crevice and slowing progress considerably. In contrast, the summit was found to be perfectly calm. This strange phenomenon occurred on all the relatively high peaks ascended during the meet.

Moel Cynghorion was then climbed after descending via the Snowdon Ranger path. Here two options presented themselves; was there

enough daylight ahead to complete the ridge to Moel Eilio, or should they make good their escape down the valley? One member had grave misgivings about the former choice and lost no time in making his feelings known to the rest of the party. The President was quick to nip these mutinous mutterings in the bud. 'Forward!' he roared, with a flamboyant swish of his ski-pole. Thus inspired, the erstwhile mutineer strode off at such a blistering pace that he was not again seen until descending the final peak of the range. The party arrived back at the hut with daylight to spare and in good time for dinner, which is more than can be said for the other hill party that day.

These miscreants, having spent a successful day exploring the Eifl group of hills on the Lleyn Peninsula, decided to forsake dinner and head for the fleshpots, no doubt in an attempt to re-enact those hedonistic, drug-crazed Llanberis parties of yore. Alas, the place didn't live up to its reputation, they had to settle for a plate of chips at Pete's Eats and a dressing down from their hungry comrades back at the hut.

After a sumptuous dinner, the peace-loving contingent retired to the sitting room, content with idle fireside chatter. The warlike faction remained in the dining area and were soon engaged in a vigorous and increasingly loud debate. At one point, a senior member burst into the sitting room and declared 'I've had enough!' Whether he was referring to the argument or the wine is still unclear.

Sunday saw more unpredictable weather, but this did nothing to dampen the spirit. Most areas were

visited, the Moelwyn and Eifl groups being favourites. On the Snowdon range, Y Lliwedd was ascended from Pen-y-Pass and Cwm Dwythwch was explored by both Man and Dog.

All in all, an excellent meet. Thanks to Tim Josephy for the fine food and a very good choice of hut.

MPP

Attendance:

The President - Derek Bush

Dennis Armstrong

Denis Barker

Derek Collins

Ian Crowther

Robert Crowther

Eddie Edwards

Mike Godden

Richard Gowing

Tim Josephy

Mark Pryor

Jim Rusher

David Smith

Derek Smithson

George Spenceley

Peter Swindells

Barrie Wood

Martin Woods

BLENCATHRA MEET

Christmas 1995

A limited amount of snow was to be seen on the tops on Friday, but this cleared over the week-end. A few members who had arrived early on Friday enjoyed walking on Blencathra and Eddie started with Dalehead, Hindsworth and Robinson.

The Blencathra Centre is an ideal place to hold a Meet. The facilities are very good, parking is no problem, and access to the hills is as good as it could be in most places. The weather was fairly kind to us. It was mild and pleasant for walking with a light breeze for the paragliders.

The landscape appeared in a silver veil of haze and layers of mist hung about the floors of the valleys. From time to time sunlight penetrated the inconsistencies in the cloud cover and gave brilliant vistas of grey, silver and white light, rather like a Chinese watercolour. The tops of the hills relentlessly made their plumes of cloud so that the familiar perspectives could only be seen at lower levels.

However, all this did not prevent parties of stalwarts setting off, some for Honister, then over Green Gable, Great Gable in quest of Pillar - and back by Sty Head Tarn. More for Blencathra, its valleys and ridges were well attended to as also was Skiddow. Various parties visited Mock Pikes, Little Calvert, Glencoindale, Calf Crag and Can Gilmour west to Elmerdale.

After the day's exertions, dinner was a splendid affair and credit is due to David, Alan and their assistants. A pleasant flow of wine, a good dinner and very good company led to the slide show we were all eager to see. Thanks to Ged we had a first view of the slides of our Himalayan expedition to Dorje Lakpa. It was an adventure that for the evening we could share.

Sunday's weather remained unchanged. There must have been slightly more breeze because Tony's and Peter's paragliding near Binsey was more rewarding than Peter said his had been on Lattrigg on Saturday.

Sunday's outings varied, Bill Todd led a visit to the West Mercian Hutton Roof and Cliff Cobb to the wilder shores of Borrowdale, Blencathra was again assaulted, this time by Sharp Edge, Scalestarn, and a party tackled Halls Fell Ridge: this was later deemed by Tim to be not recommended. Descending from Knowe Craggs we came below cloud level and I thought it worthwhile to try and make a panoramic series of photographs of Clough Head, St JoOs in the Vale, High Rigg and the Newlands Fells. I don't expect they could possibly reflect the true quality of that light, but they will serve to remind me of a very pleasant, well attended meet.

D.T.B.

Present: Derek Bush (President)
Ken Aldred Harvey Lomas
Denis Barker Frank Milner (PM)
Alan Brown Stewart Muir (G)
Ged Champion Roy Pomfret
Albert Chapman Tom Price (G)
Derek Clayton Mark Pryor
Cliff Cobb Alister Renton
Derek Collins Harry Robinson
Arthur Craven Arthur Salmon
Ian Crowther John Schofield
Robert Crowther David Smith
Eddie Edwards Michael Smith
Iain Gilmour Derek Smithson
Ralph Haigh Tony Smythe
David Hall George Spenceley
Mike Hartland (PM) Peter St Price
David Hick Peter Swindells
Tim Josephy Trevor Temple (G)
David Laughton Mike Thompson
Gerry Lee Bill Todd
Tony Lee (G) Frank Wilkinson
Alan Linford Roy Wilson
Martin Wilson (G)

Lowstern Meet March 15th-17th

This meet was well attended. In fact the expected numbers were so great that an emergency plan had to be approved allowing the overnight construction of a new car park at Lowstern involving massive earthworkings.

On arrival at the hut, the tea folk were to be found gathered around the cosy flickering gas fire making plans for the Saturday. Whilst the others sampled ales in The New Inn.

Many elders had flown the nest by the time I'd got up on the following morning setting a fine example for the younger members of the club. Indeed, Graham Salmon, our chef for the weekend, didn't know what hit him when orders for breakfast streamed in at 7.30 in the morning. We could only conclude that for some, what used to be achieved in daylight hours now took considerably longer. This theory was classically demonstrated when the President and Arthur Salmon trundled in during supper having scaled Ingleborough and Pen-y-ghent; leaving the rest of the party faltering at The Crown in Horton.

Scouts were also sent out to recce the Ingleborough plateau, topping out over Park then Simon Fell and reporting back on two newly fenced digs at Clapham Bottoms,

Others settled for the more sheltered option during the inclement weather sticking to the high walled lanes above Austwick. Someone deemed it necessary to dig out that loud pink flat cap in which to walk the dog, brightening things up considerably.

The Sunday turned out to be a blighter day, and those who had spent

all their energy the previous day were surely wishing they hadn't. Again, those venturing onto higher ground called in on various potholes including Nick Pot and Gaping Gill Gust to check it was still there). Grey Wife Hole, recently re-opened by the YRC, was very much snow plugged and the fine work forming the entrance could not be inspected. A group of 3 Peak runners descending Cote Gill were re-routed to Horton with wishes of 'Best Luck' in finding Pen-y-ghent.

The regular callers at the hut made their way once more to their winter dig with bang and Bosch - a project on-going for perhaps three years now.

It seems that a good time was had by all, although some thought was given to ideas for new walking routes. One suggestion was a tour of Cairns as marked on the old 2½" maps.

B.B.

Attendance:

Derek Bush, President
Bruce Bensley
Alan Brown
Cliff Cobb
Ian Crowther
Mike Godden
Mike Hartland
Richard Josephy
Tim Josephy
Alan Linford
Harvey Lomas
Alister Renton
Hany Robinson
Arthur Salmon
Graham Salmon
Derek Smithson
Bill Todd
Nick Welch (G)
Frank Wilkinson

Glen Etive

15 - 17 February 1996

The journey gets easier every year. Motorways, dual carriageways and much improved roads hurry the hill-hungry climber to Scotland. Glen

Etive is more accessible every year. Is this why the Spring Bank meet has lost its attraction?

Inhir:phaolin is in the throes of renovation and the cooking facilities were not as good as in previous years. The old kitchen areas has been knocked into the dining-living area. The small shed to one end of the hut has had its roof raised and a connecting door installed. The speculation was that this would be converted into a new kitchen. The interior walls are now clad in pine and when finished will be quite smart. A large solid fuel fire has been put in the living area. Stoked up with peat briquettes it made the room very warm and welcoming.

Such comforts were needed. Weather conditions at home earlier in the year may have led us to hope that Scotland would provide us with good climbing but this proved not to be the case. For most of the weekend it was wet and very windy. There was snow, above 2,000 feet, but it was being driven at tremendous speeds. People experienced driven 'snow hurting their faces, in spite of the protection of kagouls. At these heights the main danger was of being blown off. Lower, it was of being drowned in the bogs. Many paths looked like streams, the steeper parts transformed into waterfalls; not unusual on Etive meets in latter years.



First to fall foul of the rain were two campers who woke on Friday morning to find themselves pitched in a stream. It hadn't been there the night before.

The weather led to any number of failed attempts on the mountains. A large party attempted Benn Fhionnlaidh but turned back before the summit. Two other climbers had hopes that the gully on Ben Lui would aid their ascent but they were forced back by a stream which had become a torrent. The two damp campers turned back before the summit of Ben Starav. Wind speeds on the ridge suggested that had they gone any further they would have flown like kites. A distant Corbett was reconnoitred by a party including one of the club's Munroists, now nearing completion of the 2,500 feters.

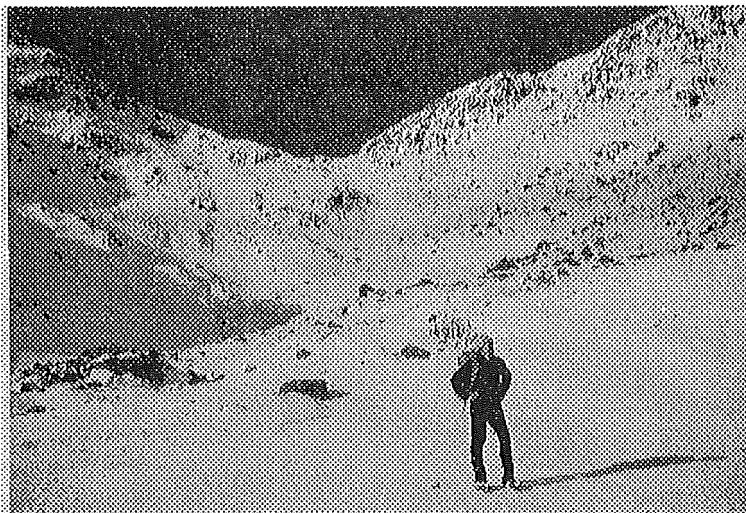
The only success of the day was an ascent of Sgor na H'ulaidh by another aspiring Munroist who inched towards the summit holding onto fence posts. He and his companion were beaten from their goal more than once until they found a convenient snow gully which left them close to the summit cann.

Thursday night's damp campers had moved their tents and dried their sleeping bags over the hut's fire only to wake on Saturday morning to find a puddle under their karrimats. Build up the fire...

Friday had yielded one Munro, Saturday was a one hundred per cent improvement;; Buachaille Etive Beag and Creise were climbed. The latter fell to a sporting route up a gully which unexpectedly contained excellent snow conditions. The pair of climbers retraced their steps over three tops because there was a blizzard on the top and they had reached the edge of their map. In fact, Victoria Bridge could have been reached by a quick descent.

Having pondered the prevailing conditions in small groups scattered around the area, and assessed the best course of action, others proceeded as one man to the nearest hostelry in time for the kick off of the Rugby Union Intemational between Scotland and Wales. One trio was delayed by a man conducting a census. They were flattered that he estimated their ages to be in the range 35 - 45 (their combined ages being in excess of 150). He was, in fact, seeking their views on the need for a new telephone hotline: Avalanche Watch perhaps? It would be interesting to know, through the pages of this journal, members' views on the need for such a service,

On Sunday most of the party were of the opinion that it was time to cut



their losses and head south. The couple of members lucky (?) enough to be able to extend their break to a full week set off to attempt Ben Sgurlaird, having sensibly made bed and breakfast arrangements for the rest of their holiday. Has anyone seen them since?

PS: I do the YRC an injustice. In fact the President's party spent Sunday attempting Meall Ghaordie, encountering white-out conditions. "The worse I have ever experienced", writes Derek.

The B. and B. pair did indeed top out on Sgurlaird. Monday saw them on Ben Cruachan and Tuesday the Horseshoe above Stronlchan to the east of the Cruachan group.

D.A.H.

Attendance

- The President, Derek Bush
- Ken Aldred
- Dennis Armstrong
- Tim Bateman
- Albert Chapman
- Ian Crowther
- Andrew Duxbury
- Eddie Edwards
- Iain Gilmour
- Mike Godden
- Richard Gowing
- David Handley
- Mike Haltland
- David Hick
- Gordon Humphreys
- Howard Humphreys
- David Martindale
- Alister Renton
- Neil Renton (Guest)
- Duncan Mackay
- John McKean
- Derek Smithson
- Michael Smith
- David Smith
- Barrie Wood