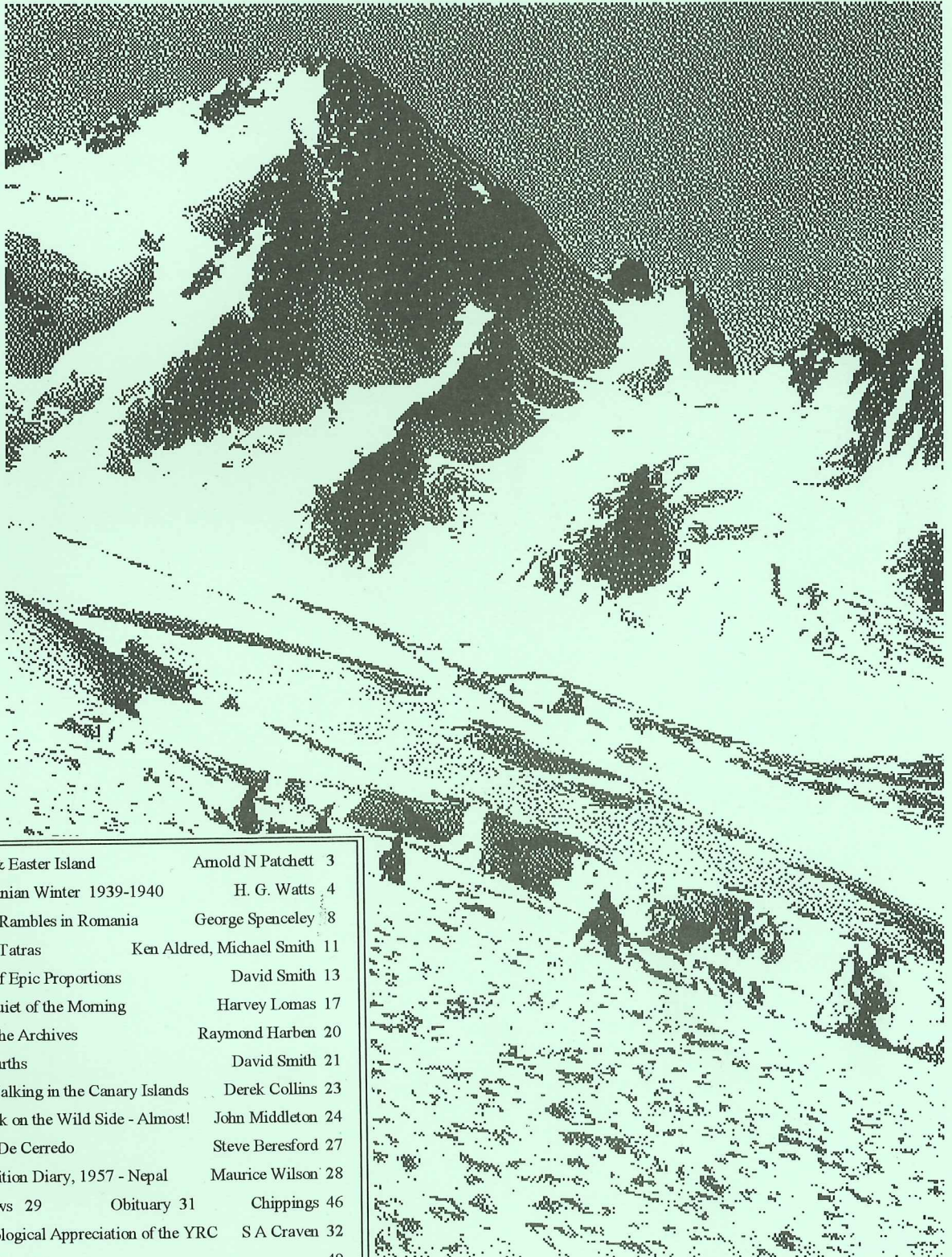


Yorkshire Rambler



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Photograph: John Devenport

Foreword by the President

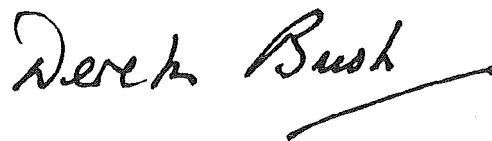
As my 'tour of duty' draws to a close it is satisfying to observe that the Bulletin goes from strength to strength. Whoever would have thought that by the time of the sixth issue, just three years from inception, there has been more material published than in our previous journals which took five or six years to produce.

Due credit must be given to Arthur Salmon for promoting the idea in his first year of office, to the Editor for carrying the project through quite brilliantly and above all to you, the contributors, without whose effort everything fails.

Looking back there is a theme running through this edition of the Bulletin and the articles will keep us busy through the long evenings of the winter months.

An appreciation of a century of Club caving and recollections of a recent cave incident contrast with a variety of articles on eastern Europe, the Americas and setting the record straight concerning a double benightment.

There is plenty of food for thought here and a sobering reflection or two. Read on...



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The opinions expressed in this publication are not necessarily those of the YRC, nor its Officers.

An information sheet, 'Notes for Contributors', is available to anyone considering submitting material for inclusion in subsequent editions.

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Chile & Easter Island

Arnold N. Patchett

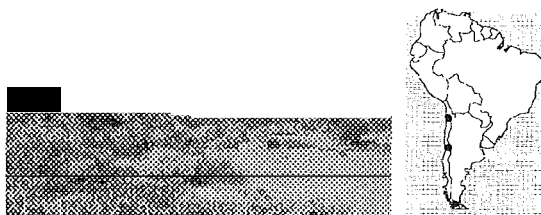
Firstly, we travelled to the vast Atacama desert in the north, and visited the very early morning geysers, as well as the main town of Antofagasta.

Thence we went to Santiago with its endless attractions and the vineyards near the city. Following this, we made a road journey through a long tunnel under the mountains to the very beautiful city of Valparaiso with its coastal and fashionable resort of Vina del Mar: great variety of sea food!

Then we flew to the south with its fantastic Paine National Park and Pehoe with icebergs, swollen rivers and stupendous waterfalls, all overlooked by the high Andes. The famous volcano, Osomo, with its everlasting snow-capped peak stands out for very many miles around, sometimes with a background of azure sky and sometimes a passing cloud.

Finally, we travelled to Punta Arenas, a lovely town, overlooking the Magellan Straits and Tierra del Fuego. Before returning home from Santiago, a two and a half day visit was made to Easter Island - a four hour flight over 2300 miles from the mainland.

The stone statues (moai) must be seen to be believed - some are thirty feet high. The piece de resistance is a row of fifteen of them overlooking the sea. They are all perfectly calved as are a number of fallen and/or damaged ones. No evidence of any early attempts by beginners to calve them appear on the island, so it is thought that they were done by professionals who were driven out of Peru by the

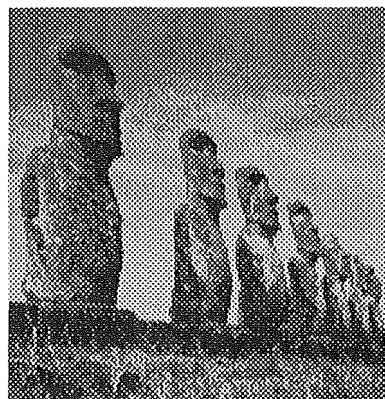


Incas centuries ago and finally landed on the first island they came to, i.e. Easter Island. They were calved and erected to commemorate specially noteworthy ancestors.

There are still some craters of extinct volcanoes one can visit with ease. At least two are over a hundred yards in diameter and are half-filled with water. Petroglyphs can be seen in several places especially on the top of the stupendously high cliffs in the south west corner of the island. Far below are three rocky islands, the haunt of countless sea birds in season. By contrast, we bathed from silver sanded palm fringed beaches into the blue Pacific. On one beach promontory is a plaque near a moai reminding us of the famous Kon T^{oo} expedition which took place a few years after World War U

We stayed at a simple, but very well equipped hotel in Hanga Roa, the little town of the island. Hibiscus trees in full flower on the roadside added to the charm.

Spelaeologists please note that there are a number of caves on Easter Island.



Roumanian Winter 1939-1940

Part 1 of 3

H. G. Watts

By an unexpected piece of good luck I spent the first winter of Hitler's war within reach of good skiing. I was on the staff of the Military Attache as a member of a small military mission which would have become active if Roumania had become involved in the war during its early months.

However, at the end of the Polish campaign the Germans found themselves cut off from the Polish - Roumanian frontier by an advancing Russian army, and had to abandon the idea of a direct military occupation of the oil fields round Ploesti in favour of the more subversive but almost equally obvious method of introducing a prodigious fifth column. Young able-bodied Germans began to appear in consulates and in German business houses, and to flood the mountain huts and ski slopes at week-ends. By March 1940 it was rumoured that there were 30,000 of them in the country, and that they had uniforms and weapons hidden ready for mobilisation at a few hours notice.

The Military Attache was at first a little embarrassed to find himself encumbered with several cheerful and somewhat irresponsible officers, whom the War Office showed no inclination to remove once the immediate danger of invasion from Poland subsided. However, he found us plenty of intelligence work to do so we established ourselves in an office adjoining his own in what had once been the Legation stables and proceeded to enjoy life in Bucharest, described by John Gunther¹ as 'a tinselly sort of little Paris'.

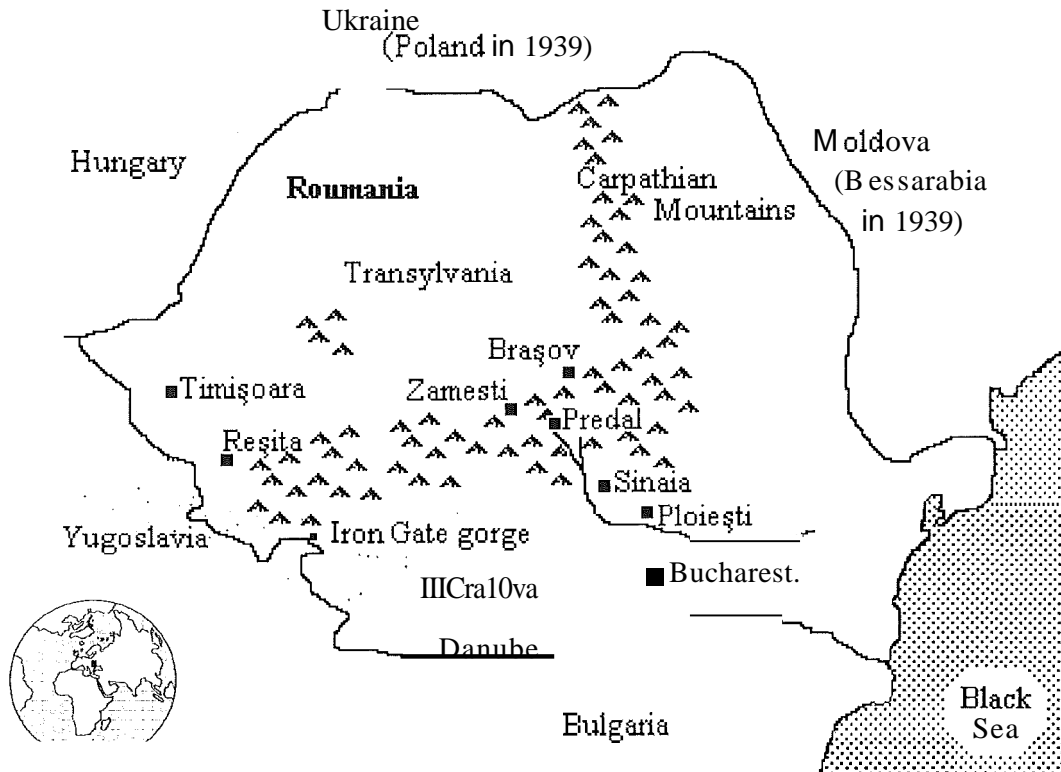
We were rather a bad smell to the real diplomats; they didn't like our habit of testing out our demolition stores in the Legation yard. One gala night we practised shooting with a .32 automatic at a picture of Hitler drawn on the door of the Air Attaché's office. The AA -didn't see the funny side of this episode and we had to pay



for a new-door. But we found a good friend in Captain Despard R.N., the Naval Attache, who used to refer to us as 'The villagers' and would often drop in for a jam. The 'wardroom' was a converted coachman's bedroom on the floor above ours, and there was always gin or whisky in his hospitable cupboard. He had been a keen skier in the early 1920's and had known Arnold Lunn, D'Egville and Chris Mackintosh, but a badly shattered leg about ten years before had put an end to active sports for him. He kept a .22 pistol in his desk and used to take pot shots at a picture of a girl pinned to the wall whilst he was talking to visitors.

He was a blood-thirsty old devil and enjoyed giving 'the villagers' advice about shooting people: "When in doubt, don't hesitate - shoot the ---, and shoot at the stomach, not the head, it's easier to hit and - - - - -". Here Captain Despard would go off into a description of what happened when he did,

During 'the' autumn I spent two week-ends walking in the mountains of the Bucegi, between Sinaia and



Brasov, which form the watershed between Old Roumania (The Regat) and her somewhat indigestible province of Transylvania, which she had acquired after the 1914 war under the Treaty of Trianon. The grassy uplands, and the glades leading down between gloriously autumn tinted woods promised good skiing when the snow came.

I found an enthusiastic companion in Major Vivian Davidson-Houston, R.E., the assistant Military Attache. Being a sapper DH's greatest joy was to motor us into the wilds of the Islomitsa valley and show us how to blow up sample lengths of pipe. He had travelled in many countries and spoke Russian and Chinese but he had never skied before. It only took one day for the SPOlt to get its usual hold over him.

The real winter snow fell a week before Christmas, so with new boots and borrowed ski DH and I set off up

the Prahova Valley to Sinaia. Nothing exciting happened to the war that winter, and we skied every week-end until the snow melted in May.

The Carpathians are not high mountains like the Alps, in fact there is nothing higher than 8,300 ft, so they do not offer that protection from wind which adds so much to the charm of Switzerland and Austria. The sides of the valleys are steep and craggy, but on the tops the rounded plateau, with limestone under-lying peat and turf, are like the Pentines, and have evidently at one time been much eroded by glaciers.

The snow quickly goes sun- and wind-crusted and skiing conditions are usually more difficult than under normal winter conditions in the Alps. However, we soon developed an eye for country and began to pick out the sheltered side of a gully where the surface was still unspoilt. At first our borrowed ski had no steel edges; these

are essential if the discomfort of an uncontrolled, rattling side-slip on wind-crust is to be avoided.

It is advisable always to carry a reliable map and compass because sudden unexpected mists can come up at any season of the year, and it is not always easy to find a way down the sides of the valleys from the high ground. The standard of map-making was low compared with British and Alpine; hachurings were used in many maps instead of contours, so that heights were 'unreliable.. and paths and tracks marked 'on 'the map ~~often~~ did not exist or were not precisely indicated on the ground. The method of marking both ski and walking routes was the same as the one popularly used in Germany; a cypher shown on the map was reproduced on rocks and trees along the track, only the marks were not always kept freshly painted.

The country where we did most of our skiing lies between the parallel valleys of the Prahova and the Islomitsa rivers. The three most popular resorts within easy reach of Bucharest are Sinaia, in the Prahova valley; Predeal, at the top of the pass into Transylvania; and Brasov, on the edge of the Transylvanian plain. All three lie on the main railway line running north-westwards towards Budapest.

We found plenty of club huts, most of them inhabited all the year round, in these hills, so in even the worst weather we could find shelter, a hot meal and a cup of tea. Roumania, thanks presumably to Slav influence in the past, was, and maybe still is, one of the few European countries where it was possible to get a good cup of tea.

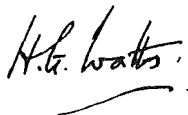
There were three kinds of hut; military outposts in the mountains, where visitors were looked after in a rough and ready army way; those run by the Touring Club Roman, a Bucharest organisation; and huts belonging to the S.K.Y. (Siebenburgen Karpathen Verein) a skiing and mountaineering club run by the Saxons from Brasov.

The S.K.V. huts always had that atmosphere of warmth, comfort and welcome that we know so well in Switzerland and Austria, and we found this to be so even when they were full, as they so often were, of Hitler's infiltrated Reichsdeutsche. There was always "Suppe", scrambled egg or omelette (mit schinken), roast lamb or pork, sausage, apfelstrudel, sheep's cheese and dark beer, and there was a delicious smell of burning pine wood.

In the T.C.R. huts, staff, language, food and atmosphere were all Roumanian, and somehow we never succeeded in feeling so much at home in them. The Roumanians have a passion for decorating all their cold food with whorls and rosettes of thick and rather 'sickly mayonnaise, the choice of dishes never seemed so attractive as in the Teutonic S.K.Y. huts, and the cooking was, to our English taste, too greasy and too much permeated with garlic. They have a peculiarly tasteless white curdy cheese - "branza Alba" - with caraway seeds in it. It seemed to take so much longer to get a meal; this we concluded was because the Roumanian idea of a day's skiing is a slow amble up the hill, a long lunch, chat and drink, and a gentle ~~down~~ 'to hot "Tsuica" at the bottom - Tsuica is a spirit distilled from fermented

pears or plums; drunk hot with nutmeg it can be very stimulating on a cold day. The Saxon, like his Anglo-Saxon cousin, gets to the top, wolfs his meal, runs down, then comes up and does it again.

There is a charming legend that these Transylvanian Saxons are descended from the children who were led into the mountains by the Pied Piper of Hamelin; and that he took them by tortuous ways underground till he brought them out into this beautiful country. In point of fact the first German colonies were planted in 1143 by King Geza II of Hungary, who brought them from Westphalia and the Lower Rhine to cultivate and repeople the territory which had been laid waste when conquered by Stephen I early in the 11th century. In the middle of the 18th century there were further migrations of Protestant Austrians from the Salzkammergut. The term "Saxon" is used locally in much the same way as it is still used by the Celtic inhabitants of the British Isles, to denote people of Teutonic origin. The Saxon villages still have the solid look so characteristic of central Germany; the stone houses turn blank backs to the street, and face into an inner 'Hof', access to which is through great arched doorways. In 1939 there were 250,000 of these Saxons. Their large number, and evident lack of sympathy with government from Bucharest made very real the threat of a "Coup d'Etat" in collaboration with the alleged 30,000 Reichsdeutsche.



Background notes:

Roumania is about 740 km (about 460 miles) east to west with a varied topography. The hilly Transylvanian Plateau with its wide farmed valleys enjoying warm summers and cold winters, is surrounded by mountains. Here above the timberline, around 1750m (5740 ft), the flora is alpine. The Carpathians enclose it to the north and east, and the Transylvanian Alps to the south. These alps continue south to the Danube gorge as the Banat Mountains. The Bihor Mountains are to the west of the basin. South of the main mountain chain is the Walachian Plain across which the Danube flows.

Although initially neutral in World War II, Roumania aligned with the Axis powers and developed a policy of friendship toward Germany. In June 1940, without opposition from Germany, with which it had signed a nonaggression pact in August 1939, the Soviet Union occupied Bessarabia. In August, at the demand of Germany and Italy, Roumania lost most of Transylvania to Hungary, and in September the southern coastal strip was ceded to Bulgaria. The German army occupied Romania under the pretext of protecting the oil fields from British attack and General Antonescu became Roumania's dictator supported by the Iron Guard. The king abdicated and left. His successor, Michael, was king only in name. Popular riots were met with massacres. Romania later entered World War II in June 1941 by attacking the Soviet Union at the same time as Germany did.

The article was passed first to Cliff Downham, then David Smith before arriving with your Editor for publication. The article has been split into three parts. The first sets the scene and the others cover the southern and northern areas visited on ski.

Tim Watts later coordinated ICI's work across Europe and was editor of the Journal from 1949 until his death in 1970.

i John Gunther, foreign correspondent for the Chicago Daily News and the NEC, published 'Inside Europe' in 1939.

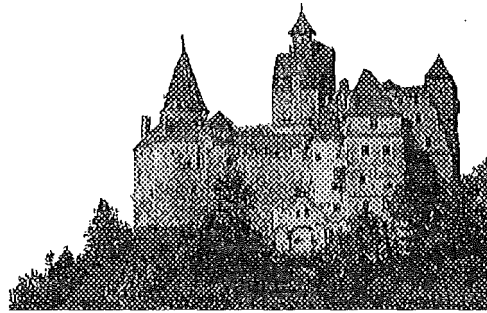
Minor Rambles in Romania

George Spenceley

Over a period of more than thirty years and numerous visits my wife Sylvie and I have developed for Romania a kind of love-hate relationship: love for its varied scenery and its rich peasant culture, hate for its inefficiency, its corruption and crime. While we had motored, walked, canoed and camped, visiting almost every part of the country, the mountains of Romania still remained a mystery. We had seen them only from the road and the tourist literature gave us no clue as to their potential.

With the 1989 revolution and the fall of Ceausescu we were encouraged to return and now, with reduced restrictions, some mountain wandering was to be part of our schedule. Our Bucharest contact was Nicolae, an opportunist and a rogue without doubt, but a man of great charm and useful influence. He had been no party member he emphatically declared, notwithstanding his residence in the exclusive and restricted Bulevard Primavera exactly opposite Ceausescu's former palace. For the first time he was now free to invite us to his home.

Nicolae was eager to plan our itinerary and to join us for the first few days of our journey. Along with his wife Gina, in a car already overloaded with food and a mountain of goods for some needy orphanage, we set off for Transylvania. In the land of fortified churches to the north of Brasov, we left the village of Virghis to drive ten miles in bottom gear along a rough track, marked on no map, and probably where no private car had been before. We made camp beside



14th Century Bram Castle, Transylvania

the primitive dwellings of some charcoal burners.

It now appeared that the chief object of this tortuous journey was less to show us the splendid scenery of this remote corner of Romania but to allow our dubious friend Nicolae to fish in a river little fished before. He and Gina disappeared until dusk up some steep-sided limestone gorge, but not before taking us to its chief point of interest.

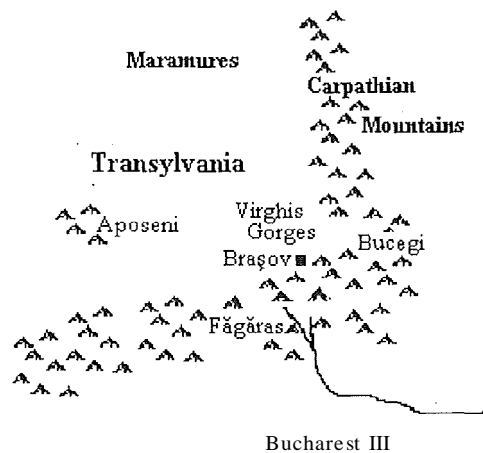
This was the dark opening to a cave reached by a scramble up the wall of the gorge. At its mouth stood a memorial stone to two cavers who had entered here some years earlier never to be seen again. Nicolae, who lives in a fantasy world, told us in all seriousness that this was the opening from which emerged the children following the Pied Piper of Hamelin.

*"For he led us, he said, to a joyous
land*

Joining the town and just at hand"

That accounted, he said, for the large German-speaking Saxon population in these parts.

*"And I must not omit to say
That in Transylvania there's a tribe
Of alien people that ascribe
The outlandish ways and dress
On which their neighbours lay
such stress
To their fathers and mothers
having risen
Out of some subterranean prison."*



We were limited for time but this little visited area of the Virghis Gorges offers great opportunities for the walker 'and, no doubt, both the cragsman and the caver, but facilities are few and maps, information and guidance, lacking or of little use.

We were to travel north-west making for our favourite Transylvanian province of Maramures where a rich peasant culture is still a living thing which forty-five years of Communist rule and Ceausescu's destructive megalomania had failed to destroy. On a Sunday we watched the wooden churches fill with worshippers colourfully garbed in extravagant hand-made costumes. On the following market day the scene was even more colourful and varied with the addition of gypsies, horse dealers, shepherds, craftsmen and traders.

We stayed in the hotel at Sighetul Marmatiei where \$50 was demanded for a spartan room dimly lit with one 40 watt lamp. The coarse sheets seemed doubtful and there was no hot water and, after 9 p.m., no water at all. Most of the items on the menu were off, there was no beer or wine, only a sickly sweet fizzy pink pop. We soon transferred ourselves to a private house where at a fraction of the cost, but still paid in treasured dollars, we were wannly welcomed and cosseted. When we departed it

was with affectionate embraces and bearing their gifts of local handiwork.

The rounded mountains of Maramures rise to 2000 metres and extend east to the Bistrita valley down which we had canoed some years earlier. They give splendid walking and a few mountain huts offer basic accommodation. But ours was but a brief visit; our aim now was to walk in the more challenging range of the Fagaras, the highest in Romania.

On our journey to them we revisited another little known area of limestone peaks and valleys, the Apuseni. We remembered this area from some of our early travels in the sixties, where there still existed in the villages the old tradition of spontaneous hospitality and the best room in the best house would be williugly vacated for the strange foreign visitors. On this last occasion we accepted hospitality at the Orthodox Monastery of Remetz, beautifully situated below the cliffs of a steep-sided limestone gorge. By tradition such hospitality is offered free but a donation to the Order is williugly received and, if paid in dollars, the nuns will no doubt pray for your welfare with even greater fervour.

Driving east from Sibiu we could see the great wall of the Făgăras rising steeply from the plain like the Cairngorms from the Spey valley only higher. We spent the night as the guest of the Father Superior of the Monastery of Brincoveanu, the next morning walking for several hours to the mountain hut, the Cabarnet Valea Simbetei,

The Romanian Alpine Club, first formed in 1934, was dissolved in Communist days to become just another State controlled federation. Now restored, although lacking in funds and resources, it is eager to

build more mountain huts, acquire proper equipment and make foreign contacts. Some of its members were sitting outside a mountain rescue post close to the Cabarnet. As we walked past they hailed us with delight for, while all others were garbed in track suits and trainers, we alone were properly booted and clad as mountain people should be. Perhaps to test my prowess I was promptly invited by one of its members to walk and scramble to a high col at some 2000 metres.

As people from the West we were regarded with some awe and curiosity and that evening we were surrounded by university students most speaking good English or French. They questioned us eagerly as if we were prophets from another world, a world that few of them could easily visit for economic reasons if no longer political ones.

We were to return to the mountains some weeks later with our Bucharest friend Cristina Goran, herself a mountain walker. This time we visited the Bucegi massif, the most important climbing area in Romania. As we walked up to the Cabarnet Poiana Izvoarelor we faced a long, almost unbroken line of steep limestone cliffs. While some noteworthy routes have been made up this face, many other possibilities remain.

Cristina knew the warden and arranged that, for a few dollars, we would enjoy favourable service and also, at that time, those most rare of Romanian commodities, beer and wine. These were brought up by mule and here remains a profound mystery, While the great tourist hotels of Sinai and Busteni could serve only the revolting pink pop why, we wondered, in a simple hut halfway up a mountain could you, if you so wished, get uproariously drunk? Whatever

dubious dealings were the cause, news of this plentitude spread far and wide. Following the mule there came a procession of gypsies and other hard drinking types toiling up from the valley bottom. There was much boisterous behaviour and some fighting that night.

With Cristina we made several pleasant excursions on the terraces below the cliffs and, on the final day, I made my only noteworthy ascent. This was to the summit of Omu, 2507 metres, the third highest mountain in Romania. I did it with a young Romanian boy who claimed to know the way. After several hours of forest path we tackled the face more or less direct by generally easy scrambling. Such difficult passages as there may have been were protected by fixed ropes. In six or seven hours we came out on to the summit plateau. The descent was north by an easier but much longer route and through a valley of spectacular limestone cliffs.

In climbing Omu I was not the first YRC member to make the ascent. Employed in some special war time service, the late Harry Watt described his ascent in 1940 in No. 24 of our Journal. He called it "Omul: or Getting Fit for War".





Polish Tatras

Ken Aldred

Anyone considering a change from the Alps may be tempted to visit the Polish Tatras. This part of the Carpathian Mountains has much to offer the walker who is content with the relatively low altitude. My wife and I had a botany trip in June, our choice of timing made with the intention of seeing the wide range of Alpine flowers. Unfortunately, it also corresponded to a very wet spell; heavy, vertical Tatra rain being indistinguishable from that of the Alps. We were advised that August was a better month but the problem then would be that the area is extremely popular and the prospect of joining a queue in order to climb a mountain does not appeal.

Covering 27 x 10 **km**, it is a very compact area and is provided with numerous well marked footpaths, most of them colour-coded to match the information given in the cheap maps and guide books available in Zakopane and Kuznice, the two larger towns on the Polish side of the border.



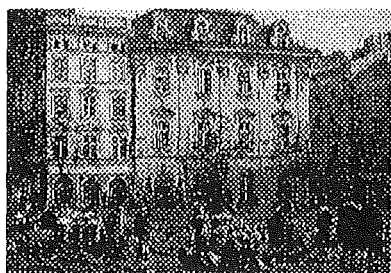
The whole of the Polish Tatras lies within a National Park and enjoys the protection of extensive legislation. Visitors are not allowed to stray from the footpaths although it is possible to obtain climbing permits for the granite, but not limestone, areas. Some of the most attractive parts lie along the ridges separating Poland from Slovakia. Here walkers approaching from either side meet along the top and mingle quite freely, but are obliged to return to their own side of the hills at the end of the day. Parties of ten or more must employ a guide. Apparently, large parties are not allowed to get lost but smaller groups are not restricted by this bureaucracy. YRC groups could do their usual things.

We used several centres, the first being Schronisko Chocholowskie, a mountain hut built at the end of a metalled road in 1933. From the large stone-built hut a pleasant path climbed steadily through trees to a col, Grzes, then south along a broad grassy ridge to the peak Wolowiec (2063m). *Primula minima* was the most common flower along the ridge with dwarf *pinus mugo* providing scant protection from the elements as its maximum height was rarely more than a metre. There were many fine ridges and peaks to be seen from the summit, some of them over the border in Slovakia, but all promising more interesting days in the hills. In the meadows on the way back to the hut were the usual profusion of flowers, but none more colourful than masses of bright yellow *caltha palustris*, the common marsh marigold.

Our last centre was at Schronisko Morskie Oko, another large stone mountain hut built in

1908 above the lake of the same name. The weather was not kind and we saw very few of the tops, and those seen were for a few seconds only as the clouds or mist parted for a fleeting glimpse. A path leads round the lake and climbs alongside a series of waterfalls to the upper lake of Czarny Staw pod Rysami. Continuing in the same direction for about three hours would bring one to the summit of Rysy, the highest summit in Poland, requiring ice-axe and crampons early in the season but infinite patience later in the summer when queues form below the summit scramble. From Czarny Staw we climbed south towards the summit of Kazaluica but a mixture of sleet, thick mist and many alpine plants persuaded us that the saddle of Mieguszowieka would not offer us any greater satisfaction had we carried on.

The people of Southern Poland, whilst not being unfriendly, do not greet visitors with the same enthusiasm as encountered in other parts of Europe. Perhaps their experience of foreigners over the last 60 years gives them good cause to be wary but the best we could say about our reception was that it was of indifference to them. However, the exciting scenery, picturesque villages, (not the chocolate box Swiss holiday resorts), and the beautiful city of Krakow, an excellent starting point to the holiday, made this an area which can be safely recommended.



Old Town Square Krakow

A Winter day on Rysy

Michael Smith

Speaking only a few words of Polish had been a hindrance to clear communication through the small window in the crowded and noisy Zakopane bus station the day before. I wanted a return ticket but could only have a single. It did though secure for me a place on the early, pre-dawn bus to the Morskie Oko. The bus filled rapidly until not only all the seats were filled but the fold down arm flaps which bridged the aisle between each pairs of seats and all the open space at the front by the driver.

Arriving I found lake was deep-frozen and while some locals ventured onto the ice I floundered round through soft snow. A 200m rise took me to a tarn, Czarny Staw, at about 1600m and on to a frozen cascade crossed by bands of snow. This gave a better footing than the deep snow of the hillsides but spindrift and strong winds lifting me off the ice made me return to the roadhead and its hut for a glass of tea.

A coach, parked on the frozen lake, was the centre of a milling crowd. Promptly at dusk the bus returned and I went over to find an angry crowd berating the anxious driver. The coach party marooned in this remote spot had him besieged. Chaos reigned until the driver, hanging from the door, waved his pistol and, presumably, demanded silence. He called out and small groups pushed through to present tickets and board until nearly full. We pressed closer. With no return ticket I was expecting to spend a night in the hut. Ruefully I pulled out my ticket and was showing it to the person beside me with a shrug of resignation. Suddenly I was the centre of a shouting and pushing group and was propelled through reluctantly yielding backs to a driver who through volume, anger and gesticulation communicated that I should have boarded earlier and had to pay for the return journey. I would gladly have paid him twice. It made a good tale when safely back at the hostel.

Days of Epic Proportions

David Smith

Why is it that the less successful days turn out to be more memorable than the better days? The epic tale of disaster after disaster undergone by two past presidents of the YRC and a trusting guest has been told on many an occasion since those memorable two days, with no doubt varying degrees of elaboration to suit the audience at the time.

Before memories become too dimmed it needs documenting; this is the 'definitive' version. It all started on a day at the Plaunus campsite near Pontresina in 1988. Two parties set out, one bound for the Biancograt of Piz Bernina and the other for Piz Roseg a less demanding route. The second party comprised Arthur Salmon, Michael Ackerley and David Smith. It is this group that is the subject of the amazing story.

It was a beautiful day as we made our way along the Val Roseg. We saw a large colourful group conducting a religious service in a hollow at Alpa Magna. Flowers decorated the moraine leading to the Tschierva hut 3½ hour from the station at Pontresina. It is a wonderfully situated hut with impressive views of both mountains.

The first part of the route involved descending unpleasant scree and boulders into the Vadret da Tschierva and up the glacier to the obvious col between Piz Roseg and Piz Aguagliouls at 3148m. It was here that the first mishap occurred, Arthur put his foot through thin ice to receive a wetting. Undeterred we moved on to

the rocky south side of the mountain; how conditions had changed since I was there with John Vamey in 1960, much of the snow had disappeared leaving gravel on the sloping shelves hardly conducive to speedy progress.

It was at this stage 3590m and well into the afternoon that we realised that we were not going to make the 3937m summit and decided to abandon the attempt and make for the Refuge Marco Rosa where we were to meet up with Roger and Sue Allen who were out with Graham Salmon on the Biancograt-Cras Alva. We descended cautiously onto the glacier Vad da la Sella and made our way up to the col, Fuorcla da la Sella at 3269m.

Here was the start of our problems, we met an Italian guide and his client who suggested that we keep to the middle of the couloir leading towards the hut. What he meant was the middle of the glacier, but we should have checked the guide book first. Dropping down into the Vadretta di Scerscen Suoeriere we could clearly see the Marco Rosa hut 3597m high up on the Fuorcla Crast Aguzza.

The couloir was steep; we wasted some time looking at the rocks, but as they were loose and neither Michael nor Arthur showed any enthusiasm for giving them any consideration we returned to the comparative safety of the snow. This was another mistake as we learned later at the hut. Proceeding up the couloir we encountered a series of bergschrunds which once crossed presented a situation of no return, The couloir steepened and the day became evening and the signs in the sky became ominous, there was a storm brewing. However, all seemed well, the hut was clearly in sight a mere 500m above us.

Heading leftwards, we considered it wise to have the rocks on the edge of the couloir to hand in case conditions did get worse. As we looked down the glacier a series of flashes of lightening heralded an approaching storm. Hastily we took to the rocks finding a huge block about four feet square, flat on top but at an angle of something in the order of 15 degrees from the horizontal. This was to be our bed for the night, there was no obvious cover to be seen in the failing light. My brother-in-law and I made use of my double poly-survival bag, Arthur had to survive alone in his bag.

We were adequately belayed to the rock, but this did not prevent us from slipping down the rock from time to time and having to re-adjust the belays. We witnessed the most dramatic storm that I have ever seen in forty years in the mountains. It was almost as light as day at times. I do not think that we ever thought we were in any danger, it was just a case of sitting and sliding it out until dawn. Nor do I not think that anyone of us had much sleep but I expect that we did.

Once again we could see the Marco Rosa hut. We left our perch on the rock, regained the couloir and moved slowly upwards. It was very cold and it started to rain. The snow turned to ice, on an ice wall of perhaps 75 degrees Arthur lost hold of his axe which slid and fell down the couloir, it was quite impossible to recover, what on earth could we do now?

Arthur had over the past three alpine holidays carried two superb titanium ice screws, which he had obtained on one of his visits behind the Iron Curtain. These two pieces of high tech metal were to be our

saviours. Placing one in and belaying Michael and Arthur to it I cut footholds and handholds into the steep ice wall moving with extreme care across and upwards for about 20 feet at a time before inserting the second ice screw and belaying myself. With double protection Arthur joined me and belayed, then Michael joined us. So this process continued with cold icy water dripping on us from above until we had reached the comparative safety of the rock and snow slope that would take us to the hut.

It was so cold that we were past shivering we just shuddered with the damp cold of the early morning. We saw Roger's party leaving the hut, but were unable to make contact. Then the mist started to descend removing the hut from view but not before we were able to get a line on the place. It was full noon before we actually set foot in the hut, some seven hours after starting off that morning.

We were greeted by the Warden who immediately diagnosed our needs and produced a calor gas fire. I cannot remember having anything to eat, but remember the generous offer of spare clothes from an East German girl before we went up to the dormitory for sleep. Roger had telephoned and established that we were safe. We looked out of the window to view the couloir, it looked horrendous and quite impossible to all but the foolhardy. In fact we felt quite pleased with our performance, or at least I did.

The following morning we prepared for the safe and straight forward Bellavista Traverse, this would take us to the Fortesa Ridge which we had experienced on a near perfect traverse of Piz Palu some days

earlier. It was very misty out, but we moved off towards the traverse. As we crossed a series of shallow open crevasses I found myself at the bottom of one having misjudged the length of rope between me and Michael. No harm done and we were off again. The plateau exhibited a series of what we took to be old footprints which we duly followed until the mist reached down to join the snow.

Fortunately this atmospheric condition did not last, the open expanse of snow eventually presented me with a crevasse about two feet wide. This I jumped and moved away to safeguard the other two. Some ten feet away from the crevasse on apparently safe area of snow I disappeared from view. "He's gone" was the cry from Arthur. And indeed I had gone, I found myself suspended 15 feet below the surface looking up at a small hole letting in the blue sky light. It was as though I had fallen through a chandelier. It was quite exciting to the extent that I had no fear. I just looked round in total bewilderment,

I heard cries from above and felt a pull on the rope, but as the crevasse was on an incline the rope cut itself into one edge locking itself into the ice. Michael, who had had no previous alpine experience had reacted instantly and driven in his axe rendering me, one might say, relatively safe. What now? As the crevasse was at an angle a drop of melting water had relentlessly dripped onto the opposing ice wall and had formed a bulge. This was to be the foundation of my escape.

Gradually developing a swimming movement I managed to gain a

delicate purchase on the bulge with my knees but only to be returned to square one by a pull on the rope intended as an attempt to extract me. Regrettably it only compounded the situation, the rope cut deeper into the ice. Again I set up the swinging motion and regained my tenuous hold on the bulge. The crevasse was about five or six feet wide at this point, widening as it became deeper. I could not see the bottom but estimated it to be about 70 ft below me.

I still had my axe, just as well as it was new and to lose two axes would have been considered careless by Lady Bracknell's definition. To safeguard my precarious position on the bulge of ice I reached backwards with the axe to touch the opposite wall. The crevasse narrowed to about two feet at the top. It could only get better if I could move upwards, which I did by front pointing up the overhanging wall and holding in position by my axe on the opposing wall.

How long it took I do not know, but eventually my head popped out through the hole much to the relief of my companions I expect. I was none the worse for the experience in fact it was in some curious way enjoyable. I never had any doubts that I would get out, but no doubt St. Bernard was watching over me.

We headed for the Fortesa Ridge we knew, but could well have been better finding a way down the Labyrinth, which leads on to the Morteratsch Glacier. The very word Labyrinth is off putting, and so we crossed to the Fortesa Ridge. It was quite different from the ridge of a few days earlier, it was covered with new snow. Progress was very slow as

safety was of the essence. Slowly we descended belaying on the numerous awkward steep rocks.

It was now getting dark again, but we had reached safety. We made the wrong decision. Instead of heading for Diavolezza we elected to return by the lower dry ice Morteratsch Glacier. We had seen large parties on it earlier in the week and it looked easy enough. We moved with relative speed at this stage to prompt Arthur to refer to his movement as being 'like being taken for a walk by two alsatians', Michael and I being somewhat taller with longer strides were unaware of Arthur's rapid paddling of his feet though the snow and rocks.

The Guardian at the Boval Hut, whose wife drinks at the same pub as Arthur in Leeds thoughtfully left on the outside light giving us a reference point. Moving towards it we encountered the rough rock and earth of the moraine. It looked dangerous to say the least, but had we spotted the track marked on the map, we would have been better placed.

The glacier was a never ending challenge; the open crevasses blocked our way incessantly and we had to continually retrace our tracks. By about one oclock we, or rather Arthur had decided enough was enough, we stopped, searched in vain for food in our rucksacks and settled down for our second night out, this time on a bed of ice.

At first light we saw lights moving up the track to the Boval Hut. We saw one person head upwards, but the other two had obviously spotted us and were making for us. It was Roger with Alan Linford two of my dependable alpine friends. It took them no time at all to reach us; arriving well prepared with food. What it is to have such friends, It is the magic of the mountains that cements such friendship.

Arriving back at the campsite, chastened to some extent by our experiences, we were greeted by our wives who had probably had the worst of it. A long and refreshing sleep followed and the episode became part of the tapestry of our lives.



The Quiet of the Morning

Harvey Lomas

The sound of the phone ringing roused me from my sleep. A voice on the other end asked me if I would answer an incident at Ease Gill. I vaguely remember saying "Yes." It was about six o'clock one morning early in May, 1988.

The caller said that three cavers were overdue in the Ease Gill system and had not been seen since the previous day when a colleague, feeling unwell, had left them to return to the surface.

I gathered my equipment. Then driving up to Bull Pot my thoughts were "Where could they possibly be? Missing all night and still not found." Calling in at the Clapham CRO depot I half expected them to have been found but they were not. Even stopping off at Inglesport yielded little more information. It was still 'just another incident'. The realisation that all was not normal had not yet dawned on me. As events unfolded I was soon to realise that this was a day I was hardly likely to forget..... ever.

Ease Gill is a vast system connecting Lancaster Hole and Lost John's cave systems to make the longest system in the country. There are many inlets and series branching off at different levels from the main passage which leads from Top Sink down to the main down-stream sump in Lancaster Hole. Search teams had been in the cave all night and had found nothing. Were the missing cavers lost up one of those many

inlets, marooned with exhausted lights? Assuming that this was the situation I arrived at Bull Pot Farm.

The situation of Bull Pot Farm is, in my opinion, second to none. The colours of the fells across that panoramic sweep of Crag Hill, Great Coum and Gregareth are a splendid greeting as you drive the narrow road contouring high above Casterton Fell before descending to the isolated farmstead. This valley of Ease Gill is where old Westmoreland joins Lancashire... and was the place where on this day three people were still lost.

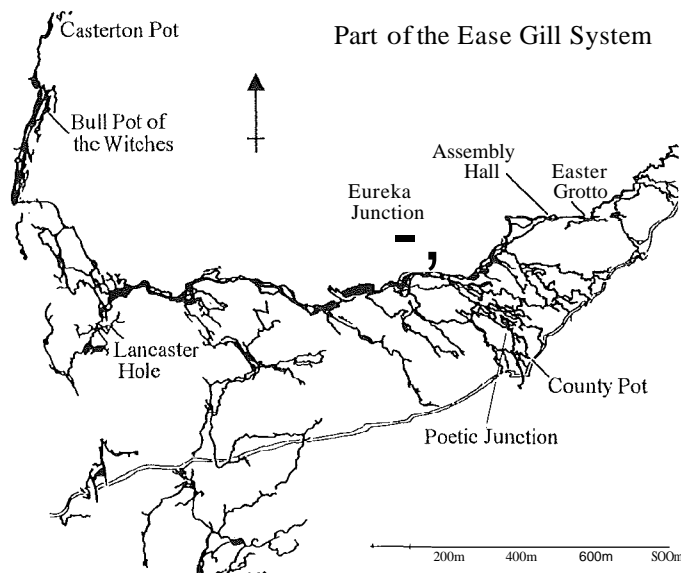
The CRO 'Control Room' was in the back room of the Red Rose Pothole Hut at Bull Pot. Tired looking controllers were musing over surveys and light poured through a window illuminating the cigarette smoke. A bleak message came over the radio "Two cavers found. Condition green." meaning that they were dead.

One of the search party in an area down in the stream below Assembly Hall near Easter Grotto had discovered signs of a rock fall. She thought she could see another searcher squeezing through boulders but found on closer inspection that it was one of the unfortunate cavers wedged high on the lip of the passage. The roof-fall had wedged him to the cave wall with a piece of rock the size of a Transit van.

There was a split second of stillness as the news came through and we realised the implications. Then the mood changed. I accompanied a senior controller despatched to make

an on-the-spot assessment of the situation.

A warm breeze blew through the heather and clouds hung over Gregareth as we walked in silence to the cave entrance of County Pot. In Ease Gill itself we quickly broke the stillness and serenity as we bombed along familiar passages. It was not long before we approached the site of the accident with that feeling of dread welling up inside when you



know full-well that you are about to experience something unpleasant. Whether or not I would be able to keep my nerve exercised my mind and there was temptation to find an excuse. This had to be dismissed and like the rest, I just had to keep my nerve despite the sound of boulders being moved.

We met one of the rescuers and I was given a phone to set up in the Assembly Hall though this was soon to be abandoned as an alternative location was found. Alone I moved towards the sounds of the rescue, climbing down into the stream then following it upstream to a crawl with an oxbow on the left. Almost there, rising up into the passage, I nearly

stepped on a bundle.. it was a body bound up in a bag.

Now part of the throng I slowly moved over the litter of gear, ropes, bags and tools to the focus of the attention, the second unfortunate caver who was being placed in a bag. There was then a pause, before the attempt to extract the third, while drills and shoring made their long journey from the surface. I cast my eyes across the great boulder collapse in search of the casualty. There, to the left, just above the lip of the roof where it met the collapse, was the body badly compressed by the sheer weight of rock. Facial features were unrecognisable. I managed to compose myself to cope with this situation while we all waited. Some talked, some were silent, some took the chance to eat and drink for there was still much to be done.

When the gear arrived we stabilised the larger rocks, by wedging them with smaller ones, so that drilling then plug-and-feathering could be used to split them. The shoring was used to prevent the boulders moving sideways. In contrast to the quiet monning on the fellside above, here the stream roared beneath the collapse while hammers rang out, drills rattled and we all pulled on ropes, pushed and levered with iron bars to manoeuvre the boulders. While extracting the leg of the casualty from being pinned between

rocks a final pull released it suddenly and I was rewarded with a firm blow on the head from the released booted foot.

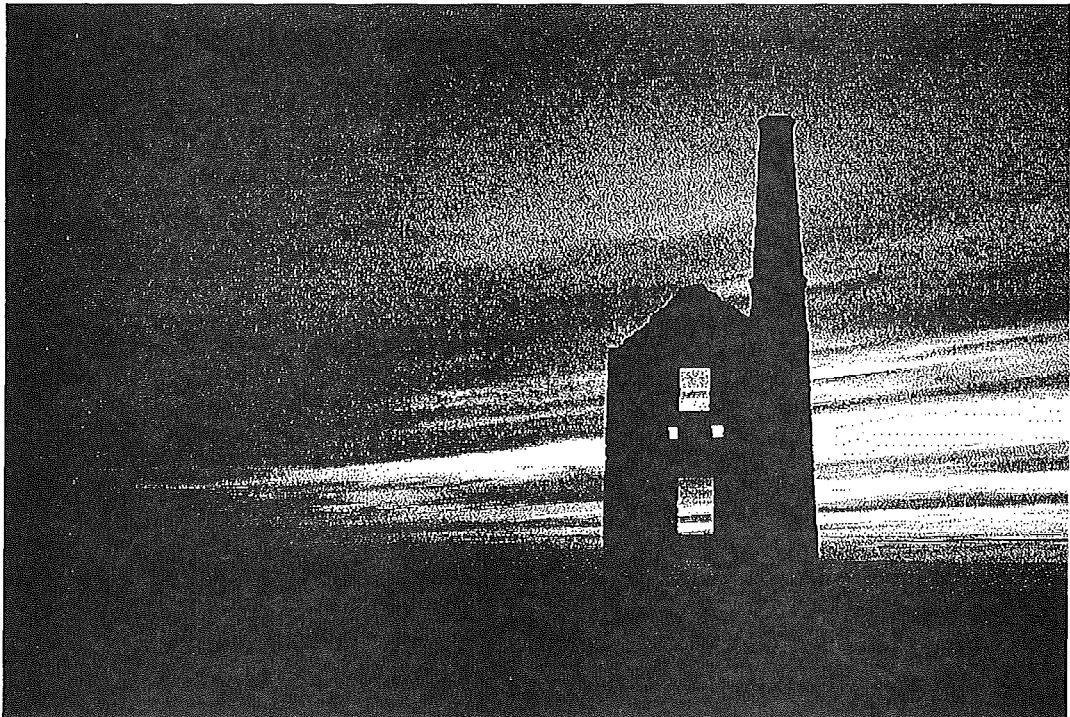
He was finally released from his place of grief by being gently slid away by a pull on his lamp belt. I turned him round and laid his stiffened corpse on the cave floor. Others placed him in a bag, prepared a stretcher and secured him in it. I now became aware of just how much backup was in place as another team was there ready to start the long, difficult carry to the surface. The other two were already well on their way out.

I gathered up gear and took some of the boxes away passing the stretcher team. It is a quite easy trip with spotting climbs out to Eureka Junction and through County Pot with its Poetic justice... but not with

a stretcher. The repeated pulling, jamming, releasing and lifting would take a lot of time, patience and effort for the team in contrast to the carefree pleasure of those who explore the caverns of Ease Gill.

I made my exit from the cave to find groups of people milling about watching the emerging cavers sorting themselves out. A kindly walker gave me a drink from his flask then I walked slowly over to Bull Pot where the full rescue circus was in full swing. Away from the flying commands and counter commands a girl, doing her bit away from the crowd, asked me if I would like some food and drink. It was pleasant to hear a soft, warm, uncommanding voice.

Like, I suppose, most of the others that night, I slept unquietly.



From the Archives

Raymond Harben

It was by sheer coincidence that a week or two before receiving Summer '96s Y.R.C. Bulletin, which contained a photograph of the 1949 Irish Meet, your Archivist had found a copy of a song written to commemorate the

occasion and thought it would be worth recording in the Bulletin,

The lyricist's name is not given but the words are to be sung to the tune of "Phil the Fluter's Ball".

Sure you know the Yorkshire Ramblers spent a week with Mr.Barbour.
They took the boat at Heysham & arrived at Belfast harbour.
And Sam, the lorry driver, said he certainly was willin'
To take them with their luggage once again to Enniskillen.
There was Charlie, the President, and Roberts the old veteran,
Godley & Wilfred, John & Harold too.
Tyas & Stanley - you couldn't find a better 'un,
Button, Watts & Barton and a bloke to make the stew.

Chorus. (repeat after each verse.)

With a Pollineska. Pollnagollum, Peter Bryant's Cattle Hole,
Pollnamada, Polnarafta, Marble Arch & Rattle-Hole,
Polnagaffie, Pollnataga, Pollnamuch - a dirty hole.
11ley wrote up on the-kitchen wall the names offive & thirty hole.

There was Roberts with his whistle - or begorrah 'twas the lack of it
"Tell the blighter on the rope to take up all the slack of it.
"This pot's a thousand feet at least but sure as I'm alive
"If you want to get the proper depth you must divide by five"
He went to the bottom & he took a mighty grasp of it,
Came to the top & let out a lusty shout.
He'd brought the bottom up with him & we could only gasp at it.
You see he'd gone & turned the bloomin' pot-hole inside out.

There's a place across the border & Black Lion is the name of it.
It's practically tee-total though you may not think the same of it
They'd go there of an evening - to enjoy its hospitality
And join with all & sundry in the best conviviality.
But they set the welkin ringing on their journey to the farm again.
Some said it was the Banshee or a howlin' wild cat.
The solution of the mystery - & sure they meant no halm again,
Was only Yorkshire Ramblers singing "llkla Moor baht 'at."

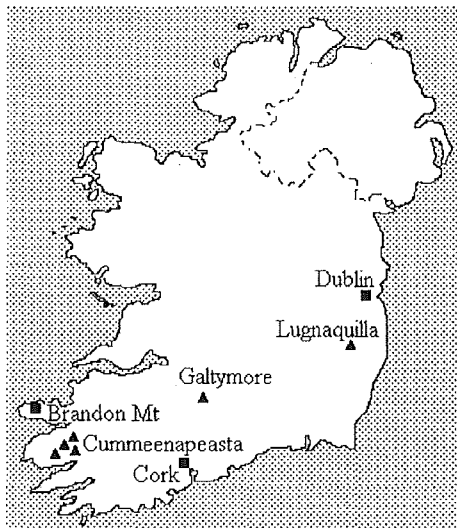
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The Furths

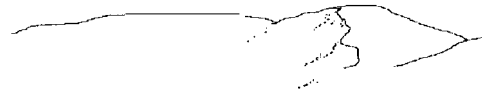
David Smith

The Scottish word 'Furth' means 'beyond' or 'outside of' and to the Munroist distinguishes people who have ascended all the 3000 foot mountains outside Scotland in the British Isles. I first discovered the word in the Munro Tables. It was the attraction of the Alps and the Scottish hills that obscured any incentive to go to Ireland. Only when I had the Scottish Munros behind me did it dawn on me that it would be tidy to add the Irish mountains to my Munro collection.

My English and Welsh three thousanders were both as a result of YRC Long Walks in the Fifties. The Scottish three thousanders were inspired by the Club's Whit Meet in 1983, the brain child of Peter Swindells. It was then that I discovered that I had already ascended more than half the mountains, mainly on Whit Meets. However it was my wife who got the Irish expedition on the move. She had been there forty years ago without seeing a mountain because of the mist.



Our Scottish Munro season ends with the start of the shooting season. So not being able to accompany my wife on her Munro quest we decided to cross the water. We crossed overnight, sailing at 3.45am and arriving at 7.30am. In beautiful late summer weather we set off for Glen of Imaal with a plan to climb the 3030 foot Lugnaquilla, 25 miles south of Dublin in the Wicklow mountains. But it was not to be as the mountain forms part of an army shooting range and the red flags were being displayed.



Cutting our losses we added another hundred road miles to Tipperary. Although we used the main road there was little traffic and what there was moved at a sensible speed with drivers being considerate to others. The road surfaces are not particularly good but we encountered no problems except for a couple of large farm tractors. South of Tipperary is the Glen of Aherlow and Galtymore Mountain at 3018 feet. Despite the loss of sleep we did not feel too drained and with prospect of only 2600 feet of ascent we set off in pleasant weather.

The route took us along a narrow lane, rising 900 feet, followed by a steep moorland walk to the summit of Galtymore before descending to a col separating it from its larger neighbour. By this time we were in warm soft

Irish mist and though rough terrain was making route finding difficult we were making good time. My friends will be interested to know that I can and do use a compass and had little difficulty finding the top and retracing our tracks to come out of the mist.

The following day we spent driving in perfect weather to Tralee and on to the Dingle peninsula along country lanes lined with fuchsia bushes. Our objective was the 3127 foot Brandon Mountain via the Pilgrims route. This was to be the highlight of the holiday. The road from Dingle rises 1800 feet over the Connor Pass through dramatically beautiful wild country speckled with numerous small lochs overlooking the spectacular Brandon Bay.



From the tiny village of An Clochan a narrow lane leads to An Fhaiche where we left the car. The Pilgrims Way is reputed to be the path to Saint Brendan's Oratory on the mountain summit. An open moorland path leads westwards towards the ridge but, instead of joining the ridge, the path descends into a remarkable cwm containing a string of tiny loughs each sparkling in the sunlight. The path rounds the cwm and crosses a jumble of boulders before a steep 900 foot climb to gain the ridge. A gentle short climb took us to the summit with marvellous Atlantic vistas.

We spent the next three days in Killorglin on the Kerry peninsula dominated by our next objective, the

Macgillycuddy Reeks. Our route started at lough Acoose across rough unmarked ground rising to 1581 feet where we found the start of the main ridge. It was misty but quite warm. Our recently discovered wind shirts proved adequate so the light rain did not necessitate waterproofs.

The broad ridge soon changes into a precipitous ridge of Skye-like proportions. The rock is of rough red sandstone and vegetation gives it a character of its own. Caher mountain has two distinct summits to be traversed before reaching Ireland's highest peak, Carrauntoohil at 3414 feet. We were denied the views of Comloughra Glen and Curraghmore lake but visibility was good enough for route finding not to be too difficult. A series of tops along the Beenkeragh ridge circling the lake led us back to our starting point.

The final phase of our expedition was back in the Wicklow mountains. A telephone call to the army resulted in a positive answer and an invitation to enjoy our day. We first had a walk up to the monastic village of Saint Kevin and the most beautiful Glendaloughs in the National park. Lugnaquilla is a very straight forward mountain and has a steady path over farmland and heather slopes to its summit. It was a relaxing ascent but in no way an anticlimax after the more taxing day on the Reeks.

Ireland is such an easy-going place, the people are so helpful, the roads are uncrowded, the scenery is magnificent and, given clement weather, has all the ingredients for a pleasant active but relaxing holiday. We will certainly go again.

Hill Walking in the Canary Islands

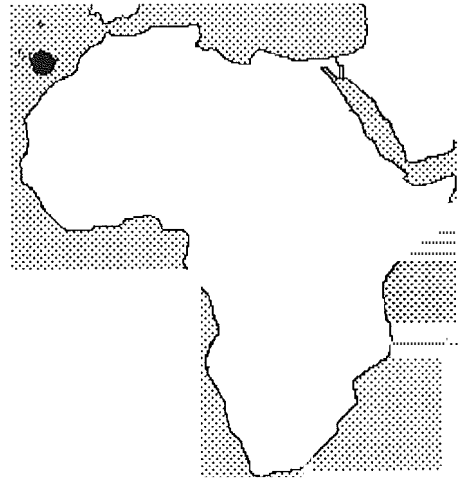
Derek Collins

I visited the Canary Islands for two months in April and May of this year. Five islands were visited and all except Lanzarote offer splendid hillwalking.

Climate. We were there at the end of the wettest and coldest winter for 30 years. The low level temperature was around 24 QC down to perhaps 10 QC higher up. Mist was fairly common between about 1000 ft. and 4000 ft. but above about 7000 ft. was unknown. Rain fell, but rarely, on La Gomera and La Palma and was unknown elsewhere. Conditions were perfect]

La Gomera. Very much on the German circuit. Rather like a higher and more vegetated Lake District with well marked paths often through woodland and beautiful Alpine meadows. Most visitors think La Gomera rather special and intend to return. It does rain on this island!

La Palma. Some old guy, Homer I think, believed the Elysian Fields were situated here. He could well have been right. This is the most varied of the islands and most visited by hillwalkers living in the Canaries. At the southern end it offers a short day in Skye like country except the rock is still warm from the eruption 25 years ago. A little further north are glorious rocky slopes sparsely covered with Canary Pines. We discovered here that the lizards enjoy bread and jam. From here the island has a hilly spine, very steep and Alpine in appearance There are randonée type walks but not well developed. In the middle of the island



is the Caldera, a semi-circle of cliffs. It is a nature reserve with routes through and round it. It is difficult to describe - usually with swirling cloud, stupendous cliffs, eerily quiet but on the **rim**, brilliant sunshine. I believe there is a full week of walking here. North again are gorges and even occasional streams.

My daughter visited in December and it poured down for 5 days.

Tenerife. Mt. Teide, a volcano, is the highest point in Spain but only those with personality problems would wish to struggle to the top. In any case the Spanish authorities do not encourage it. However around Teide is Los Canados, umpteen square kilometres of outsize clinker. Many will have seen pictures and read about the moonscape, it is all understated! There is a rim of shapely peaks which can be ascended by walking and scrambling as well as through routes. The sun shines all the time.

To the north lies the Anaga Peninsula a hilly wooded region with a good number of waymarked paths.

Gran Canaria. In the north and centre are many routes often tricky to follow and entirely without drink, there is little running water anywhere

in the islands and on Gran Canaria few houses or bars in the hills. The ground is rocky and slopes are long and steep but the views are stupendous. I came across pitons and abandoned runners here on overhanging rock.

To the west the routes are almost explorations through difficult country of gorges or barrancos and steep shapely peaks of rotten rock.

There are enormous possibilities on Gran Canaria and indeed all 4 of these islands but there seems to be little in the way of guide books in English and there are no rescue services. Often the ground is awkward and if mistakes are made they could be costly. For all that they offer wonderful possibilities and there are trips by such as the Ramblers Association and I do have some guide book information. These notes are merely to establish if there is any interest, I am very happy to chat about it and to explore the possibility of a meet in the area. The sand is mainly black, the sky blue, the beer and steak good, the people noisy, accommodation easy to find, bus services good, roads tenifying, lots of birds - could not identify most - who wants to bother with sweating up hills anyway.



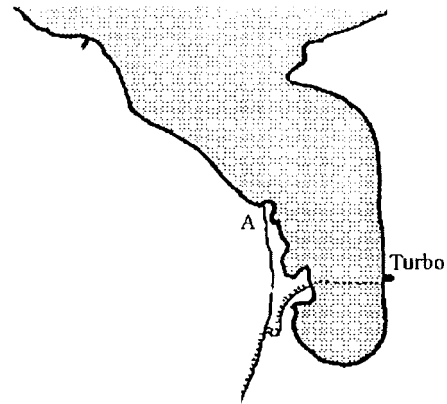
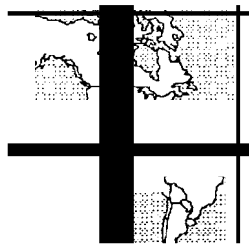
A Walk on the Wild Side - Almost!

John Middleton

The Darien Gap is a wilderness region of untamed tropical rainforest, swamp, and low mountains situated on the border between Panama and Colombia. It remains such a wilderness because modern technology has not yet made it feasible for the Pan American Highway to traverse the region. This 150 km gap is the only break in its relentless roll from Alaska to Tierra del Fuego. Most travellers prefer to fly around this obstacle but there is another way, to walk

It was hot; the road was pitted with potholes; the knee high sidewalks strewn with obstacles; 'salsa' music blasted forth from a multitude of cafes; mystifying scents assailed our nostrils; questionable characters lolled lazily against walls. This was Turbo, a Colombian wild west frontier town exuding atmosphere, excitement, and danger!

We arrived at dusk and by the time it had become dark we had most definitely decided that Turbo was far too exciting for us! We learnt in that short period that two of the boatmen who cross the Gulf of Turbo had been killed that day, that guenillas now controlled most of the villages on the far side, and that another group was making frequent raids on the only other road out of town. In the morning we rehired our battered



.....
route

Cuban jeep, drove the ten hours back to Cartagena, caught a flight to Panama City and decided to do as much of the walk as we could from that end.

DAY 1. El Real is the normal start for this adventure. It is an attractive roadless community of perhaps a hundred wooden houses on stilts situated close to the Rio Tuira. It is possible to walk from here but usually, because of its proximity to the river, it is normal to hire a motorised canoe for the first days journey. The five hour trip upriver is forever interesting with passing scenery constantly changing between banana plantations, secondary forest, and Choco Indian villages. Boca de Cupe was our destination for the night. It is also roadless but does contain a couple of bars and shops. There is no hotel but we stayed in our boatman's 'bunkhouse' and his wife kindly cooked for us (fried plantains, nee, chilli sauce, and a local bread).

DAY 2. The river route now switches to the smaller Rio Pucuro which is followed for as far as the depth of water will allow. In our case, about three hours. It is then possible to pick up a path on the right hand side of the

river (going upstream) which is then traversed for a further hour to the first purely Cuna Indian village of Pucuro. It is an impressive place. There are perhaps thirty well spaced houses, each made of split bamboo walls and palm leaf roofs. Inside is just one room which covers all the family's needs. The floor is compact dry mud and is kept scrupulously clean. Outside, friendly children run around together with a good selection of pigs and chickens all being supervised by short attractive women in brightly patterned dresses, locally made necklaces, and body paintings. In between supervising, the women thresh and grind corn by hand and crush sugar cane. It is necessary to visit the headman out of both respect and to seek accommodation - the latter being provided by one of the families with a larger house. Casava was a tasty addition to our diet here.

DAY 3. The route commences with a complete soaking as the river has to be crossed immediately. The path then follows the water for roughly four hours through secondary and then some superb primary forest to a further crossing of the river. We bivouaced here as we wished to explore this beautiful area further.

DAY 4. A further start with a river crossing and a rather tougher track which is both smaller and much muddier. However, it is only four hours before the next Cuna village of Paya is reached. This is situated in an incredibly beautiful setting on a raised river meander surrounded by superb forest and dotted with coconut palms. As Paya is quite close to the Colombian border there is a small military post about three kilometres from the village and all travellers should report here.

DAY 5. We had brought our own guide and any party without one should hire one of the villagers for the next section to the border as the trail is virtually none existent. The route, after again getting a soaking in the river, is through the best forest yet, it is also the toughest with much scrambling in mud! It took us a hard three hours to reach the border at Palo de Lettres, a weathered concrete block in the middle of a small clearing. We made a short foray into Colombia. It was, however, as well that it was short as when we returned to Paya two local hunters said that they had spotted a group of about thirty guerrillas just half an hour down the trail.

From the border, in safer times, walkers continue to Cristales, a name for just a couple of huts, hire a boat to go down the Rio Cacarica, onto the Rio Atrata, across the Gulf of Turbo, and so to Turbo, our original starting point; a journey of a couple more days. For obvious reasons we returned the way we had come without incident. At Pucuro we talked the villagers into helping us construct two balsa wood rafts so that we could 'punt' back to Boca de Cupe. It took

nine arduous hours but the hilarity and scenery made the journey quite stupendous.

On our return to El Real we then walked into the Piri mountains where the Spanish once mined gold. These hills are breathtakingly beautiful and because the altitude reaches 1,200m many differing forest zones can be experienced. A worthwhile deviation and for naturalists, a must - here we found fresh Jaguar droppings, saw monkeys, sloths, snakes, and an abundance of bird life including my first wild Macaws.

Crossing the Darien is not particularly arduous but it can definitely be classed as a wilderness adventure. Even El Real which can be reached by small planes feels as if it is a million miles from anywhere. The highlights must be the forest diversity and its inhabitants, meeting and living with the Indians, and the camaraderie between us four friends and our guide. An excellent grasp of Spanish is needed for boat and guide hiring negotiations.

Postscript. A month after we had returned it was given out over the BBC International Service that guerrillas had mounted an attack on Turbo and whilst the military had repulsed them some 23 persons were killed.

For more information see

'Great Walks of the World'

by John Cleare.

'Lonely Planet Travel

Survival Kit Colombia.'

'Hundred Days of the Darien'

by Russel Braddon.

Torre De Cerredo

Steve Beresford

An excursion, part of last year's Picos de Europa meet, involving:

Alistair Renton
David Smith
Martyn Wakeman and
Stephen Beresford.

Objectives

Torres de Cerredo, 2648m
(Highest in the Picos)
Picos de Los Cabrones 2553m

Summary

Torre de Cerredo proved to be a fabulous summit and memorable, despite being little more than a scramble. It had stunning views from its summit and getting to its wild location was thirsty work indeed!

Our attempt at Picos de los Cabrones had to be abandoned after taking the wrong approach and ending up on the loose rock of 'Agujas de los Cabrones'; a series of pinnacles to the north-west of the main summit. This was disappointing as the views of the peak from our bivouac at the Lueje hut were fantastic as it changed colour with the sunset.

Day 1 Fuente De (leave car)
El Cable 1834 (via teleferico)
Hoos Rojos Col 2344
(via Hoyo Si Tierra)
Ubeda Hut (below the
distinctive El Naranja peak)
Hda Arenera Col 2283
Lueje Hut (via Jou de los
Cabrones)

Day 2 Jou Negrud Glacier
P. De L. Cabrones (aborted)
Lueje Hut
Plateau north of loll de
Cerredo (bivi)

Day 3 Torre de Cerredo 2648 (sum't)
Hda de D Carlos Col 2422
Hda de Cain Col 2344

Hoyo Cimero 1844 note depth
Ceda Blanca Col 2352
Cabana Veronica Hut 2325
El Cable-Fuente De

Impressions

This three day trip left me with three lasting impressions. Firstly, the landscape of the Picos; a spectacular mountainous desert. A notable feature of this desert was the 'Hoyo'- an enormous basin-like valley. We invariably found ourselves looking down into a Hoyo from some lofty col, often to realise, that the next col we were aiming for was far across the Hoyo and the only logical route there required a descent into the floor, sometimes 1500 feet or more, and then a slog up and out the other side. The route to Torre de Cerredo had so many col-hoyo-col sequences that we were up and down like the proverbial fiddlers elbows!

Secondly, the dryness. We covered some considerable distance and height changes, in extremely hot weather, with only three places to replenish water supplies. After the first day we started early to use the shade and the cool. I wouldn't like to get lost in the Picos without water.

The third lasting impression I have concerns the laughs we had at the expense of one member. While setting up our bivouac at the Lueje hut one member happened to criticise the bivouac sites of the others. Allowing his ego a voice for a moment he said he was an 'expert bivouacker' and advised them to move. Of course, after such a remark the others were determined not to move however uncomfortable the spot. In fact my spot was dreadful, but I was determined to push the point. Over the next two days we made several hundred references to 'expert bivouacking'. In fact he may never live this down.

Expedition Diary

1957 - Nepal

Maurice Wilson

May 1. Camp 3.

Called for breakfast at 4.30 a.m. They all seemed to be awake. Dan and Temba arrived with the entrenching tools about 5.30 a.m. and Arthur set off with them soon after. Dan set off next, after which Pemba and I dismantled a tent. We both set off with quite a load and went quite well to begin with. Then the sun got up and the going from Camp 2 to Camp 3 was purgatory. I couldn't go more than a few paces at a time.

In due course we reached Camp 3 and laboriously erected the tent. Pemba is a real gem and nothing is too hard for him. He even went down for another food box later. I merely escorted him through the crevassed area. Not long after, George, Andy and Lakpa turned up. They had no hope to offer. All they had encountered was hard ice and not reached anyone. We had a long talk in the tent regarding procedure. George says he must go to Kathmandu to dispatch the necessary telegrams etc. He is bearing up very well.

May 2. Camp 3.

I took a sleeping pill last night and, although cold, slept like a log. Andy looked in before going down to Camp 1 for the reserve surveying equipment, and I went to sleep again. George woke me by calling me to come into his tent. This I did. We talked of memorials and various other matters. We feel that the best monument we could offer to Crosby is to complete the map which he had commenced to make. This we will try to do, though no further risks must be taken. It was arranged that Arthur and I should stay here a day or two to complete that job and then we should move to another area, probably, the Langtang.

It had been arranged that certain signals would be given by Arthur and Dan from Camp 4, at 11.00 a.m., regarding the day's work there. In fact, around 10.30 a.m. they were all seen to be coming along the track in this direction. They were obviously heavily loaded and had abandoned camp. This they confirmed on arrival. They had dug for a long time but could make little impact on the ice entombing the bodies. Moreover, their own position was extremely dangerous, as there was a loose ice block poised directly above them. (They were working 20 feet down, in the crevasse.) There is no doubt that they could do no more, nor risk any further loss of life. The Sherpas, too were agreed on that. Andy and his sherpa turned up quite latish. They had magnificently gone right down to Base Camp to get the surveying equipment.

May 3. Camp 3.

Arthur and I got off in good time this morning and followed the route to Camp 4 up to a point just below the start of the traverse. Here we set up the tripod and plane table. I took a number of rays on the prominent points around and also elevations. Arthur made a pan. sketch and we also took some panoramic photos. It was all most interesting but, as early as 9.30 a.m., the clouds started to advance up the valley. We packed up and came down in order to do some work at Crosby's old station near Camp 3, and marked by a red flag. From here we could just distinguish the flags we, ourselves, had embedded in the snow at our previous station. It was boiling hot and I find such heat unbearable as it saps my energy. Yet, an hour later, I needed my sweater on and by the afternoon it was hailing. Andy and the sherpas took some loads down to Camp 2 and then returned for their own gear.

Review

Scottish Mountaineering
Club Journal
Vol. XXXVI
No 187, 1996

I was really taken by the references to John Buchan in the first article in this bumper issue of the S.M.C. Journal. Though there was a flavour of Edgar Wallace in the reference to the "old king's country". Be that as it may 'Images' by Donald M. Orr is a fine evocation of climbing and sets the tone for the rest of this issue. As well as mountaineering stories there are learned articles on spiders and place names and some stunning photographs, notably those by Donald Bennet.

Notes on new climbs, mountain accidents and Munro matters make up a slice of essential reading for anyone interested in the Scottish mountain scene and surely all north of England climbers should be.

Finally we get the 'In Memoriam' section notable this time for tributes to W.H. (Bill) Murray who died earlier this year. I never met him but his books 'The Scottish Himalayan Expedition', 'Undiscovered Scotland' and 'Mountaineering in Scotland' kept me on the right road.

The S.M.C. Journal is in the Club Library together with an index to the previous volume 35, 1992-1995.

Bill Todd.

Review

Craven Pothole Club
Record No. 41
January 1996

Again a lively account of underground adventure is provided by the C.P.C. Record. Unusually there is nothing about mountaineering but there is a very well written account of exploration in Italy by Leonarde Rusellato and Cesare Raumer. It is exceptional for the Record to admit contributions by non-members but the editor included it for the quality of the writing.

There is also a full seeming account of the exploration of Sell Gill. This was apparently first noted in 1850 and in 1897 a party including W.C. Slingsby had a right beano exploring the first three pitches. The mention of a "weird subterranean waterfall 100 feet high" intrigues me. You might almost get me down there.

Bill Todd

Review

Craven Pothole Club
Record 42
April 1996

Until recently the first human being to inhabit Europe was thought to have done so about 400,000 years ago. A discovery at Atapuerca, near Burgos has changed all that. In 1994 human bones were discovered in a cave and proved by geomagnetic techniques to be at least 780,000 years old. It is suggested that these people could be

the missing link between the early African species and Heidelberg man.

This is one of the fascinating pieces of information in the C.P.C. Record. In addition there are the usual caving adventures at home and abroad (Transylvania) and an enjoyable Lakeland meet last February. This included ascents of Scafell Pikes by Long Gully, a new one on me, and a solo of South East Gully on Great End, something I did behind Doug Penfold thirty eight years before. I don't suppose it has got any easier, there was a helicopter rescue in March 1995 after a leader fall. A solo seems to me a great tour de force.

A good read and a welcome addition to the club library,

Bill Todd

Review

Craven Pothole Club Record 43 July 1996

No-where east of Suez this time in the C.P.C. Record. The only abroad meet is somewhere called P.S.M. which looks like France. But in spite of this geographical limitation there is plenty of underground adventure to be enjoyed under-neath places most of us know the top of. To add a slice of variety some members cycled from Land's End to John O'Groats and there is going to be a meet at Brothers Water in September.

There is also a long and learned article on belaying which would be useful of course, for climbing as well. A good read particularly if you are of the potholing persuasion. Bill Todd

Review

Wainwright in the Valleys of Lakeland

Photographs by Derry Brabbs

Michael Joseph, London, pp 216 £14.99

The Lake District is getting more and more popular. Many people are coming to Lakeland whose parents went to Blackpool, and most of them come in cars. And when they get there they very often want to park their cars and go for a walk. This movement has resulted in the loss of many lovely views, including Rydal Water, and the peace that is its rightful heritage.

That the late Alfred Wainwright was very conscious of this despoliation is very evident from his text as printed here. Of course, this popularity of Lakeland has nothing to do with any of Wainwright's activities. He wrote books about the fells which sold very well but that was just his 'tribute'; if more people came to Lakeland as a result that was nothing to do with him. When working people from Manchester and Leeds, Birmingham and London wanted to exercise their rightful heritage and motor up to Lakeland that wasn't really part of Alf's bargain.

Having got that off my chest I must admit that as an introduction to Lakeland, to give people some idea of the layout and life of the district the text is good. Those of us who have been visiting and reading about Lakeland for some time can still learn something for it has been truly said that humility is the beginning of wisdom. Even if this reviewer feels that the paragraph on Milican Dalton

should have included a reference to his self awarded title of 'Professor of Adventure'.

But the real joy of this book is the photographs and if it needed Alf Wainwright's fame to get these published then I don't grudge him his fame.

You have only to open the book at random to see pictures which make you catch your breath. I am looking at the picture of Upper Deepdale on page 59, with the sunlight on the crag, it is absolutely thrilling. So are Rydal Water on page 83, Cockley Beck on page 105, Goat Scar in Long Sleddale, Wastwater Screes and Castlerigg Stone Circle. The last named has next to it a drawing by Wainwright of Great Cockup at 'Back O'Skidda'. Reminds me of the time I followed the Blencathra hounds with Derek Clayton. People think I am pulling their legs when I say that we lost the pack on Great Cockup.

If I wanted to carp I could say that some of the pictures were too green, taken in high summer no doubt, but it has been pointed out by people who know more about art than I do (most people) that different shades of green can make an attractive composition.

This is a good addition to the bookshelf of any Lakeland enthusiast and a more than adequate introduction to anyone who is just getting interested in the brightest jewel in the crown of English scenery.

Bill Todd.

Obituary

"I'd do it all again"

J. Robert Files

One of the last links with the pre-war climbing scene was lost with the death on the 24th March last of Bob Files. He was a real hundred per cent climbing enthusiast. Tony Greenbank tells the tale of how, when they climbed Troutdale Pinnacle and topped out, Bob said, 'Now we go down' and he meant climb down, not walk. Bob climbed with Jerry Wright in Skye, he was mentioned in Wright's classic 'Mountain Days in the Isle of Skye', and in 1934 took part in the first ascent of the Direct Finish to C.B. under F.G. Balcombe's leadership.

He earned his living as a teacher and I have much reason to be grateful to him because he took some of us school boys to Lakeland in the summer holidays of 1945. We stayed at Youth Hostels and did a lot of fell walking and some climbing. My friend Jim Townley and I were taken up Napes Needle and Arrowhead Ridge on a cold August day.

When I saw him three or four years ago he was delighted to produce his diary entry for a climbing weekend we had in 1946. There was George Randall besides Jim, Bob and I and we did Got'don and Craig's on Doe, Oliversons on Gimmer and some routes on Scout. That was when he made the remark I have quoted at the head of this tribute. He suffered a stroke in 1993 and sadly was never the same again. Bob's wife, Muriel, who pre-deceased him was equally enthusiastic a mountaineer; they had no family.

Bill Todd

A Speleological Appreciation of the YRC on the Occasion of its Centenary 1892 - 1992

S. A. Craven

The Yorkshire Ramblers' Club (YRC) was founded in 1892 in the city of Leeds in the north of England. The original intention of the founding fathers was to promote mountaineering. There is nothing in the constitution to permit cave exploration; on the other hand, there is nothing to forbid it. The members of the YRC were not the first people to go caving in the north of England. Indeed the history of cave exploration in the Craven district goes back to the eighteenth century, and developed as a side-effect of the tourist trade to the Lake District. Those southern gentry who had the time, money and stamina to travel to the Lakes came to rest themselves and their horses at Ingleton, and were taken to the caves by the local entrepreneurs. Early pioneers without a financial interest included John Birkbeck and William Metcalfe between 1847² and 1870³, and the Hastings brothers at Gavel Pot in 1885⁴.

All the early cave explorations were by individuals with little technical support. The descents of Alum Pot by Messrs. Birkbeck and Metcalfe in 1847 and 1870 were facilitated by the men and machinery of the railway contractors. The other caves explored at that time were notable for their short, easy pitches. The long spectacular pitches of for example, Gaping Gill and Rowten Pot, were completely beyond the resources of independent individuals. The YRC provided a forum whereby individuals could pool their financial and technical resources for their mutual benefit. It is also significant that many of the members came from the manufacturing city of Leeds, and were of the professional and business classes. They were well-educated men with the enquiring minds, money and spare time necessary for any long-term exploration of caves and mountains.

The members of the YRC were not the only cave explorers in the Craven district during those halcyon days from 1892 to the First World War. Indeed on 22 June 1898 a meeting was held in Leeds to "*consider the propriety of forming a Speleological Society, on similar lines to the society in France*". Alfred Barran of the YRC was voted to the Chair. The meeting considered whether the proposed society would be detrimental to the YRC and to the Yorkshire Geological and Polytechnic Society (YGPS.) (which had been involved in underground water tracing at Malham⁵ and at Ingleborough"). Of the YRC men reported to be present, Messrs. W. Parsons, C.A. Scriven and I.W. Swithinbank were in favour, while Messrs. E. Calvert, I.A. Green, T. Gray and Lewis Moore were against. At the vote, it was deemed undesirable to form a new club, there being 6 votes against, 5 in favour and 6 abstentions". By 1907 at least 8 YRC members had been elected to the YGPS.; both organisations thrived⁸

At that time most of the big northern English cities had their climbing clubs such as the Kyndwr Club of Sheffield, whose members, being close to the Peak District of Derbyshire, also caved". The neighbouring city of Bradford had no kindred club, but it did have a few individuals who went potholing together, and independently of the YRC, despite meeting on common ground at the YGPS. Committee for the Investigation of the Underground Waters of Malham and Clapham¹⁰. Messrs. Dawson, Townend et al. of Bradford were technically superior to the YRC in that they possessed wire rope ladders. This equipment enabled them to descend Alum Pot at least 5 times, and probably Hlllt Pot and Gaping Gill 1. The first club to compete with the YRC was the Yorkshire Speleological Association founded in Leeds in 1906, and which failed to survive the First World War. Thereafter some of its former members became stalwarts of the YRC¹². Another transient club was

the Leeds Ramblers' Club, whose members made a bizarre descent of Gaping Gill in 1904¹³.

Most cave explorations were done in the Craven district because of its easy access from Leeds. The members also did much pioneering exploration in Ireland during the early years of this century¹⁴; and they did venture elsewhere when the opportunity arose. Wales was visited in 1909¹⁵ and 1936¹⁶. Two visits were made to Derbyshire in 1909¹⁷, and subsequently during the following year¹⁸, in 1912^{19,1915}²⁰, 1922²¹ and the 1930s²². Caves near Symonds Yat were investigated in 1911²³.

Across the English Channel Waiter Parsons visited Padirac Cave in France sometime before 1909²⁴; and Barton toured caves in France and Belgium in 1924²⁵. Austria and Yugoslavia were visited in the late 1920s²⁶. In the following decade Bill Allsup looked at caves in Assam²⁷; and Harold Brodrick visited St. Michael's Cave in Gibraltar²⁸. Majorca was visited in 1907²⁹ and 1934³⁰.

The members of the YRC were not content with mere exploration and survey. They were interested in the geology of the caves they visited³¹, in the archaeology-- and in the fauna³². Most importantly of all - and this is why the Club has survived and has celebrated its centenary - the members kept records. Some have been lost; others survive in manuscript form. Many have been published in the pages of the Club Journal and elsewhere in both popular and scientific journals and books. Although the YRC was, and still is, a private club, its early members publicised their activities to a wider audience. In particular, an early detailed account of the techniques and literature of speleology appeared in 1911³⁴. These records, incomplete though they may be, enabled subsequent generations of members to continue the work done by their predecessors.

Perusal of these records reveals many aspects of early cave exploration which will be unfamiliar to the modern potholer with his neoprene suits, lightweight equipment and private transport. The transport of these pioneers was train to the nearest station, thence by farm cart to the cave entrance. In later years they acquired cars and motor-cycles. They used hemp ropes, and hemp rope ladders with wooden rungs - all of which doubled in weight when wet. Their flannel trousers and tweed jackets were similarly very heavy when wet. illumination was by candles, and later by acetylene lamps. Their techniques were self-taught. It is remarkable that they experienced only two accidents, both non-fatal->. To compensate for the privations of the field, the members usually stayed in inns. Camp servants were taken to the Gaping Gill meets.

The YRC organised few official meets. Most of the original exploration and survey was done on private meets, the organisation of which would have been done by the individual members and not by the Committee. Up to 1914 the members systematically made first descents and explorations of most of the conspicuous open shafts and cave entrances in the Craven district, with the notable exception of Gaping Gill. That honour went in 1895 to the visiting Frenchman, E.A. Martel³⁶, who was later elected an honorary member of the YRC³⁷.

Another feature of the YRC, which is not peculiar to the YRC and which has recently caused controversy in other English clubs, is the absence of female members. The 1902 constitution³⁸ does not explicitly exclude those of the fairer gender. The exclusion is implied: "*Before any person is eligible for election, he ...*" Although ladies are not eligible for membership, it is clear from the pages of the YRC Journal that they have always been welcome attenders

at caving meets. Perhaps they attended only the private meets?

A caving club operates as a team; and it is therefore invidious to mention individual members. An exception can be made for Arthur Dwerryhouse who can be considered to be a professional cave explorer in that he was Assistant Lecturer in Geology at Leeds University before moving to University College Reading some time before 1924. Before his move he made important contributions to geological knowledge⁴³; and he wrote a popular geological book⁴⁴. On 14 November 1899 he was appointed Hon. Secretary of the YGPS. Malham Sub-Committee⁴⁵.

Another YRC member who did considerably more than just attend meets was Samuel Wells Cuttriss, whose manuscript notes, although incomplete, record much of the early history of the Club. He was an active member of the YGPS. Underground Waters Committees⁴⁶, and one of the first amateur cave photographers in Yorkshire⁴⁷.

The First World War and the 1919 influenza pandemic changed the whole social structure of Britain; and the YRC did not escape their effects. Fifty members joined the armed forces, of which five were killed in action. Another seven members died between 1913 and 1921⁴⁴. Jobs were not easy to find at that time; and other members left the district by choice or by necessity. Although the members continued their original exploration and survey between 1919 and 1939, it was done on a much smaller scale. Most of the big, open shafts had already been descended; and the members had little inclination for the tight, wet holes which remained. The founder of the Craven Pothole Club in 1929, the late Albert Mitchell, told me that he did approach the YRC with a view to membership, and that he found that it organised insufficient caving meets to satisfy his interest. Those cavers who had the tenacity to explore these smaller holes

were not attracted to the YRC. They formed the Bradford Pothole, Craven Pothole, Gritstone, and Northern Cavern & Fell Clubs which continued the tradition which had been started by the YRC. Nevertheless, the YRC co-operated with these clubs in the management of the Cave Rescue Organisation⁴⁸, with the British Speleological Associations⁴⁹, and with the Craven Pothole Club at Gaping Gill in 1931⁴⁷.

This speleological decline by the YRC in England and Wales continued after the Second World War, with little original work being done in Yorkshire. New passage was found in Easegill in 1950⁴⁸, in Gaping Gill during 1951 and 1952⁴⁹, in the Lost John's Master Cave in 1959⁵⁰, and in Blayshaw Gill Pot during 1969⁵¹. In South Wales a short extension to Dan-yr-Ogof was found in 1964⁵², and in 1967 more spectacular passage was discovered in conjunction with the South Wales Caving Club⁵³. Useful work was done in Ireland in 1947, 1948⁵⁴, 1951⁵⁵, 1952⁵⁶, 1959⁵⁷, 1960, 1962⁵⁸ and 1963⁵⁹. The post-war tendency was for the potholing members to cave with other clubs. Thus Dan Jones explored Fairy Holes with the Durham Cave Club⁶⁰; and Arnold Patchett worked at Clapham Cave between 1946 and 1959 with the Bradford Pothole Club⁶¹. The 1964 extension to Oxlow Cavern in Derbyshire by the British Speleological Association involved a YRC member⁶².

For many years, foreign speleological expeditions have been beyond the human and financial resources of any single club. Members of the YRC have therefore in recent years caved overseas with conspicuous success in joint expeditions. The first of these was to northern Italy with the Speleo Club de Paris in 1957⁶³. The leader of the 1965 British expedition to the Edelweisserhuttenschacht was a newly elected YRC member⁶⁴ - David Judson - who was in 1967 a member

of another expedition to Italy⁶⁵. Further successful joint Italian expeditions took place in 1969⁶⁶ and 1970⁶⁷. Turkey was the venue for inter-club expeditions in 1966 and 1967⁶⁸. Four members in 1968 did original work in Lebanon with members of the Speleo Club de Liban⁶⁹, and returned the following year⁷⁰. France was visited in 1972 as guests of the Speleo Club de Paris/J. Ecuador was the venue in 1976⁷² and Sardinia in 1980⁷³. However, the most spectacular joint expeditions which involved YRC members were those to Ghar Parau, Iran, in 1971 and 1972⁷⁴.

One possible clue to the reasons for the decline of the YRC's speleological activity towards the end

of it's first century comes from the late Ernest E. Roberts who had been, *...fortunate to see Lake/and before it was swamped by crowds and motors.*⁷⁵ It is clear from the pages of the YRC Journal that the Club has always attracted men with a love of the wide, open spaces; and the Yorkshire Dales fitted that description a century ago. The traditional stamping grounds of the YRC are now swanning with people. Caves and potholes have to be booked months in advance, and frequently have to be shared with other parties. There are still plenty of wilderness areas overseas; and I therefore believe that the speleological future of the YRC will increasingly lie in co-operation with inter-club overseas expeditions.

Appendix: A Chronological List of Cave Explorations in the Craven Area by Members of the YRC up to 1945.

Mar. 1893	Yordas	15 men	76
15-16 Sep. 1894	Hull Pot	"Large party"	77
1-3 June 1895	Manchester Hole	T.S. Booth, S.W. Cuttriss, G.T. Lowe, L. Moore	78
4 June 1895	Hell Hole	S.W. Cuttriss	79
5 Aug. 1895	Fox Holes (Cam)	T.S. Booth, S.W. Cuttriss	80
5 Aug. 1895	Old Ing Cave	T.S. Booth, S.W. Cuttriss, Dinsdale	81
6 Aug. 1895	Capnut Cave	(S.W. Cuttriss)	82
18 Aug. 1895	Hell Hole	T.S. Booth, S.W. Cuttriss	83
14-15 Sep. 1895	Gaping Gill	A. Barran, E. Calvert, S.W. Cuttriss, T. Gray	84
5 Oct. 1895	Gaping Gill (Jib Tunnel)	H.H. Bellhouse, I.A. Green, P. Lund, Thompson	85
Dec. 1895	Gaping Gill (Surface)	T.S. Booth, B. Mason	86
8 Feb. 1896	Hell Hole	T.S. Booth, S.W. Cuttriss	87
3 Apr. 1896	Old Ing Cave	S.W. Cuttriss, L. Moore	88
3-6 Apr. 1896	Browgill Cave, Calf Hole	S.W. Cuttriss, L. Moore	89
	Long Churn	S.W. Cuttriss, F. Holtzman, L. Moore	90
9-10 May 1896	Gaping Gill	T.S. Booth, E. Calvert, S.W. Cuttriss, T. Gray, I.A. Green, L. Moore	91
16-17 May 1896	Gaping Gill	T.S. Booth, E. Calvert, S.W. Cuttriss, T. Gray, I.A. Green, F. Ellet, G. Emsley, R.J. Jefferson, A. Kirk, T. Lister, L. Moore	92
23-26 May 1896	Gaping Gill (descended)	T.S. Booth, E. Calvert, S.W. Cuttriss, F. Ellet, I.W. Firth, I.A. Green, B. Mason, Smith, A. Barran, F. Holtzman, G.T. Lowe, L. Moore, W. Ramsden, C. Scriven, W.e. Slingsby	93
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28 June 1896	Hell Hole	T.S. Booth, S.W. Cuttriss, G.T. Lowe, L. Moore, C.A. Scriven, I.W. Swithinbank	94
2 Aug. 1896	Dow Cave (Kettlewell)	T.S. Booth, S.W. Cuttriss, G.T. Lowe, L. Moore, C.A. Scriven	95
23 Aug. 1896	Clapham Cave	E. Calvert, F. Ellet, I.A. Green	96
6 Sep. 1896	Clapham Cave	E. Calvert, F. Ellet, T. Gray, I.A. Green	97
Oct. 1896	Long Kin West	E. Calvert, F. Ellet	98
40 Oct. 1896	Rowten Pot	T.S. Booth, S.W. Cuttriss, G.T. Lowe, L. Moore, A. Riley, I.W. Swithinbank	99
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1896	Goyden Pot	T.S. Booth, S.W. Cuttriss	102
16-19 Apr. 1897	Attermire & Jubilee Caves	S.W. Cuttriss	103
8 May 1897	Rowten Pot	T.S. Booth, S.W. Cuttriss, Leach, CA. Scriven	104
13-16 May 1897	Long Kin West	E. Calvert, F. Ellet, IW. Firth, IA. Green, B. Mason, WC. Slingsby	105
6- 7 June 1897	Rowten Pot	T.S. Booth, E. Calvert, S.W. Cuttriss, F. Ellet, IA. Green, G.T. Lowe, L. Moore, C.A. Scriven, Smith, IW Swithinbank	
19-20 June 1897	Rowten Pot	T.S. Booth, Braithwaite, S.W. Cuttriss, W. Parsons, CA. Scriven, T. Somers, IW. Swithinbank, H. Woodhouse	
20 June 1897	Gingling Hole (Kingsdale)	T.S. Booth, S.W. Cuttriss, W. Parsons, CA. Scriven, T. Somers, IW. Swithinbank, H. Woodhouse	
21 June 1897	Bull Pot (Kingsdale)	T.S. Booth, S.W. Cuttriss, C.A. Scriven, T. Somers, IW Swithinbank, H. Woodhouse	
21 June 1897	Bull Pot	T.S. Booth, S.W. Cuttriss, CA. Scriven, T. Somers, IW. Swithinbank, H. Woodhouse	106
4- 5 July 1897	Rowten Pot	T.S. Booth, Braithwaite, S.W. Cuttriss, W. Parsons, CA. Scriven, T. Somers, IW. Swithinbank, H. Woodhouse	107
11 July 1897	Douk Cave (Ingleborough)	A. Barran, S.W. Cuttriss, T. Gray	108
11-12 July 1898	Attermire Cave	S.W. Cuttriss	109
18-19 Sep. 1897	Sell Gill Hole	E. Calvert, F. Ellet, T. Gray, P. Lund, B. Mason, WC. Slingsby	110
1897	Attennire Cave	S.W. Cuttriss, T. Gray	111
15 May 1898	Marble Steps	W Parsons, J.W. Swithinbank	
28 May 1898	Bull Pot (Kingsdale)	T.S. Booth, S.W. Cuttriss, W Parsons, IW. Swithinbank	112
29 May 1898	Penyghent: Long Churn & Cross Pot	E. Calvert, F. Ellet, IA. Green	113
May 1898	Hunt Pot	E. Calvert, F. Ellet, IA. Green	114
28-30 May 1898	Death's Head Hole (?)	W. Parsons, IW. Swithinbank	115
10 July 1898	Batty Hole (Kingsdale)	S.W. Cuttriss & 2 locals	116
21 July 1898	Short Drop Cave to Gavel Pot	f.H. Buckley, S.W. Cuttriss, IW. Swithinbank	117
24 Sep. 1898	Lost Johns Hole	T.S. Booth, S.W. Cuttriss, L. Moore, W. Parsons, A. Riley IW. Swithinbank	118
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1898	Hardrawkin	S.W. Cuttriss	
1898	Eye Holes (Leck)	S.W. Cuttriss	119
7 May 1898	Boggarts Roaring	E. Calvert, T. Gray, P. Lund, W.C. Slingsby	120
21 May 1899	Rumbling Hole	S.W. Cuttriss, G.T. Lowe, W. Parsons, S. Swithinbank, H. Woodhouse	121
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21-22 May 1899	Bull Pot of the Witches	S.W. Cuttriss, W Parsons, IW. Swithinbank	122
1 Oct. 1899	Sell Gill Hole	I C Atkinson, A. Barran, IN. Barran, T.S. Booth, S.W. Cuttriss, IA. Green, T. Gray, S. Kitson, Lewis Moore, W. Parsons, H. Priestman, A. Riley, C.A. Scriven, W.C Slingsby	123
22 July 1900	Alum Pot	T.S. Booth, S.W. Cuttriss, T. Gray, L. Moore, A. Riley, W. Parsons, CA. Scriven, IW. Swithinbank	
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29 May - 1 June 1903	Gaping Gill	T.S. Booth, IH. Buckley, H. Brodrick, W. Brown F. Constantine, S.W. Cuttriss, A.R. Derryhouse, R.I Farrer, H. Harrison, A.E. Horn, C.A. Hill, P.F. Kendall, P. Lamb, WW. Newbould, W. Parsons, IW. Puttrell, E.P. Sykes, W.E. Waud, H. Woodhouse	125
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21-22 May 1904	Rift Pot	T.S. Booth, Blum, IH. Buckley, H. Brodrick, F. Constantine,	

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- 21-22 Aug. 1904 Rift Pot T.S. Booth, H. Brodrick, JH. Buckley, F. Constantine, S.w. Cuttriss, J.A Green, C. Hastings, CA Hill, AE. Horn, W. Parsons, c.A. Scriven 131
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- 22 Apr. 1905 Marble Pot E.A Baker" H. Brodrick, C. Hastings, C.S. Hill, P. Lamb
- 23 Apr. 1905 Bridge Pot Thorn Pot(Newby Moss) E.A. Baker, H. Brodrick, JH. Buckley, C. Hastings, CA Hill
- Cross Pot(Newby Moss) E.A Baker, H. Brodrick, JH. Buckley, C. Hastings, C.A Hill ,
- Rosebay Pot E.A Baker" H. Brodrick, JH. Buckley, C. Hastings, c.A. Hill, P. Lamb
- Apr. 1905 Gritstone Pot F. Botterill et al.
- 11 June 1905 Pillar Pot T.S. Booth, H. Brodrick, JH. Buckley, S.w. Cuttriss, C. Hastings, JA. Green, CA Hill, W. Parsons 132
- 10-12 June 1905 Long Kin West T.S. Booth, H. Brodrick, JH. Buckley, JA Green, C.A Hill, C. Hastings, P. Lamb, W. Parsons 133
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- (surface) JA. Green, Kinnaird, L. Moore 134
- Summer 1905 Clapham Cave c.A. Hill et al. 135
- Oct. 1905 Scosca Cave JB.Barnes, (F.)Botterill, H.Brodrick, JH.Buckley, C.AHill 136
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- 24 Mar. 1906 Cove Hole (Ribblehead) F. Botterill, M. Botterill
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- Easter 1906 Gritstone Pot, Boggarts Roaring, Bull Pot (Kingsdale) Jingling Hole F. Payne, E.E. Roberts, 140
- 5- 7 June 1906 Gaping Gill (descent) A Barran, Mrs. Barran, T.S. Booth, Miss Booth, F. Botterill, Mrs. Boyes, IH. Buckley, RA. Chadwick, S.W. Cuttriss, C. Hastings, AE. Horn, F. Horsell, G.L. Hudson, W. Parsons, JW. Puttrell, P. Robinson, W. Simpson, W.C. Slingsby, Miss Slingsby, H. Williamson
- (surface) H. Brodrick, F. Constantine, AR Dwerryhouse, JA Green, CA Hill, F. Leach, G.T. Lowe, L. Moore 141
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- 18-20 June 1907 Meregill Clarke, B. Hoessly, F. Payne, Mrs. Payne, Miss Payne E.E. Roberts, H. Williamson 146
- 21-22 Sep. 1907 Gaping Gill E.T.W. Addyman, T.S. Booth, F. Buckley, J.H. Buckley, F. Constantine, S.W. Cuttriss, S.« Green, C. Hastings, AE. Horn, L. Horn, F. Leach 147
- 6- 8 June 1908 Bull Pot & Jingling Pot(Kingsdale) C.R Barran, H. Brodrick, J.H. Buckley L.S. Chappell, C. Hastings, AE. Horn, G.L. Hudson, L. Moore, W. Robertshaw,P. Robinson, A Rule
- June 1908 Double Three C. Hastings, P. Robinson
- Jingling Pot, Thorney Pot, Sheepfold Pot 148 Meregill F. Payne et al.
- 4 July 1908 Meregill E.T.W. Addyman, W.F. Boyd, J. de V. Hazard, B. Hoessly Oechlin, F. Payne, E.E. Roberts, H. Williamson 149
- July 1908 Swinsto H. Brodrick, C.A. Hill, A Rule 150
- 19 Sep. 1908 Alum Pot (via Long Chum) E.T.W. Addyman, F.H. Barstow, M. Botterill W.F. Boyd, J. Buckley, IH. Buckley, B. Hoessly, Mattley, A Palmer, W.E. Palmer, Shaw, H. Williamson 151
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24 Apr. 1909	Hardrawkin	E.T.W. Addyman, F. Payne, E.E. Roberts 152
28-31 May 1909	Gaping Gill	F.R. Barstow, T.S. Booth, I.R. Buckley, L.S. Chappell, I.N. Collie, H.E.J. Dalton, I. de V. Hazard, AE. Horn, E.E. Roberts, A Rule, C.B.R Wingfield 153
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4 May 1912	Little Hull	E.T.W. Addyrnan, F.R. Barstow, L.S. Chappell, E.E. Roberts, RF. Stobart 178
25-27 May 1912	Gaping Gill	F.H. Barstow, W.V. Brown, H. Brodrick, I.H. Buckley, H.E.J. Dalton, AA Hall, A Rule, Stenhouse, C.B.R Wingfield, et 15 al. 179
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12 July 1912	Penyghent: Long Churn	E.T.W. Addyman, C. Hastings, G.L. Hudson, E.E. Roberts, I.G. Stobart, R.F. Stobart
13 July 1912	Cowskull Pot	E.E. Roberts, RF. Stobart
	Cross Pot	E.E. Roberts, RF. Stobart

14 July 1912	Sell Gill Hole	E.E. Roberts, RF. Stobart
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6 Sep. 1918	Dismal Hill Hole	F. Payne, E.E. Roberts
18-21 Apr. & 7 June 1919	High Hull Pot	I de V. Hazard, E.E. Roberts
7 June 1919	Hull Pot	F. Payne, Miss D. Pilley, S. Sanderson, R.F. Stobart
7 June 1919	Ribble Swallow	F. Payne et al.
7- 9 June 1919	Deaths Head Pot, Gavel Pot, Rumbling Hole	
7- 9 June 1919	Sell Gill Hole	F. Payne, Miss D. Pilley, RF. Stobart
8- 9 June 1919	Hardrawkin	I de V. Hazard, F. Payne, Miss D. Pilley, E.E. Roberts, S. Sanderson, RF. Stobart 193
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26 Mar. 1922	Scosca Cave	IN. Longfield, E.E. Roberts
27 Mar. 1922	Gillhead Pots	C.D. Frankland, E.E. Roberts
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23 Aug. 1924 Juniper Gulf 6 men
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10 May 1925 Blayshaw Gill No. 2 F.H.Barstow, D.G.Culross, AS.Lowden, E.E.Roberts
31 May 1925 Marble Steps Pot Anderson, F.S. Booth, H.S. Booth, W.v. Brown,
1 Bilton, AS. Lowden, E.E. Roberts
21 June 1925 Blayshaw Gill No. 1 D.G.Culross, AS.Lowden, E.E.Roberts, W.L.Sutcliffe
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23 May 1926 Rowten Pot F.S.Booth, W.V.Brown, C.D.Frankland, 1Bilton, E.E.Roberts
11 July 1926 Gavel Pot F.S. Booth, W.Y. Brown, 1 Bilton, E.E. Roberts 220
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27Oct. 1929	Blue John Hole(Swaledale)	E.E. Roberts, H. Yates
8 Mar. 1930	Clapham Cave	A Bonner, E.E. Roberts
9 Mar. 1930	Pillar Pot	
7- 9 June 1930	Lost John's Hole	W.v. Brown, 1. Hilton, G.c. Marshall, E.E. Roberts H. Yates, & 4 guests
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Sep. 1931	Rumbling Hole	W.F. Higgins, E.E. Roberts, H. Yates
8 Nov. 1931	Goyden	A Butterfield, AE. Heys, W.F. Higgins B. Nelstrop, E.E. Roberts, H. Yates
21 Nov. 1931	Rumbling Hole	Dean, W.F. Higgins, H. Yates,
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- 253 1. YRC. (1936) 6. 373 - 374.
- 254 J. YRC. (1936) 6. 350 - 355.
- 255 1. YRC. (1937) 1. 84.
- 256 1. YRC. (1947) 7. 178 - 180. (1952) 7. 343.
- 257 British Caver (1943) 10. 70.

Chippings

George Spenceley writes of memories evoked by a recent visit to a bookshop

Those members who have visited our home will soon recognise that I'm a compulsive collector of books: mountain books of course, but others covering interests all too wide, offering learning all too quickly forgotten. With an awareness of increasing age my chief lament is that many will remain unread.

Recently while walking in the Cotswolds I browsed in a bookshop in Dursley and, for a modest price, bought a first edition of Geoffrey Winthrop Young's 'Mountains with a Difference'. The unexpected reward was that between its pages was a letter of thanks written and signed by the author himself. It was headed 'The Two Queens', Cambo, Northumberland, dated May 1953, and addressed to a Miss Mortimer. E. Mortimer - her bookplate is on the inside cover. Who is she I wonder? To research this question would have delighted my old friend, the late Louis Baume, and the answer could well have enhanced the book's value. Louis was a bibliophile extraordinary, collector and seller of many treasures. A slightly damaged copy of Slingsby's 'Northern Playground' which I picked up for £2.50 in Salisbury, Louis sold for me for £300 to a Norwegian collector.

Another book on the same shelf in Dursley brought back much earlier memories. While still in my mid teens my father, much concerned at my solo

ventures down Goyden Pot, placed me at the feet of my first mentor, Ernest Roberts. I became a regular visitor to his Harrogate home and gladly accepted his invitation to caving excursions, driving through the Dales in his open Armstrong Siddley tourer. The benefits were not entirely one-sided for never before had Roberts caved with one so slim who could be coerced into the most restricted of cavities.

It was on one of my visits that Roberts lent me a copy of the recently published Norbert Casteret 'Dix Ans Sous Terre'. I regret I failed to confess that my mastery of the French language was hardly adequate for a proper understanding but no doubt I returned the book with appropriate words of appreciation.

Now for what started out as the chief purpose for beginning these ramblings. In the Dursley bookshop I found a copy in good condition, reasonably priced, of the English edition of Casteret's book 'Ten Years Under the Earth'. It may now be a collector's piece! Should any member be interested it may still be for sale at The Bookshop, 28 Long Street, Dursley, Glos. tel. 01453-544711.

Following the struggles of the earlier part of this century to gain public access for tramping the High Peak of Derbyshire as we approach the end of the century the damage caused to the

vegetation is all too evident. The wear and tear caused by a still increasing number of feet, added to the effects of sheep grazing and acid rain, have left wide swathes of bare ground exposed to the ravages of the weather.

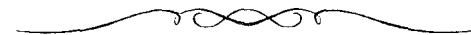
Help is already underway though organised by the National Trust and financed in part by the National Lottery. 10km of paths at a cost of £ ½ million works out at about £40 for each stride. These paths consist of gritstone pavers, weighing in at up to ½ ton, which are airlifted into place by helicopter then laid on prepared ground by a small team of workers.

At first they look pale and imposed on the landscape. Over a year or so though the surrounding vegetation re-asserts itself and the pavers darken as they weather blending in with their surroundings. Apart from being wider and not yet worn to a groove, with the passage of time and feet, they are not unlike the paved ways across other parts of the Northern Pennines and the North Yorkshire Moors.

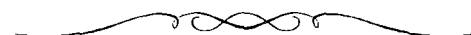
These paths are restricted to the high moors and do not link with roads or car parks to minimise the chance of encouraging even greater usage.

To Michael Smith at least they are preferable to some of the other attempted solutions to the problem, such as matting, wooden platforms or honeycomb lattices, as they are easier on the eye and give a firmer footing in wet and freezing conditions. They are used by most walkers in preference to the surrounding uneven ground. An exception is at busy times, when repeatedly stepping on and off to avoid approaching groups becomes tiresome since the pavers are barely

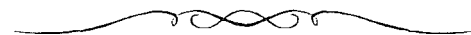
wide enough to pass without slowing and turning.



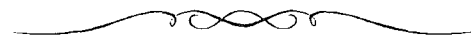
Seven members joined Iain Gilmour in July this year on the ascent of Schiehallion, the last summit needed to complete his round of the Munros. He started in May 1984 with the nearest one, Ben Lomond and has included all but 70 of the tops along the way. Working through those is next on the agenda so Iain is seeking climbing partners for the trickier tops such as the Bhasteir Tooth.



Harvey Lomas is now a qualified Cave Leader certificated to also take control of youngsters in outdoor pursuits. So if you know of anyone in need of these services you know who to contact.



Having seen John Bartons photograph of members at the 1949 Irish Meet, John Godley confirms that WOOed Booth is one of those missing from the picture which was taken at Mr Barbour's Killesher Farm and not Florence Court as stated. John Godley maintained unbroken attendance at those meets from 1938 right through to 1959.



A large volume of material has been deposited by our Archivist, Raymond Harben, with the West Yorkshire Archives Service in Leeds. In the main it relates to accounts including balance sheets, cash & subscription books covering 1936 to 1983.

Also deposited there is the Treasurers' correspondence which contains a wealth of interesting information giving an insight into the activities of Y.R.C. members such as the letter from Denny Moorhouse in October 1965 in which he records having completed the first British ascent with Brian Shirley of the Carlesso Sandri route on the south wall of the Torre Trieste with, unintentionally, only the 5th ascent of the direct finish to this route. This latter part climbed as a result of the poor route description in the English guide book! !

Also in the correspondence is the telegram from George Spenceley to Stanley Marsden advising of the fatal accident in the Himalayas.

The club is fortunate that it can now bring together all its archival material under one roof which will prove extremely beneficial to those wishing to research the history of the Club and its members.

The summit of Ben Nevis, this September, saw Rory Newman and Sue Thomason, who many members will remember from Norway and Open Meets, complete their round of the Munros started in 1987. Rory included all the tops as anyone who has seen him on the hills would expect. They have picked out for us some of the highlights:

Wettest Munro - Ben More on Mull,

Windiest Munro (actually atop) -
Creag an Leth Choin,

Most unsuccessfully attempted Munro
- Cam Dearg (Monadh Liath)
whose summit was finally reached
at the fifth attempt,

Worst navigation - Geal Charn in the

Drumochters with the summit
difficult to find in fog and deep
snow,

Silliest day out - Glas Maol, Creag
Leacach, Cam of Claise, Tom
Buidhe, The Tolmount and Cam an
Tuirc done at night to avoid being
shot during the stalking season,

Most disconcerting meteorology -
Binnein Mor when ice axes started
to crackle and spit sparks in cloud
and heavy snow,

Most midge-bites in least time - Loch
Maree below Slioch,

Most peas in sleeping bag - Loch
Maree below Slioch,

Largest hole eaten in tent by mice -
outside Aviemore.

"We've had a lot of fun playing this
game and now intend to repeat almost
all of them."

Peter Chadwick managed to find
some heavy weather and take a
soaking or two while sailing in the
Hebrides. The trip included a visit to
Soay off the Isle of Skye.

Any reduction in errors in recent
Bulletins is due to the proof-reading
efforts of Elspeth Smith and David
Laughton. The remaining errors are
entirely the Editor's responsibility.

As this edition of the Bulletin goes to
print news has just arrived of the
recent death of one of the Club's most
senior members. Cliff Downham
died peacefully on 23rd October after
a period of illness. If it is not possible
to include an obituary in this edition it
will appear in the next issue.

Low Hall Garth

5 - 7 January 1996

A poor weather forecast saw nineteen members assemble at Low Hall Garth cooking evening meal, exchanging experiences. As the evening progressed some sat by the fire whilst others ventured to the Three Shires Inn. Saturday dawned fine but with low cloud which remained all day, different groups were away quite early after an excellent bacon and eggs breakfast.

Parties visited the usual Lakeland tops via the well established routes for this traditional January meet. One high level group walked via Wet Side Edge, Three Shires Stone, Cold Pike, Crinkles and Lingmoor and other visited Wetherlam, Swirl How, Carrs, Coniston Old Man, some members visiting tops twice in a day! After, parties circumnavigated the Coniston fells at various levels.

Whatever the activity everybody assembled back at the cottage by late afternoon, by now the weather had deteriorated to the normal wind and heavy rain which persisted throughout the evening.

The well established and ingenious re-organisation of the furniture under the supervision of F.D. Smith enabled everybody to sit down at the same time to a first class evening meal, washed down with adequate amounts of wine and beer.

After dinner a selection of slides were shown of recent YRC activities overseas. These were made much more enjoyable by the critical comments of the audience whose

memories of this event differed considerably. Several members braved the elements and retired to the Three Shires Inn whilst others retired to their bunks.

Sunday morning dawned damp and misty, again a full English breakfast was enjoyed. A few members departed early for home whilst others set out for half and full day expeditions. Another enjoyable meet at Low Hall Garth, our thanks to David Hick for organisation and the excellent food.

Attendance:

Ken Aldred
Alan Brown
Derek Bush (President)
Ian Crowther
Roy Denny
Martin Truler (guest)
Andrew Duxbury
Mike Godden
David Hick
Richard Josephy
Tim Josephy
David Martindale
David Smith
Michael Smith
Derek Smithson
Bill Todd
Martin Woods
Alex Woods (son)



Joint Meet with the Gritstone Club 12-14 April 1996

Early Friday evening the ghost of winter re-appeared on the crest of an easterly wind that carried snow down to the 300m contour. By morning the wind had freshened and wind-chill put paid to any rock climbing aspirations. Plans were moderated to walks over Scawfell Pike, the Dodds, Helvellyn and the hills between Thirlmere and Borrowdale. It was a day of sombre beauty with blue silhouetted hills beneath menacing skies. Supper was a relaxed occasion in the village hall ably hosted by the Gritstone Club.

Overnight the weather warmed as the wind shifted towards the south-west. A dull morning of limited visibility hinted of rain later. Undeterred, members were out and about early with Eagle Crag, Thirlmere, being the venue for a Grits/YRC quartet who climbed routes Anarchy and Genesis. A YRC duo found excellent snow and ice in Central Gully, Great End, and made an enjoyable ascent. Another party walked up Blencathra whilst others went away to do other things. A fine drizzle arrived too late in the afternoon to affect the aspirations of members present.

Joint meets are a sociable occasion for people of similar outlook and this one was no exception. As the weekend progressed the rapport between the clubs grew. Some members began to talk about future joint expeditions, such was the convivial time had by all.

Attendance:

Gritstone Club

Chris Ambler,
Matthew Ambler,
David Bateman,
Mike Butterworth,
Andy Chapman,
Dennis Chapman,
Jack Escritt.,
Peter Green,
Andy Grimshaw,
Peter Haigh,
Edward Hodgson,
Malcolm Hopkins,
Dave Mort,
James Nichols,
Pete Roberts,
Mike Rose,
Andy Sparks.

YRC

Derek Bush,
Ken Aldred,
David Atherton,
Albert Chapman,
Arthur Craven,
Ian Crowther,
Alan Brown,
Derek English(G),
Mike Godden,
David Handley,
Mike Hartland,
George Heeles(G),
Jeff Hooper,
Tim Josephy,
David Laughton,
Mark Pryor,
Alister Renton,
Harry Robinson,
David Smith,
Derek Smithson,
Peter Swindells,
Robin Swindells(G),
Bill Todd.

Ladies' Weekend

26 - 28 April 1996

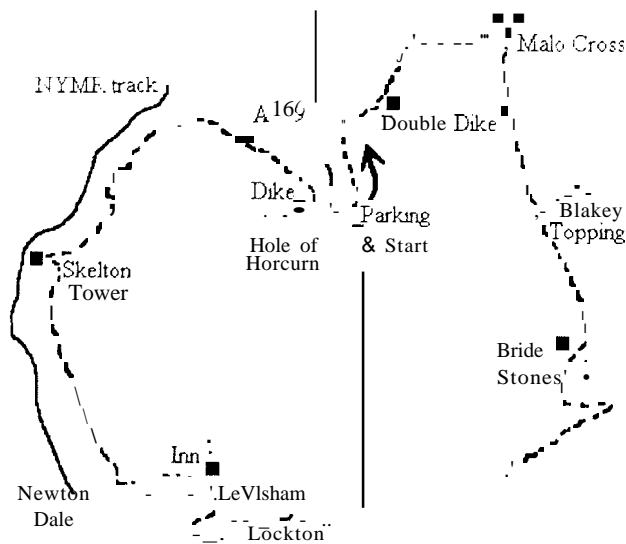
It should not be necessary to begin this Meet report with an apology; but this scribe feels compelled to do so. Not, he hastens to say, to apologise that the YRC has a meet with their partners (PC for wives). That, folklore has it, was blessed thirty five years ago by Ernest Roberts, no less. At the committee meeting when it was proposed that there should be a "Ladies' Evening", all present (struck dumb) looked to Roberts for a sign: thumbs up, or thumbs down? Roberts pronounced that there had been a Ladies Evening in 1921 and that he 'been' there. So with a Nihil Obstat from such an authority, the event entered the club's calendar of meets and has remained so ever since. No, the apology concerns the patronising word 'Ladies' in the title of the meet, which in 1996 is surely redolent with the pre-PC days of 1960's. In those unreconstructed days, the meet was a kind of 'Thank you' to the Ladies (God bless them!), for allowing their bread-and-butter providers to go on meets, and to let them see what a jolly good lot of chaps they were in the YRC; and by implication, she had no fear that there would be any danger of hanky-panky. In 1996 the meet surely deserves a better title, one that more suitably expresses the equality of sexes that exists in a meaningful relationship (PC for marriage.)

It deserves a better title because over the years the event has transformed itself Evening has given way to a Weekend; dancing for walking; and DJ's and long dresses for fleeces and bags. We still have dinner together on the Saturday evening, and most members wear a tie, but the President



this year showed his disdain for neckwear by publicly discarding it during the meal. There is now a real equality in those attending. Those who have not yet attended should no longer be put off by the Bertie Wooster title.

The success of this reconstruction is best expressed in numbers. This year there was a record attendance: forty two people came. Twenty one couples, which is in line with meet average attendance. Costs are inevitably double those of the average meet, for obvious reasons. This means that the meet is a bit harder on the pocket than meets with communal catering. Its prime appeal is to those who are 'unsalaried' (PC for retired). who either have a lump sum in the bank and can afford the hotel bill, or to those who have spent their lump sum on a caravan, and want to get some use out of it. So the concept hinges upon first finding a good tolerant hotel and second a good caravan site nearby. It is a social weekend, when the prime aim is to enjoy ourselves; it therefore helps if members are still on speaking terms with their wives. But then the After Dinner meet and the Christmas meets are also enjoyable social meets. There are other meets in the calendar where



wife disported themselves). to Staindale and so to Levisham for en route refreshments. Then on by Skelton Tower, Levisham bottom, Huggitts Scar, Hudson's Cross and Yewtree Scar back to Hole of Horcum. On Sunday, the route centred on Wheeldale Moor, and although some rain threatened in the morning, the afternoon gave perfect walking conditions. Our thanks to Gerry and Margaret Lee for their organisation of the whole weekend.

grasp, endurance and smews can be tested to the ultimate.

It deserves a better title because the event is purposeful and aims to take us to those parts that other meets do not reach. Last year we were in Holmfirth (quite!). But it gave us an excellent sixteen mile walk. This year we were near Pickering on the North Yorkshire moors. On Saturday some fifteen miles were covered by the main party and on Sunday slightly less, to allow for a later start after the late night festivities. The views over the moors were far and wide, the north wind sharp enough to tingle the face, the sun warm enough to compensate, and we saw very few other people. Ideal walking conditions. The Cottage Leas Hotel, some 2 miles north of Pickering, looked after us well and the dinner on Saturday evening was a splendid confection of formality, (ties and dresses), and informal humour and unconscious wit, (the President's speech).

For the record, the circular walk on Saturday started at the Hole of Horcum, went via Malo Cross, Blakey Topping, High and Low Bride Stones (on which some members and one

To close, it should be recorded that there were two couples present who had not been at this event before. May there be more New couples at the New Ladies Meet in 1997, in line with the New political Agenda.

Dennis Armstrong



Was it by chance that the Hole of Horcum was chosen for the main walk for this meet? According to Norse mythology the Hole was caused by the Giant Horcum (alias Wade) scooping up a fistfull of earth to throw, in an atypical moment of temper, at his scolding wife, Bel. His aim was poor and the clod landed to form Blakey Topping. MS

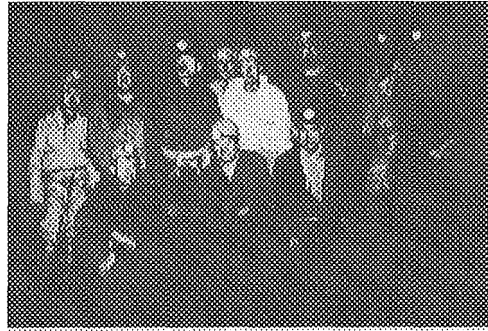
Gaping Gill Centenary Meet at Low Stern 10 - 12 May 1996

The low temperatures and cold winds which had been a feature of the 1996 Spring continued over the weekend as members met to commemorate the Centenary of the first descent of Gaping Gill by Edward Calvert in May 1896. One member had driven through snow on his southward journey over Shap and Pen-y-Ghent wore a white mantle on Saturday.



The direct descent into the main chamber was not possible as the BPC were setting up the equipment in readiness for their own Gaping Gill meet the following week. Alternative plans saw eleven members descend Bar Pot on Saturday to enter the main chamber from South East Passage. YRC resourcefulness had triumphed again, and although they could not match Calvert's two minute descent, they stood on the floor of the 'gruesome cavern' almost one hundred years to the day after their illustrious predecessor.

Other members visited Crummackdale and Ingleborough and



returned via Gaping Gill where a tented village had been erected by the BPC which would be *in situ* for two weeks to include the Bank Holiday. Kegs of Fosters "down under" lager were much in evidence on the surface which would eventually be stored on the cavern floor to prevent a recurrence of a previous theft of the amber nectar.

Because of the logistics of raising a group of eleven cavers to the surface, Mike Godden's anticipated 7.00pm dinner was delayed until around 8.15pm and was then avidly consumed with the aid of copious amounts of Bulgarian

Red. Marcian gooseberry crumble was greatly appreciated to follow the main course chicken.

During the repast toasts were given, firstly to John White who had visited Gaping Gill during the day with Albert Chapman. A second toast was to Ian Crowther, who had become a grandfather for the first time on Friday night. Pressure is already being applied by him to have the child christened Thatcher Crowther.

Most of the assembled company then appeared in the New Inn, so perhaps the Bulgarian Red was not sufficient.

Sunday morning saw a group of six on Giggleswick Scar whilst other went into existing caves leaving the rest to their digging, I would like to record that as I was unable to go down Bar Pot, I returned to Gaping Gill the following week and was lowered by the BPC whose members then gave me a guided tour of the environs of the main chamber. Many thanks to them.

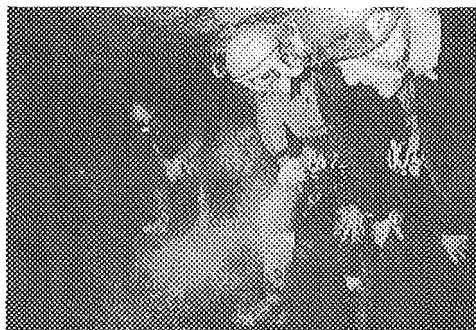
Dave Martindale

Photography by Richard Gowing

Attendance:

Ken Aldred
Denis Barker
Tim Bateman *
Bruce Bensley *
Derek Bush *
Albert Chapman
Ian Crowther *
Mike Godden
Richard Gowing *
Mike Hallland
David Hick *
Richard Josephy *
Tim Josephy *
Harvey Lomas
David Martindale
Alistair Renton *
Graham Salmon *
David Smith
Michael Smith *
John White

Those marked * visited Gaping Gill



The Long Walk

The Fans, Brecon Beacons

21 - 23 June 1996

'A splendid weekend was enjoyed by all' is perhaps the most appropriate way to begin the meet report covering the events of this year's long walk in South Wales.

Accommodation for the walk from the Black Mountains to the Brecon Beacons was finely catered for using the facilities at the Dulwich College Field Centre at Glynnetowe.

The June weather had so far been mixed, but hotted up in the week into what most people hoped would continue for the weekend's walking. Bright and sunny conditions covered most of the country for the journey to South Wales, a journey which some decided to make early on the Friday enabling themselves time for familiarisation of this quite beautiful part of the countryside. The clear weather allowed fantastic views from the low ground of Fan y Big, Cribyn, Pen y Fan and Corn Du.

As usual on the eve of such an event the local watering hole was on most people's agenda for dinner and liquid refreshments prior to retiring for the night.

The peace of the early morning was shattered at 2:30 am by the fire alarm of the Centre, set off as a result of the well done toast being prepared for breakfast. After breakfast was served, the various vehicled parties set off for

the start, some 16 miles away at about 3:30 am. Due to the hour of the day and the fact that the route to the start went off the available maps navigation to the start point on the A4069 Brynamman to Llangadog road proved more difficult than navigation on the walk.

At 4:15 am on a crisp and bright morning the walking party set off on this 36 mile challenge across the southern part of Wales heading in an Easterly direction. The stroll to Foel Fraith was a very welcome way of clearing the early morning cobwebs and the views to the South towards Cardiff and Swansea were invigorating as the route proceeded across good walking country over short grass and low flat rocks to the top of Garreg Las. Low cloud and early morning mist descended as the walkers, slowly beginning to spread out as the fast-lads got into gear, ascended to the Bannau Sir Gaer ridge.

Despite poor visibility route finding was not too difficult due to well defined paths to Pies Du. From here the route descended steeply before climbing to the trig-point that marked the top of Fan Brycheiniog, at 802m, the highest climb before breakfast. The warm sun soon burnt off the mist resulting in spectacular and far reaching views as the walk crossed Fan Hir and descended to the Centre for breakfast.

High on the agenda for discussion over breakfast was which route to take over to and up Fan Gyhirych. The unappealing option of taking the A4067 north and then climbing the steep route up to the summit was soon dismissed and the conversation focused crossing Glyntawe Common. Once over the old quarry railway the

route was straight forward with most choosing to travel north around the wood and take the short climb to the top. A more gentle route was to take the track through the wood which continued almost to the summit. The sun at this point of the walk, at about 10:30 am was very hot indeed but once on the tops the cool breeze refreshed the legs and lungs. From the summit we dropped back on to the track, only turning off at the last possible moment for the scramble up Fan Nedd.

Whoever decided to set up an extra feeding station at the base of Fan Nedd prior to climbing Fan Dringarth deserves a medal. Alan Brown and John Sterland were a welcome sight and perhaps, some may say a vital stop in the strategy of the walk. The section from breakfast at the Centre to tea at The Storey Arms would have been overwhelming. Following lunch the route proceeded east straight up Fan Dringarth where the purists headed north across pleasant walking grounds passing wild horses and through a nature enclosure towards Fan Frynych as the majority skirted around Rhos Dringarth to climb Fan Fawr. From the top, The Storey Arms and Harry's van were clearly visible and provided a boost to the tiring limbs and flagging spirits.

At tea some were ferried back to the Centre, and later regretted the decision as the best of the walk was yet to come. As the hot-dog(s) was digested, the chocolate shared out and the tea guzzled the weather warmed up for the 3:30pm push up to Corn Du. Again both routes, north and east, were taken by various people and both were rewarded on the summit with breathtaking views in all directions. Looking east as far as the

eye could see the start of the walk was not visible, even on this clear day. The late afternoon sun continued to burn as the highest peak, Pen y Fan of the Brecon Beacons was conquered.

Loud cheers from a group of four teenagers every 2 or 3 minutes half way up Cribyn were a source of both amusement and confusion. Were the frequent crazed cheers and run arounds on the steep slope because of something in the teenagers temporary shelter or were they the result of some other event? Whatever the answer the thoughts helped to pass the time. Only when we drew level with them did we find out that they carried a transistor radio and were holed up listening to the England and France penalty shoot out.

Tempting though it was to descend the ridge of Bryn Teg, Fan y Big was targeted and taken and what followed was a feeling of the utmost relief and accomplishment as the gentle Cefn Cyff ridge sloped down to the low lands and the farms of Rhiwiau, Tynllwyn and the riverside walk into Llanfrynach in the early evening.

Early finishers completed the route by about 4:00 pm, perhaps too early to enjoy the softer tones and cooler conditions created by the declining evening sun.

The walk was a huge success which would not have been at all possible without the local knowledge and fine organisation of the meet leader Harvey Lomas. Thank you to Harvey for all his hard work and thank you also to the support team, who must have covered many miles east and west during the 16 to 20 hours that spanned the walk.

Quote of the day: "Cribyn is unfair at 6:30 in the evening !"

Michael Wood

Attendance:

Meet Leader Harvey Lomas

Support

Alan Brown
Ian Crowther
Harry Robinson
George Spenceley
John Sterland

Walkers

Denis Barker
Adrian Bridge
Derek Bush, President
Derek Collins
P Davis
Iain Gilmour
Richard Gowing
Neil Grant (G)
Mike Hartland
Jeff Hooper
A Jones (G)
Richard Josephy
Tim Josephy
Alan Kay
KMaddocks
A Maddocks (G)
Rory Newman
Arthur Salmon
David Smith
Anthony Toon (G)
Nick Welch
Frank Wilkinson
Michael Wood
Alan Wood (G)
John Woodier (G)

The Sunday after the Long Walk

R. Gowing

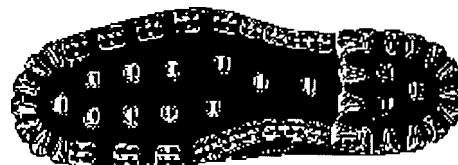
I drove to the finish of the Long Walk at Llanfrynach but decided this wasn't the ideal spot to start and finish my intended walk, so I drove to Llwynceilyn farm where I parked and followed by-roads and field paths to the foot of the north ridge of Peny Fan, which I followed to its top.

I then made the short traverse to Corn Du where I had my lunch, finding a new use for my trekking pole in fending off greedy sheep!

I returned over Peny Fan and Cribyn, past crowds enjoying the sunshine, to Fany Big which I descended by its pleasant NNE ridge to Rhiwiau and by lanes and field paths back to the car.

As I descended the ridge two gliders soared in a thermal rising from its end before making off towards the Black Mountains.

A memorable day which I would have missed had I doggedly pursued the main walk to its end, finishing long after everybody else!



Dove Crag Cave

5 - 7 July 1996

Those who attended this meet came from the extremities of the North of England. From as far north as Carlisle, as far east as Middlesbrough, a president from the West and a poet from the South, Leeds. Even they were not all there for the whole period and arrived at the cave from different directions. My definition of 'rambling' is walking where there are no roads and sleeping where there are no houses and being interested in being there. This meet demonstrated again that we are mostly not in agreement about how we should ramble and this may be an essential part of the character of the Club. The president confirmed this by telling us that only two people found the proposal to go to Iceland irresistible whereas about twenty were expected at Ailefroide. We enjoyed the Lakes and it was perhaps improved by the simplicity of being few in numbers.

Two retired members met at The Brotherswater Hotel, where one car was left without quibble. They then had a pleasant walk over High Street and down to Small Water. The weather reports had promised rain so they had a tent which was erected before there was any sign of rain. The only rain that fell during the weekend happened that evening as the president walked over from Kentmere and erected his tent, but he said it was only light, as the others covered in their tent. The stone shelters were examined as we walked out the next morning and they would have provided adequate shelter, but not as comfortably as a tent. The three of us walked over Thomthwaite Crag where Ken left us to walk back to his car via Threshthwaite Cove, Hartsop and Brotherswater. We were sorry to lose him, but he had to be home for Saturday evening. The two Dereks continued the high level route that gave views over the eastern Lakes all day with the final view

of the day being from Dove Crag Cave. We crossed Stoney Cove Pike, crossed the road at Kirkstone Pass and struggled up Red Screes before crossing Black Brow and descending to the cave. The president being very newly retired had been subject to much advice of varying quality and this did not stop when we reached the cave. Here a smell of burning paraffin was the first indication that Ian Crowther had made it from the Gritstone Club hut in Thirlmere where he spent Friday night.

The situation of the cave is unsurpassed and we had it to ourselves and we had not spent time together recently, which made it all the more enjoyable. The president had received a spirit flask as a recent gift and carried it so far that it would have been churlish to deprive him of the pleasure of giving us whisky. This did lead to a maudlin discussion of the different attitudes of the soldiers in the First World War to those in the Second and even produced a most affecting love story from real life. The only complaint could be that the wall erected to reduce the wind blowing into the cave, prevented us enjoying the view as we lay in our sleeping bags. We slept late the next morning and, before we had packed up, a group of walkers arrived. They seem impressed that we had come from so many different places to meet in the cave. Their youth made them also impressed by our great age and the number of years we had known each other. We were so late that, even though the sun was shining, we each just walked back to our cars. The two Dereks went together as far as Patterdale where the president turned off to go to Kentmere whereas I had only to walk to Beetham Cottage situated on the road side just beyond the turn off to Hartsop. Ian, I hope, made it to Thirlmere. D.A.S

Attendance:

Ken Aldred,	Derek Bush,
Ian Crowther,	Derek Smithson

Cwm Eigiau

23 - 25 August 1996

Quite a different meet for us in many respects. Unfortunately not so in one; we don't seem to get much luck with our weather in North Wales generally, & this was no exception. However, the Cwm Eigiau hut of the Rugby Mountaineering Club which was booked by meet leader Tim Bateman (a member of both clubs) is reputedly the oldest club hut in the UK, having been occupied by our old friends the Rucksack Club from 1912 until 1919. It hasn't changed a great deal since then in general appearance, and there were photographs from the 1913 Rucksack Club Journal to prove it. It is very cosy and well equipped in a style suitable to its remoteness, it being between 20 & 45 minutes walk from where cars can be left according to whether or not you have a key to a locked gate! Everything has to be carried in along a roughish track, but the owners have made shift to provide Calor Gas, fuel for the pot-bellied stove and running (cold) water! It is in a superb location scenically, in an upper valley which is now almost entirely uninhabited but shows much evidence of the work that has been carried on there historically. This includes the reservoir, much reduced in size since the original rather flimsy looking barrage burst in about 1925 resulting in devastation in the Conwy valley.

A disadvantage of the hut is that accessibility to hills is pretty well restricted to the eastern sides of the Carneddau, so after a wet and windy night on Friday parties set off from the hut or their damp tents for the prime target of Craig Yr Ysfa which looms large and forbidding over the head of the valley. The whole day was showery, the tops wet and windy and

the rocks slippery. Nevertheless three ropes completed the grand mountaineering route of Amphitheatre Buttress with degrees of competence varying from the energetic to the geriatric, so we can report that over 50% of the attendance went on the crags. The others made various forays upon the cirque of hills around the valley, several of them solo. The cosy hut with its stove was very welcoming to the soggy specimens who returned from the hill! Some of the party then made the considerable expedition in the dark in order to visit the hostelry in the Conwy valley and our lone member camping with his canine companion at the valley camp site.

Sunday dawned with the distinct threat of further rain showers, and so after a leisurely breakfast everyone chose to pack up and leave together in convoy in order to facilitate the arrangements for driving out through the locked gate and securing it behind us. Some were going to rock climb at lower levels, some to walk more easily accessible hills and others to drive straight home. In spite of the pretty unco-operative weather it was a successful meet with a bit of everything done and a good attendance for a meet in August immediately following on the return home of the summer Alpine party. Tim Bateman earns our thanks for arranging a meet in an unusual and attractive setting and which required more effort on the part of those attending than is often the case.

WCIC

Attendance:

Tim Josephy (President Elect)	
Tim Bateman	Harvey Lomas
Derek Clayton	David Smith
Ian Crowther	George Spenceley
Eddie Edwards	Niel Renton (Guest)
Mike Godden	Alister Renton

Ennerdale

11 - 13 October 1996

Early in October the organiser of this meet was worried about the small numbers who had sent in their forms. In the event over twenty members and guests arrived on Friday to find the rain falling gently on the Scout Camp hut situated on the very edge of Ennerdale lake. During the night this gentle rain swelled to a continuous heavy downpour. Our sense of cosiness in the hut was emphasised by the knowledge that one of our number was camping by Black Beck Tarn.

After breakfast the downpour had, if anything, increased in intensity and the arrival of the (very wet) camper was greeted with hilarity. However in true YRC fashion the hut quickly emptied. A party intending to do the Ennerdale skyline soon realised the impracticality of this (given the weather) and divided itself into two parties, each doing half. One man did in fact walk (or run) the entire round. We can all guess who this was! Simply to walk round the lake was an interesting experience with the path along the southern bank being mostly ankle deep in running water.

The main Ennerdale beck was a raging torrent and could only be crossed by bridges. The bridges however could only be approached by wading. On the tops walkers were blown about to such an extent that ankles, spectacles and noses were damaged. By midday the rain moderated and other activities

included visits to Sellafield power station, the fleshpots of Keswick, tent drying, a descent of a deep working iron ore mine and an examination of the Georgian architecture of Whitehaven. Saturday was concluded by an excellent meal and good cheer helped by the usual consumption of red wine.

Sunday dawned with a spectacular sunrise. The upper valley was again penetrated and a promising gully explored for use in more favourable conditions. One member drove to Glenridding where he and his wife walked up Hellvelyn. A group drove south and walked up Black Coombe. The ascent of this infrequently visited top in the glorious Autumn weather was a most worthwhile experience.

No climbing was attempted such was the weather.

Our thanks go to Andrew for finding the Scout Hut, the excellent food and the log fires. I'm sure we all felt that we should return there before long.

Harry Robinson

Attendance:

The President, Derek Bush

Ian Anderson	David Martindale
Ian Crowther	Rory Newman
Andrew Duxbury	Frank Platt (guest)
Eddie Edwards	Harry Robinson
Iain Gilmour	John Schofield
Mike Godden	David Smith
Richard Gowing	Derek Smithson
George Heeles (guest)	George Spenceley
David Hick	Bill Todd
Geoff Hooper	Michael Wood
David Laughton	AIan Wood (guest)