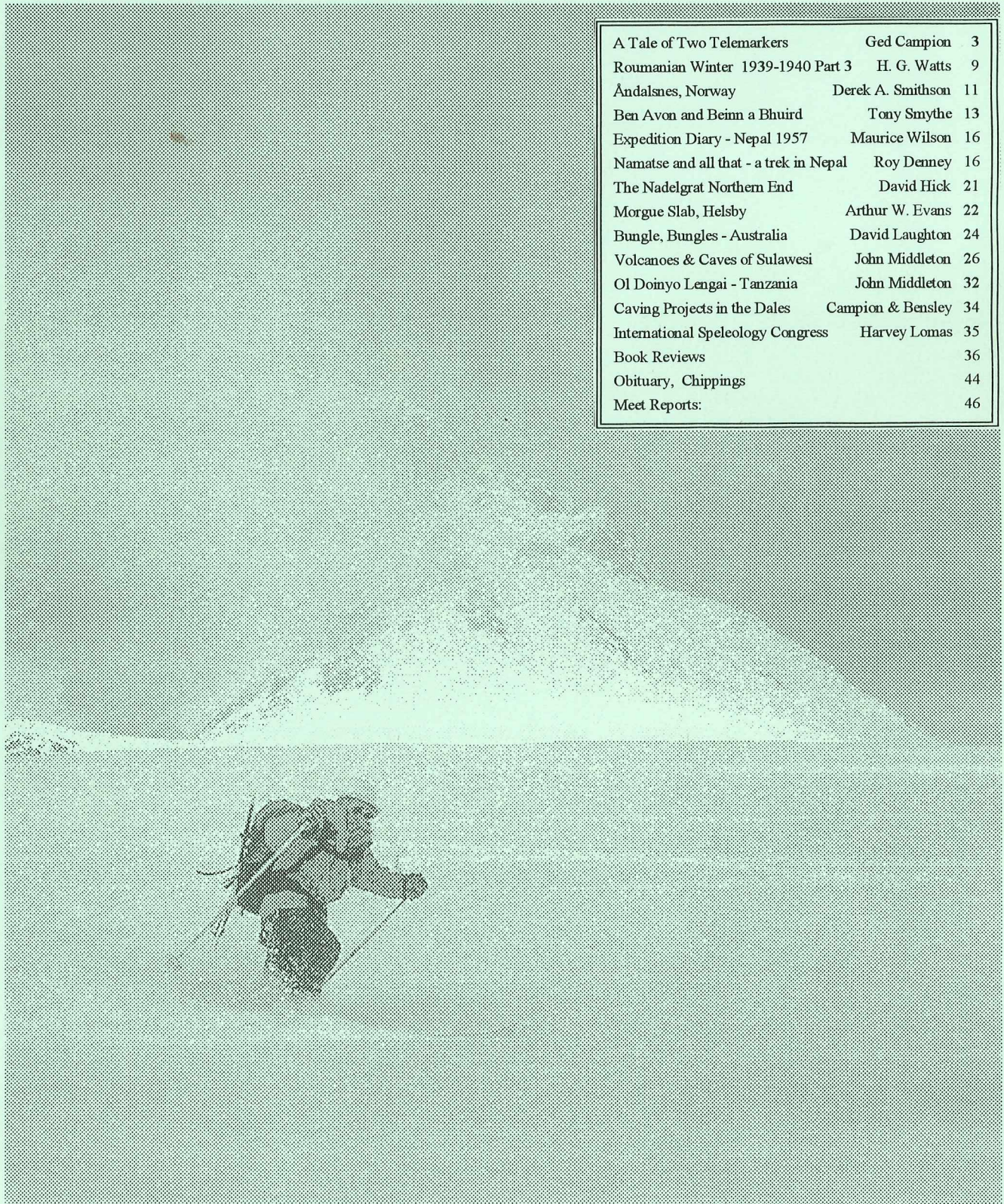


Yorkshire Rambler



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Photograph by Shaun Penny

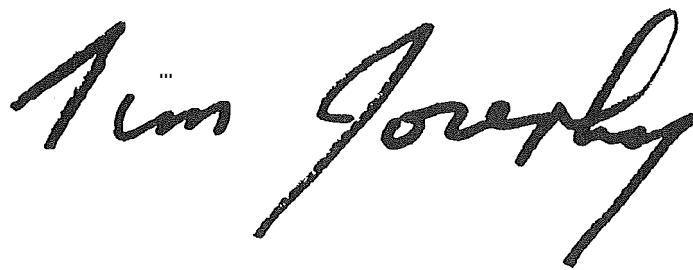
Foreword by the President

There were so many articles submitted for this bulletin that at least one has had to be held over until the next edition. Don't sit back on your laurels though, we still need to know what everyone is getting up to. As always the scope of the articles is astonishing and some of the adventures make compelling reading.

One of the most interesting facets is the mixture of historical and contemporary articles - on the one hand we learn of devious doings on the crags in the 1930's (still, if it was good enough for Professor Collie it's good enough for the YRC), and on the other we have YRC members once again active in Yorkshire cave exploration. All this variety makes for a most stimulating Bulletin.

One plea - you will notice the large number of meet reports in this edition as compared to the last. Please, meet report authors, try to get your works of art out early so they make the next available Bulletin. Who knows, you might even remember what happened on the meet!

Enjoy your reading,



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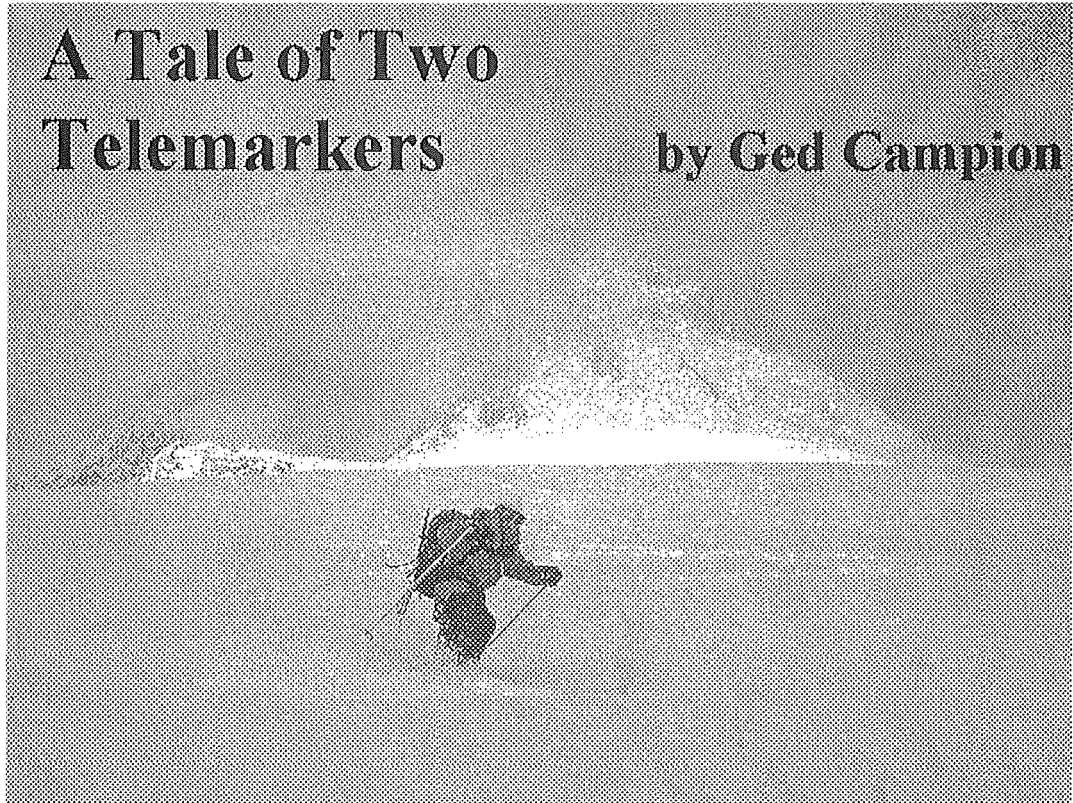
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A Tale of Two Telemarkers

by Ged Champion



The freedom of the Telemark free-heel technique

Photography by Shaun Penny

I had always wanted to climb Piz Bemina and what would be an even greater achievement would be to ascend and descend the mountain on ski. Shaun Penny and I had, over the previous two winters, developed a more refined Telemark technique which had liberated us from the seemingly pedestrian feeling of fixed-heel ski-ing. But the Bernina Alps, guarding the border between Switzerland and Italy, would be no push-over with its lofty peaks, many at the 4000 metre mark.

We soon discovered that little information was available on ski mountaineering in the Bernina, in fact all we had to go on was the West Col climbing guide first published in 1968! We had three main objectives in mind: Piz Palü (3905), Piz Roseg (3937) and, of course, Piz Bernina (4049).

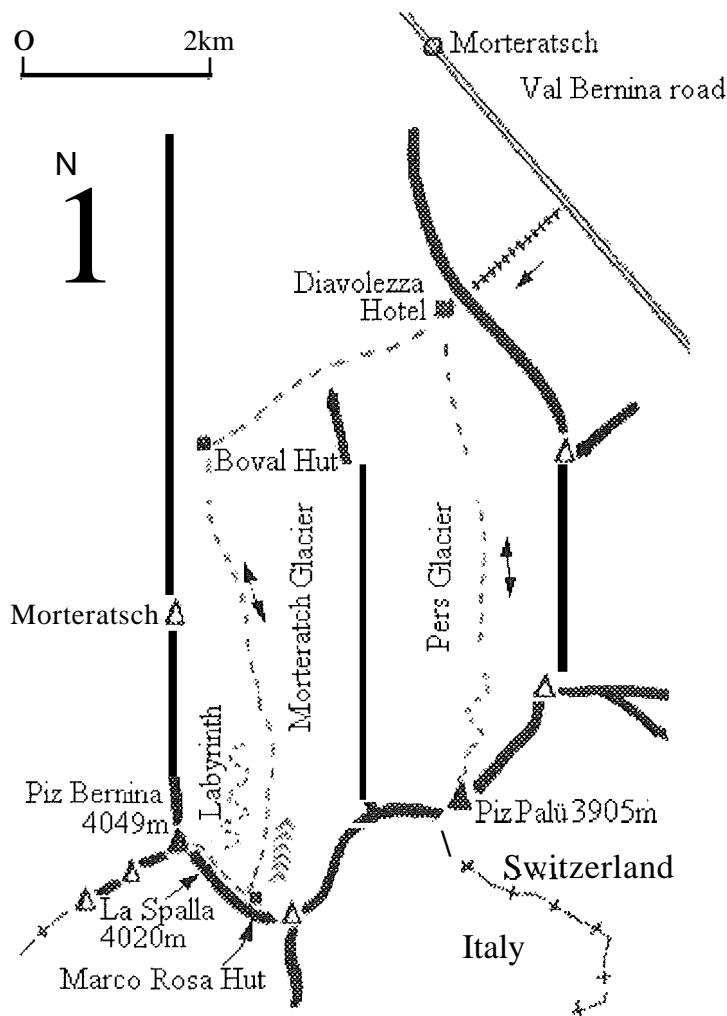
On the May Bank Holiday, 1993, we flew to Zurich and caught the train to St. Moritz at the upper end of the

Endgadin Valley. It was too late in the day to consider climbing up to a hut so we looked around for somewhere to stay and quickly discovered that St. Moritz is one of the most expensive Alpine resorts for accommodation. The hotels that were still open were exclusively for the rich. We made enquiries in a local sports shop and the assistant confirmed our worst fears about finding anywhere to stay. Then, quite out of the blue, he offered to put us up for the night in his flat at Samaden. We gratefully accepted. Ruskin was correct when he said 'the Swiss use no phrases of friendship but they do not fail you in your need'.

The following day our host, Kuck, drove us up the Val Bernina and dropped us off so we could canyon hitching to the Diavolezza Railway terminus. We took the cable railway to the 'Hotel' at 2973m which would be our starting point for Piz Palu. The indications were that Piz Palu would

be a reliably straightforward climb and descent via the Pers glacier.

convincing bergschrund, proved steep but we climbed unroped.



The angle eased and we soon reached the East Peak. We carried on to the central summit, careful to avoid the cornices above the north face. It is a place to be treated with great respect and the scene of numerous accidents in the past. Sadly, the cloud rolled in when we reached the summit denying us a view across the valley. We lost no time in getting back to our skis and enjoyed descent to the basin, bemusing the passing Italian ski-mountaineers.

The following day we prepared for a short traverse across to the Boval Hut on the other side of the Morteratsch glacier. The full

Despite promises of good weather, we woke the following morning to cloudy sky and flurries of snow. But our objective, Piz Palu, reared up majestically behind the cloudy veneer. Palu is the mountain above the swamp of Alp Palu, Its main ridge runs east/west and is marked by three summits. With buttresses its profile bears a strong resemblance to Blencathra in the Lake District. It is one of the most frequently climbed peaks in Bernina, mostly because of its romantic associations. We made good progress up the glacier to the point on the ridge at 3731m where we deposed (skiing jargon for 'stashed') our skis. The final slope guarded by a fairly

panorama of Piz Palu hung above us with the majestic corridor of the Bellavista, a high level pathway to Bernina, alluring and clearly visible. But this would not be our route today. Bernina itself stood aloof with its long downward sweep of the Biancograt, then the steep rock uprush of Prielvusa and finally the splendid summit of Morteratsch,

We crossed the Pers glacier to the lateral moraine and quickly arrived at the Boval hut. We were greeted by two very boisterous labradors promptly followed by the hut warden's wife who, curiously enough, was a Yorkshire 'lass' from Otley. Then Hans, who we were later to

discover had been the hut warden for many years.

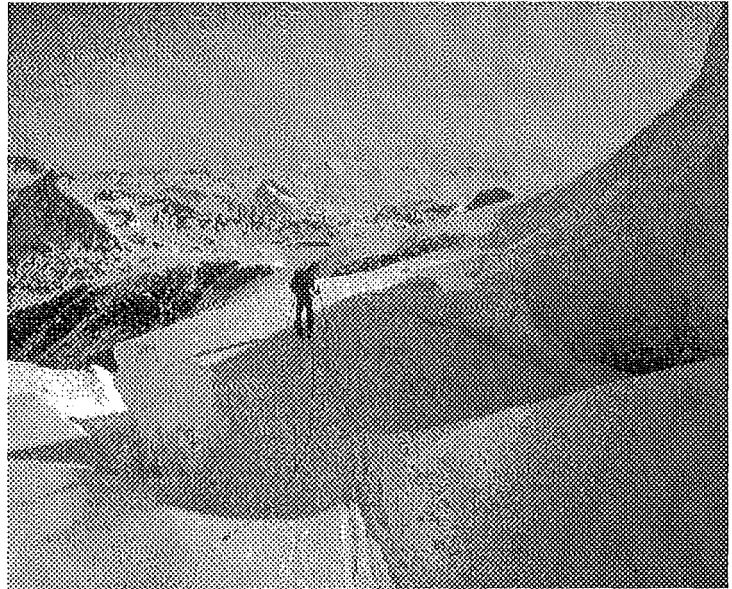
There was one other party, Austrians who had arrived the previous day. We soon sensed a tense atmosphere. They had apparently been brought in from Salzburg to search for two companions on the Morteratsch glacier for three days. The Swiss rescue helicopter had searched but was about to quit though the Austrians were anxious to continue believing that

there was a slim chance their companions were still alive. The helicopter made a final foray up the valley, dwarfed by the vastness of the glacier. It returned an hour later with no news.

It was with this tragedy in mind that we set off the following morning knowing that even the most experienced and seasoned alpinists are not immune to the ravages of the mountains. These good mountaineers had probably quite unwittingly skied too close to the edge of a crevasse whose cruel interior was now their icy tomb.

At first, the Morteratsch glacier appears to be a devastation of crevasses and seracs. To thread a way through its endless maze of icy obstacles one has to be equally cunning and careful. It does not give up its secrets easily. Hans described, with the aid of binoculars, the best route in the prevailing snow conditions. It was not possible to attempt the Labyrinth route on the right hand side of the glacier. Instead, we would ascend to the light of the Buch, the normal winter route. We bid

our farewells and told the Austrian



Cell Campion, above the jaws of the 'Buch'

team that we would be vigilant during our ascent and report back if we saw anything.

We reached the first real steep slope and were quickly reminded that Nordic skis do not always respond well to icy conditions. Telemark technology has not yet come up with a harshschizen or any equivalent system. Resisting at all costs the temptation of deoting skis and donning crampons, we forged on. We soon reached the first crevasse obstacle which quickly surrendered with an obliging snow bridge. From then on the route became increasingly complex, crevasses almost everywhere denying access to the belly of the upper glacier.

As the morning started to dawn, we rose above the Buch. We looked back and could see the Austrian team, who had by this time resumed their search, forlornly probing crevasses with their avalanche sounding rods. We continued cautiously, roped together all the way. The crevasse zone steepened and, by accessing serac terraces, we found an intricate way through to the upper slopes. Here, the

crevasses were even bigger than below but the dangers were more visible. We reached the point where the rescue helicopter had landed the previous day. We had learned that these were the biggest and deepest crevasses - their size was awesome.

As the sun became stronger we could see our objective, the Fuorela Crast Aguzza Sattel where we would find the Marco Rosa hut. We knew only the winter refuge would be open, but it would be an ideal place to stop for lunch and study the climb ahead of us.

The hut has a reputation for being difficult to find but, as we approached the col, we could see what appeared to be a little aluminium dolls house, shining like a beacon in the sun. We took off our skis and stepped inside. Its pine clad walls gave a cosy feeling and were festooned with memorabilia of early Alpine days. We were presided over by a solemn portrait of the Duke d'Abruzzi peeling down on us with utter disdain. Little did we know that this would be our home for the next few nights.

The Spallagrat (south-east ridge) reared up behind the hut. This was the usual route to the summit of Bernina, an easy and popular way up the mountain in summer. In winter and spring it is known to be more challenging. We skinned up to where the ridge steepened at 3850m deposed our skis and climbed icy chimneys which linked snow slopes - one requiring a traverse on a steep, icy slope on the east side of the ridge. We arrived at La Spalla and headed up to the fine snowarete which led us up to the summit. It had started to snow gently and we suddenly lost any prospect of a view from the summit. Nevertheless, we were pleased by our achievement and took a few photos before heading down.

Arriving back at our skis we took the easy angled snow slopes and floated effortlessly down to the hut. So encouraged were we by our improved technique and powder conditions that we canvassed the idea of staying overnight to get the best snow conditions early the next morning. Our decision was finally made when we observed avalanching ice and snow from the rock buttresses of the Crast Agüzza across the col.

We had virtually no food, water or spare warm clothes but there were plenty of blankets in the hut so one night's stay would not prove to be too austere. We were confident the weather would stay settled the following day.

It was a chilly night in the hut and we were woken by an icy blast which echoed against the hut's exterior. The Marco Rosa is the highest hut in the Bemina. It is perched precariously on rocks above the Vedretta di Scerscen. The summer refuge is only metres away but solidly locked in the winter months. As I woke I looked out of the window it was snowing heavily, was this a passing shower or something more permanent? I questioned Shaun who only confirmed my worst fears - it had been snowing for over four hours. I crawled from beneath my blankets and opened the hut door. There was a considerable accumulation of snow outside. All we could do was to wait until first light and hopefully make our escape. At 5.00am the conditions outside were approaching white-out, we could not even see the summer refuge.

We hadn't any water to make a drink nor a stove to melt snow. Apart from a few solid bread crusts abandoned on a dusty shelf, we had no food. Our situation had become a little wonying!

We needed to tell our hosts at the Boval Hut of our predicament so they would not alert the rescue services. There was an emergency telephone on the wall - providing a one way link to the Italian emergency services in Chiesa. We decided it would be prudent to try to get a message through.

By 10.00am it was snowing even more heavily - we peered miserably out of the windows, clad in our blankets, like forgotten orphans. The potential for fresh snow avalanche would be considerable on the glacier below us - and any escape the other way down the couloir towards Italy would be equally suicidal.

By midday we decided to try and use the phone to relay a message to the Boval hut. I confidently dialled the number. Not surprisingly, I was immediately confronted by an Italian operator speaking rapidly in his native tongue. I couldn't understand a word. I forlornly attempted a mixed Italian/English approach only to utterly confuse my correspondent. The more we exchanged, the more confused we became. I tried to tell him my position - he kept asking me if I needed a doctor. I looked despairingly at Shaun who encouraged me to keep trying. In my most convincing and animated Italian I rolled the location off my tongue - 'The Marrro Rrrrosa hut' I proclaimed. Suddenly he gasped, 'O, the Marco Rosa Hut!' Almost suggesting 'Why didn't you say so in the first place'

A rapport suddenly developed and, in no time, he told me to await a call from the warden at the Boval. Sure enough, ten minutes later, the little green phone rang. It was Hans - who duly pondered our predicament. It was clear from his concerns that he

didn't want a repeat of the Austrian tragedy.

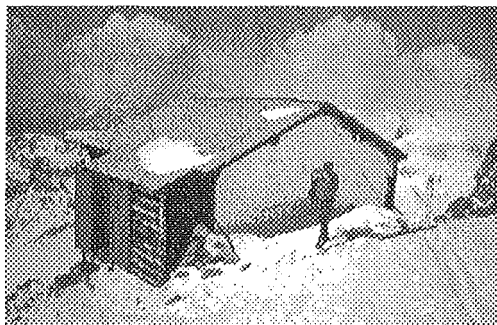
He recounted how there had been an incredible accumulation of snow and the steep sections of the glacier would be dangerous. He said we should sit tight and he would get the latest report from the Meteo. He rang back minutes later, vaguely optimistic that the snow would abate the following morning and, somewhat surprisingly, said that he would negotiate a helicopter to pick us up next day! The cost seemed reasonable because it was not the rescue chopper but a supply craft piloted by one of Hans' friends. All round, this seemed preferable to the ignominy of being properly rescued.

More immediately, however, was the dreary prospect of another night at the hut. We were hungry and desperately thirsty. That afternoon we vainly tried to melt snow in an old mess tin using candle ends - not surprisingly, it didn't work. We ate some snow and rationed a few sweets. The siege mentally must have affected us a little as we found ourselves discussing starvation, low morale and being too emaciated to escape on ski!

At 6.00pm we ventured out of the hut to survey the conditions - it was still snowing heavily. We attempted to find a chink in the heavily armoured summer refuge where we might find a stove but there was no means of gaining access without causing damage so we retreated to our aluminium box.

We awoke the following morning at 5.00am to the sound of the phone ringing. It was Hans. He said there were problems getting the helicopter up to the col because of poor visibility. The good news, however, was that it had temporarily stopped

snowing possibly long enough to allow us to descend. Hans desperately tried to describe the best route down. As he spoke I tried to visualise the layout of the glacier. He kept emphasising that we must ski roped together and not descend via the Buch. Visibility was reasonable.



The Marco Rosa Hut is the highest in the Bernina

A little anxious about leaving the safety of the hut, we moved off, taking full tramping a route through the deep snow. We traversed up and down, ever mindful of the freshly corniced crevasses. We made mistakes but kept calm - always trailing the rope. At one point, rather suddenly, we arrived at the top of a huge serac tower with no apparent way out. Hans's warning echoed in my mind 'Stay above the Buch'. Determined not to be funneled into the ice-bound trap, we traversed higher and, more by good luck than judgement, found a corridor at an acceptable angle.

Rarely did we pull our skis, always tentatively edging down. After three hours we could see the flat bottom of the mighty Morteratsch below. A few more slopes and we'd made it. Our relief was evident. In spite of our tiredness we skied with purpose as if in defiance of the mountains' attempt to keep us hostage.

As we approached the Boval hut we could see Hans with binoculars trained on us. He had apparently watched us high on the glacier with bated breath

as we had wandered perilously close to the jaws of the Buch. We drank soup and ate food cooked by his wife.

The next day we headed down the fertile ablation valley to Morteratsch itself. For the remainder of our time we retreated to the flesh pots of Pontresina and decided to leave Piz Roseg for another time.

It is curious how success, failure and fears can strengthen bonds between mountaineers. What appear to be 'serious' situations can, later, be laughed off or even dismissed. But they do at least equip one with rich and varied experiences. At the time, of course, you don't quite know how things will turn out. It doesn't take long, however, before the over-riding desire to have another go takes over and the beckoning of the mountains simply becomes too strong to resist.

With this in mind we headed up to the Coaz hut above the Roseg glacier to climb one of the mountains in the Sella group - possibly Piz Gluschaint. But time dictated and we eventually chose Il Chaputschin at 3386m. It was simple, straightforward and not too committing. From its summit we skied down the enchanting Fex valley where verdant alpine meadows carpeted with crocuses, blue gentian and soldanella were eroding the spring snows.

The smell of lush vegetation and lightly burning fires heralded our arrival at the beautiful Romansch hamlet of Sils Maria in the upper Engadine. Pastel coloured buildings and intricate wood carvings preside over an air of peace and serenity - a fitting end to our Alpine sojourn.



Roumanian Winter 1939-1940

Part 3 of 3

H. G. Watts

BRASOV

It was almost by accident that we found out how good the skiing was at Brasov. There had been an explosion in the liquid chlorine tanks of a small paper factory at a village near Brasov called Zemesti, and the War Office asked us to find out what had really happened. The Germans were blaming the 'English Secret Service'. The chlorine had got into the village and several of the inhabitants had been killed. We thought a skiing expedition would be the best way of canying out a reconnaissance without arousing undue suspicion, so we stayed the weekend at the Aro Hotel in Brasov, and on the Sunday morning skied light-heartedly into Zemesti and bought a beer at the Inn. From the landlord we got a fairly satisfactory account of what had happened, and we got a good look at the works and the chlorine tanks from a hill overlooking the village.

Brasov lies north of the Carpathian range, on the edge of the plain and at the foot of the Schuler, 'Christianul Mare' in Roumanian, a mountain of about 6000 ft where the ski slopes are. The town had two excellent hotels, the Aro, very modem, clean looking and Roumanian; and the Krone, old fashioned and Saxon, with superb food, a snug atmosphere and with what I believe was a quite undeserved reputation for bed-bugs. As we never stayed there we didn't have the opportunity offinding out.

At night Brasov looks a typical German town of the picture books and fairy tales, with gabled snow-covered houses, each with its archway leading



to the "hof". There is a "Rathaus" with a tall square tower, and an old church, said to be the most easterly mediaeval Gothic church in Europe. In the winter of 1939 the bookshops round the main square were filled with anti-British literature in German and Roumanian and it was evident that the Germans had turned their propaganda machine full on in this part of the country,

The ski slopes start at Poiana Mare, a gently undulating open meadow about a mile square on the side of the Schuler, 1½ hours' climb from the town. It can be reached by car except under the worst snow conditions. Poiana Mare is itself a small winter sports centre with two or three hotels and half a dozen restaurants. Our favourite place was a log cabin kept by an old Hungarian couple from Temesvar in the Banat. They got to know us well and always looked after us, and if we were alone didn't mind giving us their opinion of the Germans,

It was 2½ hours' stiff climb from Poiana to the summit of Schuler, where once again we found the usual pair of huts, the S.K.V. for comfort, and, nearer the top, the T.C.R. for view.

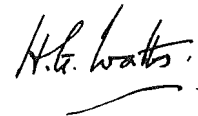
The favourite run down from Schnler is known to the locals as "Telegrafenberg", It consist of 3000ft of continuous fast running down steep narrow glades between trees; most of the time one must either do quick tail-wags or take it straight. There is an easier wood path, known as "Familienweg".

Telegrafenberg starts from the Roumanian hut at the top with 500ft of wood path, then it opens out on to a small meadow, and the steep glade begins on the other side of this. It varies in width between ten and twenty yards and goes on through the woods for 2000ft without a break till it reaches the upper end of Poiana where it finishes with a long straight like the run-out of a jumping hill. It was a tremendously exhilarating run, specially if one had the good luck to find it untracked after a fresh fall. The closeness of the trees on either side enhanced the feeling of speed. On account of its popularity it soon became well tracked and if there was any shortage of snow it was very necessary to look out for exposed patches of rock.

I would hesitate to suggest to a skier from England that he should choose the mountains of Roumania for a winter holiday, specially as the train passes through the whole range of the Alps before half the journey is over. But if ever the Iron Curtain is lifted and peace settles once more over the Balkans, anyone whose job takes him to South-Eastern Europe or the Eastern Mediterranean might well give some thought to the attractions of Brasov or Sinaia. Unless conditions have changed irreparably since 1940 there will be at least some of the comforts which we associate with a skiing holiday. There is a certainty of

reasonably good snow, and there is the added spice of exploration, since much of the country must still be uncharted from the skier's point of view.

The educated Roumanians, when not overburdened with political doubts and anxieties, as they were in 1940, are cultured and companionable. It is to be hoped that they still exist. The most apt description I have heard of the newly emancipated Roumanian bourgeoisie is that they resemble Kipling's Bandar Log, the monkey folk. When faced with a difficulty they shrug their shoulders and say "Nu se poate". The mountain peasantry, like their kind the world over, are rough, hard-working and not over-clean, but kindly and hospitable. They have a ready sense of humour, and we found it an advantage to know enough of the language to be able to appeal to it.



Correction:

From the oppressive dry heat of Kano on the edge of the Sahara in Northern Nigeria, Trevor Sahnnon has written to put the record straight on the list of names given under the 1959 Irish potholing group photograph printed on page 7 of the Summer 1997 issue of the Yorkshire Rambler.

The 'probable' Michael Selby is indeed him. Next to Selby is not Trevor as attributed in the caption but John Varney. Trevor is kneeling at the front and incorrectly identified as 'probably Peter Hurrell'.

Recollecting finding Rayfad's rimstone pools in 1959 and evenings of Irish Mist in Black Lion sustained Trevor through those hot dry evenings.

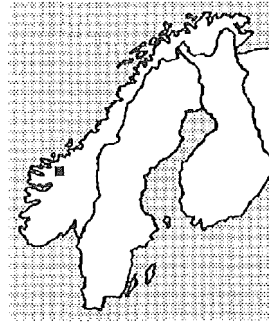
Andalsnes, Norway

Summer 1997

Derek A. Smithson

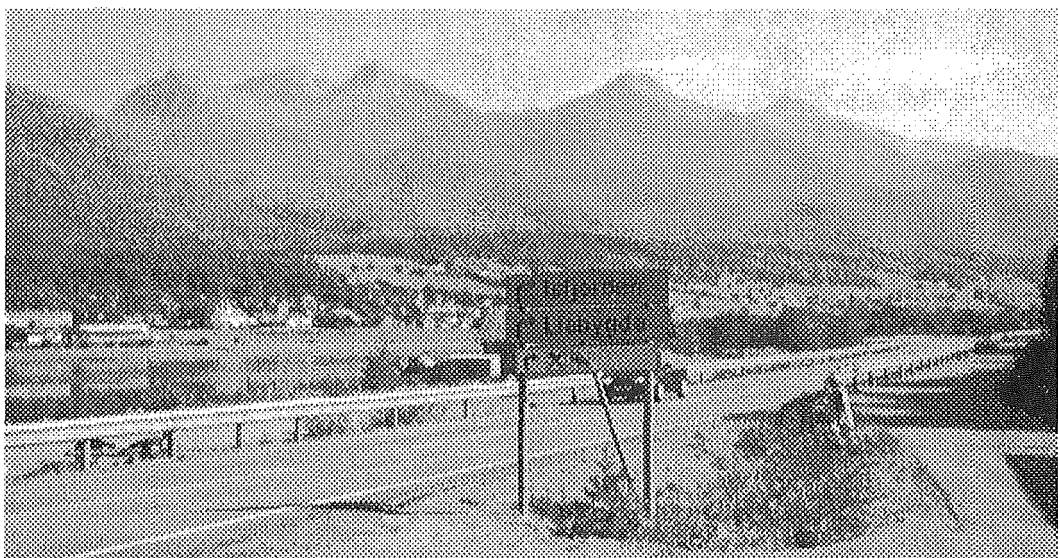
Twenty four hours after I left home I was sitting having lunch in the sun on a bench by a mountain hut five hours walk into Dovrefjell. A flight, late in the day from Newcastle, gets to Oslo in time to catch a sleeper to Romsdal or Trondheim or places en route. I had to wake before five in the morning to have breakfast before leaving the train at Kungsvoll and this led me to be close to Snohette by mid-day and to discover this is really an interesting mountain. I walked over the highest summit which consisted mainly of large boulders, but the other two summits are jagged knife blades of rock. What terrifying and wonderful situations I missed for the want of a competent companion who could climb *difficult* with a touch of *severe* as the guide book says. A local hunting guide merely said, "It is hard". There's also Lars Edge, at the western end with the typical *miles* of steep rock above a lake, with no-one climbing.

I found another mountain that I intend explore even though I don't expect to



interest anyone else. But before that I came across a beautiful valley, like a miniature Utladalen, with a picturesque old saeter

where it is possible to buy milk in the summer. From here I took the path on the wrong side of a gorge and experienced a typical Norwegian trap of a steep hillside covered in small birch trees and never quite difficult enough to be worth the descent to start at the right place. The birch trees were dry. I also spent a day walking to a hut with a shower, where meals were served and where there was beer. Slotte is not even 2000m. high, but even on the map it looked inaccessible. From the map I judged that there might be a walking route from the east, via a valley with a lake, I was told that, *if* guided, there is an exposed walking route at the western side and when I saw Slotto I realised it is a complicated mountain or group of mountains that might be fun to explore. I may even find a way to the summits.



Looking across the head of Isfjorden towards Hen and the mountains north of Grøvdalen



Upper reaches of Hoemsdalen showing the peak Juratind

My last full day, before descending to Andalsnes, gave me a good pass crossing and a tiling ascent to a small hut by a still frozen lake. Still frozen after what is said to be the hottest, driest summer for over a hundred years. The pass was started by the lake side, very early to avoid the heat, and a path wandered through the forest until a rock slide and mud slide made it disappear, but not for long, once I found the courage to cross the mud slide. Then there were alpine meadows with waterfalls and two arches of snow over streams. Forgetting the boulder fields, a finale of a snow field at a reasonable angle brought me almost to the foot of a

rocky pinnacle which I had seen most of the way up. The descent was steep scree and then what I call whale-backed slabs, steep enough to call for care but with good footing between each slab, and then a narrow path through the bilberries, which allowed my knees to recover some what before the ascent up a side valley to the hut. A good day, a longish day but now I was carrying less. Only meals for the hut and some snacks for the descent to Andalsnes (a six hour walk) and the wait for the sleeper. Andalsnes to many people means Romsdalen and the big walls, but I never got to them. They are not suitable places for old men with no companion of proven patience.

Norway, again, in continuous sunshine with

comfortable huts and friendly people - who nearly all speak English! Norway, again, with its boulder fields to try the patience and biting, flying insects to test the temper. Norway with its lovely rough rock to help the river crossings and the deep swift water for the unwary. Norway with its flowers. Some of the trails were made dull by being fairly flat with a slow changing scene and the personal limitation of staying on marked trails so that one was heading from one red marker to the next, but then there were flowers contrasting with the rock and grass. I'll be going again.

A Traverse of Ben Avon and Beinn a Bhuid

Tony Smythe

These two most easterly high peaks of the Cairngorms together form a large plateau area slightly detached from the main Cairngorm massif. They are remote from the nearest roads.

The weather in the early part of August 1997 was fine and settled and I found myself heading north-east via Killin, where I had two excellent days in the Lawers group and then a day on the peaks east of Glen Shee. From Glas Maol the Cairngorms looked magnificent on an afternoon of unlimited distances, fluffy white clouds and their shadows, and huge mysterious glens. I made up my mind to walk over Ben Avon and Beinn a Bhuid, although I have to admit to a feeling of slight anxiety at the thought of being so far out on a limb on my own.

Mountain Sports in Braemar pointed to the place on my map which I could expect to reach by bicycle via the private road from Invercauld Bridge and the Factor at Keiloch kindly invited me to park outside the estate office the following morning. I decided on the earliest possible start and at five just as it was becoming light I was pedalling up through the forest, sharing the track with rabbits and deer, and juddering across numerous cattle grids and lifting my bike over a deer fence stile alongside one locked gate. My bike was a tatty old road machine, hardly suited to the gravel and stones but I made good progress up the Gleann an t-Slugain until the track narrowed and steepened just before the mined lodge (at 123950) where I thankfully cast the machine aside in the heather and continued on foot, having covered the first six miles in well under an hour.

The route now followed an excellent path north for a further five miles to the 'Sneck' - the high saddle between the two mountains. I thundered along, charged with adrenaline in the realisation that it was working well. The weather was cloudy with mist wreathing the huge crags and conies of Beinn a Bhuid's east face to my left, but to the south where the weather was coming from there were glimpses of blue. This glen - the upper part of Glen Quoich - is huge, and I had that depressing sensation of being unable to 'change' the scenery, however hard I walked. Eventually, though I came to the Clacha Cleirich, an enormous boulder that was a natural pit stop. Beyond it the saddle beckoned, but I had not reckoned on the wind, a strong cold wind that blasted without pause through the rounded granite outcrops on the pass, forcing me to seek shelter on the other side and get into all the clothing I had with me. As I contemplated the last slope, the wind-worn slabs and the flying cloud, it might have been the final bit of Mount Everest - it was certainly a very lonely place. It was also somehow timeless. In the towns and over the face of the inhabited earth where humans have made their mark changes to the landscape have been the natural result of the passage of civilisations. Up here near the Cairngorm plateau changes are measured by the much longer time-scale of ice ages, together with the immensely slow erosion of the granite by wind and weather.

On the plateau a few hundred feet higher I steered by compass towards Leabaidh an Daimh Bhuidhe, as the highest rock tor of Ben Avon is called. Luckily my navigation was not to be seriously tested as the mist shredded obligingly and I soon covered the dipping and rising mile to the fortress-

like tor, where a scramble described as grade 3 brought me on top, and then hastily down again into a sunny oasis of calm in the lee of the rock. In front of me in the racing clouds the weirdest landscape imaginable materialised to the east and south - ghostly castles and crouching monsters that could creep to a new place if you turned your back on them. I began almost to wish for some company - to share the experience, and maybe to be quite sure that this was real and not the setting for another Great Grey Man to appear, as experienced by Norman Collie.

Back at the saddle I was badly chilled but the climb up towards the North Top of Beinn a Bhuid warmed me up and I could take time to enjoy the beautiful flora - the tiny alpines and vivid green mosses in an area of drainage. The blink of the huge cliffs of Coire nan Clach came up on my left - how lethal they could be in a white-out - and then the four-foot cairn on a bit of table-flat plateau nearby. There was room only for one to escape the gale and no incentive to linger. Even while I ate some chocolate the mist closed in and the compass was needed to return to the cliff edge for progress south. An hour later I passed the South Top and losing a few hundred feet at last found a sheltered grassy hollow below the cloud where I could get my breath back. Ahead were miles of moorland to cover to rejoin the outward path but I had lots of time in hand and could treasure the moment. It has been an exhilarating day made perhaps a little special by the fact that I had not seen a soul.

Summary: the traverse of Ben Avon and Beinn a Bhuid from Invercauld Bridge. Approx. 23 miles. 1100 metres ascent. Time take, 11 hours.

Expedition Diary

1957 - Nepal

Maurice Wilson

May 7, Base Camp

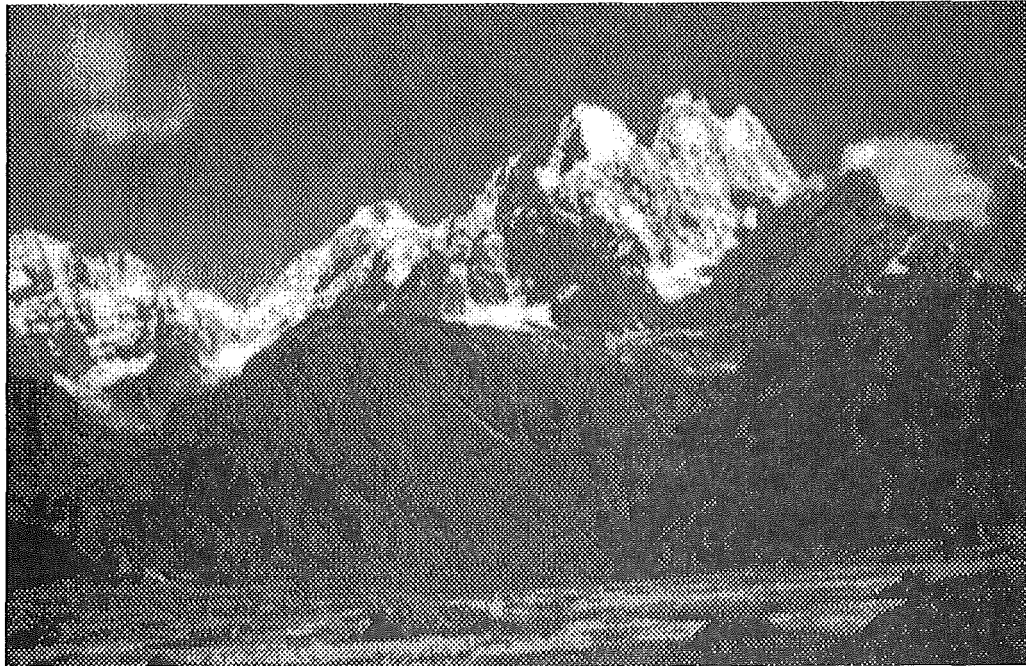
Pemba and I set out for Base Camp with all the odds and ends, for which Dan had asked. The hillside was covered with snow but I went rather better than usual. Pemba soon caught me up, so we crossed the couloir together and he showed me exactly where, on the other side, members of the other party had slipped. (Someone had stumbled into Lakpa and Dan, turning to see what was happening, also went off down the hillside,).

At Camp 1, I found Dan very cheerful after a good night, but Lakpa looked in a pitiable condition. Not only has he broken a leg but also has head injuries. Stayed about 1½ hours chatting and making plans for getting them back to Base. Pemba stayed and Ang Temba came back with me. We at once ran into a hailstorm and, in the middle of the couloir, we crossed a 'river' of hail a yard wide.

At Base, Andy and I had a long session with Nima Lama, negotiating with him how best to get the injured men back to Katlunandu. It was no easy matter. A cold and bleak afternoon with continuous snow and large hailstones, followed. This traverse from Camp 1 is quite dicey across soft snow and steep wet grass slopes. The sooner we are done with this route, the better.

May 8, Base Camp

Andy went off to Camp 1 this morning, so I have been left on my own. Stayed in the bag longer than usual. Eventually, got up and set out various things to dry; did a little packing for the journey and cut



The Dorje Group from Five Cwms photographed on the 1995 expedition

steps in the mud slope up to the kitchen. Nima Lama set off back to Tempathang. I went a little way down the hillside to prospect a route to the glacier. It is obviously dangerous between the moraines. Snowfall commenced, punctually, at 12.04 pm and continued all afternoon. Arthur turned up later than I expected. They had been putting fresh splints on to Lakpa and generally preparing him for tomorrow's journey. Pemba was with him and both he and Ang Temba seemed in good form. They do not want to carry Lakpa down the glacier to Pensall, as I'd suggested, on account of the danger from stonefalls. They would prefer to carry him pick-a-back.

May 9, Base Camp to Camp J

The alarm didn't go off, (so Arthur says) and the very early start did not materialise. We set off as we each got ready, myself, Arthur, Ang Temba, Pemba and Tensing Lama. The others all overtook me before I reached the col. It was a beautiful morning with the sun rising over Phurbi Chyachu as I rounded the shoulder and reached the stone couloir as the others

approached the camp. Tensing Lama had been left behind at that point. As I reached Camp 1, Lakpa was just being strapped on to a pack frame and Pemba then set off carrying Lakpa on his back. They had gone barely fifty yards when they stopped and turned back. Lakpa's injured leg was catching on the slope. They then strapped him sideways on the frame so that his leg lay 'with the slope'. This was, obviously, much better. Things then went well and in about an hour they were over the shoulder and into the stone couloir. I could hear loud shouts of jubilation when they reached the Chorten, the highest point.

Meantime, I had been active with Dan. Getting a man with one useless arm, out of a sleeping bag in a mountain tent is not easy. He had his own routine, however, and at length the job was done. After a rest, he had a walk for a few yards up the slope and then returned to the tent. Getting him back in again took longer. Had a job getting the primus stove to work and nearly set the tent on fire in the process. Dan is proving to be a good patient.

Namaste and all that

Roy Denney

Diary extracts from a two man trek through the Khumbu Himalaya & Everest National Park including ascent of Kala Pattar, 18,188ft

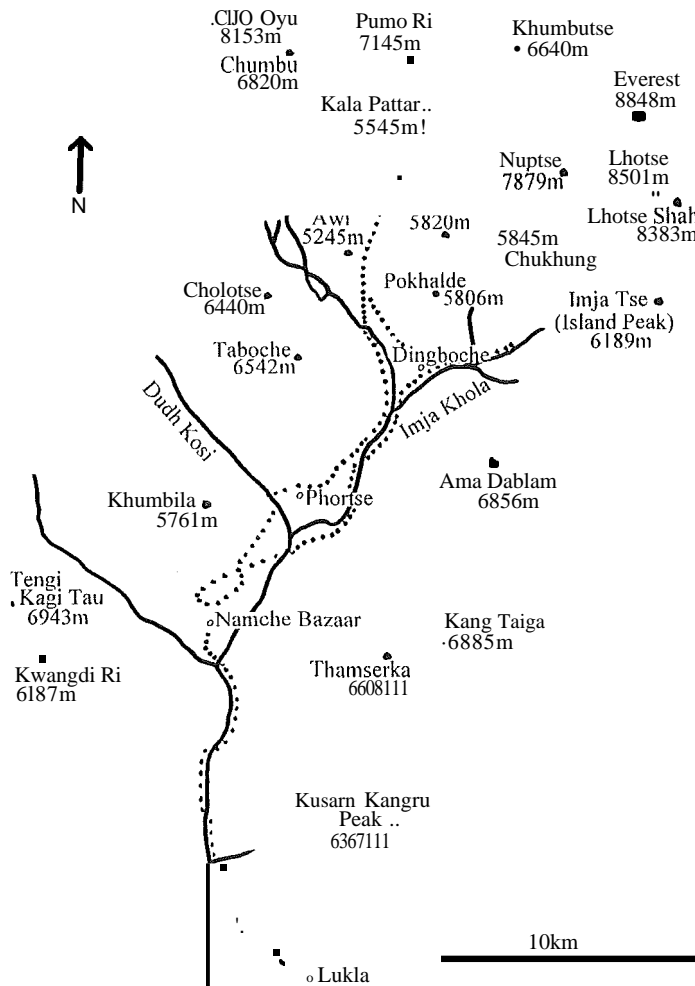
Nepal, a country of twenty million people with a million in the Kathmandu Valley and 600,000 in Kathmandu itself, is one of the poorest nations on earth having a per capita income of only £2 per week. The valleys of our trek while often without electricity or running water are relatively prosperous by local standards. Porters earn about £2 per day carrying up to 100 lb. Trekkers find the valleys incredibly cheap but the money they inject into the local economies makes an enormous difference to the local standard of living. Dormitory accommodation in the lodges is from 20p a night, with single rooms as much as £2. Hot lemon drinks are around 20p and more than adequate western style food can be had at similar prices. Meat is scarce but cheese, eggs and a reasonable choice of vegetables are available and, sometimes, apple pies and pancakes. Most animals seen carrying loads are Dzopkyo or docile male cow/yak crosses but some full yaks are used higher up as their shaggy coats give them more protection. The female cross (Dzum) gives rich milk and a pleasant cheese. Nepal has over fifty different ethnic groups but Sherpas inhabit the Khumbu valleys with a small but increasing number of Tibetans amongst them. Most Tibetan refugees live in Kathmandu. 80% of the Nepalese are Hindu but the religions co-exist happily and most Hindus are also Buddhists to differing extents.

Hindu Buddhism is quite distinct from the more opulent Tibetan Buddhism. The Sherpas are predominantly Buddhist.

Flying from Heathrow via Dubai and Karachi to Kathmandu we had an overnight stay before a flight by freight helicopter to Lukla (9184ft / 2880m) to start the trek. The Tiger Mountains Agency, Kathmandu, made efficient travel arrangements to and from the trek and had recruited our team: leader, Sherpa guide, cook, four cook's assistants and, at various times, three porters lower down and later above Namche, two Yaks.

Tuesday: Arrived at Lukla. This is seven days walk from the nearest road and the airport resembles a ski-jump only taking helicopters and small short take off and landing planes. Walked four hours through hazy sunshine with ups and downs and a bridge crossing of the Kusam ^{river} and a view of Kusam Kangru Peak (6367m). A net descent of 700ft to camp above Phakding (2640m). Trail then climbed gently over ridge to follow Dudh Kosi ^{river} through Phakding with evidence of recent flood and landslide damage. Cold night around -5° ,

Wednesday: Enter Sagannatha or Everest National Park at Jorsale, dropping several hundred feet to cross a ^{river} by wire bridge, one of many in various states of repair. A sunny morning with picnic lunch by river before a long climb, steep in places, to Namche Bazaar camp, ^{3500m}, above the village. Ascent today c.4000ft in $6\frac{1}{2}$ hours. Light snow started falling last hour to Namche. Night sky cleared and the temperature fell to about -20° By morning the tent, frozen rigid, was impossible to pack. From this point we found lodges rather than camp.



Spent Thursday morning enjoying the views including Kwangdi Ri (6187m) beyond Namche, Thamserka (6608m) behind our camp, Khumbila (5761m) and the impressive Ama Dablam (6856m) to the North East and further away in that direction our first view of Everest itself (8848m) peeping between Nuptse (7879m) and Lhotse (8501m). After Lunch we climbed past Syanboche Airstrip (3833m) and then dropped into Khumjung (3790m) to spend two nights getting further acclimatised to the altitude. The weather was fine till dense mist rolled in during the early evening.

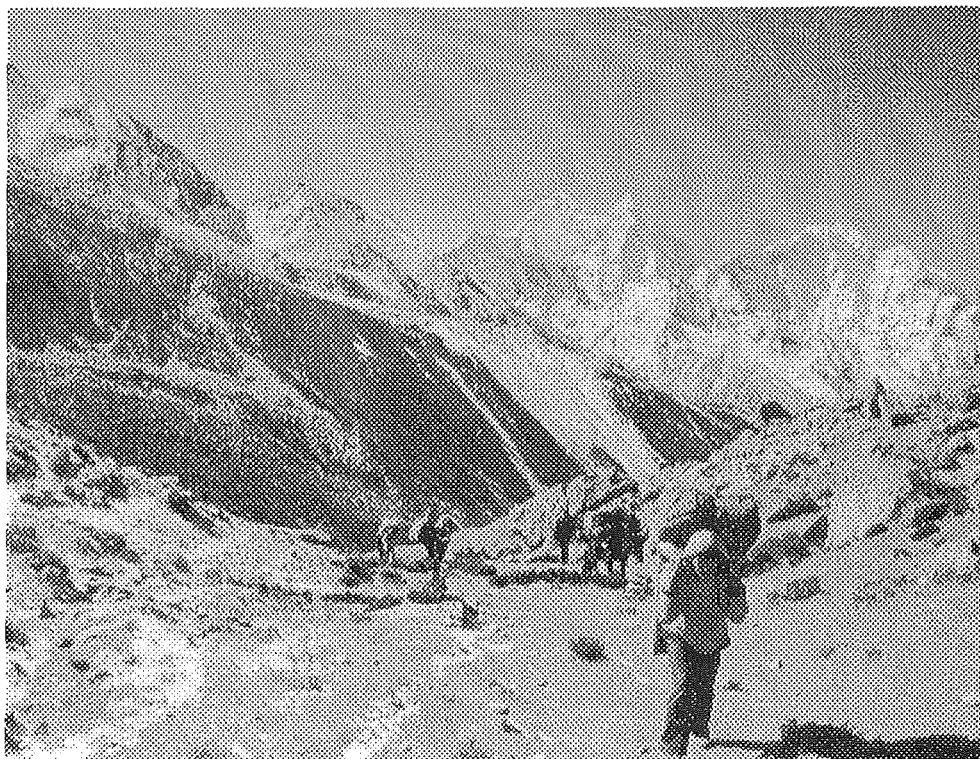
Friday: Acclimatising three hour walk with packed lunch onto ridge above Khunde, a village just uphill of Khumjung stopping on way back to visit home of our Sirdar, a clinic staffed by New Zealand volunteer

doctors and a Buddhist Gompa, or monastery, housing what they claim is a Yeti Scalp. Evening walk for views of Ama Dablam, Thamserka and Kang Taiga (6885m) and distant ridge top monastery of Tengboche. We visited the world's highest bakery for coke and a bun. Weather: cloudy with sunny spells.

Saturday saw us set off to drop over a thousand feet back down to river, passing through woodlands in misty sunlight before the long climb to the monastery at Tengboche. Fog closed in during the ascent and we arrived as snow starting to fall heavily - had to spend from just after noon until bedtime (7.30pm) huddled around a

stove in hut with party of 12 Germans. An early evening 5 minute break in the gloom gave our only glimpse of the Monastery. Ascent today c.4000ft.

Sunday: Woke to still falling snow and hence a precarious walk out in tricky conditions and still near zero visibility. Tahr, Musk and birds spotted. We headed for Dingboche (5hr) crossing Imja Khola River on way by high wire bridge then climbing to Pangboche, highest permanent settlement and oldest monastery in the region. We climbed above the tree-line into alpine meadows and tundra then followed the line of the river north to cross back and climb up to Dengboche finding a very acceptable lodge where we spent three nights - Ascent 2400ft The sun broke through occasionally during the afternoon giving brilliant snowscapes.



Moving out of the valley at Dengboche to camp at Lobuche on the Chumbu Glacier

Monday: Five hour excursion up a side valley towards Chhukung in good morning weather which closed in later. Good views of major peaks: Taboche (6542m) to the West across the main valley, Pokhalde (5806m) on left looking up a side valley and Ama Dablam to the right. Towards the head of valley the Nuptse Wall hid Everest but its neighbours Lhotse (8501m) and Lhotse Shah (8383m) were clear with Island Peak (Imja Tse) (6189m) in the centre of the Upper Valley with Makalu (8475m) peeping out from behind it - Ascent c. 1000ft.

Tuesday: We climbed the shoulder of Pokhalde ascending c.1500ft in poor weather with odd breaks and saw a Lammergeier close up. Views of Taboche and Cholutse(6440m) over a ridge to the East and Lobuche (6145m) to the North East

Wednesday: Long trek to Lobuche on Khumbu glacier with good views but rough going in places. Started with

gentle ascent along shoulder of Pokalde, dropping down near Cholutse glacier and it's moraine. This was blocking a stream and creating one of few lakes we saw. A side path passing this lake went over into Gokyo valley by way of 5420m Chola La (pass) and scene of several near disasters whilst we were in the area. Stream boulder hopping preceded lunch at Dughla. Continued with a stiff climb towards Lobuche with monuments to dead climbers, mostly Sherpas, across the skyline. The path by the glaciers edge led to this tiny windswept hamlet with Mehra (5820m) in view across the glacier. Stayed two nights in a dormitory - afternoon snow left three inches of fresh cover. Ascent c.1500ft.

Thursday: 5.45am dawn start to climb Kala Pattar (Black Rock) the highest point of the trek at 18,188ft (5545m). Long grind taking 3 hours in sub zero temperatures up to a lodge at Gorak Shep, a flat sand and gravel covered

expanse. Then a 2 hr climb direct to the summit with great views till mist and snow closed in half way up. Descent (1 hr) by a safer route of short walk part way along ridge towards Pumo Ri (7145m) then longer contoured path down in light snow. On the way up most of face of Everest was in view and we were looking down on Base-camp by a small frozen lake. A 2 hour walk back to Lobuche in the face of blizzard. Ascent c.2000ft

Friday: 9 hr's walk out, first along side of Imja Khola River then up a high narrow path contouring precariously around hills to West of liver before dropping into the hillside village of Phortse where we found a lodge with no heating. Snow on ground tricky in places but fine morning. Falling snow and hail later during ascent and arrival at lodge. Ascent c.1500ft .

Saturday: Fine sunny morning for breakfast on 'Lawn' before half an hour spent stalking Musk and Blood Pheasants but not very successfully - then drop down almost 800ft through forest to Dudh Khosi River in the stunning Gokyo Valley and up a very hairy trail the other side to ridge-top tea rooms and very welcome drink - Views up the valley included Cho Oyu (8153m) on the Chinese border which has still not been climbed from the Nepali side. The weather then started to close in and a long contouring high path over the shoulder of Taboche was completed before lunch was taken after dropping down to cross the Khumjung to Tengboche trail we had come in on several days earlier. Lunch was followed by a rapid deterioration in weather and last hour to Namche was in a blizzard which turned the sandy trails above Namche into mud slides to the distress and amusement of porters and trekkers

alike depending on their success or otherwise in keeping their feet. The snow coveting grew throughout the evening. Ascent c.2000ft.

Sunday: Bright morning sees us descending the long hill through mixed woodland to join the Dudh Khosi River with its nerve racking bridges and we walked down the valley to climb out of the National Park at Jorsale. We had decided to make a forced march of this day and to cover what had taken us two longish days coming in. When it started to pour with rain after lunch we started to regret this plan but having sent on our porters and the Sherpa to try to book us into a lodge we had no option but to literally plough on through the rain and mud so arriving exhausted and wringing wet at about 5pm., 9 hours of hard work with an ascent c.2000ft.

Monday: Flew back to Kathmandu by helicopter after a total trek of 13 days and over 25,000ft of climbing in unseasonal poor weather.

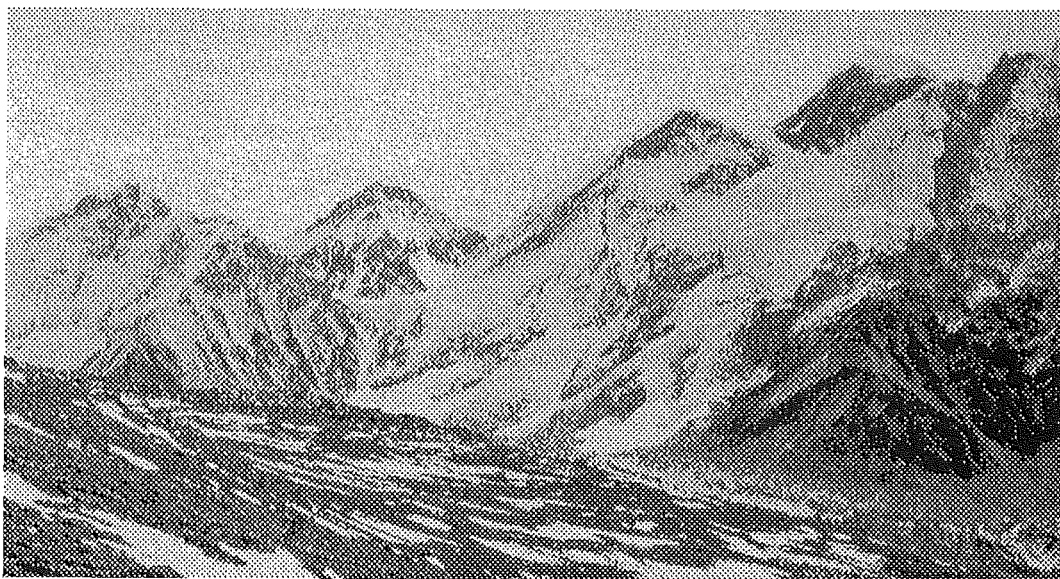
Natural History:

Primula, Lavender coloured widespread in sheltered valleys around 8/1000ft
Silver Birch, found in valleys and up to tree line often festooned with moss like growths
Long leafed Pine (Chir), lower slopes, long green needles in 3s, tall straight oval cones
Blue Pine, up to 4000m, short blue-green needles in 5s, long hanging cones
Hemlock, sweeping branches form graceful pyramid, short needles, small cones
Silver Fir, like Christmas tree, flat needles silver underside, erect sticky purple cones
Rhododendrons, widespread just coming into flower lower down, red and white most common
Magnolias, large trees in full glory in river valleys lower down
Juniper, higher slopes usually dwarf varieties
Daphne, Upright shrub, white-pink flowers

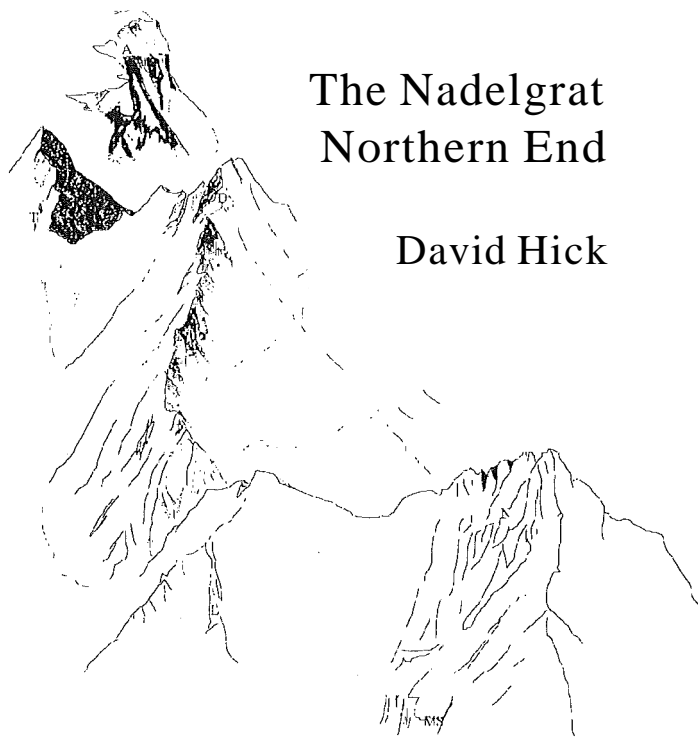
Brown Dipper, Chocolate coloured dipper
 Grey Tit, similar to Coal Tit, seen in lower valley woodlands
 Stonechat ?, brown back and tail, grey head, orange breast and pale barred belly, not positively identified, seen high level cultivated areas feeding on ground
 Rock Bunting, grey barred head, orange body, brown wings & grey tail
 Common Myna, attractive cocky bird seen around Kathmandu
 Himalayan Greenfinch, flocks of noisy feeders near villages with grain crops, many Dengboche
 Whistling Thrush, dark blue with white specks, good song heard, fleeting glimpses
 Plumbeous Redstart, Male slate blue with red tail, female drab -usually near streams
 Black Redstart, Male dark with red underbelly and tail, F. brown/red, uplands
 Himalayan Monal (Impeyan Pheasant), dark but iridescent in sun, only seen in distance
 Blood Pheasant, female drab but male much red & green, both have red legs
 Black Headed Rufous Backed Shrike, darting between bushes in valleys
 Himalayan Tree-Pie. blacks and brown greys, white wing flash, chestnut under tail
 Crested Goshawk, a large typical hawk, round wing ends, brown above -pale streaky below
 Pariah Kite, smaller eagle like bird seen scavenging around temples in Kathmandu valley
 Golden Eagle, Tawny (white marks when young) wide wing (open V in flight)

Lammergeier, scavenger more vulture than eagle, wings up to 9ft
 Snow Pigeon, black back, white belly/chest
 Tibetan Snow Cock, high slopes, grey with white under-parts with black streaks, noisy
 Choughs (Crows), red billed or yellow billed, tame playful flocks
 Himalayan Raven, very big for species, on ground a lot high up
 Musk Deer, no horns, large canines, Antelope like -2'6", tree-line
 Rhesus Macaque, seen around monasteries in Kathmandu Valley
 Tahr, (Mountain Goats), young males & females herd together. short curved horns
 blue sheep, part sheep part goat
 Marmot, seen near Gorak Shep, not normally found in E Himalayas, Could have been equally unusual Northern Pika

At 52 and as fit as I have been for years, this seemed a good way of celebrating my early retirement before finding gainful employment. I was joined by an Insurance Broker friend of the same age, Alan Pearce, who has been my occasional companion on the hills for many years and on numerous weekends at the club's cottages.



The view from the lower slopes of Kala Pattar with Khumbutse centre beyond the col and Everest base-camp in the snow field below it. Everest itself is top right.



The Nadelgrat Northern End

David Hick

To climb from the Mischabel Hut a terrible price in sweat, toil and energy, sorely required on the morrow, must be paid. Zig-zag paths, fixed ropes, views of Saas Fee getting lower but remaining in relatively the same position are all endured gladly by Alpinistes set on pitting themselves against this most northerly ridge of the Mischabel chain.

Ten years previously I had crossed the southern end of the Nadelgrat with Peter Chadwick. I had now returned with Tim Bateman to traverse the Durrenhorn - Hohberghorn - Nadelhorn. On that occasion we crossed from the Dom Hut over the Lenzjoch - Lenzspitze - Nadelhorn to the Mischabel Hut. This summer the Mischabel Hut, 4th hour slog from Saas Fee, was to be our starting point. At four the next morning crossing the Hohbahn Glacier Tim and I had mixed feelings. We could look back and see lights high up on the north face of the Lenzspitze belonging to climbers who had risen at two thirty, waking everyone else in the dormitory. No-one sleeps well at high altitude huts. The Windjoch Pass was reached in book time but descending to the Ried

Glacier we started slightly too high and needed to contour back on very steep slopes. This allowed another pair to reach the Hohbergjoch couloir first. Not critical, you may think, but with the snow now softening in the full glare of the early morning sun, cries of "Achtung!" as whining boulders sped past our ears, made us wish we were in the lead. We both, of course, had hehnets with us... packed safely in our sacks. This section, on very steep snow and ice, proved to be the *clux* of the climb.

At the col we left our sacks and nipped up the Durrenhorn for a photo session on a tiny summit with wonderful views across to the Weisshorn and the Matterhorn. Back at the col the ridge ahead looked daunting and very long but retreat down the couloir was out of the question.

The Hohberghorn proved easier than it looked and we descended to the Stecknadeljoch for a rest and something to eat. It was by this time mid afternoon and several ropes of climbers who had missed out the Durrenhorn were holding us up. We managed to overtake two parties while crossing the Stecknadelhorn, a craggy 4,000m prominence on the ridge. Between this top and the Nadelhorn, delicately curving snow aretes were crossed on the very apex to join a traverse to the north east ridge of the Nadelhorn and so on to the summit.

We descended to the hut, weary but happy. A very long day in the mountains, 3.00am to 10.00pm, before being picked up in Saas Fee after a welcome grosse bier.

Morgue Slab, Helsby

Arthur W. Evans

I suppose most, if not all, of us have, in the past, been guilty of some peccadillo which the passage of time has mercifully buried. Be wamed!

Last year two books were published dealing with the careers of the two men who dominated British rock climbing in the 1930s, Colin Kirkus' and 1. Menlove Edwards'. Reading these brought back many memories but I was really startled when I read the name 'Morgue Slab at Helsby' in both books and a long-forgotten episode came flooding back.

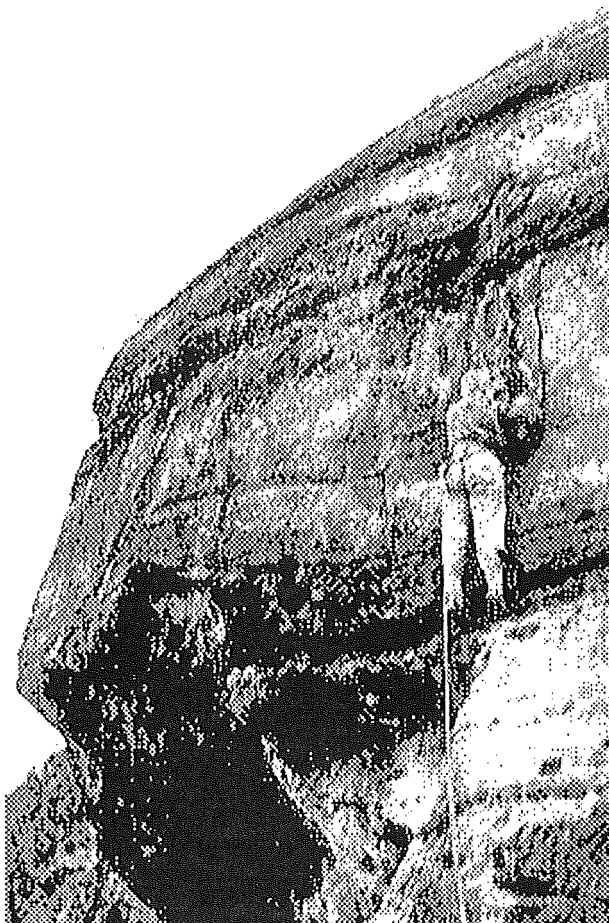
Helsby was a popular crag in pre-war days. It had been thoroughly explored by members of the Wayfarers Club, including Kirkus and Edwards, and provided a large number of excellent climbs many of a high standard.

Living, as I did, at Aintree, Liverpool, it was only a two hour cycle ride to Helsby and during my university years most Sundays found me there.

One's techniques benefited from this particularly in the use of small holds, and the subtleties of delicate balance and body position.

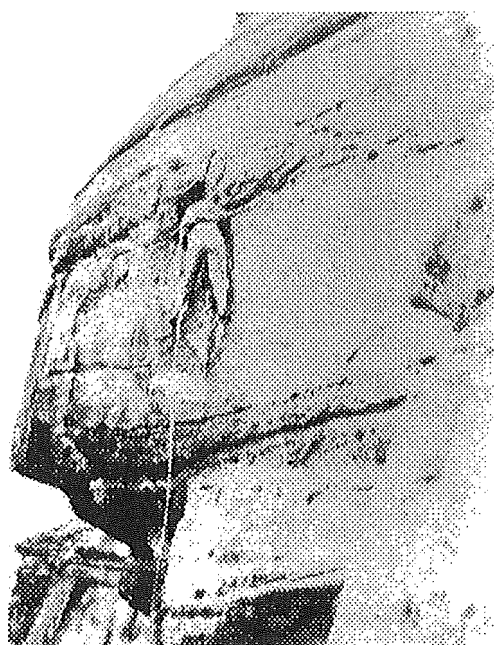
There was one small stretch of the crag however, with no route on it and it was perhaps natural that this aroused our interest. Attempts on a top rope revealed that the bottom and the top sections, though hard, would probably go, but there was a short bit in the middle which we found impossible.

The problem was that, poised on small toe holds and one equally small hold for the right hand, any attempt to move the left hand up to try and reach for another finger hold caused the body to rotate outwards and one came off. However



Arthur leading Eliminate II one 1937 day when the Liverpool University MC group was joined by the Manchester UMC

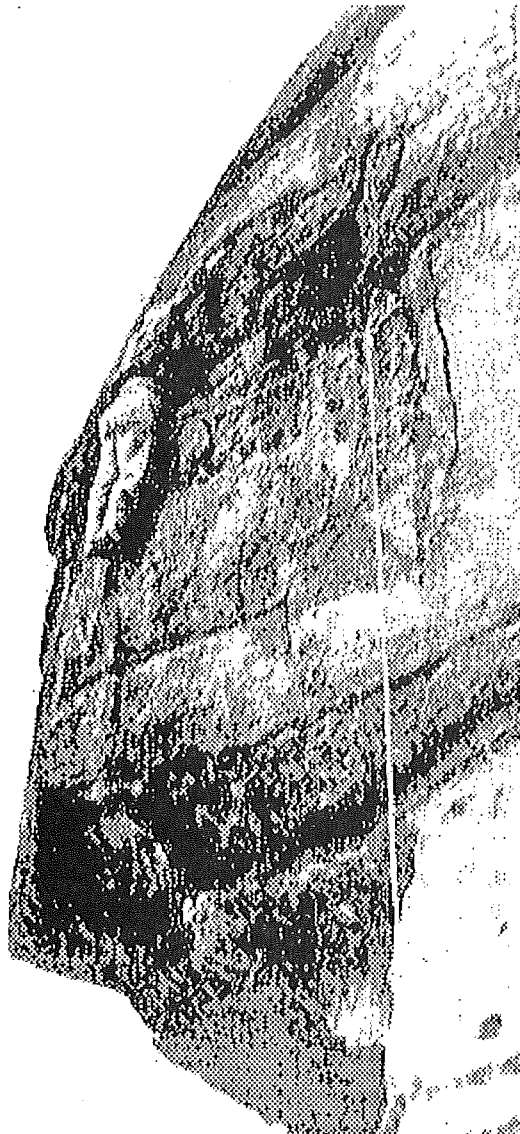
much we tried it seemed impossible until it occurred to me that if there was a suitably placed pebble embedded in the sandstone and it could be 'persuaded' to come out it might provide the necessary missing hold. Unfortunately, there was no such pebble.



1 Hands of a Climber by Steve Dean

2 Menlove by Jim Perrin

I've always been opposed to pitons, etc., and doing anything that brought the natural difficulties down to one's own level. The temptation was, however, there and, after all, Helsby was primarily a training ground for the real hills. There was also something of a precedent. This was the arrow cut in the rock on Eliminate IT pointing to the hidden but vital handhold near the top. Eventually, my conscience gave way and I brought a wood chisel from home and, dangling on a rope, slowly bored a neat hole in the rock just wide enough for a finger to fit in and deep enough to take the top two joints of my first finger which I reckoned was the minimum necessary.



This solved the problem but, although I climbed it on a slightly slack rope, I could never lead it. It needed a stronger finger than mine.

I jocularly referred to it as the Morgue Slab. There was already an Undertaker's Butress on the crag. It was never written up or publicised in any way and was only known to two or three of my friends.



Not long afterwards I moved south to start my first job at Teddington and never visited Helsby again.

To suddenly read about it after fifty-nine years was quite a shock, especially to find it had quite a reputation, and that Colin Kirkus was the first to lead it. There was even a mention in one book that it was thought a hole had been drilled.

I had assumed that it had been completely forgotten and that my little hole, if it still existed, would have sported a little knob of green moss. They say confession is good for the soul. I hope so. It was, after all, a very small hole.

A. W. Evans

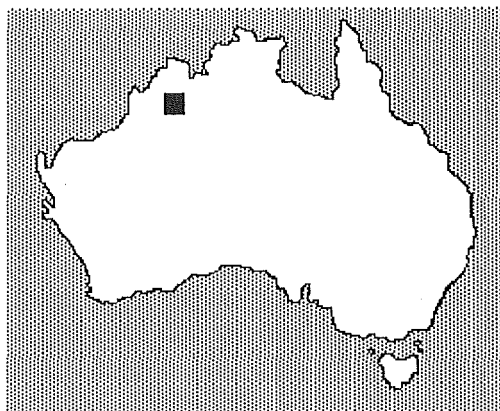
Bungle Bungles

David Laughton

During a three week holiday travelling around the Kimberley area of North West Australia in early June this year I was able to spend a couple of days walking in the Bungle Bungle massif in the Purnululu National Park.

Until the early 1980s these spectacular mountains were virtually unknown other than to the Aborigines, local stockmen and a few geologists etc. Then they were "discovered" by a television film crew and shown to the world. I saw the film and immediately put them on my "wanted" list.

A party of eleven of us were travelling in a 4-wheel drive truck. We had spent the previous night on a very comfortable camp site in Kununurra, a small, modern town just a few miles inland from the Timor Sea and some 500 miles south-west of Darwin. A good tarmac road took us south through almost uninhabited bush past the Argyle Diamond Mine until a dirt road turned off east. A sign prohibited non-four-wheel drive vehicles or caravans - we soon found out why. This sole access track, which initially crosses the Mabel Downs cattle station, was extremely rough. A piece of graffiti said that to get to the mountains involved crossing 96 creeks and we could well believe it, the road is impassable in the wet season. It took us 2½ hours to cover the forty miles to one of the two official camping areas in the Park. These camp sites have a limited number of taps, the odd earth dunny and we found a shower up on the hillside consisting of a hosepipe tied to a tree with a punctured beer can at the end. Our site was backed by the low hills of the Osmond Range but looked



across to the sandstone and conglomerate walls of the Bungles. We had the camp set-up just in time to climb up behind the camp for a glorious sunset (6pm) which rivalled the famous one over Ayers Rock.

Next morning we were up at dawn (5am) to the sound of a dingo howling, and quickly drove to the foot of the wall. This almost sheer cliff is pierced by massive canyons, cut by the torrential rains of the wet season, which run into the high plateau in some cases for several miles. They often contain stands of palm trees and other thick vegetation. We spent the day exploring three of these canyons. Access throughout the Park is restricted to a few marked routes. This is necessary because much of the rock is so friable that any damage to the surface crust quickly results in serious erosion. The paths in the canyons involve scrambling over scree, climbing over large blocks fallen from the 300 ft high walls or wading through pools left by the last Wet. One of these, 'Cathedral Gorge', almost a mile long is described in the Lonely Planet guide as one of Australia's most sensational and awe inspiring natural wonders. Another, 'Echidna Chasm', narrows until it is only an ann span wide with sheer walls over 350 ft. high. Gordale will never be the same!



The Beehives barely showing, in this monochrome print, their distinctive coloured strata

Our second day was spent exploring the even more unusual and spectacular part of the Bungles - the Beehives, These consist of hundreds of conical hills each several hundred feet high with orange and black or grey banding, A few trails lead through the narrow gaps between them but again all climbing on them is banned,

Most "visitors" simply overfly the range from airfields some way away but there is a small airstrip within the Park from which helicopter trips are available, Later in the day most of us took advantage of this expensive facility enabling us to fully appreciate the complex nature of the range, We could see that it consisted of a large, high, grassy plateau with the canyons

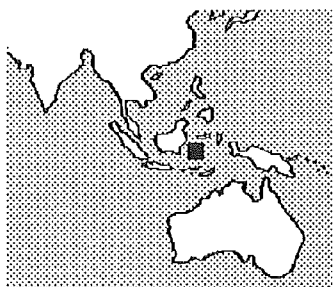
looking even more spectacular from above with the beehives clustered on one side, The pilot said that no-one was allowed onto the plateau and certainly no helicopter landing was possible - a pity as it looked to be a great walking area. We all got excellent photographs particularly as the helicopter only took three passengers and the doors had been removed giving perfect visibility. However the noise on the ground and the intrusion of these choppers circling round when earlier we were walking in this "wilderness" convinced me that they should not be allowed to fly sightseeing trips over the Cuillin (as has been proposed) or any other remote area of Britain - sorry Tim!

Some Volcanoes of Northern Sulawesi

John Middleton

The infamous 'Ring of fire' is at its most dynamic as it passes through the northern tip of Sulawesi.

Here, where the mighty Pacific and Eurasian plates collide, there are no less than nine active volcanoes and many more currently dormant. The resulting landscape is dramatic, exciting and challenging.



Gunung Lokon/Empung (1589m/1350m 12 km round trip, 900m of ascent, allow 5 hours). These two volcanoes dominate the skyline to the south of the city of Manado and their old forest covered lava flows can be seen descending to the sea. Access is from the Manado to Tomohon road at the village of Kakaskasan. The route heads westwards until a zone of dense and prickly scrub is reached. At this point a 1991 lava flow can be followed up to a barren volcanic boulder field. The 250m diameter by 100m deep crater is banded by black ash and lava whilst the bottom is brightened by many yellow sulphur fumaroles and hissing steam vents. The hole is situated on the col between the two older volcanoes. The summit of Lokon is still another 300m of very steep work through 2m high razor grass but the views in all directions are stunning and amply rewarding.

Gunung Mahawu (1311m, 6 km round trip, 700m of ascent, allow 3 hours). We visited this volcano on the same day as Lokon (very tiring!). The start is again from Kakaskasan but this time up a cart track to the east. The

trail is followed to a stand of tall Pampas Grass and stunted trees where the path is then left by an exhaustingly steep scramble upwards. The view from the top is amazing, the crater, 400m by 150m by 80m deep is

filled by a dazzling turquoise blue lake. Around this are numerous sulphur encrusted fumaroles and steam vents whilst in between variously coloured mud pools bubble violently. Whilst the volcano has not erupted for some time, it does frequently emit poisonous fumes - witness the dead surrounding vegetation.

Gunung Soputan (1830m, 18 km round trip, 1000m of ascent, allow 10 hours). Soputan is currently the mainlands most active volcano having erupted great clouds of fine ash several times a year for the past decade. It is also in the middle of nowhere and requires a long hot walk in. Ours was a 2 am start from the village of Molompar. The initial part of the journey is obviously hazy but as dawn came we were passing through a fascinating forest with numerous orchids, tree ferns and insectivorous Pitcher plants. Beyond these an area of large lava bombs and flows has to be negotiated before the final difficult climb to the misshapen ash filled crater. The views are again stunning and include both the Maluku and Celebes seas. In the rice fields next to Molompar there is an amazing assortment of bubbling mud pools, steam vents and hot water pools, one even being big enough to accommodate all the villagers after a days work!

Gunung Ambang (1750m, 8 km round trip, 900m of ascent, allow 5 hours). The route to Ambang starts by the Pentecostal Church in the village of Bongkudai Ban some 30 km from Kotamabagu on the road to Modinding. After the usual fields a unique dense forest of tree ferns, pandanus, and various palms is negotiated. Once through, the track enters a tunnel between 3m high razor grass which in turn leads to the edge of a three sided crater containing the finest, most extensive and exotic sulphur formations imaginable. The summit is a difficult 200m ash and scrub ascent above this.

Manado Tua (822m, 4 km round trip, 822m of ascent, allow 3 hours). This small island in Manado Bay is separated from the mainland by a 1000m deep trench. It is best known for its world-class diving. A path behind the fisherman's few small houses ascends through coconuts to an idyllic picnic summit with sensational island views. The volcano is considered dormant but there are frequent smells of sulphur and some small steam vents.

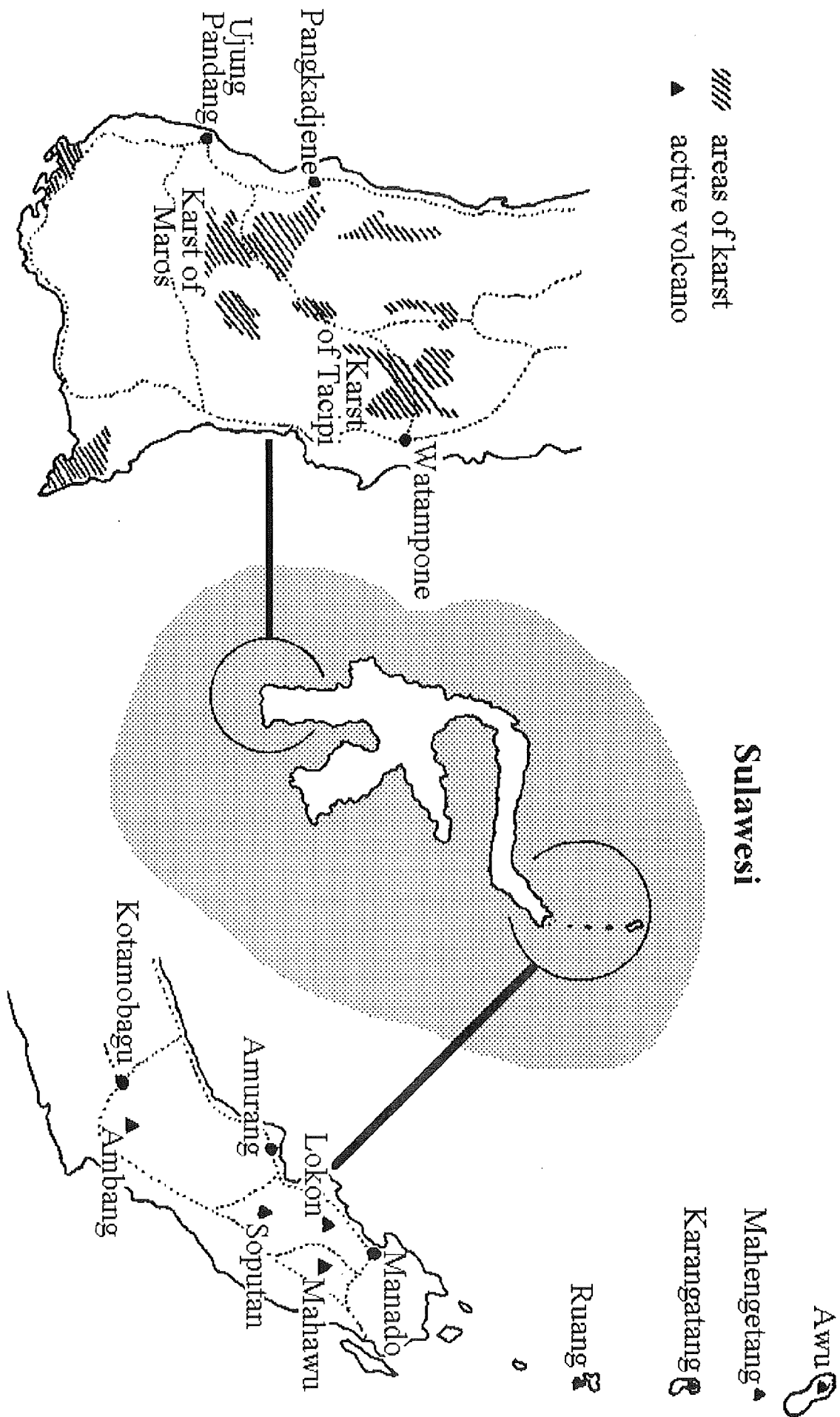
Gunung Awu (1320m, 12 km round trip, 1316m of ascent, allow 6 hours). To reach this volcano it is necessary to take a 12 hour boat trip to the island of Sangih. Apart from its passengers there is also an assortment of chickens and pigs etc. The boat departs at dusk to a tremendous cheer from the quay and much hooting. At the same time the ships many multi-coloured lights come on and extremely loud Indonesian pop music blasts from its speakers. This continues unabated until midnight! We were, however, lucky to be awake as we passed the island of Siau where Karangatang volcano was in its full glory.

Incandescent rocks shot into the sky whilst red hot lava flowed down its slopes into the sea - very impressive.

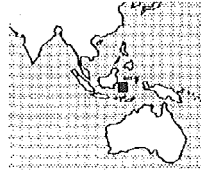
Once on Sangih, the route up Awu is both strenuous and complex. It first meanders through coconuts, nutmeg and cloves before reaching an amazing dense band of Tree Ferns. As these finally thin out the rolling scenery could be that of an English moorland except that underfoot are dwarf ferns, club mosses and orchids. The summit crater, which last had a major eruption in the 60's, is a couple of kilometres across and 300m deep. One third is taken up by a turquoise lake whilst areas of bubbling mud and steam vents occur at one end. Extensive crater wall collapses add to the drama.

Mahengetand. This small island is situated about three hours boat ride from Sangih. It was once split in two by a volcanic explosion with one half of the island sinking beneath the sea. Divers in Manado informed us that it was possible to go there and snorkel amongst fumaroles and steam vents 3-6m down. We did try, but just one hour out into the South China Sea we were caught by a major storm. Our subsequent return to Sangih was made with such a great loss of adrenalin that we decided to abandon further attempts!

In the north of Sulawesi we found that we were much more easily understood - the only time we needed a translator was for our Sangih trip. We did, however, find it necessary to hire local guides, not so much to assist in climbing the mountains but to initially find our way through the incredibly complex maze of small village fields. There was never any shortage of guides.



Some Caves and Karst of Southern Sulawesi John Middleton



decorated caves and some are home to giant tunnels such as the 1415m long MimpilInstani Toakala which exits sensationally about 25m up a cliff face.

A brief overview of a recently visited limestone region with considerable caving potential.

This geologically battered Indonesian island is perhaps best known for the culturally unique Toraja people, as the homeland of the once piratical bugis, and as the source of many valued spices. For us three, the attraction was the extensive and little visited tropical karst. This is most dramatically revealed on the descent into Ujung Pandang airport where forested towers rise spectacularly from the flat, flooded paddy fields just a few kilometres away.

The limestone extends for over 700 sq. km and exhibits a great and fascinating variety of forms. It has been noted as long ago as the '1960's by such people as Balazs, Lehmann and Sunartadirdja but it was not until the end of the 1980's that any serious attempt was made at systematic exploration - this mainly being done by the French 'Association Pyreneene de Speleologie'.

Maros and Pangkadjene This is the largest continuous block of limestone and we spent some six days here basing ourselves in a small 'chalet' at Bantimurung (1). The setting is idyllic with densely vegetated towers, often over 100m high, in every direction. These are home for monkeys, parrots, and an amazing array of butterflies. Some towers are joined together, particularly as they progress away from the edge, but most are separated by thickly forested karst corridors. Many are riddled with small well

The sparkling Bantimurung river meanders through the area and emerges from the great 'vaucussian' pool of Towakkalak Meer. The small lake is the region's principle resurgence, impenetrable, but behind this lies the Towakkalak system, a hydrologically proved course through, so far, four known caves. The first (furthest away) is the 12,460m long Gua Sallukan Kallang situated close to the village of Kallang. This leads to Lubang Kabut (1095m), then Lubang Batu Neraka (749m) and finally Gua Tanette (9700m) which terminated just ½ km from the 'Meer'. All these caves are wet, big and highly sporting to explore. Penetration off the beaten track is extremely difficult due to the dense and usually prickly vegetation but the potential is obvious for many more caves.

Area (2) is just a few kilometres back down the road towards Maros. It rises directly from the rice fields as several broad well eroded towers and has been designated as an archaeological park. There are many short caves and rock shelters housing bones and paintings dating back to 8000 BC. The best known are Ulu Leang 1 and 2, Gua Pette and Gua Pettakra. A small charge is levied on visitors.

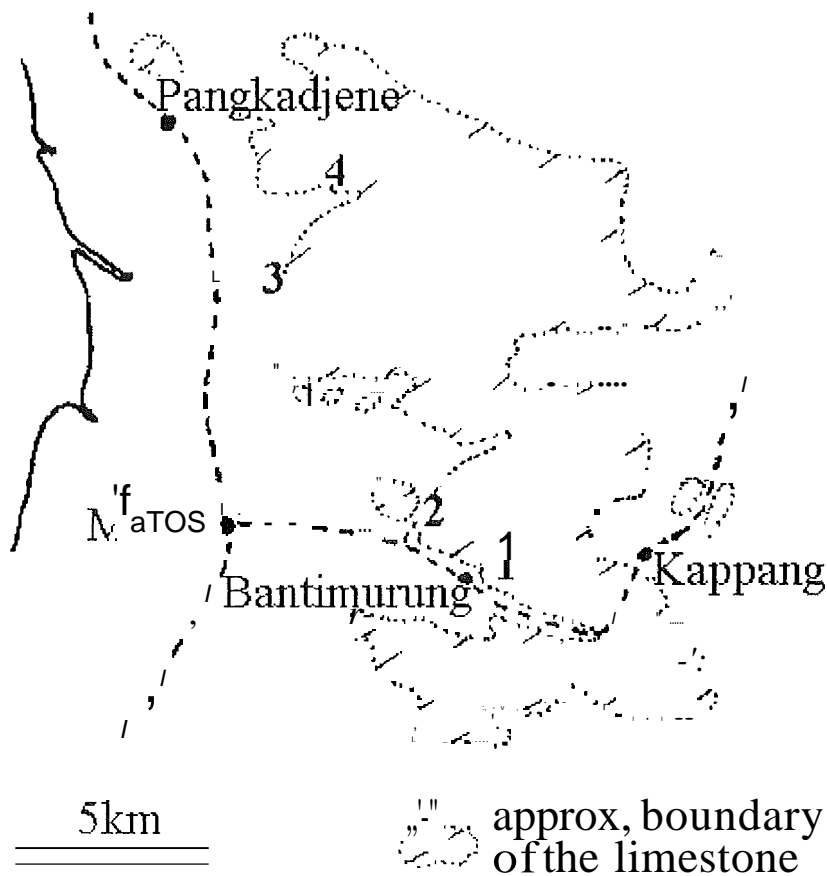
Further to the north, in an area measuring roughly 1 km by 300m lies the incredibly beautiful karst of Soreang (3). It extends outwards from the base of the main limestone cliffs and consists of numerous razor

sharp pinnacles up to 15m in height and other dramatically eroded rocks which are thought to have been formed by marine erosion at a time of a much raised sea level. In between the karst the villagers have dug pools where they raise and breed fish for food. Add in a few palm trees and the occasional rickety wooden hut and here is a place of timeless beauty. Whilst the French listed this place as Soreang the local people referred to it as Ujung Bulu. The surrounding cliffs house many more caves - several exhibiting more paintings and bones. One we visited was also well inhabited by Mossy Nest Swiftlets and large bats.

Slightly northwards again, across a plane dotted with occasional Kapok trees and stumps of residual karst was

the fourth area we visited, Sumpang Beta (4). It is much drier, less vegetated and the hills are distinctly more rounded and less dramatic but we did explore one superb river system, the 4312 long Gua Londron. This emerges from the side of a steep sided valley and initially involves 1100m of swimming along a great passageway. Other caves are known but none have yet been found with noteworthy lengths,

Tacipe The second region to be visited is very different to that of Maros. The countryside is much more open and contains no towers. Instead beautifully symmetrical cones are sometimes densely crowded together or at others separated by specious cultivated fields. Depressions, blind valleys and dry sinks abound but little



The Karst of Maros and Pangkadjene

bare limestone is exposed. So far no major systems have been found and we only spent one full and fascinating day here.

Gua TA6 is a short sporting river trip of Yorkshire proportions entering one side of an attractively forested

cone to emerge 500m later through a very aqueous exit. The cave has a rich fauna which includes large freshwater crabs, large spiders, frogs and many flying insects - most probably having been washed in. Not too far away, in the bottom of a banana filled depression is the 400m long Gua Lampira a beautifully sculptured passageway descending maybe 50m but black with bats and their usual fauna and smells.

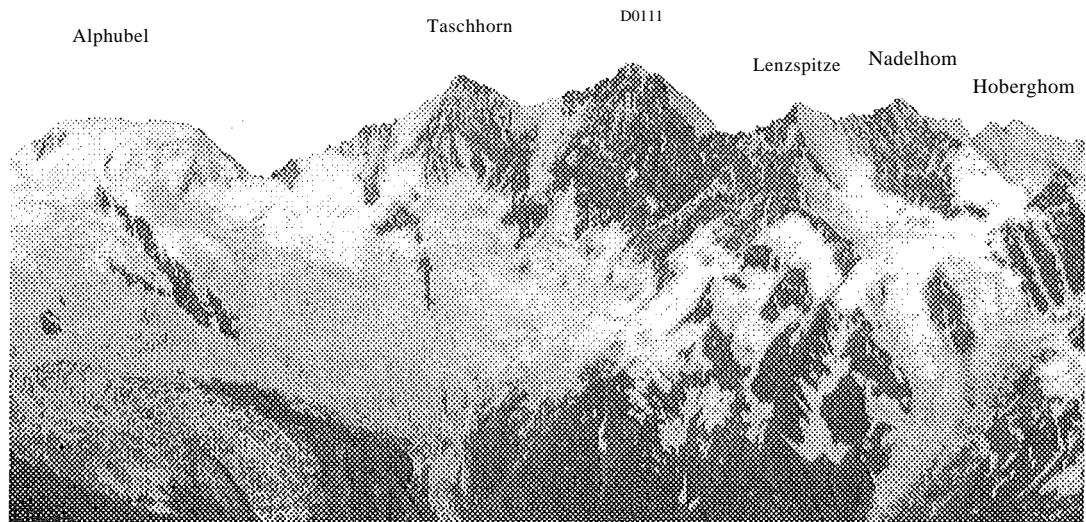
Any visitor to Tacipi must take the time to see the very impressive Sungai Bubumparanye gorge. It cuts a 3 km long swathe through the landscape 5 to 15m wide and up to 200m deep. The river contains many sporting cascades and deep pools whilst the



walls exhibit some superb erosion features.

Little serious exploration has been undertaken but the potential for at least small finds must be considerable, particularly in the denser area of cones just slightly further south.

Our party consisted of myself my younger son Crispin, and an adventurous friend, Ann. We also hired a guide/translator as we found no one in the south who could speak English or understand our Indonesian - in the Tacipi region very few locals could understand our translators Indonesian either! They were, however, amazingly friendly and helpful.



An account of an ascent of the Hoberghom and the Nadelhom during the recent alpine meet is on page 21

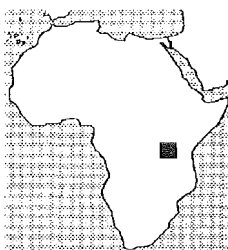
Ol Doinyo Lengai John Middleton

Amonst the wild, inhospitable desolation that is Tanzania's northern Rift

Valley there rears up a majestic and unique volcano that the Maasai people call the Mountain of God, Ol Doinyo Lengai. To climb it is both a physically satisfying challenge and an educational insight into Planet Earth.

As we attempted to rouse ourselves yet again at 1 am. Alexis and I deliberated on the fact that ten days into our 'holiday' we had already been up eight days before daybreak and once before midnight! Such ramblings were abruptly interrupted however, when John, our local Maasai guide again insisted 'come, we go now!' We moved, John who we had hired the previous evening was 110 cm tall to argue with - he must have been almost two metres tall, was incredibly lithe, and most persuasively he carried a long spear, a stick, and a knife.

A few moments later we were leaving our aptly named "Scorpion Camp" and jogging after John's quickly receding back. At first the moonlit going was quite easy, a gently angled, firm ash beneath our feet, and just the odd tussock of dry grass for us to fall over. It didn't last of course, and on the top of the first ridge we altered direction to follow it straight up the mountain. The angle became steeper, the grass less frequent, and the ash softer until eventually we were scrambling up near vertical flows of lava interspersed with 45° soft ash slopes. To keep us alert a horrendous, black, bottomless gully accompanied us all our light.



Some three exhausting hours later we entered an even steeper gully enclosed by lightly coloured lava walls. This led us up to the edge of the crater which, even though we were shattered after the pace of ascent, held us mesmerised. Through the darkness we could see several dull red glows accompanied by assorted gurgling, burping, and slopping sounds whilst all around us steam vents hissed violently. John told us that it was another hour to dawn so he simply lay down, wrapped his multicoloured blanket around him and was immediately asleep. In our T-shirts and shorts we cooled down rapidly and realised we may not even survive the night unless we took drastic action. The solution was obvious, make use of the steam vents.

As daybreak came with a sudden flash of sunlight we again peered into the crater just ten metres below us. The scene was spectacularly primeval. The crater wall for two thirds of its circumference was between five and ten metres high with steam vents screaming from many fissures. The final third of the wall reared up a further 100m to an ash strewn summit. The crater floor, perhaps 200 m across, was littered with both cobble sized and smooth lava flows. These had originated from seven irregular shaped cones (hornitoes) some 10 m high and it was from these that the assorted noises came. The lava was various shades of white through to black and this gives a clue into its uniqueness. When erupted, the high carbonate content extremely low viscosity lava is black, but within two days of contact with atmospheric moisture it turns white with a composition which is little different than washing soda! Several of the

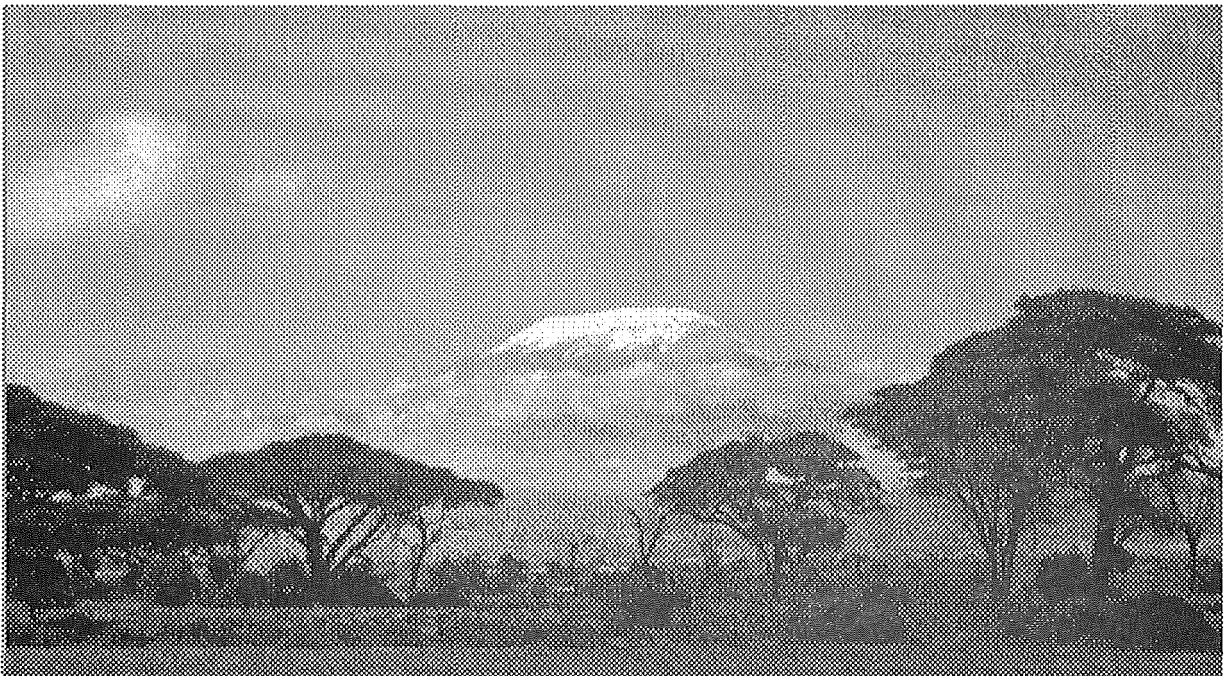
flows were still black and may have been made during our night's climb. Small yellow sulphur fumaroles were also visible amongst the flows.

Exploring the crater absorbed us for an hour or more before we made our ascent to the summit where the views from which can only be described as stupendous. Below us, on the moonscape floor of the Rift Valley ash cones, collapses, and depressions proliferated whilst to the north the great white soda expanse of Lake Natron could be seen edged in pink Flamingos. To the south the ancient volcano of Empakai reared up to almost 2,700 m behind which lies the even greater and better known Ngorongoro. To one side the 600 m high walls of the Western Rift extended as far as could be seen whilst 10 km opposite the Eastern Rift edge was more a gently but obvious slope interspersed with other volcanoes - Gelai, 2941 m and Kitumbeni, 2865m.

On our stumbling, slithering, rolling dust covered and definitely knee jerking descent we passed a pair of

ostrich and a family of giraffes - two strange looking animals that summed up the area - unearthly!

NOTES. This trip was made during February by my son and I. In Arusha we had hired a Land Rover and a driver who had knowledge of the region. We followed the spectacular Longido track which took 9 hours of almost constant 4 wheel driving rarely on anything remotely resembling a track! We also had to take in all our fuel and food. There are several good places to camp between Lake Natron and the volcano. For the ascent it is possible to drive to around 1000m which leaves Gust) 1878 m to the summit. Allow 3½ to 6 hours - our ascent was very fast as we were very fit having just also been up Kilimanjaro. The Rift Valley bottom is an extremely interesting place to explore - we spent 5 days here hiring the friendly local Maasai as our guides. We spotted virtually as much wildlife as we later did in Ngorongoro, the bird life was even better, the arid flora was exceptional, particularly near the western Rift walls, and the geology just unbelievable. Our daily shade temperature was usually in excess of 40° and at night it rarely dropped below 25°. We only noted two other vehicles on our stay and finally exited the Rift via the Malambo route on yet another breathtaking track.



YRC Caving Projects in the Yorkshire Dales

Ged Campion & Bruce Bensley

Over the last 12 months work has continued with enthusiasm.

Rosebay Pot, Newby Moss, was first descended on 23 April 1905, by the YRC (E.A.Baker, HBrodrick, IHBuckley, C.Hastings, C.A.Hill and P.Lamb), and more recently in the 1970's the NPC extended the pot by enlarging the top of the 3rd pitch and descending to a sizeable fault chamber. Ged Campion and Alistair Renton went to inspect the hole, the encouraging draft that appeared to 'whistle' around the top of the 3rd pitch. Further investigations by Shaun Penny and Ged revealed a narrow fissure at the bottom of the chamber descending to a squeeze and widening to a boulder choked chamber. At this point the draft became elusive, nevertheless, the boulder obstruction seemed worthy of further investigation. Could this be a way into the Newby Moss master cave?

Compacted mud, sand and clay gave to a very large boulder that had to be removed by chemical persuasion. After a couple of weekends we were down 2m or so but in the process were undermining a worrying looking hard packed mud wall. Discretion being the better part of valour we abandoned the site and pulled out the gear, including scaffold through the tight 3rd pitch opening. It was thought that the encouraging draft could have been disappearing in the direction of Cross Pot nearby.

Clapdale Dig Work has continued at the Clapdale dig, the large doline North of Clapdale Farm and west of Rayside Plantation. With considerable

help from scaffold and shoring a depth of 10m has been reached. Unfortunately no outlet has been found yet despite the promise of a stream disappearing into the hillside from a considerable catchment area. The dig is directly in line with the Newby Moss fault. The stream has been positively tested to Moses Well. Work continues - any volunteers?

Catamite Hole

For a number of years members Ged, Bruce, Graham Salmon, Alistair and Shaun have focused their attentions on the area between King Pot and Crescent Pot, in East Kingsdale. Despite a high concentration of shakeholes and various-digging attempts by clubs in the past, virtually no cave passage has been discovered. Approximately three years ago, Catamite Hole became the main focus of our efforts - a strong draught and the sound of a healthy stream beneath boulders seemed promising indicators. Much effort digging through loose boulders to a depth of eight metres was rewarded by a breakthrough into a fault chamber descending via two pitches to a small stream. The stream follows some low bedding to a large passage and eventually ends in an impenetrable slot - where the stream flows tantalisingly on.

Tile upstream of the cave is decorated and bifurcates to a number of inlets.

The cave goes some way to explaining the drainage of the surrounding area. Sh01t Cave, Little Demon Pot and Thunder Thighs Hole would appear to be feeder streams. Certain sections of the cave a number of dangerous loose boulders, and the lower passages have a potential to flood in wet weather. To date 200m of passage have been discovered and hopefully there is more. A full report on this discovery will follow.

The International Congress of Speleology Switzerland, 1997

This congress is held every four years, the last being in China during 1993 and the next in Brazil in the year 2001. During August four members attended this congress in the Jura town of La Chaux-de-Fonds, an important place in the watch making region of Switzerland. The area has beautiful rolling hills and forests broken by meadows with bell tolling cows. To the north and the French frontier the hills drop steeply into winding limestone gorges. A spectacular one carries the river Doubs which is the border between the two countries.

The Swiss had organised everything efficiently; the lectures and field trips to either caves or geological sites. Most of the lectures were of a deeply scientific nature, in French or English, and covered new discoveries. Some of these were subject to cancellation; in fact three were cancelled one after the other, though this was not the fault of the congress organisers but simply the speakers not turning up.

There were some two and a half thousand cavers from all over the world, with what I thought was a poor turnout by the Brits. Other than the hosts, there were many French and Americans with one lone Finish caver, and a delegate from the Cameroon. The Swiss published a news-sheet each day of the congress which kept everybody in touch with events.

Wednesday was a day off and the whole congress went on an excursion to some of the region's not so best kept secrets: the Musée d'Horlogerie, with many time pieces under one roof and then the Moulins Souterrains, a flour mill which was powered by an

underground stream with the whole works deep underground, but in the latter part of the last century was converted to be a hydro-electric plant. Later delegates went on a boat trip down the river Doubs to the impressive Saut de Doubs waterfall, about four times the flow as Hardrow force and twice the height, all the way impressive crags and cave entrances loomed through heat haze. However all this was to Swiss yodelling songs and, as we returned, the boatswain playing *Auld Lang Syne*.

On the Tuesday evening there was a trip to an ice-cave nearby called le Glaciers de Monlise situated near the town of Le Locle some 10km up towards a forest area. Within 20 minutes of the road and in a clearing there was a deep chasm with fixed ropes aiding the descent to a wide ledge. From there a wooden ladder of dubious origins was climbed down to the bottom of the 60 ft chasm with a temperature drop of around 23°C. A low opening led to a chamber with a floor of ice sloping down to the right, however the ice had a depth of some forty feet and it was possible to descend a sloping shaft and from underneath explore the sides of the glacier. On reaching the surface a fire was lit and food cooked over the flames while everybody thawed out from crawling over the ice. Drink and food were consumed, and many languages spoken until late into that starlit night.

The Swiss went out of their way to be helpful and the assistance from the local community also was impressive, Free public transport being just one of the visible contributions. It was a week well spent and excellent value.

YRC members attending:

Ged Campion, Richard Sealy,
Harvey Lomas & Jolm Whalley

Book Reviews by Bill Todd

Yorkshire Limestone - Millenium Supplement

The Yorkshire Limestone Supplement is now in the shops at the very reasonable price of £3.95. It includes a complete revision of Gordale Scar featuring 34 major new lines, 12 new routes on Dib Scar, a new crag, Caygill Scar and much more.

While most of the routes are in the hard grades there are five routes on Raven Scar at Severe and below some of which have been experienced by your correspondent and our President.

Like the definitive guidebooks this supplement is published by the Yorkshire Mountaineering Club and edited by Dave Musgrove. No Yorkshire Climber should be without it.

Craven Pothole Club Record No. 46. April 1997

With regularity which would be monotonous were it not for the liveliness of its contents, the Craven Pothole Club has come up with its 46th record.

The descriptions of exploration and adventure underground are in this issue varied by an account of a winter meet in Lakeland which saw absolutely atrocious weather.

Strangely there is no abroad meet recorded but there is an article by Matyas Vremir and Malta Veress from Romania who had a very enjoyable visit to Yorkshire invited by Hull University and looked after by C.P.C. The article is as much fun as the caving. Like an C.P.C. Records, worth a look.

Karstand Caves of Great Britain
by AC. Waltham, M.I. Simms, AR.
Farrant and HS. Goldie.
Chapman and Hall, London, pp, 358, £115

I was chatting with an archaeologist some years ago who had a prehistoric artefact made of yellow stone on his mantelpiece. I asked him what the rock was, 'Limestone' was the reply. I was temporarily nonplussed because every Yorkshireman knows what limestone looks like and it certainly does not look like yellow soap. Then a long forgotten item of knowledge came to my rescue, 'Ah, Jurassic'. 'That's right', said Lawrence, slightly surprised that I had ever heard of the word.

The diagram on page 3 of this book makes it clear that the Jurassic Oolites are officially limestone, just like the chalk of the South Downs. They both come within the purview of this very absorbing attempt to list and describe the most important areas of Great Britain where the detail of the land surface is due to the action of drainage through soluble underlying rock.

After a learned introduction subsequent chapters deal with the principal karst areas in turn. Of course, our own Yorkshire Dales is the biggest (pp. 70) section followed by the Peak District, Mendips, Wales and Scotland. There is a separate chapter on the North Pennines, from Arnside to Asby. Before this appears some of us will have seen the latter under Ian's guidance on the Ladies Meet. The chapter on Outlying Areas, includes Beachy Head, Buckfastleigh and the Devil's Punchbowl.

In many ways this is a grown up version of Tony Waltham's excellent 'Caves, Craggs and Gorges' (Constable 1984). It contains a lot more science and not quite as many photographs.

But the photos it does include are very good, I wish I had taken them myself

Climbers who have experienced the peculiar delights of loose limestone will be surprised to learn from the introduction that it is a 'strong rock, capable of spanning large underground voids and forming stable cliffs'. I suppose 'stable' need not apply to every hold but when whole sections of crag fall away as happened on the first ascent of 'Piddler' on Blue Scar the word seems a bit optimistic.

In the whole world twenty-eight cave systems longer than 50km have been explored. Yorkshiremen will be proud but not surprised to learn that one of the principal ones. Ease Gill, is in Yorkshire. The authors are confident that a link-up with the Kingsdale system will soon be achieved making a single system in excess of 100km (62 miles).

This book should be of interest to all members whether cavers or not and it is in the club library for our use.

Kinabalu Escape, The Soldiers' Story

R.Mayfield, R.Mann & M.Dunning.
Constable, London, pp. 282 HIB £14.95

A Board of Enquiry was held at York from 25 April to 24 May 1994 to investigate the planning and conduct of exercise Gully Heights. Readers of my review of the officers' book will recall that this involved the first ever descent of a precipitous stream bed by a team of British and Hong Kong soldiers. The two officers and the Hong Kong soldiers were marooned part way down and were rescued by helicopter after the rest of the party had descended the gully and fought

their way through jungle to raise the alarm. This book is by Lance Corporal Mayfield, Technical Adviser to the expedition. This means he was adviser on abseiling and rope techniques. Bob Mann was with Mayfield a lot of the time and contributes to the book.

It is a riveting book, about people and adventure. All the more so if you can grasp the modern army slang and the proliferating mountaineering qualifications. What we used to call a 'skive' is now a 'proff' and the qualifications are JSMEI, JSRCI, TR&A, and ML., which, by the way, is not our now familiar Mountain Leadership Certificate but is a Royal Marine qualification and requires an eight month course. It's a far cry from the days when we used to run rock climbing courses at Ilkley without a certificate between us. I don't recall any student ever suffering injury.

Compared with the officers' book something of a worm's eye view is conveyed. Lt. Col. Neill is the boss and rightly decides what is going to happen. I cannot escape the impression that the expedition is the last bid for fame by an ageing officer. Shades of Captain Scott. It seems unfortunate that he led from the back and was handicapped by illness at a vital stage. He had been to the area twice before.

All well and good but you don't put chaps in an Everest team after three days instruction in snow and ice technique, even if they are fit and athletic to start with. And this was going to be a series of long abseils covering thousands of feet of unknown country, a tall order even for experienced climbers. At the training weekend in Yorkshire an abseil down Malham Cove was on the programme.

'Unsettled weather' caused this to be cancelled and Ripon climbing wall was used instead. I would have thought that half a dozen abseils down Malham Cove in wet weather would have given the team something of a taste of what they were in for.

Another thing, of course, is that there was no long term friendship between the members of the expedition except for the two officers. During the expedition the NCOs seem to have 'bonded' if that's the word, with one particular mate only. This becomes particularly evident when the five British soldiers having left the gully are making their difficult way through the jungle in search of habitation. Three of them were cooking breakfast, the other two had no food so set off walking. Both parties reached safety separately.

But why did only three people have food? Why didn't the senior insist on a share-out? Who was in charge anyway?

There were two Lance Corporals qualified in top roping and abseiling. This meant a week long course doing single pitch work under fifty feet. One of them was also a Joint Services Mountain Expedition Leader, a mountain walking qualification acquired on a two week course. The other Lance Corporal, the author, was a Joint Services Rock Climbing Instructor. This was a course only available to climbers of two years standing, it lasted twenty days and emphasised rescue and teaching.

There was a full Corporal who as well as TR&A had some jungle training and was designated still photographer. The Sergeant had had some 'adventure training' and was designated 'video recordist'.

No-one had a commanding collection of both rank and skills; a not unfamiliar military situation for the man with the most rank to be the least qualified. All the more reason, therefore, for the officer in charge to have laid down a clear chain of command for the advance party before losing touch with them. The result was several days of leadership by committee meeting and the fact that lives were not lost is solely due to the sheer guts and determination of the men. The journey through the jungle was an absolute nightmare. Thorns and leeches, crags and 'bastard trees' and the nightmare did not stop after the author reached hospital.

The findings of the Board of Enquiry included:

- *The Army's commitment to adventurous training remains.*
- *More stringent qualifications will be required for those supervising abseiling.*
- *The planning for this expedition was conducted thoroughly and professionally.*

It seems to this reviewer that there is all the difference in the world between a training exercise and exploration. The former must be finite and suited to the stage of the trainee. The latter should be done by a self motivated elite and preferably on leave, *vide* Younghusband's travels in Central Asia.

In spite of the fact that the team bristled with qualifications there was still a crisis and planning should have included full contingency action to take care of the unforeseen.

Read the book and see **if** you agree with me.

The Elusive Expatriate

John Buchan: the Presbyterian
Cavalier

by Andrew Lownie
Constable 1995.

Biographies of great men used to tell only about their successes; we got cardboard figures of impossible ability and virtue, Janet Adam Smith's 1965 biography of John Buchan was after this style. Then things changed; these people were not one hundred per cent selfless. We were delighted to learn that General Wavell asked for promotion, that Lord Baden Powell eased his sister out of the post of Chief Guide in favour of his young wife, and that John Buchan asked for a GCVO for his services in the 1914-18 war.

This is an excellent book. It does not diminish its subject and is a credit to the author. I enjoyed every one of the three hundred odd pages and many of them gave me more insight into a man I have admired for fifty years. We got a recognisable picture of a unique human being, sometimes irritable, forgetful of his wife's birthday and capable of astringent remarks. In spite of shining at Oxford he did not in fact sail through life with ease. He went to the local grammar school as a day-boy and to the local university where he won a scholarship to Oxford. Already he was making some useful pocket money from writing which he continues while at Brasenose College. His earnings in due course enable him to take a full part in undergraduate social and sporting life and to get to know some of the scions of the establishment.

In case you are wondering why this review appears here I should point out that John Buchan was a mountaineer, in the sixties, as Governor General on a tour of Canada, he climbed a cliff face which none of his aides fancied, solo. History does not relate whether there was an easy way down. Two of the

Richard Hannay books contain climbing sequences. Hannay's climb up to the Col Das Horondelles in 'Mr. Standfast' could be a prose version of 'Excelsior' such a vivid impression is conveyed of the 'world of snow and ice'. In 'The Three Hostages' the final confrontation with the villain takes place on a Scottish crag.

But the best warranty of JB's provenance as a mountaineer lies in a short story he contributed to the S.M.C., Journal in 1907 entitled 'The Knees of the Gods'. In the story the Cuillins were made a climbing reserve and fancy railways were forbidden. It must be a mark of true genius that something written ninety years ago should so accurately reflect current concerns. If only we could be sure fancy helicopters would stay forbidden.

We learn that Buchan was far sighted strategically as well as mountain-wise. Speaking of a future in the 1930s he said 'the first stage will be a conflict in the air for the mastery of the air'. This, of course, is what Goering sent his Luftwaffe to achieve in 1940. Surprisingly Buchan was not associated with Gordonstoun or the Outward Bound movement but he was associated with T.E. Lawrence, AP. Wavell and RH. Liddell Hart in a scheme to train boys in leadership and outdoor skills. I suppose the idea was to harness Lawrence's fame as an ideal for the nation's youth as Baden Powell's fame had done earlier.

May I conclude with a note on JB's sense of humour, something which is not readily apparent from his distinguished career. Edward VIII's attachment to Mrs. Simpson must have shocked his Calvinistic soul but he contended himself with remarking in a letter to his mother, 'It was as if a British Admiral had applied for the post of third mate on an American tramp'. A remark worthy of a Yorkshireman

The First Fifty Years of the British Mountaineer Council. A Political History.

Edited by G.Milburn, D.Walker
& K.Wilson.

The British Mountaineering Council,
Manchester, pp.321. H/B £16.99

It is generally agreed that little of excellence is ever produced by a committee. The last time this happened with a book the product was the King James Bible and as far as I know all great books since then have been written by individuals.

It is greatly to the credit of all concerned that this 'Political HiStOIY' is so good. Indeed, it falls short of excellence in minor respects only, e.g. in quoting' 1899 as the date of the foundation of the Yorkshire Ramblers' Club and I think I know why.

Imagine one of the editors, or one of the contributors, more likely Geoff Milburn as it is always the boss who does the dogsbody jobs that fall within nobody's job description. Imagine Geoff Milburn, I don't know him so it is not easy, faced with the job of listing the key dates in the political history of British Mountaineering. Easy enough to start, formation of the Alpine Club. The next group of clubs were the acknowledged senior clubs, Climbers, Fell & Rock, Rucksac all now full of years and honours but when the dickens did they start? 'I know, Clark and Pyatt's 1957 'History of Mountaineering in Britain' must have something'. The book fell open at page 275, bibliography, the last entry is 'Yorkshire Ramblers club Journal, the . 1899' that will do.

The only other little niggles I have is that George Steele's membership of the Yorkshire Mountaineering Club isn't mentioned. It is probably wrong to blame the editors for that however,

it may be George concealing his humble origins,

But what a mine of information we have there; it's worth the money for the photographs alone. Most of the big names in mountaineering in the last fifty years have sewed the BMC in some capacity, notably Yorkshire's own Dennis Gray. Other Yorkshire climbers mentioned include YR.C. members Peter Swindells, who sadly died earlier this year and Roy Pomfret, the late Jack Bloor of the Gritstone Club, Mike Dixon whom few now remember, *sic transit gloria*, Angela Soper and Johnnie Lees. It is also interesting to be reminded of what Sid Cross looked like in 1960 when he was photographed with a group of Soviet mountaineers.

The text of course, if where most of the information is, exhaustive and exhausting. One feels that no stone is left unturned in telling the story of the inception and growth of the organisation and the activities of all its committees, functional and regional. Though I have no doubt the writers and editors agonised about what to leave out. Geoffrey Winthrop Young was the first to raise the idea, in 1907, that there should be a representative body for British mountaineers. He returned to attack 37 years later during his presidency of the Alpine Club with strong support from John, now Lord Hunt, who pushed the character building and forces training angle.

The first meeting was held in December 1944 and the rest as they say 'is history'. But while looking back it all seems inevitably little of value would have been achieved without the efforts and support of some well known climbers whose names are enshrined in mountaineering history. These include Pigott, Chorley, MacPhee, Good-

fellow, Longland and Moulam who all served as president in the early days followed by Bonington, Walmesley, MacNaught-Davis and the late Paul Nunn,

I found it strange to read that climbing used to be dangerous before modern safety methods were invented. Ask Dave Musgrove, most people led up to V. Diff and the occasional mild severe, yes, that describes me in my heyday, the top climbers aspired to V.S. and were proud as punch to lead Kipling Groove and Cenotaph Corner. Mind you, in those days the rule was that the leader must not fall. If you couldn't lead a pitch you were supposed to come back down and wait for a better climber to do it. but there was always the odd maverick who put in a piton or two and got up, then a bigger maverick who led it clean.

Climbers being an anarchic bunch there was opposition to the formation of the B.M.C., a lot of it from the establishment of the Alpine Club, including the notorious Colonel Strutt who had already made a name for himself by condemning people who climbed without guides. There seems to have been a fear the B.M.C., would usurp the position and influence of the senior clubs; and I suspect, a concern that the wrong types would be encouraged into mountaineering. Especially as about this time the working classes were beginning to get holidays with pay. Good heavens, what's the world coming to?

But it is no good hying to do justice to this very fine book in a short review. Every page you open it at has something of interest or somebody you know or know of Buy it and be assured that your spare reading time will be enjoyably filled for some time to come.

The Ordinary Route

by Harold Drasdo,
drawings by G. Mansell

The Ernest Press pp.258 stiffPIB £12.50

This review takes the form of a letter to the author.

Dear Harold,

Congratulations on a fine book and an excellent choice of artist for the illustrations. As well as entertainment you have said some things that needed saying about our SPOlt and related subjects, some of which I have been thinking myself

It's funny too, I can just see Mike Dixon jacking up the price of something he was selling, especially after you had just reminded him that being a millionaire was no great shakes these days. I also enjoyed hearing about the man who, applying for membership of a senior club put 'rag merchant' as his occupation. Years later the same chap raised his eyebrows when I mentioned that I had joined a (different) senior club. He must have thought, probably rightly that wool reproprocessors were socially superior to accountants.

It was a good idea to break the book up into groups of chapters subject wise. It has meant that even well into the book a figure from the past can pop up to the delight of those readers who knew him. I enjoyed the reference to the Skye boatman in the middle of the chapter in Ireland and to the Cumberland wrestler on the same page.

The chapter group on adversity has well chosen sections on Falling Off, Getting Lost, Involuntary Bivouacs and, of all things, Guide Book writing. I enjoyed your account of the Harter Fell Gully. I climbed this, solo, in

August 1953 but remember nothing of the chockstone or the rotting sheep.

It is good to know that other nations are no more original in their mountain names than the British. I refer to the Greeks. When I started your chapter on Cavall Bemat my head was in Majorca and the mention of Profitas Iliis by Mount Olympus brought memories of Rhodes. I expect these are the Greek equivalent of Raven Crag, Creag Ddhu or High Fell.

More seriously I particularly like the point you make about The National Trust. I used to regard it as a body that acquired wild country so that people could walk over it for ever. Now, as you say it seems to be in the property development business. You may remember when we were charged a shilling to go into Brimham Rocks. Now the National Trust has it admission free but parking is around a pound and there is a crowded gift shop instead of just the wooden hut cafe that the two old ladies ran. You do well also to remind us of the historical basis of all land ownership, seizure,

I do like your title. Perhaps, as an ordinary sort of chap who is proud of having put up North Buttress Ordinary on Guise Cliff I should declare an interest. I must also admit that I top-roped it first largely because the mantelshelf ledge was covered with heather. The removal of the latter would now be a criminal offence.

With true Yorkshire canniness you assure your readers that you have omitted any account of your highest mountain, nearest miss or most agonising decision. This reticence will ensure that everyone who enjoys this book, and that means everyone who reads it, will be queuing to buy Harold Drasdo's next book.

The Scottish Mountaineering **Club** Journal, Vol. XXXVI, No. 188, 1997

Is it a sign of old age when an article purporting to deal with the long ago talks about alterations to a camp site in Glen Brittle which wasn't even there when you first went? I and I knocked at Mr. McCrae's door about 1.00pm to say 'Please is there anywhere we can camp'? Nobody will be surprised at the answer we got, "Camp where you like in this glen, there are no drifters here".

But 'what a feast of reading we have. Even if you're not much interested in the lists of new routes and new Munroists the activities of the SMC and JMCS at home and abroad are the stuff of which dreams are made.

There is an article, strangely enough, about John Buchans mountaineering credentials which told me a lot I hadn't known. There are three pieces on Skye which are absorbing. One on first ascents, of mountains not rocks, one by Bill Brooker about his first visit fifty years ago and one by two expatriates revisiting after a twenty three year gap.

In 1959 the Youth Hostel warden was Willie Sutherland who also ran the bus service to Sligachan. I wonder if he was related to the Alex Sutherland who was warden when Bill Brooker went fifteen years earlier.

I have always been impressed by two items of Ben Nevis history. The first is the marathon journey by rail and bicycle which Messrs. Brown and Tough undertook to climb the North East Buttress. The other is of Graham Macphee who motor-cycled to the Ben every weekend from his work in Liverpool while working on the guide book.

So please read the account by Alec Keith of his repeat of the Tough/Brown exploit with Macphee's grandson complete with worn tweeds and the use of one bike. And see if you agree with what Malcolm Slesser says about sex in 'A Merry Dance'.

The SMCI is in the club library for your delectation.

Book Review

by Beryl Houghton

On Foot from Coast to Coast,
The North of England Way,

by David Maughan

Michael Joseph Ltd 1997 pp.178, *SIB* £9.99.

Which is your favourite long distance walk? The challenging Pennine Way, Wainwright's wonderful Coast to Coast, the very attractive Dales Way, or perhaps Scotland's West Highland Way?

David Maughan realised that for many the experience of walking coast to coast was so special they walked the route many times. With this in mind he accepted the challenge in the concluding notes of Wainwright's book. He planned and walked a new route from Ravenglass to Scarborough, two places that lie on north/south rail routes.

He has written an enthusiastic little guide, 'On Foot from Coast to Coast. The North of England Way' which was published at £9.99 by Michael Josephy in early March. The two hundred mile walk follows the line of nine Youth Hostels through exhilarating scenery. It passes through Eskdale to Coniston and Windermere where it picks up the Dales Way. This way is followed to Cam High Road near Hawes for a turn off onto the Pennine Way to take you to Gayle. From there Maughan takes you down Swaledale to Jervaulx Abbey. This is followed by what he admits is a not so satisfactory twenty-one mile section to Thirsk involving much road walking. From Thirsk he takes you via Helmsley, Hutton le Hole and the Hole of Horcum to Scarborough,

Maughan has planned the walk to last 14 days but at the beginning of each clearly described day there is a useful chart of facilities available along the route including accommodation and bus services. So it should not be difficult to tailor the daily distances to suit yourself.

Even if it is unlikely that you will be able to walk the whole route it would be a lovely little book to want to spur you to visit some of the many places of interest described along the way.

Book Review

by Derek Smithson

Norwegian Mountains on Foot

Edited by Claus Helberg and translated by Arthur Battagel, Arne Bakke & Andrew Glasse, Den Norske Turistforening, 1996, pp. 430

The Norwegian Mountain Touring Association has been in existence since 1868 and this book is a translation from the Norwegian of their latest guide to walking routes throughout Norway. It covers about 1000 routes most of which have cairns/waymarks to help the traveller. The book shows Norway as divided into 36 areas, each with a sketch map showing numbered routes and a brief description of each route. The descriptions need to be brief to keep the book to reasonable proportions, 17½ by 11 cm and 280 gms in weight. This brevity has enabled them to include, in the English language version, an introduction giving information about the D.N.T. and other useful information for foreigners visiting Norway and using mountain huts. It also has allowed some space for interesting stories of the history of some of the huts, people and places, e.g. Gjendebu, Vormeli, Slingsby and Mohn, and Vettismorki in Jotunheimen. Only the solitary backpacker would not consider this book worth its space in a rucksack,

The route descriptions vary in the detail they give. The great glacier crossings, like Jostedalbreen and Alftobreen, have very simple directions. The first three hours of a twelve hour journey from Fabergstolen to Vetledalseter has the directions, 'Northwards on the west side of the river through tangled birches, then partly in dwarf woods

and partly across boundaries and moraines to the snout of Lodalsbreen.' The remainder of the route has three more sentences and this is not a cairned route but not a complex one either. For each route there is a unique number and title giving the start and finish places. Then the walking time, the maps required, and the directions which give mention of cairns, paths and the method of crossing streams, as well as the description of the route to be followed. Most of these routes will be shown on the maps as a path even when there are no marks on the ground. Checking known routes indicates a high degree of accuracy in description and that the times given are walking times not total journey times.

For each area there is a sketch map, without contours, showing huts, villages, roads, lakes and routes. There is also a broad description and history of the area and lists of D.N.T. and privately owned huts/hotels with the facilities they offer. There does not seem to be a simple explanation of how routes are chosen for inclusion but there are no climbing routes. All glacier journeys are said to need climbing equipment and skill, and there are other places where use of a rope is advised. Most of the routes go between villages or huts but there are some mountain ascents. On top of all this, despite the number of routes included there is plenty of space between them to find your own way and have your own adventures.

This admirable book is in the Club Library for our enjoyment.

Obitua

Winston Farrar 1910 - 1997

Those members who are familiar with either Goyden Pot or the climbs at Ilkley will be sorry to learn of the death of Winston Farrar. I first heard the name in a report of the YMC Annual dinner of 1956 when he made a 'gem of a gem' of a speech. I am sorry I never met him because he seems to have been a man of parts and a living example that a good man can make his mark without advantages of birth or extended education.

He left school after matric and became a clerk. Later he went into library work and qualified FLA. He is said to have made a traverse across the upper frontage of Leeds Municipal Building. I wonder if Arthur Craven had anything to do with that.

As a young man he teamed up with Charlie Salisbury and they made some of the popular routes at Ilkley including Josephine, Three Slabs and Fairy Steps. He was also active underground and his adventure in Goyden Pot is graphically described in his own words in the Journal of the Pudsey & District Rambling Club. This is reprinted in the Craven Pothole Club Record No, 47. He also gets a mention in YRC Journal Vol VI, 1930-36, pp, 223-4,

After the war service with the RAF he opened a bookshop in Bradford with Gordon Daley and went on working there, latterly part time, until the day before he died. His funeral took place at Ilkley on 10 April with readings from various sources chosen by himself including Chuan Tzu and the Rubaiyat.

I am indebted to Don and Liz Pennington, Stephanie and Pete Hanson and the Editor of 'The Yorkshire Mountaineer' for the above information and permission to reproduce it.

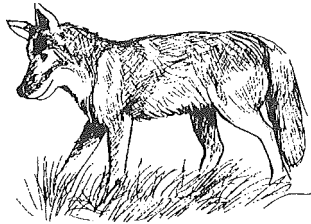
Bill Todd

Chippings

Bill Todd raises the issue of access in the BMC's Summit magazine, Issue 5. His solution is one of reasonable negotiation based on personal approaches to the local workers or landowners. A BMC's Officer offers comments in response based on the BMC Access Charter,

A stray dog climbed Mt. Aconcagua and rescued two lost climbers before disappearing according to the local daily newspaper, Clarin.

Austrian mountain guide, Armin Liedl, and four German climbers were beginning their ascent of Aconcagua when a mongrel began to tag along then wandered off but later turned up again shivering in the snow outside Liedl's tent. Together they climbed and at 21,000 feet the dog



helped save two lost Argentine climbers who were stricken by altitude sickness, by barking to alert Liedl and his team, who went to the aid of the pair..

The dog later vanished again after accompanying reaching to the summit but the guide intends to go back to look for it and take it back to Austria.

This September's Lake District meet was the scene of the celebrations for Bill Lacey's 60th birthday.

For those who wish to visit some eighteen (pre-1974 boundary changes) Yorkshire towns, from Yarn to Conisborough, through the anecdotes and historical facts of Arnold Patchett seek out his *Some Unique Yorkshire Towns* which has just been published by Pentland Press, Durham DL14 6XB, at £12.50. With 37 illustrations - Ruth Patchett's sketches and Arnold's photographs - the book is a wealth of detail which will be reviewed in full for the next issue of the Yorkshire Rambler.

Derek Smithson having noticed that magazine reviews of mountain food concentrate solely on freeze dried foods packaged for the outdoor market, has set down his experience following decades of experiments in the field.

In a couple of pages he sets out simple practical advice for making the best use of standard supermarket products and so avoiding unnecessary costs.

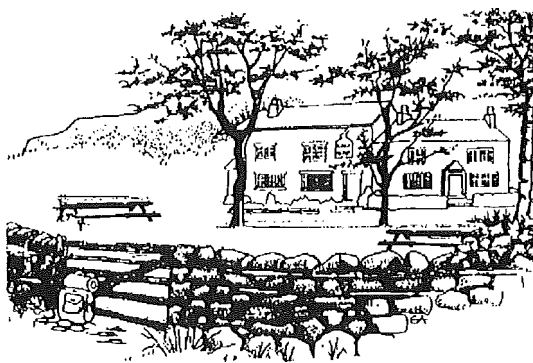
I am sure Derek will describe his conclusions or send a copy if asked.

Your editor encourages you to take advantage of this offer and learn from the trials as he was a 'guinea-pig' on several trips and would like to feel assured that there should be no unnecessary repetitions of some of the experiences. A cheese and pasta combination has lodged itself in my memory, just as it did in my digestive tract at the time.

Christmas Meet

6-8 December 1996.

Goat Gap Inn, Clapham.



This meet was typified by high spirits and low cloud. A total of 54 members and guests assembled for dinner several in their eighth decade. Many members recalled scores of years of passing the Goat Gap without ever considering a visit. In fact the venue offered good food, real ale, ambient surroundings, camping, caravanning, bivouacing and not to mention the close proximity of Lowstem and Harden. A very useful base for meets in the future or even for Saturday dinner on Lowstem meets. Our sole member from Surrey made a welcome appearance.

But above all our new President and Vice President made their inaugural appearances having been persuaded to sway to the Gregorian calendar! Our secretaries incoming and outgoing, were seen to swap helpful hints to one another about running the Club and, no doubt, continued the myth-cum-fact that one half of the YRC cannot read and the other half cannot write, thus making the Secretary's job rather tricky!

Many local hills were ascended, some at the speed of light, others at a snails pace. Several members enjoyed lunch on the Saturday above the cloud though they would be lucky to enjoy the same conditions on the Sunday. The President's party ascended Wildboar Fell via Aisgill during which a guest related to a younger member by maniage was seen to go becking in bare feet and underpants. A hardier party descended Roseberry Pot, Fern Pot and Pillar Halls to recover gear

left on a previous trip. They also reconnoitred the Newby Moss area looking for a winter dig.

A five course Christmas Dinner was the social highlight of the Meet and our thanks to to the Landlord and our eccentric member from Ribbleshead.

Sunday saw a variety of activities embarked upon all of which enjoyed poor weather. A group of potholers renounced guide books in order to make their hips more interesting and the President's party aided and abetted by an ex-president renowned for a lack of sense of direction reorientated a party of lost scouts in Crummockdale.

And so that was it - again. Muscles exercised fresh paths explored, thirsts slaked, stomachs filled, friendships made & renewed, advice asked and freely given on a host of subjects - the YRC at its best! Then homward to their other families.

DJH

Attendance:

Tim Josephy, President
Ken Aldred
Denis Barker
Bruce Bensley
Chris Bird (G)
Alan Brown
Ged Champion
John Casperson

Albert Chapman
Cliff Cobb
Arthur Craven
Ian Crowther
Robert Crowther
Roy Denny
Eddy Edwards
Iain Gilmore
Mike Godden
Ralph Hague
David Handley
John Hemingway
David Hick
David Holmes
Gordon Humphreys
Ray Ince
John Jenkin (G)
Alan Kay
Mike Kinder
Ian Laing
David Laughton
Gerry Lee
Alan Linford
Harvey Lomas
Lohn Lovatt
Rory Newman
Roy Pomfret
George Posthill
Keith Raby (G)
Harry Robinson
Arthur Salmon
Graham Salmon
John Schofield
Jack Short
Roy Wilson
David Smith
Michael Smith
Derek Smithson
Tony Smythe
George Spenceley
Trevor Temple (G)
Mike Thompson
Bill Todd
John White
Tim Wilkinson (G)
Frank Wilkinson

Glan Dena, North Wales

31 Jan - 2 Feb 1997

This year's first North Wales meet was, as usual, organised by Tim Josephy and held at the MAM hut at Glan Dena. Sitting at the foot of Tryfan in the Ogwen valley and having recently been renovated, it served as an excellent starting point for any mountain activities.

The weather outlook for the weekend wasn't good and sure enough Saturday started off a bit grey and overcast. Not to be put off by this people set off in all directions, some headed for the Snowdon Horseshoe, some set off up the Camedds and some even went shopping in Bangor.

A small group of four of us headed off up to Cwm Idwal in search of some rock climbing. At the foot of the Idwal slabs we split into two groups of two and started to do battle with 'Hope' and 'Charity'. After negotiating the slippery start to 'Charity' in our big boots we were away and progressed quickly upwards only slowing slightly to clear some footsteps in a patch of ice that barred our way. This was done by Daniel using my set of rocks! They looked a bit battered after that but now fit into places that they never would before so that's OK. At the top of the slabs we regrouped and finished up a route called 'Lazarus'. A short scramble and a walk across the nameless cwm and Tim introduced us to one of the hidden jewels of the Ogwen valley, the Cneifion Arete. I never knew this existed though I must have passed it by a good twenty times. It must be one of the best scrambles in the whole area if you keep light on the edge of the arete. Once on the top of

the Glyders we finished the day off by descending by the side of Bristly ridge, over Tryfan and back to the hut, all in all a good day out.

A fabulous meal was then produced by the president Tim which included a toast to the late Peter Swindells. On the only occasion I went walking with Peter I remember he managed to guide us accurately along the Five Sisters of Kintail in thick cloud without getting lost once. I'm sure he will be sorely missed.

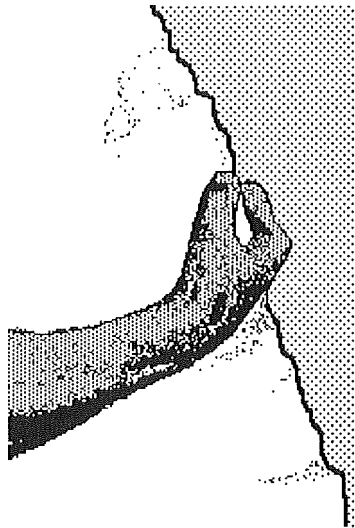
Reports of the other days activities uncovered conflicting views of less successful feats of navigation that took place on the Camedds, Members were said to have departed from the top of Carnedd Llewellyn only to return twenty minutes later and then set off again in a completely different direction. All the parties involved however managed to return in time for the evening meal.

The Sunday saw a group of ten set off up the north ridge of Tryfan in misty conditions with verglas covering the upper slopes. At the col between Tryfan and the Glyders, the group split with some descending to Idwal whilst the rest continued up Bristly Ridge, over the Glyders and down via the side of the Devils kitchen. Also on Tryfan at the same time the president and Mark Pryor managed to get up Gashed Crag, an excellent route on the North face, in somewhat icy conditions.

Tim Bateman,

Routes:

Charity	V Diff	**
Hope	V Diff	***
Lazaraus	Severe	*
Gashed Crag	V Diff	***



Attendance:

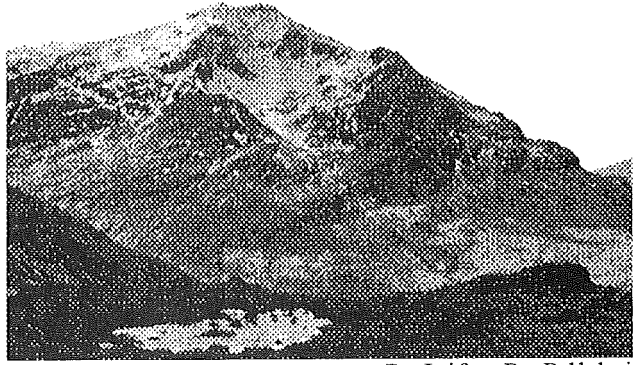
- Dennis Armstrong
- Dennis Barker
- Tim Bateman
- Derek Bush
- Derek Collins
- Ian Crowther
- Andrew Duxbury
- Nigel Duxbury (Guest)
- Eddie Edwards
- Iain Gilmour
- Mike Godden
- Ray Harben
- Tim Josephy
- Frank Platt (Guest)
- Mark Pryor
- Jim Rusher
- Euan Seaton (Guest)
- David Smith
- George Spenceley
- Frank Wilkinson
- Alan Wood
- Barrie Wood
- Daniel Wood (Guest)

Inverardran Cottage Criarlartch, 11 - 13 April 1997

The first thing to say about this meet concerns the Ochils M.C. Inverardran Hut. We have stayed here before but this time we were pleasantly surprised by the improvements that the club have carried out. It is not yet complete - some rooms are still awaiting the accumulation of further funds, but all in all it is now an excellent venue, easily accessible for a weekend from our area. There is adequate parking space and plenty of room to camp, although the ground is rather rough for tents. All other desirable facilities are available nearby.

The usual alcoholic gathering took place on the Friday evening as members started to arrive from early afternoon onwards, but not before one keen soul had climbed Ben Vane on the way.

Saturday was a brilliant day - warm enough, clear and sunny with just enough snow left on the hills to add interest and make others wish they had carried ice axes and crampons. Good days were enjoyed by several parties including one that completed the Aonach Eagach traverse (including the Pap of Glencoe) before finding it necessary to repair to the Clachaig Hotel for medicinal reasons. A second party had a super day on Ben Lui and Ben Oss ending in a gorgeous walk back through the Coille Coire Chuilc woodlands. Other parties completed varying combinations of Cruach Ardrain, Beinn Tulaichean, Beinn a'Chroin, An Caisteal, Beinn Chabhaire and some of the lesser heights nearby. Everyone retired thinking that they had had a 'good' day on the Southern Highland hills.



Ben Lui from Ben Dubhchraig

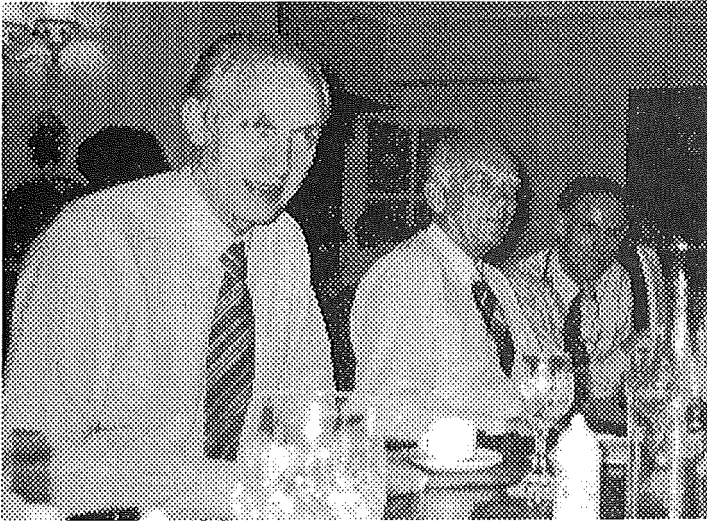
Sunday was not nearly such a nice day, rather gloomy and misty with much low cloud.. There were nevertheless some substantial hill days completed. A party of three traversed two Munros, two tops and a Corbett - Sgaith Chuil, Meall a'Churain, Beinn Cheathaich, Meall Glas and Beinn nan Imirean - an excellent trip. The President seems to have achieved most of the Arrochar summits as we would expect of him, and some of the previous days summits were repeated by alternative parties, plus Beinn Chabhair and some of the Balquidder braes.

All in all a first class meet and our thanks are due to Cliff Large for his organisation.

WCIC

Attendance:

The President - Tim Josephy
Ken Aldred
Denis Barker
Ian Crowther
Iain Gilmour
David Hick
Alan Kay
Cliff Large
David Large (G)
David Martindale
Roy Pomfret
Derek Smithson
Tony Smythe
George Spenceley
Stuart Thompson (G)
James Whitby (G)



**David,
Alan,
and
Richard**



**Derek,
Juliet
and
Una**



**Iain,
Sarah
and
Ian**

Photography
by Bill Todd

Ladies Weekend 25 - 27 April 1997 Ravenstonedale, Cumbria

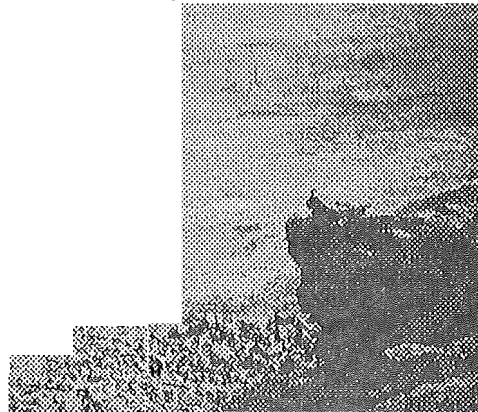
Three of our stalwart couples were unable to attend this year yet a record total of forty-seven sat down for the Saturday night dinner, a statistic which heavily underlines the continuing success of this popular meet.

Most had assembled at the Black Swan Hotel on the Friday night when there was much swopping of news since the last Ladies weekend in Holmfirth. Talk of the mOITOWS activities was overshadowed by gloomy weather forecasts, especially disappointing after April's wann spring weather and softened our resolve, but everybody, including the Saturday morning arrivals, was on parade in the Hotel. Crowther quickly steered 80% of the party to a parking spot in The Street. From here the ascent of Wild Boar Fell was tackled via a



'limited visibility' at the lunch spot...

...and the 'stunning view', across the valley .we missed



stunning views so conversational exchanges were the order of the day. The descent over Ravenstonedale Common and Fell End Clouds enlivened our return

making our 4 pm arrival at the Hotel feel as if we had fitted in a good day in spite of the weather.

The low level walkers parked at Newbeginn and aimed for Green Bell 2½ miles to the south via Beckstones, Pinksey and Swarth, Between Swarth and Green Bell the miserable weather caused a change of heart and the party struck North East down Swarth Gill to Greenside thence back to Newbeginn.

Both the Swan's two dining rooms were fully taken up by the YRC for the Saturday night dinner which meant that our Vice President, ran Gilmour, had to deliver his elegant and well deserved 'vote of thanks' speech for

ran Crowther in each location. The evening didn't really lose any buzz because of this split. The four course meal was both interesting and appetizing. Included amongst the starters was ham knuckle and rabbit roulade with warm potato salad and mustard dressing - an original collection of ingredients which excited the taste buds for what was to follow. We were all delighted to greet Shirley and Arthur Sannon once again. Observers of Ladies' Weekends, perhaps spurred on by the very success of the occasion, often search

for hidden messages which might influence the Club's future.



Alan, Joyce, Pat, John and Madge



Shirley and Arthur

This scribe merely wishes to record that the move towards informal dress for the Saturday dinner continues apace: only four suits were spotted which could mean we will have trainers and T-shirts for the Millennium dinner.

Sunday's weather was glorious and the 10am start had everybody setting off from the Hotel, North along the river to Smardale Bridge, on to Smardalegill viaduct with a lunch stop just short of Crosby Garrett. West from here along Ladle Lane brought us to the picturesque Pott's Valley where it was good to see (and hear) a buzzard soaring effortlessly above us for several minutes. At the western end where the road is reached Ian had thoughtfully parked a car enabling five drivers to have the whole party back at the Swan by 4 pm.

Ian Crowther's intimate knowledge of this lovely corner of England, which many of us had not explored before, helped us to endorse enthusiastically all the claims he has always made for Ravenstonedale. The organisation was excellent throughout and we are gratefully indebted to Ian for the hard work he must have put in to make the weekend such a success.

Attendance:

- Ken Aldred
- Alan & Madge Brown
- Derek & Yvonne Bush
- Ian & Dorothy Crowther
- Iain & Sarah Gilmour
- Mike & Marcia Godden
- Richard & Elizabeth Gowing
- John & Janet Hemingway
- Bill Todd & Juliet White
- Alan & Julia Kay
- Ian & Una Laing
- Cliff & Cathy Large
- Jerry & Margaret Lee
- Alan & Angie Linford
- Bill & Brenda Lofthouse
- Frank & Wynne Milner
- Chris & Joyce Renton
- Harry & Margaret Robinson
- Arthur & Shirley Salmon
- Roy & Margaret Salmon
- John & Pat Schofield
- David & Elspeth Smith
- Michael & Helen Smith
- Herbert & Elma Wunsch (G)

Wasdale Meet

9-11 May 1997

Good weather saw the dawn of Friday as some members set off early for Wasdale. Snow had fallen on the tops, and Scafell Pike was ascended from Brown Tongue. Skiddaw House was visited, part of the Cumbrian Way traversed, and one member walked to the camp site from Rosthwaite.

On Saturday one party headed for Pillar via Black Sail Pass, with some visiting Robinsons Cairn and completing Shamrock Traverse onto Pillar. Others took the direct route up Pillar and then via Little Scoat Fell to Dore Head where horizontal snow gave them a thorough wetting. Yew Barrow was judiciously avoided in favour of the track down Over Beck. One loner did this circuit in reverse, Yew Barrow and all.

Another circuit was completed via Sty Head, Aaron Slack, Green and Great Gable, Kirk Fell and Black Sail.

Climbers were not to be daunted, and Grove Arret, Pikes Crag, Scafell Crag routes were completed in poor conditions. Slingsby's Chimney was not completed, but not surprisingly so

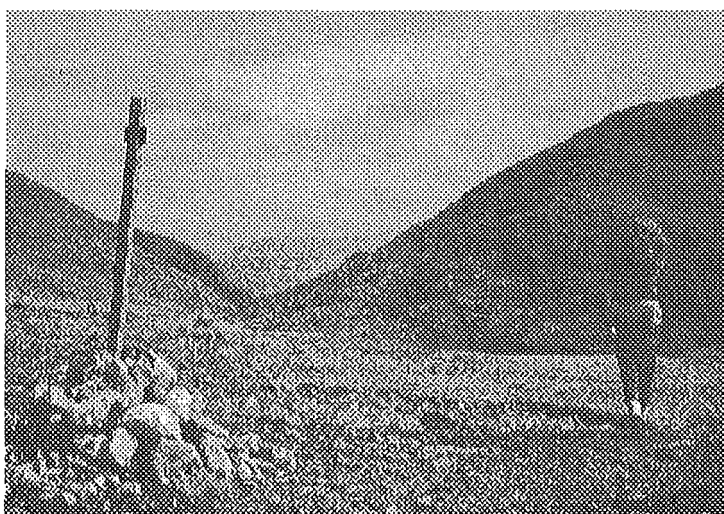
in view of the snow conditions experienced. A party were out on Napes but conditions were rather rough on Needle Ridge leading to "abseil off. Their route home was via the Gable traverse, Corridor route, Scafell and Lingmell.

The usual pub fare was enjoyed at Wasdale Head on Saturday evening, where an unusual 'Where am I' enquiry was made by a stranger who stated he had been on Snowdon and Scafell, and was to be picked up at Seathwaite to be transported to Ben Nevis. The 'Effort' was in aid of Victim Support, and luckily someone was going round to Borrowdale and thus able to give him a lift. Guess what? The gent concerned was none other than the Director of Victim SUPPORT.

Sunday saw the completion of the West Water round by a good few members before leaving for home territory. A good weekend was enjoyed by all, with much variation in conditions creating interesting walking and climbing.

Attendance:

The President, Tim Josephy,
Denis Barker
Alan Brown
Derek Bush
Eddie Edwards
Mike Godden
Mike Hartland
Jeff Hooper
Vie Maloney (G)
Frank Milner
Martin Milner (G)
Derek Smithson
Alan Wood (PM)
Michael Wood



Styhead Pass, Michael Smith

Outer Hebrides

Spring Bank Meet

22 - 27 May 1997



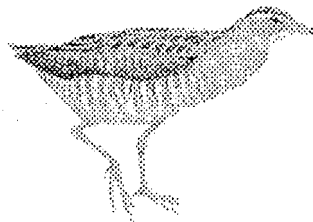
The following is a distillation of the experiences of those present on this most successful of meets. People arrived over several days and took up residence in various forms of accommodation, ranging from the beautiful but basic Atlantic shore campsite, through caravans to the rugged stone built slate roofed tent of the Meet Leader's party. Here the inmates huddled over a spirit stove to eat their meagre rations, washed down with nothing more than red and amber coloured liquids. Nevertheless, they bravely overcame adversity - so much so that sounds of merriment were often unaccountably to be heard. Others sat outside on the magnificent beach where the evening light had a clarity and quality never seen further south.

The Linfords arrived early and enjoyed the best weather, others made camp in a torrential downpour and almost gave up, but overall the weather was very kind. With the extraordinarily long days we would have been well advised to go for afternoon starts, the mornings being usually misty; nevertheless everyone managed some good days out. Most took advantage of the poorer days to visit the antiquities, Brochs, Black Houses and of course the Callanish Stones. Members ranged far and wide over the splendid hills and coasts of Hanis. What this area lacks in size it more than makes up for in grandeur and loneliness; paths are rare and erosional unheard of. Most parties only ever met other YRC people in the hills, whilst evening walks along the flower

studded machair and limitless sands of the west coast were almost magical experiences. A list of hills ascended would be tedious but at least eight people climbed Clisham, the highest mountain, and two parties completed the excellent Clisham Horseshoe.

Rock climbing was indulged in and I can do no better than quote the words of the youngest member of that party. "On Tuesday me, Michael and Tim climbed up Sron Ulladale which was a five mile walk to it then a six hundred foot severe climb. One bit I found very hard was a traverse across a few centimetres wide ledge which had hardly any hand holds. At one point Tim was in danger of being knocked off by a huge rock so when Michael passed he kicked it off. We watched as it bounced down leaving big holes in the ground. When we had finished the climb we stopped to have lunch at the top of the mountain at five o'clock. I ate lots of Jaffa cakes and we looked at the beautiful views." A YRC member in the making!

Wildlife was much in evidence. Mountain hares and deer were everywhere and the bird watchers saw a great variety of species of which the

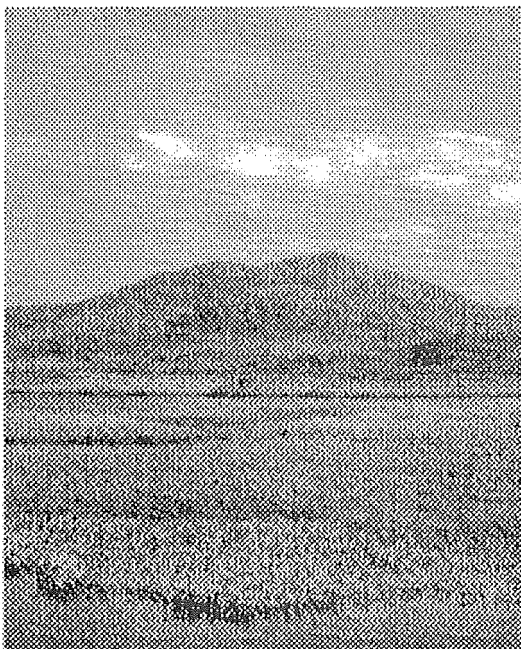


most notable was a remarkably amenable corncrake which posed most conveniently for nearly all the meet to see. Everyone saw golden eagles and it seemed that each mountain corrie had its own resident cuckoo. Despite the variety of species, one member was concerned to note a significant reduction in overall numbers, confirmed by the locals. Surely pollution cannot be



After Clisham: Tim, Michael , George and Derek

reaching even places like this? After the recent long spells of dry weather the bogs were quite dY, but covered with flowers; this made approaches to the hills a much more pleasant experience than might otherwise have been.



Heclu

Towards the end of the week some members had to leave, but the rest moved on to the Uist islands for the last days of the meet. The short ferry crossing from South Harris to N01th Uist was sheer delight, weaving amongst rocky islets inhabited by families of seals and watching the gannets diving around the ferry. Sadly there were no whales to be seen although apparently they are regular visitors. Nearly all the remaining members climbed Hecla, an imposing and entertaining hill at the north end of the Uist range. This was the best day's weather of the whole meet with unbroken sunshine and light winds. One member traversed the whole range crossing Hecla, Ben Corodale and Ben More, a superb walk through wild and impressive scenery. He was treated to true island hospitality when upon knocking at a house to ask for the use of a telephone, was not allowed to leave until he had partaken



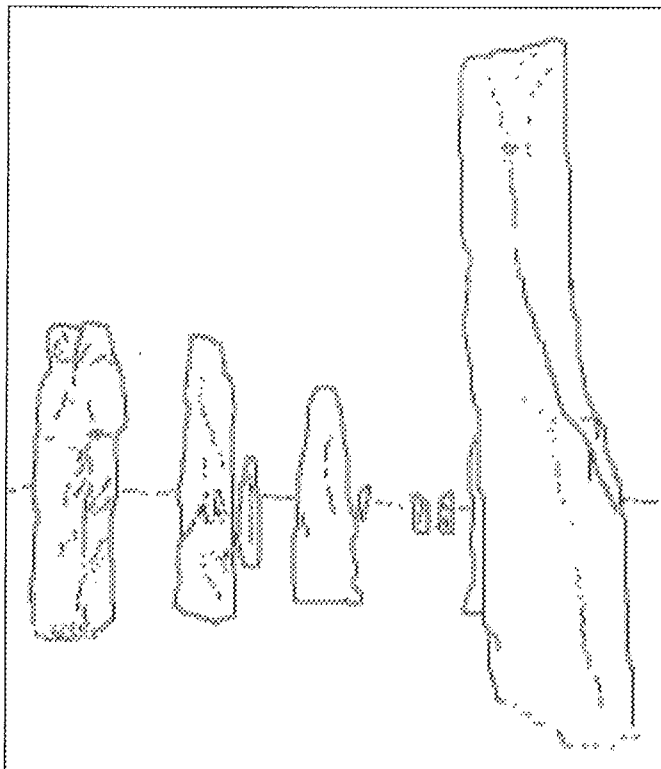
Mike, Cliff, Albert, David Smith, David Handley and Derek

of beer and been given a lift five miles up to the main road.

All the remaining meet congregated in the Lochboisdale Hotel on the last evening for a very convivial dinner before taking the morning ferry to Oban next day. This really rounded off the meet, with the perfect weather giving fine views of the islands and the West coast throughout the seven hour journey.

The Outer Hebrides, if you get the weather, is without doubt one of the most beautiful areas in Britain. No one who comes here can fail to be affected by it and certainly most of the members who attended the meet have vowed to return.

TJ



Attendance:

- Victor Bugg
- George Burfitt (G)
- Albert Chapman
- Derek English
- Mike Godden
- David Handley
- Tim Josephy, President
- Elaine Josephy (G)
- Cliff Large
- Alan Linford
- Angie Linford (G)
- Dave Martindale
- John Martindale
- David Smith
- Michael Smith
- Helen Smith (G)
- Richard Smith (G)
- Fiona Smith (G)

The Long Walk Buttermere 20-22 June 1997

To say that the weather forecast was not promising for this weekend was an understatement. Some nice storm warnings on the Radio 4 shipping forecast predicted that two large depressions were heading right for the Lake district. This only seemed to increase the interest in the meet and 50 members were expected. The President summed up the situation on Friday night when he said "I don't think there is any doubt about it " we are going to get wet".

The convivial meal at the Kirk Stile Inn, which by the way proved to be excellent food at very reasonable prices, was followed by the early departure for bed of most walkers in order to get a good nights sleep before the 3a.m. wake up call. When the morning arrived the sky was overcast but it wasn't raining and the wind was slight ... so this was a promising start. We had a sustaining breakfast and a good lot to drink before shouldering rucksacks and heading for Whiteside. The valley was alive with the sounds of wildlife ... the dawn chorus in full swing. A wet bedraggled fox trotted along the road and almost ran into us before turning tail and vanishing quickly into the undergrowth.

For the ascent of Whiteside two different strategies were adopted ... up the path or straight up the ridge, As it turned out the direct route proved the quicker and the late starters found themselves suddenly at the front. Soon we were in the mist which didn't prove too wet although drizzle and rain were interspersed by dry periods. We were

getting damp but not really wet. The view was limited but the freshness of the early morning made walking conditions really quite good. It had the makings of a great day in the hills. In fact as we crossed Hopegill Head and went on to Crag Hill the mist cleared periodically to give some spectacular glimpses of the view ... halfhidden in the swirling clouds. We crossed the col between Crag Hill and Ard Crag at 6a.m. and climbed a long slanting traverse up to Knott Rigg. Then finally down to the first feeding point at Newlands Hause. The two white vans stood out at the top of the pass as we came down into the moist but clear air. We were all a bit damp ... but enjoying ourselves and ready for some breakfast.

Orange juice and sausage sandwiches followed by a wonderful honey and banana buttie ... just the thing to replace the energy we had used up. Then after a cup of tea we were faced with the ascent to Robinson. This went well and the weather was by now clearing a bit. The odd shower and swirling mist was interspersed by clearer periods, At last we could see along the valley. But the view came and went as we traversed along to Dale Head. The mountains were still deserted and the combination of the early hour and the weather forecast conspired to give us the freedom of the hills ... we were quite alone.

We seemed to speed up as the next feeding point approached and by the time we were descending to the Honister youth hostel some were almost trotting ... the lure of food being strong. Well, we came down out of the mist to the car park to find no white vans ... surely they are just around the corner ... but no ... the walkers had beaten the support team

to the meeting point. Fortunately we didn't have to wait long and dead on 10a.m. David Smith rolled into the car park with the refreshments. This rest was very welcome after the arduous start at such a strong pace. And after a short while we were recharged and ready for Grey Knotts and Brandreth. From here on a change had taken place in the world and people had started to emerge onto the hillsides in large numbers. The magical quiet of the morning was dispelled and we had to share our paths with large smiling ladies in unsuitable footwear SPOTting accents from all corners of the country. All were out of breath and happy to let us pass.

Our next feeding point was at Red Pike where Ian and Albert had a tent, but first we had to cross the delightful tarn covered Haystacks, then up the big hill to High Crag ... our last really long bit of climbing. From here the traverse to Red Pike was along the ridge ... the rest of the route lay across the hills and hummocks ... (some quite large hummocks) to the north of Ennerdale, finally coming down into Loweswater off Carling Knott. The route was completed by eight members and many people were back at the old village school by early evening. Some people returning via the lakeside, others down Scale beck or Mosedale. The President and one other added Great Gable and also Grassmoor to the route ... interesting additions which ensured they had a good thirst when they got home. On returning to the school house there was an early retreat to the pub which allowed thorough re-hydration. So in spite of the early weather ... once things improved lots of members enjoyed some delightful walking in the sunshine ... not all of it on the route of

the long walk ... but enjoyable just the same.

Two comments overheard in the school house afterwards:

"You go home and I will send you a bill for whatever the loss is"

"Now I know why cockneys talk about plates of meat ... that's what I've got."

D. J. Mackay

Attendance 38:

The President, Tim Josephy

Ken Aldred
 Brue Bensley
 Alan Brown
 Derek Bush
 Ged Campion
 Albert Chapman (Support)
 Cliff Cobb (Support)
 Derek Collins
 Arthur Craven (Support)
 Ian Crowther (Support)
 Derek English
 Mile Ellercott
 Iain Gilmour
 Mike Godden
 Richard Gowing
 Ralph Hague
 Mike Hartland
 David Hick
 John Henuningway (Support)
 Jeff Hooper
 Richard Josephy
 Alan Linford
 Bill Lofthouse (Support)
 Duncan Mackay & Guest
 David Martindale
 Frank, Mike & Adam Milner
 Frank Platt
 Mark Prior
 Alister Renton
 Harry Robinson (Support)
 Arthur Salmon
 John Schofield
 David Smith (Support)
 Derek Smithson
 John Sterland
 Trevor Temple
 Nick Walsh
 Frank & Phillip Wilkinson
 Mike & Alan Wood

Slaughter Stream Cave
The Royal Forest
of Dean
July 4th/6th 1997



The unpromising June that did not flame had gone and out of the cloud and cold came the first weekend of July. Members and guests arrived on a beautiful Friday evening at Bracelands campsite near the small village of Christchurch in the Royal Forest of Dean. The main objective of the meet was to descend a relatively new system of some 11km, called Slaughter Stream Cave. The Cave was discovered about 1990 by the Royal Forest of Dean Caving Club.

Saturday

The morning broke to a perfect summer's day. The walking party set off to explore various routes through the forest, down to the steep sided gorge that holds the erratic course of the River Wye on its long tour round Symon's Yat. They crossed the river by a narrow suspension bridge, and returning by a ferry to the original side. By numerous paths back to the campsite with the party was a dog whose owner was underground.

The underground team assembled at the entrance, around 10.30, in a small wooded valley set in the pleasant rolling countryside of Gloucestershire. The actual entrance point was at the base of an outcrop behind a steel wire grill. A succession of fixed ladder pitches, plus a pitch which had to be rigged, led to the stream passage with a hands and knees crawl en-route. A reasonable sized passage was beyond; 12ft high with no formations.

We split up into two teams the *upstream gang* and the *downstream gang*. We were to meet up together some two hours later in a small rocky chamber further into the cave. At the actual meeting of the parties, the *downstream gang*, heard the approach of the other party and turned their lights off, to listen to the *upstream gang's* 'Is this it down here?', 'It might be the other way', or 'Oh no it's not!', 'Oh yes it is!'. Your correspondent can not recall which voice was correct. Eventually they heard our laughter and woo-woo's.

The cave has few formations. The river gallery is quite a splendid trip, having interesting rock formations fashioned by the more than adequate amounts of water rumbling its way through the cave. The water was of a milky green appearance, and did not lend it's self to be splashed about in. From a cross stream junction, the place where the two parties separated, the river was followed through pools and cascades for about 300m to a point where the water disappeared down a crack. *DIy Slade* passage was the name of the bypass round to the continuation of the stream, on the way we noted a passage that was the route up to the main dry part of the cave.

We followed the main stream for quite a long time traversing some very interesting liver passage, however we felt that a start on other regions was in order, so a return upstream was made.

From *DIy Slade* passage, a left turn brought you into *Coal Seam Passage*. This was the route up into the chunnel, and the point where, as previously described, the two parties met.

The upper cave was devoid of life in the caving sense of the word. No formations, no sounds, and little

Through the *three deserts*, three easy hands and knees crawls on sand for about half an hour, stooping and crawling, one eventually arrived at the *dogs grave*, where some two and a half centuries ago a poor unfortunate dog had found it's way into these caverns, It's skeletal remains are still there to be seen.

The long return to the chunnel was through the well named *three deserts* which are presumably named because the cave was being discovered about the time of the Kuwait war. After the bouldery-floored chunnel, a series of cascades led back down back the junction where the two parties had separated some four hours earlier. At the actual pitch the two parties rejoined on the journey back up the fixed ladders, climbing over two hundred feet to the surface and the very hot day which awaited us.

At camp that evening most went to the pub for food whilst others, more kindred to the woodland spirit and love of cooking on camp stoves, cooked their food on the campsite, like hue sons of the outdoors! The evening was pleasant and enjoyable in the pub.

Sunday

A little more cloud than the previous day. One party went climbing further down the Wye valley and reported how interesting they found it to be. Others went their various ways; some to explore further the forest and what else to be discovered there. A party went down into the Wye gorge and through the forest pathways and then inevitably making tracks homewards.

A pleasant weekend with a fine caving hip and enjoyable walking for which we give our thanks to Richard Josephy for organising the weekend. It was a memorable time in Gloucestershire and the Royal Forest of Dean; a part of England unfrequented by the YRC!

Attendance:

Tim Josephy, President
Bany Andrew [G]
Denis Barker
Alan Bolton [G]
Ian Crowther
Ian Goodchild
Richard Josephy
David Laughton
Harvey Lomas
Jim Rusher
Nick Walsh



Cadair Idris Meet Ty-Nant Camping Barn 5-7 September 1997

On arriving at the barn on Friday evening Alan Wood and I thought it might be a good idea to get sorted out then go down to the Gwenan Lake Hotel for a little beverage. From the corner of the barn Mike Godden's half-clad body loomed up. Mike had arrived earlier in the day, had a beautiful day's walking and then decided to have a shower.

We all laid our sleeping bags on the palletted floor and then walked the five minutes down to the pub on the Dolgellau road. There we found several members deep in conversation, and beer, at the bar.

Ian Crowther left early with rations, and the like, to find his tent which was pitched somewhere on the hill. I never saw him again all weekend.

In the barn we enjoyed a fairly good night's sleep except for the arrival of Derek Bush and the Wood family and friend at 1.30am.

Saturday morning was dull and damp and it had been raining overnight. Alan Wood and I decided to take the pony path some distance behind four other members but they turned west half-way up the hill and disappeared into low cloud.

We arrived at the summit about 10.30 in cold and mist conditions and a quite strong wind blowing so we made up our minds to go down to Dolgellau and have a look around; meeting three local walkers on the way.

At eleven we stood observing a minute of silence for Diana, Princess of Wales, after the fatal car accident.

As we left the ridge and dropped down into Dolgellau the mist cleared and opened up the landscape. The countryside was now at its best.

We arrived back at the barn about 4.30 after stopping for a pint on the way. It started raining as members came back. Till later they arrived; the wetter they were.

The climbers had had a good day and reported:

*Tim Josephy & Adrian Bridge - Cyfrwy.
Pusher Man HVS, Cyfrwy Pinnacle VS;*

*Daniel Wood & friend - Cwydrin El, Table
Direct VD, Cyfrwy Arete VD,*

The barn was basic but with toilets and showers on one side and a camping field behind. After showering most members went down to the Hotel for the night while Alan and I went to Bannouth for a meal and a walk around. The weather was terrible with high winds and rain.

Sunday arrived and most were returning home but Tim, Adrian, Derek, Barrie, Daniel and I went to Tremadoc and reported a wonderful day in T-shirt order.

Alan and I stopped at Bala and using Tim's map, marked with power line obstructions, decided on the ridge walk which was quite long but very enjoyable in good weather, returning to Pandy car-park about 4pm.

An enjoyable weekend, thanks to Adrian, in a beautiful part of Wales.

FP

Attendance:

The President, Tim Josephy
Denis Barker
Adrian Bridge
Derek Bush
Ian Crowther
Eddy Edwards
Mike Godden
David Hick
David Jones (G)
Alan Linford
David Martindale
Frank Platt
Daniel Wood
Barrie Wood
Alan Wood

South Pennines Meet Saddleworth 17-19 October 1997

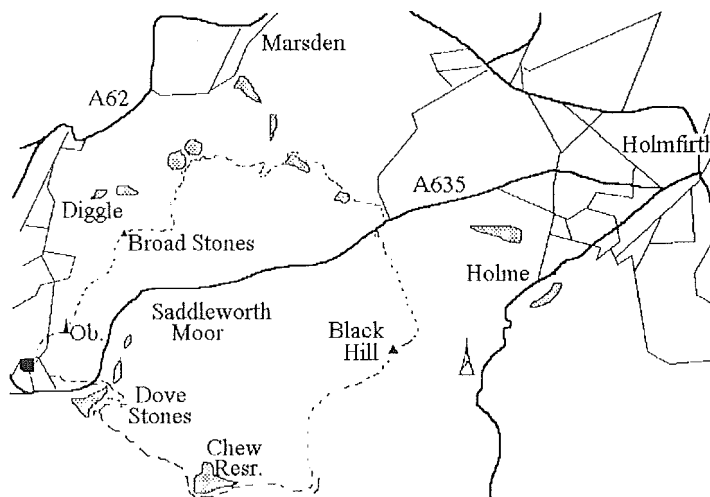
Greater Manchester doesn't sound the ideal location for a Club Meet. However that is only the official location of the Saddleworth Outdoor Pursuits Centre which proved to be our ideal home for the weekend. The Centre is located on a steep hillside above Greerfield, just east of Oldham. It is surrounded by beautiful stone-built houses/mansions and has extensive moorland views. The attendance of sixteen (plus one day visitor) was good considering the number of the Clubs regular attendees away in Nepal.

On the Friday evening we were all introduced to our host's base, the Cross Keys Inn, some 1½ miles away but well worth the journey for the friendly welcome and the excellent beer and bar snacks.

Saturday morning brought a clear blue sky and all day sunshine with a cool breeze. We split into four main groups tackling different walks, broadly based on the local big one - the Ten Reservoirs Walk. Two groups including the Presidential party, headed north climbing steeply to a prominent Obelisk, over Broadstone Hill (454m) and on above Diggle Reservoir. The larger, and faster party continued past Black Moss Reservoir to the Wessenden valley the Pennine Way then taking them over Black Hill to Laddow Rocks returning via Chew and Dovestone Reservoirs. The slightly less fit did a similar but rather shorter route still covering both sides of the A635 including an atrocious

stretch of the old, unimproved Pennine Way south of Black Moss Reservoir. This was little more than a morass of bogs and peat hags - I am sure they are deeper, steeper and wetter than they used to be! Two of the three members of this latter group then made a long diversion east to include two pubs before heading back - guess who!

The other two groups, one including our local member, Pat Stonehouse, kept south of the A635. The younger ones included Black Hill, Laddow and all the southern reservoirs whilst the slightly older pair contented themselves with Laddow via the Chew Valley.



Every one was back at the Centre in time for hot showers before Roy Denney's excellent dinner, with a particularly good choice of beer and wine. This was followed by Roy showing slides of his recent Nepalese trek from Lukla to Kalar Pattar above the Everest Base Camp. Virtually everyone then repaired to the Cross Keys, encouraged by a very generous offer of a free first pint from Pat to celebrate his recent birthday.

Sunday again produced a perfect morning. A meeting had been arranged to discuss next years Club expedition to Iceland which eight

members attended. This broke up mid-morning freeing us to again enjoy the sunshine. As we left we got a reminder that this was autumn as a large skein of geese flew overhead. As usual Sunday's activities are not easy to record but the President and one member climbed on Dovestones a local crag. Those heading back to Yorkshire were met by valleys full of fog as they crossed the Pennines. This encouraged at least one member to park and enjoy a sunny walk over West Nab before descending into the murk.

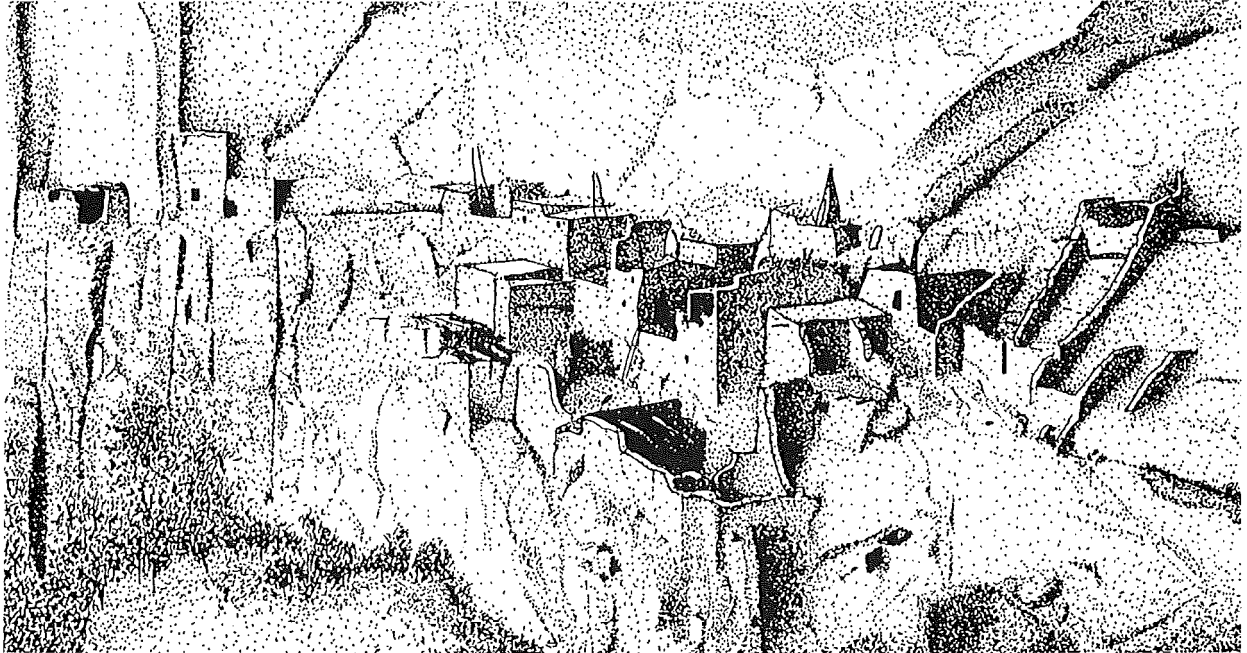
Thanks to Roy and his helpers and the Centre's owners for an excellent weekend.

DL

Attendance:

The President - Tim Josephy
Chris Bird (P.M)
Alan Clare(G)
Derek Clayton
RoyDenney
JeffHalford (G)
John Hemingway
David Hick
David Laughton
Dave Martindale
Keith Raby (P.M.)
John Schofield
Michael Smith
Derek Smithson
Pat Stonehouse
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Remains of indigenous Americans' cliff dwellings in the Navajo Indian Nation near Kayenta, Arizona

Several thousand people are thought to have inhabited the many overhanging cliff sites such as this over some hundreds of years around the 11th to 13th centuries. Some of the sites have over a hundred rooms and most face south and are served by a nearby spring. The overhang provides shade in the hot summer and shelter in the winter, while capturing the heat from the low winter sun. The rock may be limestone, sandstone or black basalt and the cliff can be on the sides of a gorge or a mesa.

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