


Foreword

As I write this foreword the sun is shining, the cavers have returned safely from another China expedition, our YRC library has been returned to us by Leeds City Library and is being re-catalogued, and I have enjoyed four well attended and catered meets already this year.

This summer's Bulletin covers the majority of our objectives including backpacking, trekking, rock climbing, skiing, potholing, natural history and a caving conference. This leaves just archaeology and folklore for which our editor would welcome contributions!

2002 is the International Year of the Mountains and at the end of my two short years as President it will be celebrated in a good, if slightly controversial, Annual Dinner.

I wish you a good read.



Albert Chapman, President

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

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The John Muir Trail

July 2001

Alan Kay

John Muir is known in the USA as “The Father of the American National Parks”, a popular title, which honours his important early role in the national conservation movement.

He was born in Dunbar, Scotland, in 1838, and emigrated to California with his family when he was 10 years old. He first visited Yosemite when he was 30, and thereafter spent many years extensively exploring the High Sierra, making either first or early ascents of many peaks. His mountaineering ethos was, however, far removed from the tick list and number obsessed attitude which now often prevails, rather he immersed himself in the whole experience, his object being to explore, study and enjoy the entire mountain, its rocks, glaciers, rivers and lakes, plants and animals.

Although the name of John Muir is now synonymous with Yosemite and the High Sierra of California, he was not the architect of the trail which bears his name. It was Theodore Solomons who as a teenager in 1884 first had the idea of a long distance trail in the High Sierra, and subsequently the Sierra Club, founded in 1892 with John Muir as its first president, suggested that a trail be constructed running the length of the Sierra. Work began in 1915, the year Muir died, and construction was largely completed 10 years later.

The Trail begins at Happy Isles in Yosemite Valley and ends at Whitney Portal, some 218 miles, 40000 feet of climbing and 37000 feet of descending later. The High Sierra have probably the most pleasant climate of any mountain range in the

world, and also have scenery which is both spectacular and sublime, a near perfect mix of massive granite cliffs, pointed peaks, jagged ridges, shining lakes, waterfalls, meadows and magnificent conifer forests. Unsurprisingly, the area has been said to give the best backpacking in the world.

In July 2001 four members of the YRC attempted to walk the John Muir Trail (JMT), namely Kevin Brown, Iain Gilmour, Derek Smithson and myself. We left the UK on 4th July, and after buying provisions in San Francisco for the first six days of the trek, travelled to Yosemite Valley, and commenced the trek on 7th July. Many of the high passes often have significant snow and ice cover this early in the season, but little snow had fallen the previous winter, and the early summer had been hot, so not only were the passes clear of snow, but the snow melt had largely gone from the streams, thus reducing the risk of difficult stream crossings.

I found the scenery so exquisitely beautiful that it made me want to stop almost every few yards to savour the near perfect combination of features; the sense of discovery was constant, be it a new view of a peak, a hidden lake, trees of every shade of green, a beautiful butterfly, damsel fly, flower, deer, etc.

I was asked on our return to the UK what were the highlights and low points of the trek – almost every minute of every day was a highlight, and there were only two very low points, and they will become obvious later in this report. Thus rather than relate our day-by-day itinerary, I will describe a few of the most memorable highlights, and also the difficult situations we faced in the latter part of the trek.

Monday, 9th July, day 3.

We had a hard day yesterday, so had a lie-in this morning - up at 6.30am instead of the usual 5.30am! We left Tuolumne Meadows campsite at 7.45am for the walk up Lyell Canyon, planning to get beyond the 11056 ft Donohue Pass today. The Canyon floor was fairly wide and the slope gentle. The river scenery varied from a gently flowing, wide stream meandering through multi green coloured meadows, to cascades and water shoots, with tributary streams falling steeply off the side of Mammoth Peak to the east. This valley has been described as a bear haven, but we didn't see any - perhaps they saw us first! There were many delightful campsites, and we met a few people enjoying them. In the early afternoon thunder rumbled to the south west of our route, around the area of the Vogelsang Peak we had seen yesterday. We crossed the outflow of an unnamed lake near the head of the valley and began the ascent of the headwall, when the thunderstorm focused on to the upper part of the headwall, with lightning strikes twice in quick succession exactly on our route. We decided to retreat half a mile, down to the outflow of the lake and await developments. We experienced a severe hailstorm for about half an hour and a sudden fall in temperature, and there were signs of hypothermia in the party, a danger even in these relatively benign mountains. We erected the tents, cooked a meal and decided to go no further today.

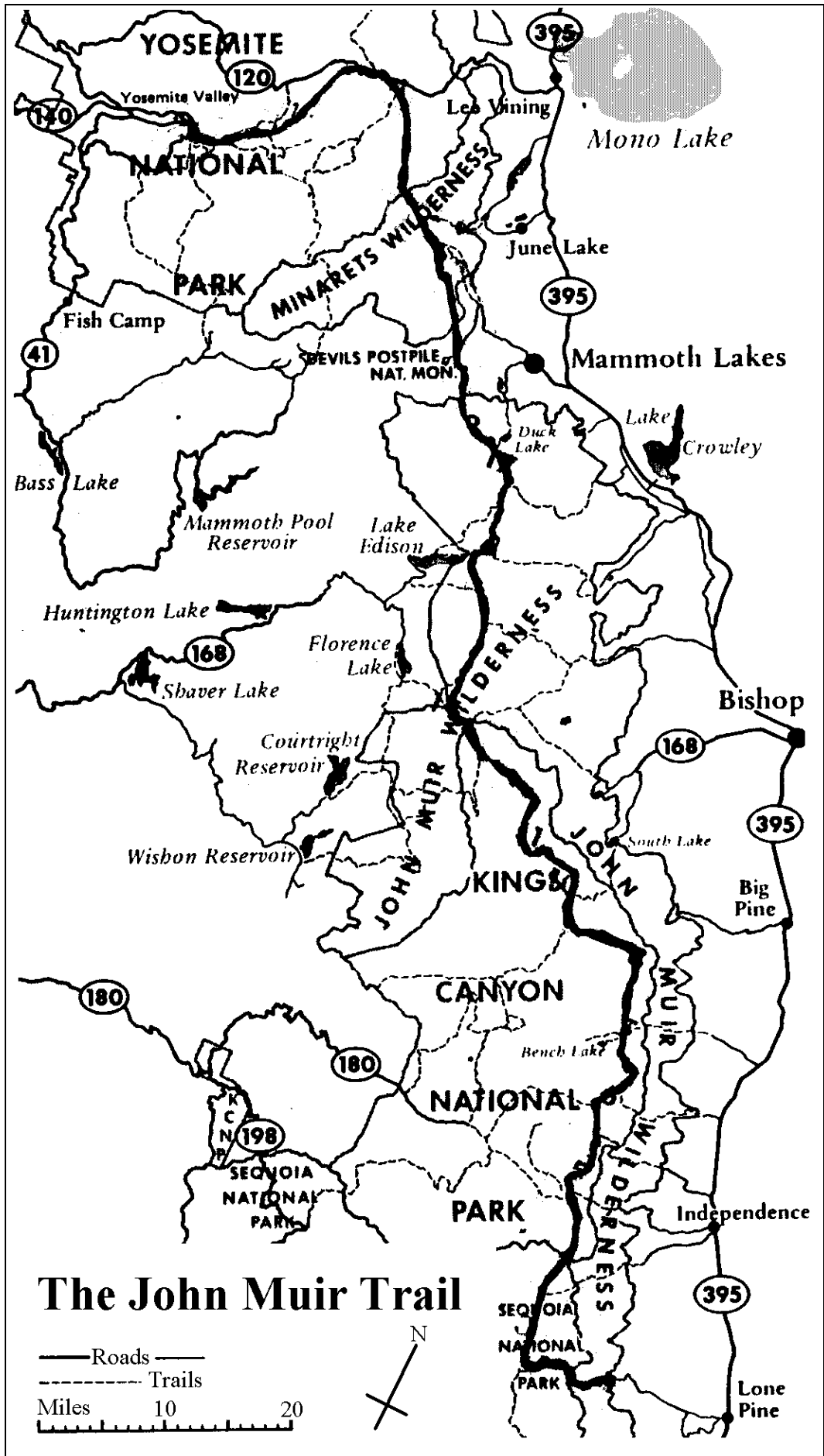
Tuesday, 10th July, day 4.

What a transformation overnight! The air was so clear it almost seems to have been washed, as indeed it was yesterday. We re-ascended the

headwall, the route curved round, first south, then north east, south east then south again, passing a throng of small lakes and rock outcrops on the way, and finally we reached the summit of Donohue Pass. The view southwards was wide open, with a multitude of small lakes, and towering over all, the jagged peaks of Mount Ritter (13143 ft) and Banner Peak (12936 ft), an area thoroughly explored by John Muir in 1872 when he made the first ascent of Ritter. We descended the south side of the pass, crossing many streams flowing into Waugh Lake - fortunately they were not in spate - and gradually ascended Island Pass. Here we met an elderly lady (she was probably older than our oldest member!) trekking through the Sierra on her own; she seemed to be almost a female re-incarnation of Muir himself, with a deep knowledge and understanding of the mountains, a charming lady, fully self sufficient and independent in her travels. Beautiful views across Thousand Island Lake (there may not be 1000 islands, but there are certainly a lot of them) to Ritter and Banner were quite riveting, and we continued past Emerald, Ruby and Garnet Lakes, to Shadow Lake, where we cooked our late afternoon meal; then finally, up a well graded path to Gladys Lake, unfortunately swarming with mosquitoes, so out came the head nets, we quickly set up camp and went to bed. It had been a long, but excellent day, and we were back on schedule.

Saturday, 14th July, day 8.

We re-supplied yesterday at Vermillion Valley and were therefore today carrying ten days food and fuel, so the pace was steady and measured.





Derek Smithson on Sunrise Creek Trail

The long ascent from Edison Lake went well on a good, graded path, and the descent to Bear Creek was easy, with long distance views to the west through pine trees. We planned to camp at Rosemarie Meadow, but when we got there at about 7pm we discovered it was infested with mosquitoes. Our alternative campsite was 1½ miles further and 500 ft higher – about 45 minutes away – so we pressed on in the hope of a better site. Fortunately the going was good, and on schedule we arrived at a good flat spot overlooking Marie Lake, free of mosquitoes, and pleasantly cool. The sun was slowly going down behind Mount Hooper to the west, and the ridges and peaks to the east – Seven Gables, Gemini and The Pinnacles – were lit by a soft, cool alpenglow. There was an immense and beautiful silence, and despite the lateness and our tiredness, we were almost transfixed, absorbing the wonder of it all. We had to resort to

hanging food from trees overnight, as we were carrying more than could be crammed into bear canisters, but consoled ourselves with the thought that we were possibly above bear altitude – we weren't, but neither were we visited by bears in the night. Our campsite, at about 10600 ft, meant that we were only 300 ft below Selden Pass, our first objective for the next day.

Monday 16th July, day 10.

We had camped the previous night amongst trees near Evolution Meadow, and for the first part of the day the trail went up valley through a thinning forest, with occasional glimpses to higher meadows and Evolution Creek. At the head of the main valley the trail wound up to 10800 ft, and we entered the upper valley, and before us, stretching into the middle distance was Evolution Lake. If we were to seek a highlight of highlights, it would surely be this; there was no cloud in the sky, the lake

was shimmering in the late morning sun, there were a few stands of pine trees around the lake edge, and to the east were the twin pointed peaks of Mt Mendel (13710 ft) and Mt Darwin (13831 ft); south west was another pointed peak, The Hermit (12328 ft). We stopped here for our mid day snack and hardly a word was said as in our individual ways we each absorbed the most comprehensively beautiful scene imaginable. If one was to seek the place of evolution, or a mountaineers "Garden of Eden", it would surely be here, and with the use of names such as Evolution and Darwin, we were clearly not the first to feel this way.



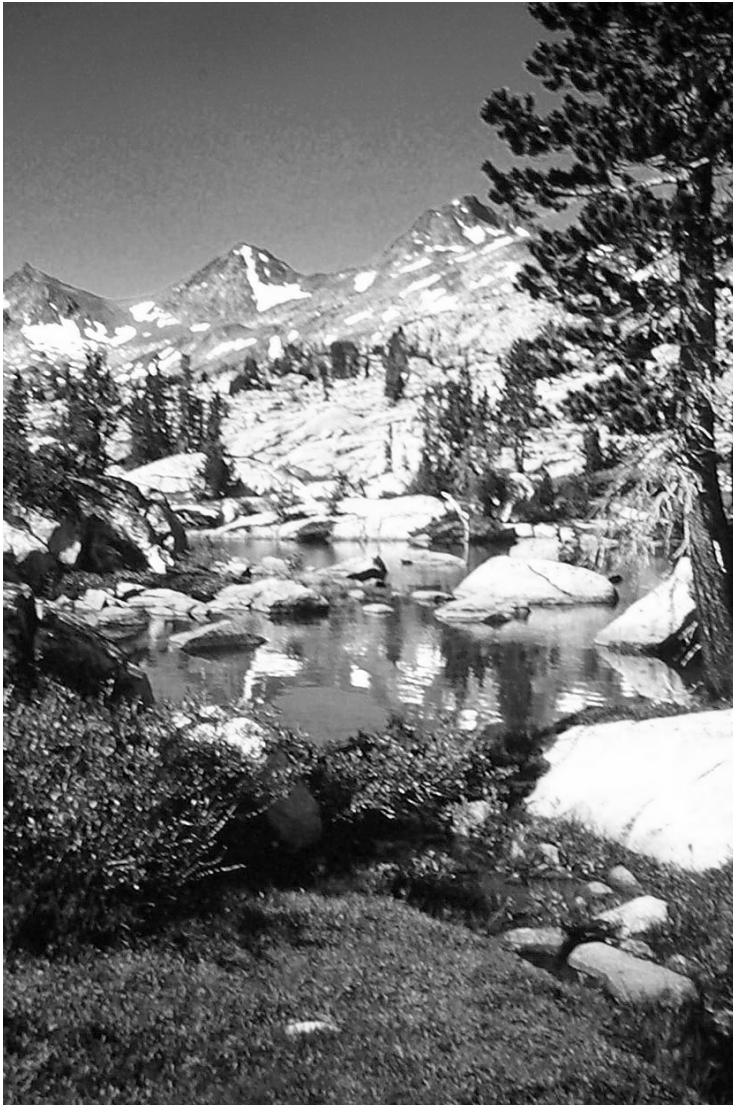
Cathedral Peak

Reluctantly we moved on, past Sapphire Lake and up to Wanda Lake where for a mile we ran the gauntlet of hordes of small flies, then gradually upwards through stark rock scenery to Muir Pass (11955 ft). At the summit of the pass is a small stone beehive shaped hut that would provide shelter in case of need, and all

around are the jagged, rocky peaks of the Goddard Divide, many still with a fair covering of snow. The descent to Helen Lake was rough and rocky, with patches of old snow and tributary streams to cross. We had thought of camping near Helen Lake (named like Wanda Lake after one of Muir's daughters) but there was nowhere to put down a tent, there was no blade of grass, nor any other vegetation to be seen, and all around were tumbling slopes of huge boulders. We did manage to cook our evening meal in this high windy spot, afterwards descending past a series of small lakes, to camp beneath trees in the upper Le Conte Canyon at about 9200 ft. Just before dusk a deer sauntered past and stood observing us for minutes, quite unafraid of humans because never hunted, and reciprocating the same silent inquisitive looks and interest that we had fixed onto it, a fitting end to this lovely day.

Tuesday, 17th July, day 11.

After an uneventful descent of Le Conte Canyon, we turned east beside Palisade Creek, gradually ascending all the time through dense forest and vegetation, and a profusion of flowers. In the upper valley, clear of forest, the trail climbed steeply on a series of rocky zigzags, and in the heat of mid afternoon, the going was quite hard. Derek had from time to time been suffering from minor altitude problems and hadn't fully acclimatised, and the cumulative effect had now built up to the extent that on this hard, hot ascent, he was unable to climb and carry his loaded rucksack any further. We shared most of his load between the three of us, and slowly went on to the first of our possible campsites, where we set up camp, had a drink and some food, and I began to work through our options.



The view from Island Pass

We were at Lower Palisade Lake at over 10600 ft, another place of solitude and beauty, three days walk in any direction over passes of 12000 ft or more, to any form of help. Derek was able to climb very slowly if carrying little or no weight in his pack, and seemed quite OK, in fact his usual chirpy self, going downhill and on the flat. To go on was preferable to going back, but this involved two fairly long days, firstly over Mather Pass at 12100 ft and then over Pinchot Pass at 12120 ft, followed by a long but downhill exit via Woods Creek to the road head at Cedar Grove. The road head was one

day's walk from the JMT, and as Derek had to be accompanied on his exit, Iain kindly offered to go out with him, thus leaving Kevin and myself to try to complete the trek.

The next two days, 18th and 19th July, passed slowly and uneventfully, through yet more beautiful scenery, as we climbed firstly Mather Pass, continued on the trail and camped beside Lake Marjorie, and then climbed Pinchot Pass. The rock scenery around Pinchot was unusual, the slopes to the south west towards Mount Ickes being alternate sections of chocolate brown rock and white rock, rather like a gigantic chocolate cake with thick layers of white cream.

Three hours after crossing Pinchot Pass, Kevin and I parted from Derek and Iain; they were to continue down Woods Creek, camp overnight, then continue next day to the road head at Cedar Grove, and on to Fresno with an American we had met earlier in the day. Kevin and I had only parted from them about two hours when at a narrow section of the trail a rattlesnake sprung out from beneath a rock and although it didn't bite Kevin, it nevertheless sprayed his legs with venom. It was most likely protecting young, for it was truly angry, coiling back and forth, waving fangs around,



Crossing the outflow from Thousand Island Lake

hissing and spitting at us both. We thought nothing more about it, continued southwards and camped at Arrowhead Lake. The mountain scenery here was impressive, with Fin Dome, an 11699 ft version of the Pap of Glencoe being particularly prominent.

Kevin wasn't well during the night, and was unusually lethargic next morning, and although we crossed Glen Pass (11978 ft) and descended southwards towards Charlotte Lake, he had a headache, was sweating, feeling dizzy and sitting or lying down whenever the opportunity arose. This condition had arisen quite quickly after the episode with the snake, and I began to wonder whether the venom could have somehow penetrated his bloodstream, in which case we had no way of knowing if or how he might be further incapacitated. We had three days trekking before us to complete the trail, including ascents of the two highest passes, Forester Pass at 13180 ft and Trail Crest at 13480 ft and there was only

one escape route left to us, and this involved leaving the JMT near Marjorie Lake and descending via Marjorie Creek to the road head at Cedar Grove. We could not risk continuing along the trail into an area with no escape, we had to head towards the road head in case help was needed, and so the decision was taken to exit from the JMT; this was both the easiest and most difficult decision of the whole trip, easy because there was no acceptable alternative, difficult because we would not be fully completing the venture we had been planning for over a year. So we headed out, eventually arrived at the road head, and hitched lifts to Los Angeles, but how we got there is another story.

Food resupply was a major problem during the planning of the trip, as foot and mouth restrictions meant we could not take or send dehydrated food from the UK, and there was insufficient time for us to buy food on arrival in the USA and get it delivered to our resupply point at Vermillion

Valley. Alan Linford and Gordon Humphreys very kindly solved this problem for us as they were both holidaying in America shortly before our arrival, and they kindly agreed to buy food and send it to Vermillion for us. In fact Gordon and his wife Fiona not only bought a considerable amount of food for us, they delivered it to Vermillion, a round trip on dirt roads of about 200 miles; Alan Brown kindly drove us to and from Manchester Airport, and we are very grateful to them all for their assistance.

The High Sierras are some of the most attractive mountains I have seen, and although the JMT is a hard trek, with effort and planning it is quite manageable by experienced backpackers. Although there was a continuing sense of discovery, and we were in quite remote country, there was paradoxically little feeling of remoteness, and there are perhaps two reasons for this; firstly there were few navigation problems, for there was a trail to follow all the way, albeit often a slender one, and secondly the weather is very reliable and this largely removes (though not entirely, remember our episode with the thunderstorm) one of the big uncertainties we have to consider all the time in most other mountain ranges.

There is one aspect of the High Sierras I've hardly mentioned, and left to the end, but it is the all embracing quality that moulds everything else together, and that is the crystal clear light, and the most fitting conclusion to this article must be a quotation from John Muir: -

It seemed to me the Sierra should be called not the Nevada or Snowy

Range, but the Range of Light. And after ten years spent in the heart of it, rejoicing and wondering, bathing in the glorious floods of light, seeing the sunbursts of morning among the icy peaks, the noonday radiance on the trees and rocks and snow, the flush of the alpenglow and a thousand dashing waterfalls with their marvellous abundance of irised spray, it still seems to me above all others the Range of Light, the most divinely beautiful of all the mountain chains I have ever seen.

I commend the JMT and the High Sierras, and I hope to return before too long.

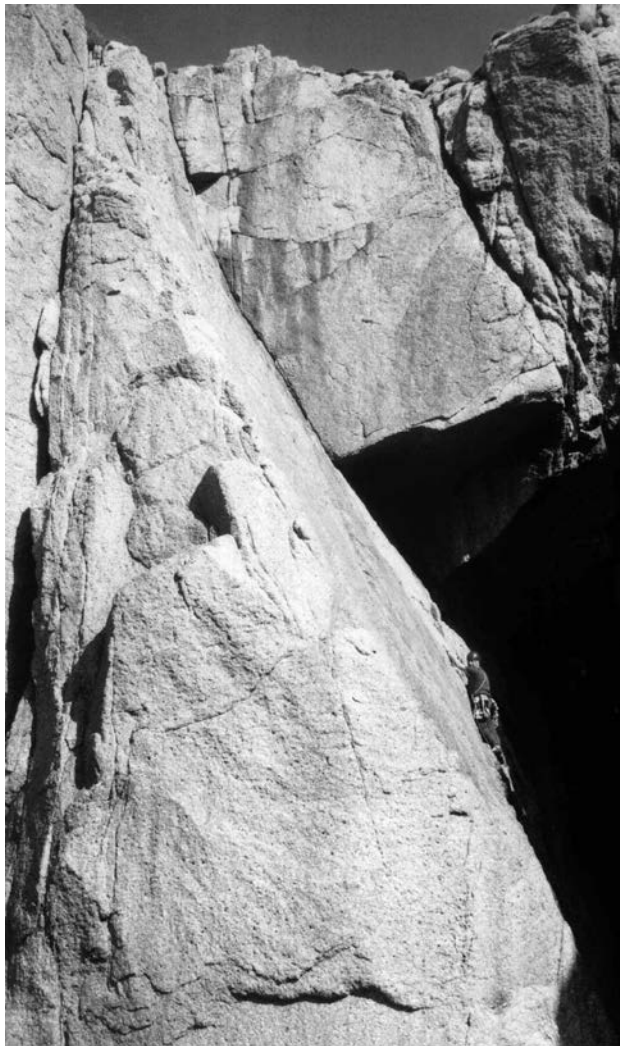


Walking through the morning mist approaching Silver Pass

Lundy, September 2001

Adrian Bridge organised it and invited along Tim Josephy, Adrian Dixon and Steve Eccleson. He even organised the weather - a week of north easterly winds that kept the craggy west coast of the island sheltered, sunny and warm.

The adventure started in Ilfracombe on Saturday morning when the captain of the MV Oldenburg deemed it far too rough to sail, so we all had to go by air. As there were over sixty people to ferry and only one seven-seater helicopter, we had to employ underhand tactics to ensure we were at the front of the queue. Sadly, this meant that our gear ended up at the bottom of the pile and some of it



Jug of Punch

didn't arrive until late in the day. Three people did manage one route, however, whilst the fourth created a spaghetti bolognese in our excellent ground floor apartment in the Old Lighthouse, situated at the highest point of the island.

We climbed all day, every day, nearly always on excellent rock and always on excellent routes. Only on Sunday, on the famous Devil's Slide area did we encounter many other climbers - the rest of the week we hardly saw a soul (apart from the joker who insisted on abseiling down the "Indy 500" - a rather tense EI that Adrian Bridge was trying to climb up).

Between us, we climbed five E1s, eight HVSs, eight VSs, three Severses and descended one Diff and a Moderate. It is hard to pick out the best from climbs like Double Diamond (HVS), an immaculate steep slab hanging above a great arch, or Formula 1 (HVS), a strenuous climb of great technical beauty following steep corners through a couple of intimidating roofs. Or the aptly named Immaculate Slab (HVS), where the perfect climbing comes as a relief after the utterly gripping descent. Then there are the two sea stacks, Devil's Chimney (VS) and The Needle (S), where the climbing is lent some urgency by the worry that the tide might creep in whilst no-one is looking.

But perhaps the best route of all was American Beauty (EI). A thin crack line up an enormous slab leads to a large overlap some 300ft up. Past the overlap, a steep comer

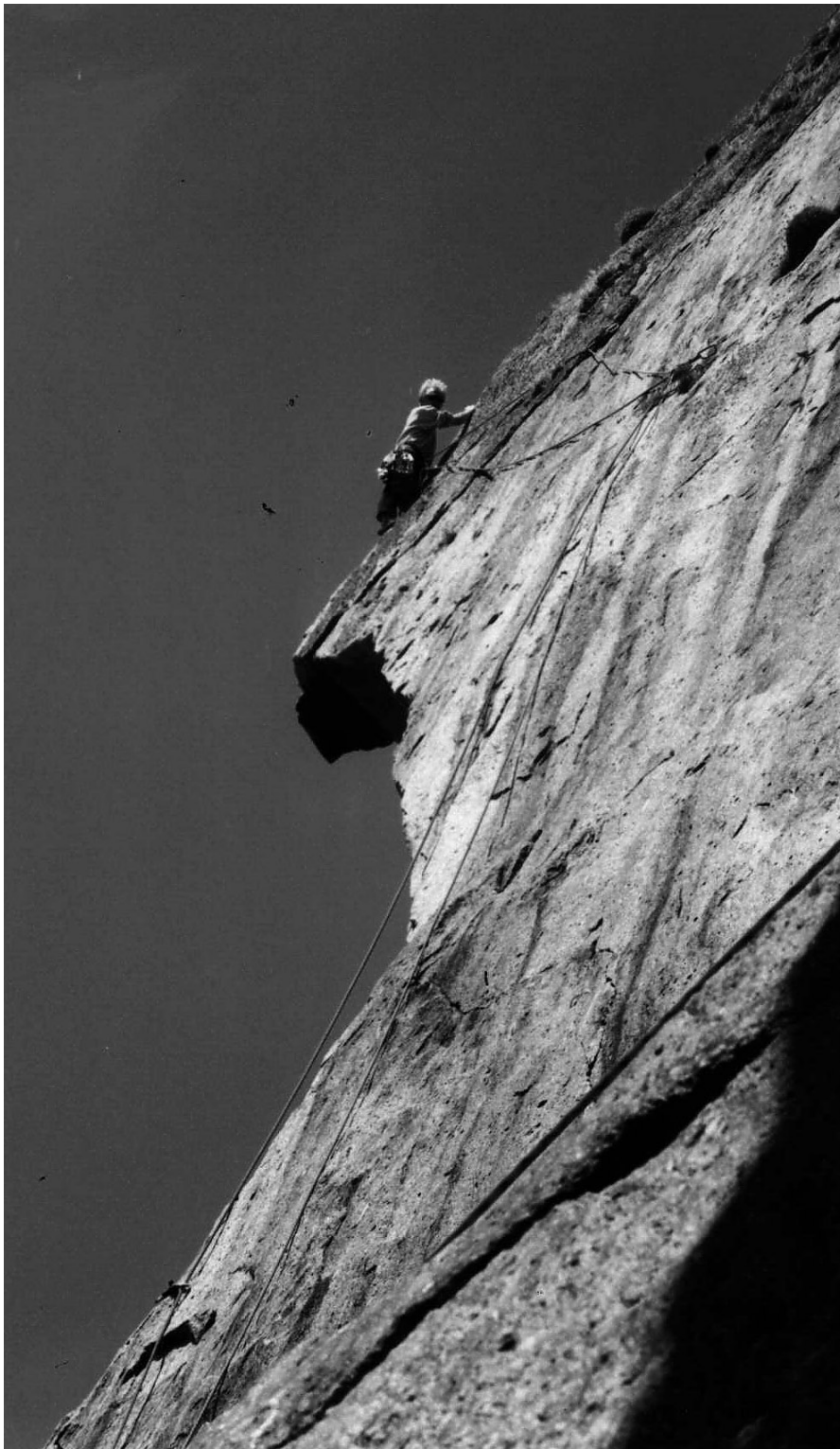
finishes the route. This is a place where the traditional advice not to look down is reversed - don't look up, because all you will see is the crack fading to nothing and the holds

dwindling to insignificance. It's amazing what you can stand on when you have to! The atmosphere of this climb is greatly enhanced by the involved descent down steep grass, a long abseil, then tricky traversing above the thundering Atlantic rollers into an awesome zawn. These descents are a strong part of climbing on Lundy. Apart from the relatively easily accessible Devil's Slide, many of the lower grade routes are probably less stressful than the approaches. You either need a very long rope or a very brave scout. We didn't have a long rope, but we did have Adrian.

The northeasterly winds continued and the Oldenburg still did not sail. This kept the island quiet, but the pub was running out of beer! Of lesser importance, a dry summer meant water was scarce, so we could not wash. At last on the Thursday, the ship arrived, bringing more people, more beer and a little bit of water. By the time of our return to Bideford the following day, the sea was calm, the voyage pleasant and we seemed to have plenty of space for ourselves on deck (this was nothing to do with the washing business I'm sure).



The Constable



Holiday in Cambodia

All in all, a splendid week. We did a lot of climbing, soaked up the unique atmosphere of this beautiful island, saw many seals, a lot of birds, including merlins and a hen harrier,

and came away well satisfied. Lundy is recommended to any climber with a reasonable competence on steep ground or a very long rope!

Yorkshire Speleological Association Journal, 1907

Vol.1 Part 1

In the good old days before the Kaiser's War the Yorkshire Speleological Association members, under the guidance of the late Eli Simpson, were doing much good work in the northern Pennines. They published two journals which, being typed carbon copies of one original, are very scarce items. Dr Steve Craven has re-typed his well-thumbed photocopies of the journals and an index has previously been published by Descent. In the interests of preservation of the records, almost a century on, the articles are presented in this Bulletin, two or three at a time complete with their original illustrations.

The Journal of the Yorkshire Speleological Association

Vol.1 Part 1

Edited by E. Simpson

1907

Editorial (pp.1-2)

The custom is that the Editor is expected to write a short preface to the first number. Why it should be I do not profess to know, but it is customary, so I will hurry along and try to make it short and sweet, that the reader may get to better men's work than mine.

The Yorkshire Speleological Association three years ago did not exist, though we saw dimly such a thing might come to pass. There were only two of us then, and one evening

in August 1903 we might have been seen toiling (with two 80 foot ropes, a few candles and a camera, not to mention rucksacs crammed with clothes which had seen better days) along the road leading from Ingleton to Ribbleshead. We were making for the Hill Inn, Chapel-le-Dale, and how I got there I don't know, but when I did I could only murmur "long pull" and cast my weary limbs on a sofa to rest a "fleeting lassitude".

The outcome of that week's holiday was another visit on the following Xmas, and when Easter came round we were yet again to be found at Hill Inn, investigating caves. By this time all that could be explored and surveyed by two pairs of hands was exhausted and so it was decided to find, if possible, some good raw material who could be trained into real ardent speleologists. Luck seemed to favour us, and we quickly got together 7 members, so that when Easter 1906 came round the first meet of the Association put it on a right footing.

The next problem was the publication of the matter which had accumulated during our investigations of previous years. It was decided that a journal should be published dealing entirely with speleological research. Now we are able to place in the hands of our members, what we believe to be the only publication in England dealing entirely with the investigation of the underground world.

The object of the journal is to place on permanent record the Association's investigations, and will also facilitate the exchange of photographs and plans which hitherto has been a rather difficult task.

Yorkshire will be the home of most of the investigations, yet it will not be

entirely confined to that area, though its caves and potholes are only just beginning to yield their secrets to the world.

Owing to the difficulty in preparing this new venture only a limited number of copies will be issued, though a small reserve will be kept for the use of future members.

The Editor is especially conscious of his own short comings, being only an amateur at the best, so if his criticism at times should be severe he asks the contributors to forgive him as he criticises only in his anxiety to bring the journal to the highest possible standard.

Bear with his failings, and rest assured he will always endeavour to do his best.

E. SIMPSON.

Mere Gill Holes. Ingleborough.

F. Haworth. (pp.3-8)

Mere Gill Holes are the termination of a swift running stream having its source on Swinestail, the North-Eastern spur of Ingleborough, and flowing northwards until it reaches the more level part of the plateau existing on this side, where it abruptly ends its visible course by plunging over a waterfall 35 feet high into a pool some 120 feet long, 6 to 15 feet broad and in normal seasons 3 to 40 feet deep.

We had been engaged for some time in investigating the courses of underground streams in the Chapel-le-dale district, and had gone up at Whitsuntide 1905 with the object of carrying on our work. On Whitsunday, one of our party who was walking in the neighbourhood returned to our camp and reported that

the water in Mere Gill was 20 feet below its normal level, and that the whole of the southern end was dry. We therefore determined to make a more complete survey of the pot than we had been able to do previously. Up to the present the place seems to have been left alone by explorers.

Picture a long rift in the rock with a surface width varying from 6 inches to 2 feet and in parts completely covered in, water usually 40 feet below you, dully reflecting the light from the other end of the pot, no ripple disturbing its surface, the sides precipitous and for the most part undercut and in parts beautifully clothed with ferns, the upper end almost overgrown with shrubs, where a magnificent shower-bath sprayed fall tumbles into the depths below. One can then understand the great variety of remarks which are made about the place, varying from that of the day tripper who said to his companion "By gum, Jim, sither at this deep hoil, ah shouldn't like to fall into theer", to that of the local guide writer who calls it "a tremendous canyon, whose cliffs are laved at the base by waters of a pool like Erebus".

Since the southern end is the higher, and nearer to the mountain one would naturally expect the water to flow out of the pot somewhere towards the northern or valley extremity.

Exploration by us in 1904 had failed to show any way of escape of the water at this end, the only hole here being a small cave which sloped downwards back to the water of the pool and into which entered two streams by falls of 6 feet and 20 feet respectively, the water then running into the pot.

We took with us two rope ladders, one 60 feet long and the other 40 feet

long and two 80 feet lengths of rope for safety lines. The first question was how to descend to the bare southern end. Five of the eight of us were novices at rope and ladder work, and as it is an axiom with all cave explorers to do nothing that is dangerous without taking the maximum of precaution, we decided that the best means was to follow the course of a small waterfall some 20 feet from the upper end of the pot.

The only point of difficulty was at a bend in the stream bed after a descent of 16 feet. I assisted all the novices round this corner and thence to the bottom by means of a rope. The first thing that one noticed was the extremely steep slope of mud down to the surface of the water. The highest part of this bank was opposite the first pitch of our descent. The floor then descended somewhat to the southern end where we saw a tunnel mouth four feet wide and three high. Candles were lit and we crawled up a very steep bed of silt for a distance of twenty feet, the slope being about 2 in 5. The top of this bank marks the usual level of the water, this being very markedly shown by the high water mark on the sides of the passage.

Two things then became self-evident. The first was that in all but very dry weather, the mouth of the cave was underwater, and therefore inaccessible, and the second that this was the place of issue of the main part of the water from Mere Gill in its journey to the valley. The astonishing thing was to find the passage running back towards the heart of the mountain instead of towards the valley.

We were now in a passage of height varying from 4 to 40 feet in the line of the main fault of the limestone which

renders the rift possible and 50 more feet found facing us a chamber some 16 feet above our heads, and from which poured a waterfall. Simpson and I climbed up this and found a chamber about 20 feet high, from a hole near the roof of which poured the stream which caused the waterfall mentioned above. The roof of the chamber can not be far from the surface of the ground and we tried subsequently to locate it but cannot up to the present flatter ourselves on our success.

Clambering back to the bottom passage, where the rest of the party awaited us, we were met with the announcement that not very far off were more falls. We therefore followed the downward course of the stream which branched off abruptly to the left of its previous direction (the passage being by no means so lofty and only about 8 feet wide, but very much waterworn) till a roar told us of the near presence of falls.

Neither candle nor magnesium light revealed the bottom, so two novices were sent back for an 80 foot rope. Simpson then volunteered to descend first to a break we could just distinguish below us. Lowering him into the waterfall, it was not long before he called a halt, the first pitch proving to be about 30 feet deep. He could distinguish another break below him, so we decided to return to the surface for ladders and ropes. By means of a couple of crow-bars wedged across the passage into convenient cracks in the walls we fastened the upper end of the 60 foot ladder, and belayed this end to a chock-stone which we found some 20 feet back and 10 feet above the floor of the passage.

Simpson was then again lowered. By some marvellous chance his candle

was unextinguished, and he safely descended another pitch of 20 feet when he expressed a desire that I should join him. It will be some time before I forget that journey. My candle was lit for about 6 feet of the descent, then both it and I came very suddenly into the water. I have often found an ordinary shower bath nearly take away my breath, but this beat it hollow. Get about 50 times the strength of the ordinary shower bath and let the water fall on your head (you wearing an ordinary cloth cap) with gradually increasing force and you will in most cases be glad to cry halt, as I did for a minute or two, on arrival at the bottom of the first pitch. After that, it seemed a still greater marvel to me how Simpson's candle had remained alight during his descent. The second pitch was easier to go down, as the fall was not quite vertical and the water slid down it, instead of breaking on you. On my arrival here, I found a platform some 4 feet wide and then a third fall of approximately the same height as the one last descended, so I let Simpson down this. He then went a little further, down further falls of 6 and 5 feet, along the passage which turned first to the right and then to the left, but he soon returned as we never care to wander far singly into unknown caves in case of some unforeseen mishap. We were both tired and so, after hauling him up the third pitch back to my level, we both ascended to the top of the falls, leaving the ladders fixed ready for another descent. Time underground 3½ hours.

Just as we had changed clothes, and had a good lunch of sandwiches and hot soup, four members of the Yorkshire Ramblers' Club arrived with ladders and ropes. I told them what we had done, and that our tackle was fixed down below if they cared to

use it. They therefore went below, not by our side waterfall, but by a ladder let down the then dry waterfall at the head of the pot. While they were below, I remembered that in previous searches in the neighbourhood I had found a small pot fourteen feet deep south of Mere Gill, on the further side of the wall, in which I had distinctly heard the sound of a waterfall. I went to this pot to confirm my previous experience. When there, I heard not only the sound of the water, but also that of the party now below, showing that there is a continuous passage between the pot and the cave, which, if cleared should enable one to enter the cave in absolute independence of the amount of water in Mere Gill, with the difference that there will be a bigger volume of water than when we descended.

On their return to the surface, they said that they had not been down the falls and urged me to survey the cave as far as possible. Tuesday morning found us at the top at 9-30. We got down our previous climb and were not long before we got to the top of the falls. I "lowered" Simpson, C. Burrow, Stringer and Cook to the bottom of the second pitch and then, leaving three members of the party, Flatow, Jacobson and Jeffery to "look after" the life-line I descended to the bottom of the third pitch where I was joined by Simpson, leaving the other three to haul us up again on our return.

I have never seen a more weird scene, than the one which presented itself here. The flickering candle flames at three levels, dimly lighting the huge hall over a hundred feet in height, the silvery shine of the water as it descended, sparkling brightly at each of the breaks in the fall, and the scarcely distinguishable figures of the

three at the top make an ineffaceable picture in my mind.

Leaving the Mere Gill concert party to amuse themselves as best they might, we found the stream cutting away under another bed of limestone, the main line of fault being perceptible at intervals. The descent was rather rapid and the roof consequently increased in height as we progressed. Presently we heard another roar, showing the proximity of more falls. These began at a sharp turn in the passage. Magnesium light showed a state of affairs almost similar to that in the hall above. The falls again descended in pitches to a plumbed depth of 65 to 70 feet. I went part way down the first pitch but from motives of safety soon returned. We all got back to the surface in safety, after a stay underground of 4 hours.

Further survey of the pool during the week showed that there is another exit for the water when it falls below the level of the silt bed in the tunnel mentioned before. This is about half-way between the ends, being close to the "Eye-hole". We could hear the sound of a waterfall through a crack, but were not provided with means to get to it, the water being from 13 to 17 feet in depth and the rock much undercut.

At Easter 1906 we again attempted to explore the holes but as the water was horribly cold, besides being greater in volume than in 1905 we did not get further than the second pitch.

The weekend however proved that our previous surmise was correct as to the second exit for the water, the whole of the pool drained off just at the place we mentioned.

We have attempted to clear the pot on the further side of the wall, but have

not hitherto achieved any amount of success.

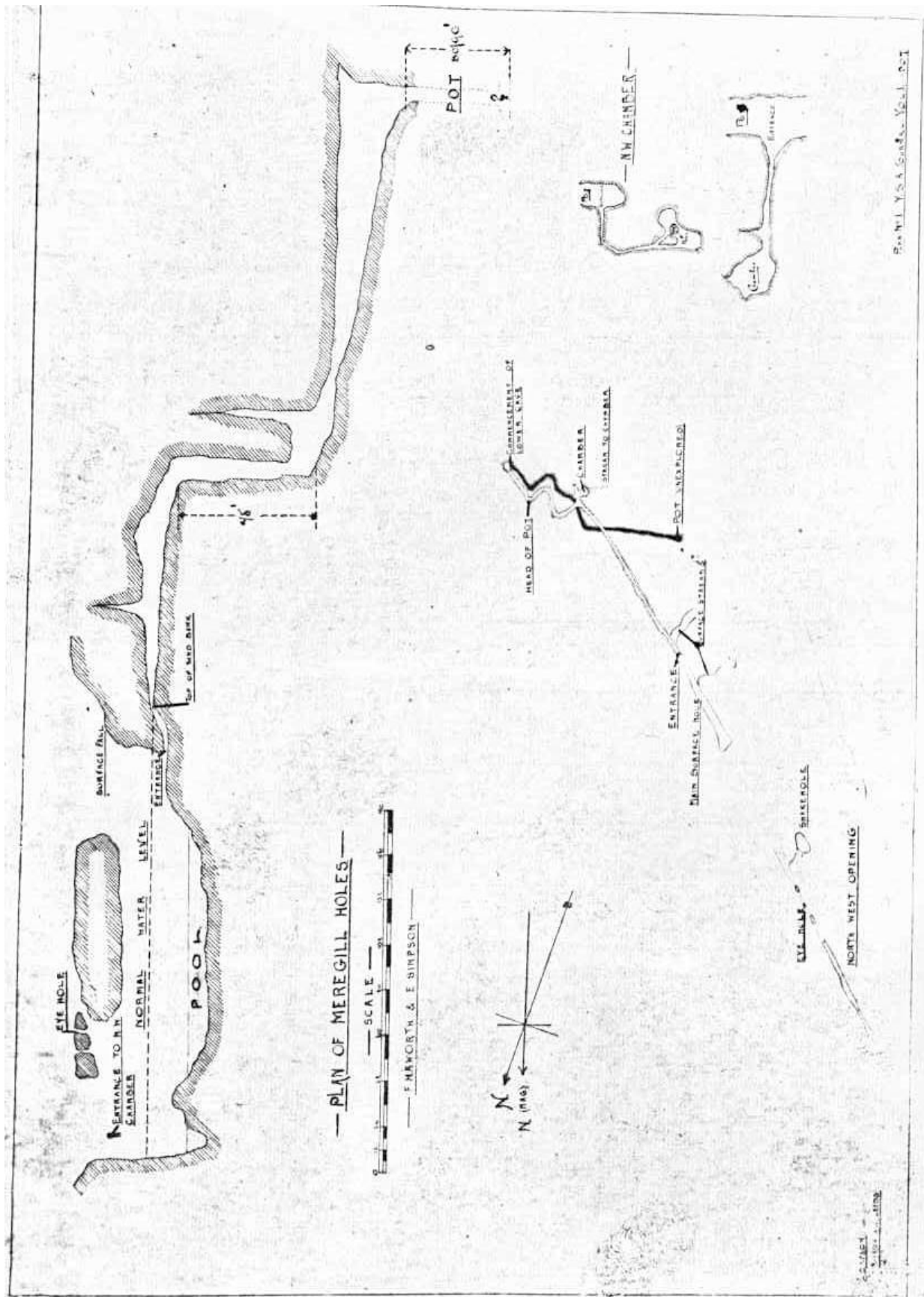
I can scarcely predict what follows after the foot of the second set of falls whose depth below ground is over 200 feet. It is evident that a larger party than ours will be needed for the thorough survey of the cave, but now the ground is broken we hope it will not be long before a complete exploration is completed, which will show that Mere Gill is a worthy rival to its companion pot on the other face of Ingleborough, namely Alum Pot.

Dow Cave, Nr Kettlewell. (pp.9-10)

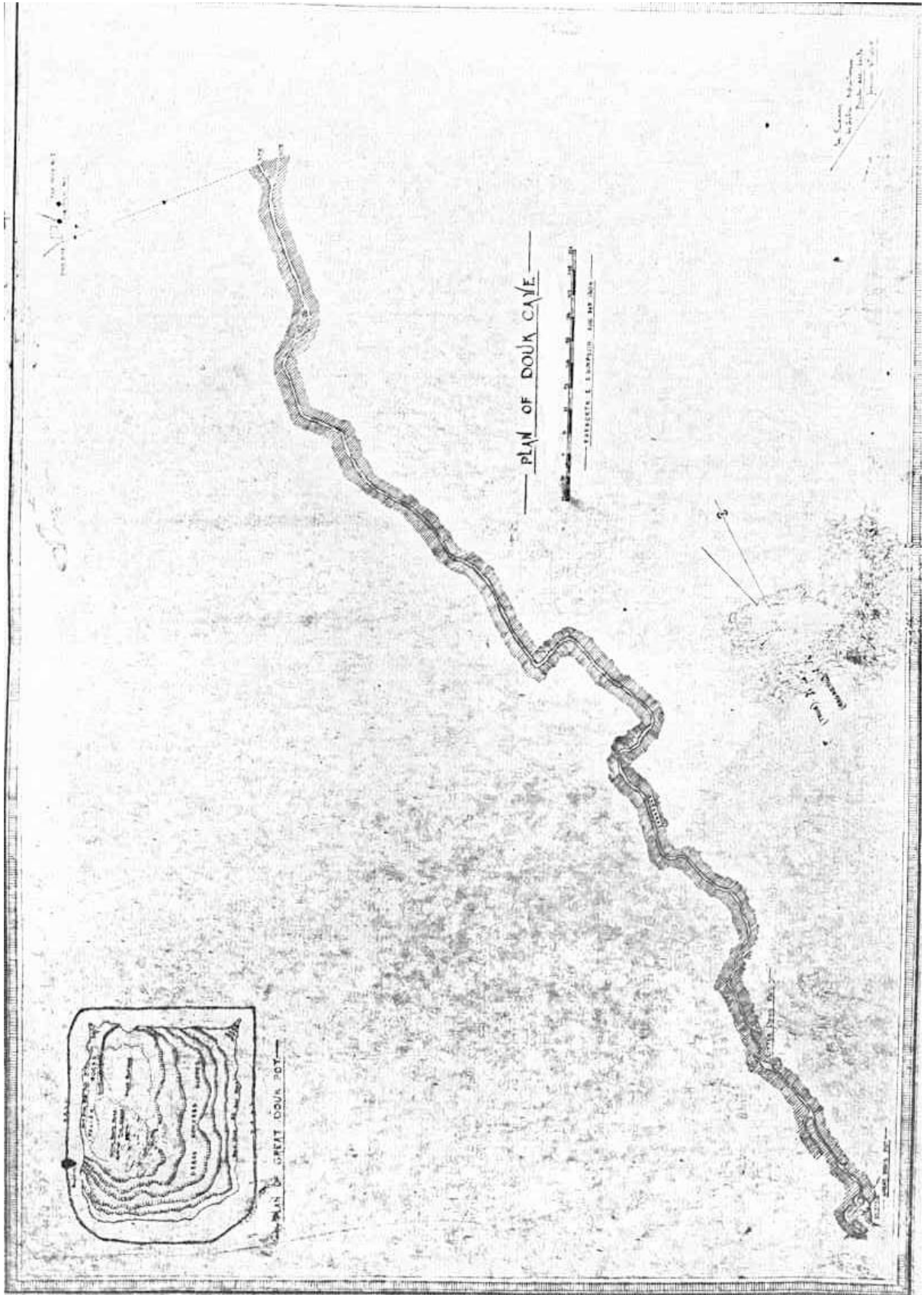
Oliver Stringer.

This cave is situated in the East Scale Park, near Kettlewell, and is somewhat difficult to find. Leaving Kettlewell we cycled along the Middleham road for about 2 miles, when the road began to rise steeply. At this point on the right there is a stile, over this we climbed and following the path shortly arrived at the side of a stream. Crossing this by a bridge we followed a small tributary which joins the main stream from the east bank, until we arrived at the cave mouth. A great quantity of rock was dislodged at the cave mouth during the severe winters some 10 years ago, which now renders the cave much easier to find.

The accounts of the length of the cave, were on enquiry at Kettlewell most startling. We first gathered it was about 1½ miles long, but under pressure our informant admitted it was probably not less than 3 miles, so we thought we might with interest investigate it ourselves. We did and found the length greatly overestimated, not being more than 445 yards or a quarter of a mile.



Plan of Meregill Holes



Plan of Douk Cave

The stream which flows through the cave, finds its way through the loose rocks on the hillside, and issues several yards lower down the dale.

On entering we descended a slope of fallen rocks to a ledge some 10 feet or so above the stream. It soon became impossible to proceed dry shod however, and we found it easiest to walk in the stream bed.

About 100 feet from the entrance is a curious arch composed of five masses of rock, which have fallen and wedged themselves across the passage. At this point the roof is flat and some 30 or 40 feet above the stream, while the width is probably about 15 feet.

As we proceed the floor gradually

rises until it is almost too low to proceed further. The width at this point is about 30 feet, the stream flowing between silt beds.

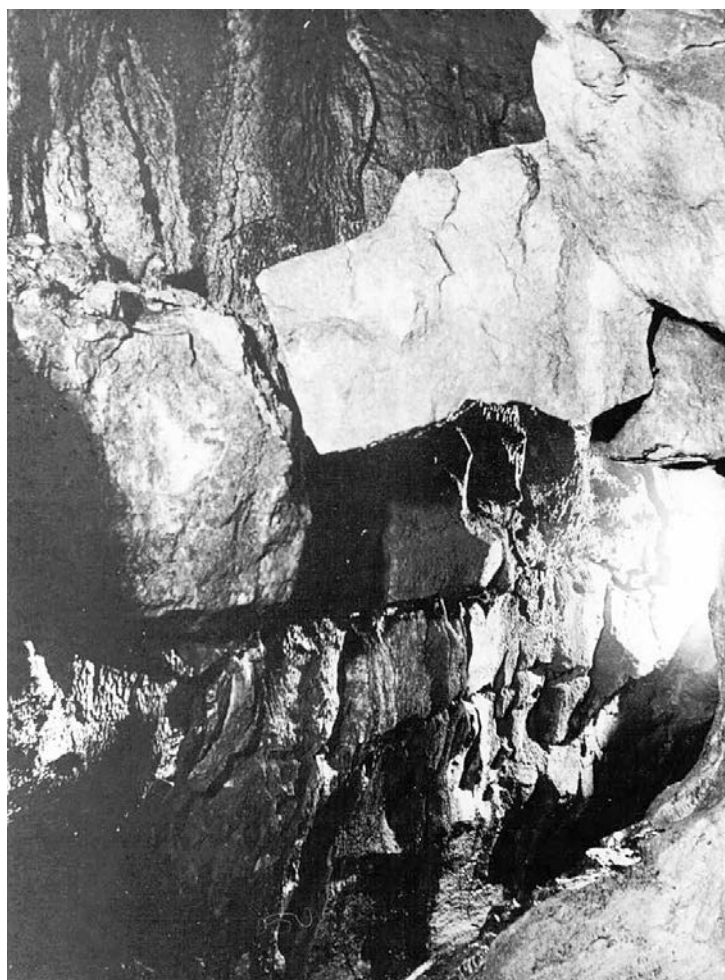
About 1000 feet from the entrance, on the left, is a dry passage, about 100 feet long ending in a high chamber. A few yards along this dry passage, which has a steeply rising gradient, is a low horizontal passage, in which it is possible to crawl to a point where it joins the main passage.

Leaving the side cave we came to a place where a great deal of fallen roof had almost blocked the main passage, but found it possible to climb over this into a large chamber. The passage is low, and it was necessary to crawl for some distance, when we again came to fallen roof with the consequent increase in the height of the passage.

The fallen rocks from the roof has formed a high chamber here, while the stream is lost to sight among the loose blocks. A few yards further, the stream falls between fallen rocks, and it seems impossible to penetrate further than this point.

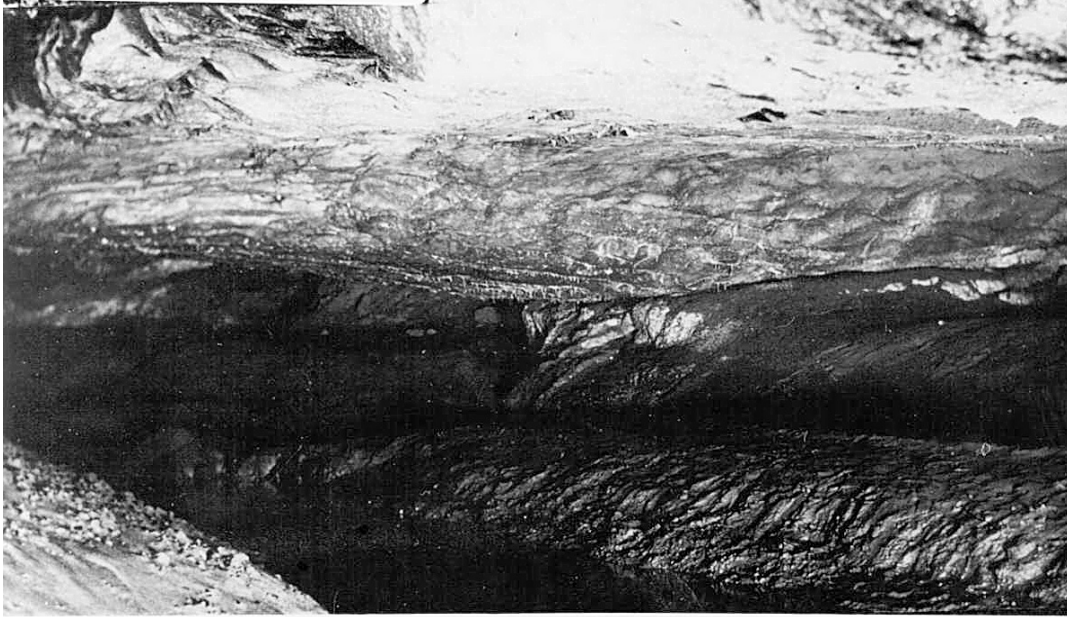
There are several tunnels leading out of the main cave, but owing to their regular character, I think they are artificial, probably made by miners in search for lead.

The general direction of the cave is S.E. and that of the dry side passage N.N.E.



Dow Cave, Kettlewell. Bridge composed of five blocks of fallen rocks. Photograph by Oliver Stringer.

Dow Cave, Kettlewell. Stream flowing between silt beds. Photograph by Oliver Stringer.



Dow Cave. Kettlewell. Entrance showing fallen rocks. Photograph by Oliver Stringer.

On the hill above the cave are several shake-holes, but we could not find

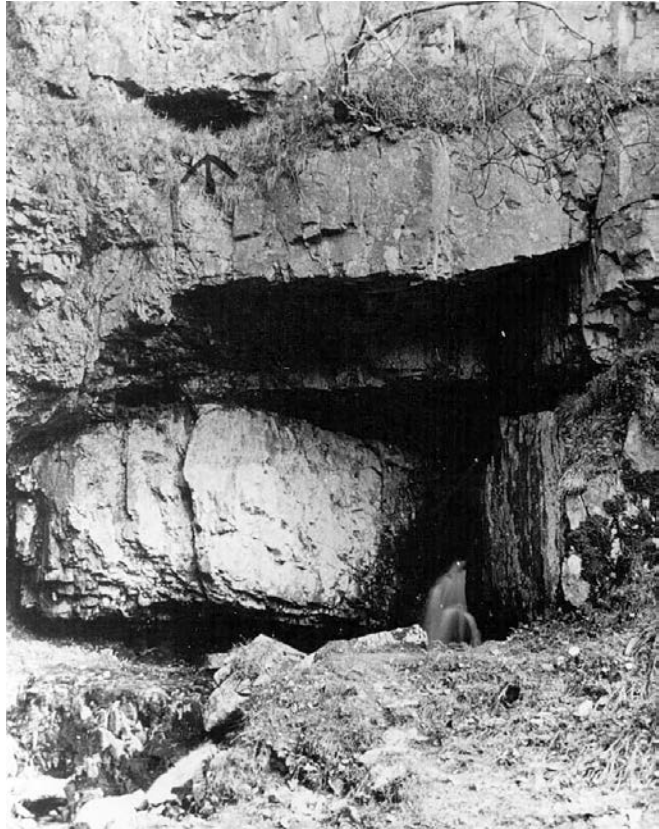
any which it was possible to enter.

**Great Douk Pot and Caves.
Chapel-Le-Dale. (pp.11-14)**

R.E. Cooke

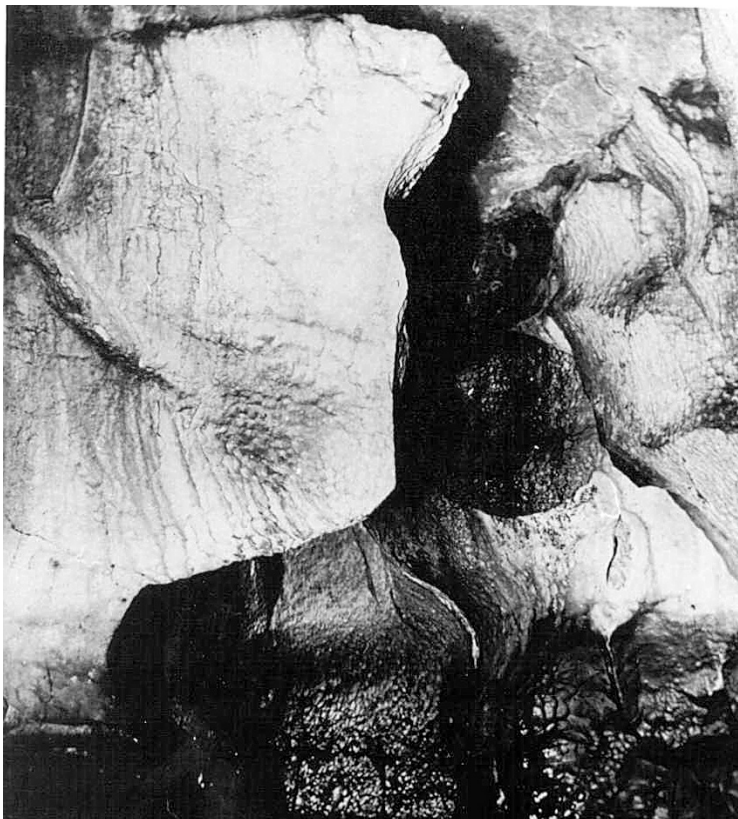
Douk is the name given to a pot-hole and cave situated on the North-West flank of Ingleborough.

To reach it from the Ingleton and Hawes road, cross the stile just above Hill Inn, and follow the sled track (which will be found on the top of the first rise) running towards the mountain. Turn to the left after reaching the second gate, and following up the wall side for about 150 yards you will see a large depression (about 160 feet long and 100 broad) surrounded by a wall. This is Great Douk Pot, and it has an elevation of about 1100 feet above the level of the sea, and its greatest depth is about 60 feet. There



Entrance to Douk Cave showing water issue; also entrance to 40 ft. Photograph by E. Simpson.

is a possible climb down to the bottom of the pot at the south end, but by far the easiest descent is on the N.W. side, down a steep slope of fallen rocks and earth. It is quite evident at first sight that Douk Pot has not been formed in the same manner as the majority of the pot holes, (namely by the "wearing away" action of a surface stream). The general appearance is more suggestive of fallen roof. The probability that this theory is correct is almost a certainty for a glance down the east side shows a small stream issuing from which,



Interior near entrance, Douk Cave. Photograph by E. Simpson.

after flowing nearly across the pot, sinks below the fallen rocks at the base of a sheer precipice on the north. This water is not seen again till it emerges in Dale Beck, just above God's Bridge.

At first sight the only way to enter the cave is by climbing up a waterfall, about 6 feet high, just within the cave mouth. There is however a much drier method which is to climb up the S.E. side of the pot onto a narrow ledge, some 30 feet long but only 20 inches broad, about 25 feet above the stream bed.

It is now possible to traverse right over the stream bed, immediately above which is found the entrance to a small chamber about 10 feet high. But as this entrance is only 3 feet wide and 3 feet high, and, moreover, is somewhat hidden by a tree, a casual visitor might easily overlook this useful "loft" as it has been called by the surveyors. It is quite dry and has a sloping floor, while on the right is a low passage. Following this for about

20 feet, still keeping to the right, it is possible to drop about 6 feet down into the stream bed, just at the top of the fall seen from the lower entrance. If, on entering the low passage, instead of keeping to the right you turn more to the left, and wade through a small pool there is a passage about 12 feet wide and 7 feet high; which, in 17 feet, opens out into a chamber 26 feet high. The stalagmite deposit here is probably the finest in the whole cave and is well worth a visit. There can also be seen the bone of some animal, cemented in the stalagmite, on a ledge 20 feet above the floor. There is a small stream flowing into this chamber from a cave which, after 20 feet becomes too low for further investigation. The water flows into the pool mentioned above, after which it branches to the left through a low passage 25 feet long when it joins the main cave 20 feet from the fall. (This stream is probably the one seen at Bargh's Pot in Fenwick's Lot).



Great Douk Pot looking W. Photograph by E. Simpson.

The main cave, which at the entrance is 10 feet wide and 15 feet high, rapidly becomes narrower until, after 39 feet, it is only 4 feet wide. At this point the cave turns to the left when some inconvenience is caused by water dropping from the roof. This subterranean shower bath is formed by the drainage of a surface pool. The height of the cave gradually increases to 30 feet at a point 90 feet in; when it also widens somewhat. Here are noticed the remains of what have been fine stalactites but which have been removed by former visitors. There are also indications of a passage on the right, merely a small side fissure. In all probability this is the continuation of a small cave noticed on the south

side of the pot; about 30 feet from the entrance to the loft, and in the same horizontal joint in the limestone. This cave slopes downwards and the floor is covered with mud and silt. Anyone shouting in the main passage can be heard quite distinctly, which shows there must be some connection between the two.

Proceeding once more the main passage is again found to diminish in width, this time to 3 feet, whilst a very strong current of air is noticed blowing towards the entrance. At 170 feet from the entrance there is a branch passage on the left some 15 feet above the stream bed. After 50 feet this becomes too low for exploration. Continuing up the main

cavern the roof is found to lower until it is less than 4 feet high, and then, after traversing 200 feet underground, daylight is seen.

This is Little Douk Pot which has also been formed by the falling in of the roof. Its sides are sheer precipices 45 feet high. And the effect of the light on the mosses and shrubs growing on them is very fine.

At the bottom of the pot there is an accumulation of rocks which have dammed back the water. So that, in the continuation of the cave, a pool has been formed 3 feet deep and 15



Stalactites in Douk Cave. Photograph by E. Simpson.

feet long. The easiest method is to walk straight through this, but, if the explorer wishes to keep dry above the knees, he can avoid it by a traverse about 6 feet above the water. After leaving Little Douk the height varies from 20 to 30 feet, the width from 2 to 3 feet.

About 180 feet from Little Douk Pot, a series of cascades has to be climbed, the passage then being fairly level for another 130 feet, when there are some more cascades. Then 300 feet further the sides of the cave are covered by fluted stalactite which continues until the passage branches right and left 1720 feet from the entrance.

The water issues from the left branch, which was found to be too low for investigation. The passage on the right however, is quite dry and of fair size, but after proceeding some 50 feet the stream is again joined. The height of the cave now diminishes rapidly. At a point 172 feet further there is a second junction, the water again entering from the left. The right hand passage is almost dry, the small quantity of water in it is apparently only a pool formed by the rising of the stream in flood time. Neither of the passages can be followed for any distance owing to the diminishing height.

With the exception of the pool at Little Douk and two others below the cascades the water is never more than 1 foot deep. There are a few stalactites in the further reaches of the cave but a great number of fine stalactites have been removed.

The local guide book says that this cave is only entered by "bold and venturesome explorers". We can therefore rest content, and feel assured that the missing stalactites are ending their days in the collections of some

of England's brave and dauntless speleologists.

With regard to the source of the water, tests with fluorescein show that the water enters a low cave near the sheepfold marked on the plan. This cave is known as Douk Sink, and up to the present it has only been explored for about 60 feet.

Reference to the plan shows that the two farthest points reached as yet, are at least 250 feet apart, and whether this distance can be reduced is very doubtful owing to the difficult nature of the passages.

Dunald Mill Hole, Silverdale.

By C.E. Burrow. (pp.15-16)

While spending a short holiday at Silverdale last August, a friend along with myself had a severe attack of "Speleological fever". In consequence we decided to visit Dunald Mill Hole, which I had visited some two or three years previously, but of which I had only very vague recollections.

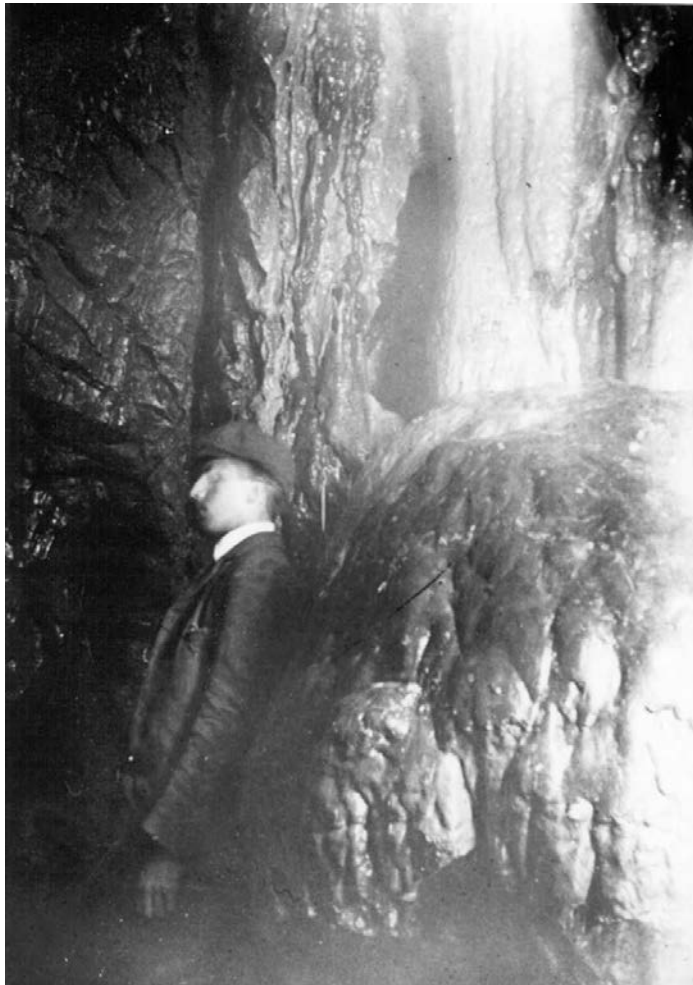
Leaving Silverdale on our bicycles we made our way through Carnforth to Over Kellet thence by rough cart tracks to the cave which is situated about midway between Over Kellet and Nether Kellet.

After leaving our cycles at the old mill, from which the cave probably receives its name we proceeded to the mouth, into which the water flows. The cave has a large and impressive entrance, measuring some 20 feet high and 25 feet wide, having a large rock standing in the centre. The main passage lies on the right and for about 60 feet it will average about 14 feet in height, the floor falling perhaps 10 feet. At this point we are in a fairly large chamber, but the passage leading from it is very small and it is

Two photographs of Dunald Mill Hole Silverdale by O. Stringer.



Entrance



Stalactite Chamber

only possible to proceed by crawling on hands and knees, however after some distance it enters another chamber. This is somewhat circular in form, with a dome shaped roof, some 15 to 20 feet in height. On the right

wall are some very fine stalagmite pillars ending in a large boss. The entrance and exit both being low, photography of these pillars is a difficult matter, as the smoke from the magnesium has practically no outlet.

After leaving the Stalagmite Chamber, as we called the one just described, we came across several moths whose wings were covered with tiny globules of moisture.

The roof becomes slightly higher at one or two points but the explorer has to practically crawl all the way through silt after the first 60 feet from the entrance (with the exception of the Stalagmite Chamber) until the roof becomes too low for further progress at about 300 yards. No stalactites are to be found in the main channel, and it is evidently filled to the roof in times of flood.

On returning to the entrance we found a very small side passage leading from the left of the entrance. We crawled along this for about 15 feet, when we came into a passage at right angles or parallel to the main passage. This is about 4 feet in height and continues for 20 feet in the direction of the main channel, then ended in a small pot 15 feet deep, the floor of which was covered with fallen rocks. Not having a rope we did not descend to the

bottom, which for anything we knew might be merely a sloping bank to the brink of a larger pot. This I do not consider probable but in these subterranean waterways one is ever coming across improbable things. This side passage was the only part of the cave where we saw any stalactites and these were only small.

This cave is I believe one of the few examples to be found in the low lying limestone around the coast in these parts, but it is interesting to note the absence of surface streams and the numerous springs which come boiling up far out on the sands causing the quicksands which are so numerous in the more northerly parts of Morecambe Bay.

Long Kin East. Ingleborough

By E. Simpson. (pp.17-20)

On the S.E. flank of Ingleborough, some ½ mile N.E. of Gaping Ghyll Hole, and situated in an enclosure called "the Allotment" is the mouth of Long Kin East Cave.

The entrance is somewhat difficult to find, but by crossing the moor, in the direction of Gaping Ghyll Hole, a small patch of weathered limestone is reached, and if these are followed in a northerly direction, one will soon arrive at the stream which enters the cave at the main entrance.

I had previously visited the cave on September 18th 1904, and again paid it a visit on December 4th of that year accompanied by F. Haworth, with the intention of clearing the fallen rocks at the end of the old cave, and if possible continue our exploration further. It was no joke removing the debris, especially with a snowstorm raging above, but by dint of hard labour we succeeded in clearing the

passage. We then explored as far as the chock-stone, but were compelled to return owing to the quantity of water along with its low temperature. Changing our wet clothes was the next consideration on reaching the surface, and was accomplished in a blinding snowstorm, and so ended the first exploration of Long Kin East, which is impressed in our memories in more respects than one.

F. Haworth again visited the cave in September 1905, first with a schoolboy E. Walker, when he descended the first two falls and the second time with a party of Yorkshire Ramblers, when he and Baker succeeded in reaching the head of the 4th fall, but owing to want of tackle could not go further.

We were spending our 1906 Whitsun-holidays in Chapel-le-Dale in the hopes of completing the exploration of Mere Gill Holes, but owing to constant rains found it impossible.

On June 3rd, Mere Gill not being possible, a party consisting of Messrs. C. Burrow, D. Burrow, S.H. Bateman, R.E. Cook, J. Flatow, F. Haworth. H. Jeffery. O. Stringer and myself set out from the Hill Inn, Chapel-le-Dale with the exploration of Long Kin E. as our object.

After the climb over Ingleborough, we arrived at the entrance (A) which is situated in a rocky gully, and is about 12 feet high and 2 feet wide. On entering we come in about 150 feet to where the passage forms a small chamber, while on the left is a branch which in about 30 feet comes to the surface.

Immediately on leaving this chamber, a pool some 4 feet deep is met with, but can easily be avoided by a traverse on the left. About 175 feet from the first chamber, we enter a second and

smaller one, having a large boulder in the centre round which we have to scramble. At this point the horizontal ribbing is very marked.

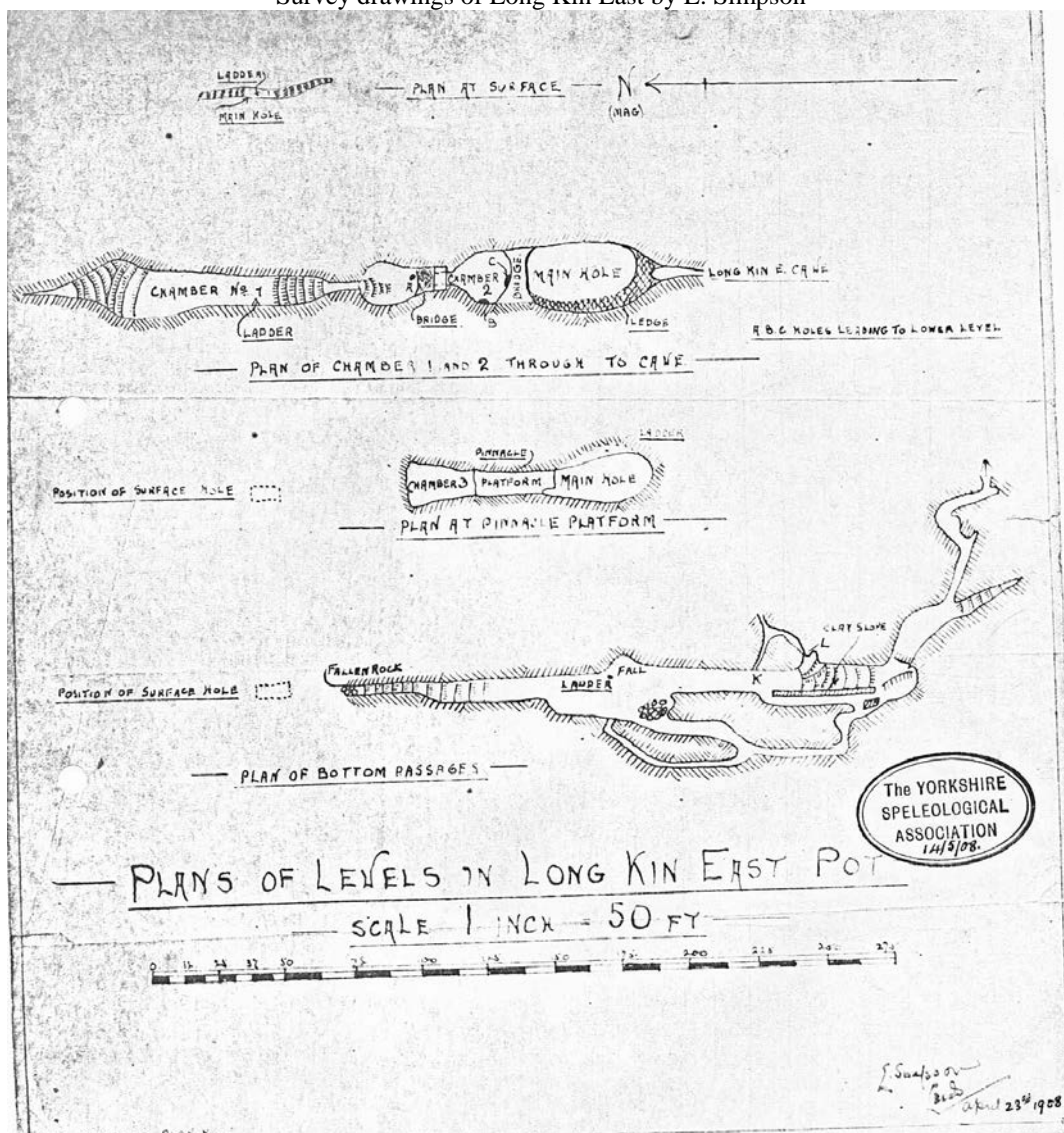
Some 50 feet further, daylight can be seen coming through an opening in the roof on the left, the passage being very much waterworn and has a height of about 20 feet, while the width is seldom more than 3 feet, though at a few places, it widens out to a size worth calling a chamber.

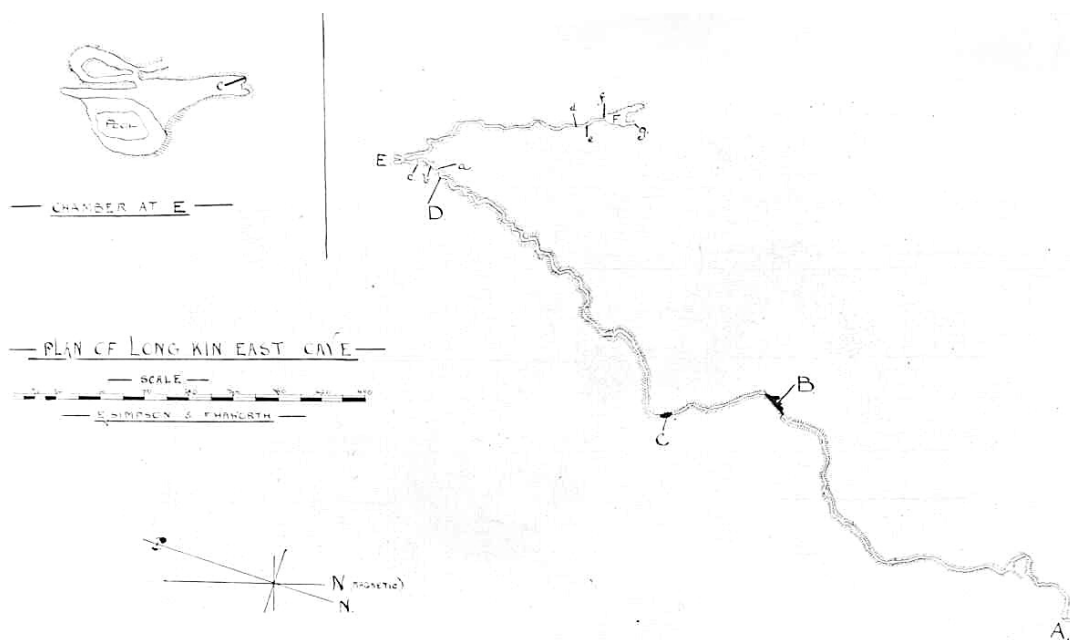
After travelling some 630 feet from entrance, daylight is seen ahead and by wading through a pool 3 feet deep, one emerges into a small pot, known as Long Kin E Pot (B).

This pot is similar to the Little Douk Pot in Chapel-le-Dale, and was probably formed by the falling in of the roof. At the present it is some 30 feet high, and is surrounded at the surface by a low wall.

Again entering the cave, we find it much more spacious being some 15 feet wide and about 8 feet high, this however soon contracts into a vertical fissure, the floor of which descends rapidly. Some 200 feet from the pot, daylight is seen ahead, and by wading through a pool some 4 feet deep, with a soft mud bottom we emerge at the fallen roof (C) at a distance of (blank) feet from the entrance.

Survey drawings of Long Kin East by E. Simpson





The water at this point sinks on the right of the passage, and flows under the fallen rocks, to be again met with in the new cave.

Entrance to the new cave is rather difficult owing to its smallness, together with a sheer drop of some 12 feet to the floor of the cave. Once however, having gained the stream bed, travelling is fairly easy though the passage twists and turns in a most curious manner, having at each turn a small fall. The roof is flat throughout, and owing to the rapid descent of the floor reaches a height of 80 feet by the time we reach the chock-stone (D).

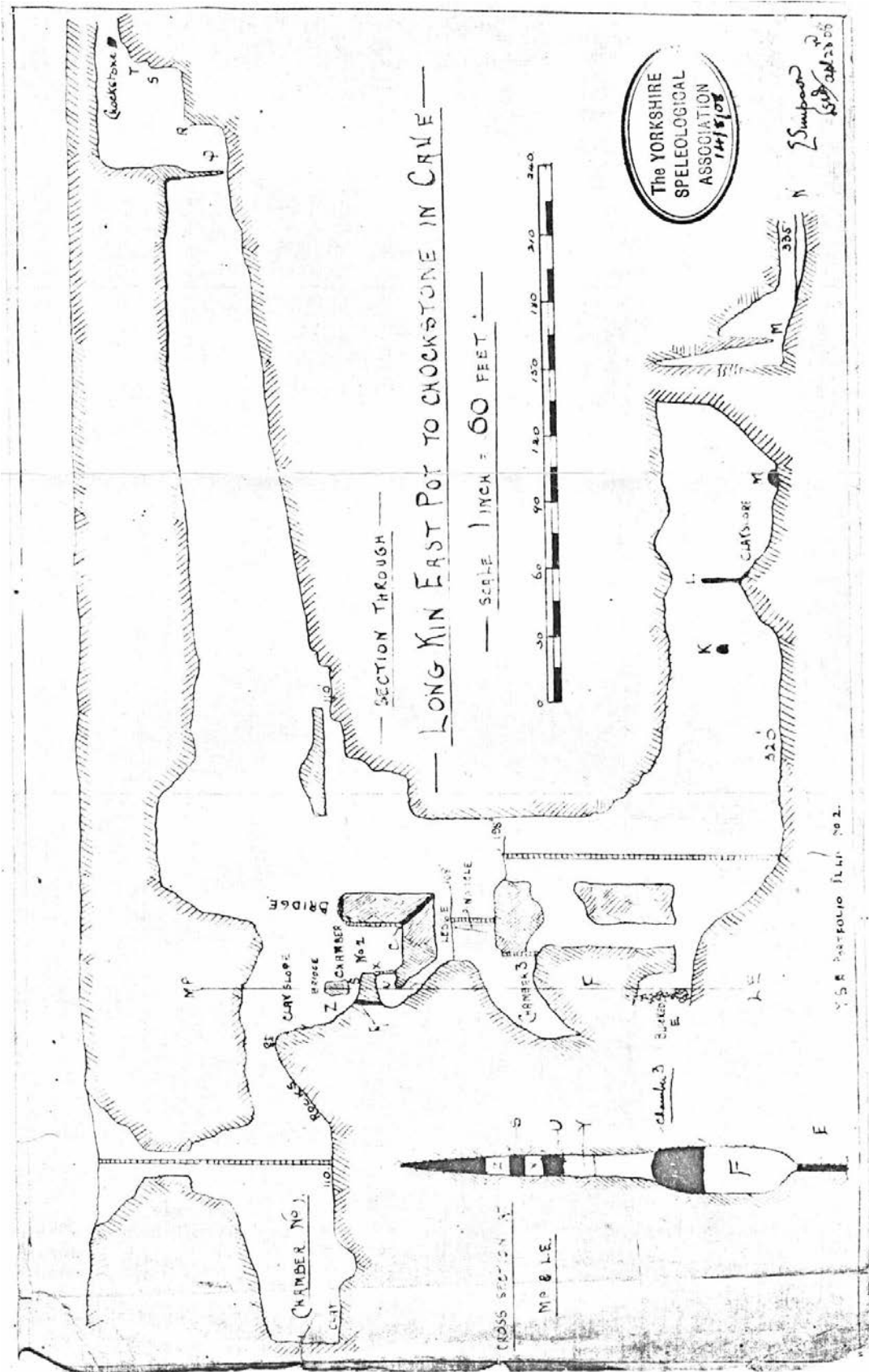
At this chock-stone the passage turns sharply to the right, and in a few feet we come to the head of a fall (a) some 8 feet deep. By fastening a rope round the chock-stone we were able to scramble down to the foot of this fall only to find another, 12 feet deep (b) beyond. Reaching the bottom of this and proceeding some 20 feet, we reach the head of a third fall (c) which is 18 feet deep. Here we rigged a short ladder, and descended down a side gully clear of the waterfall.

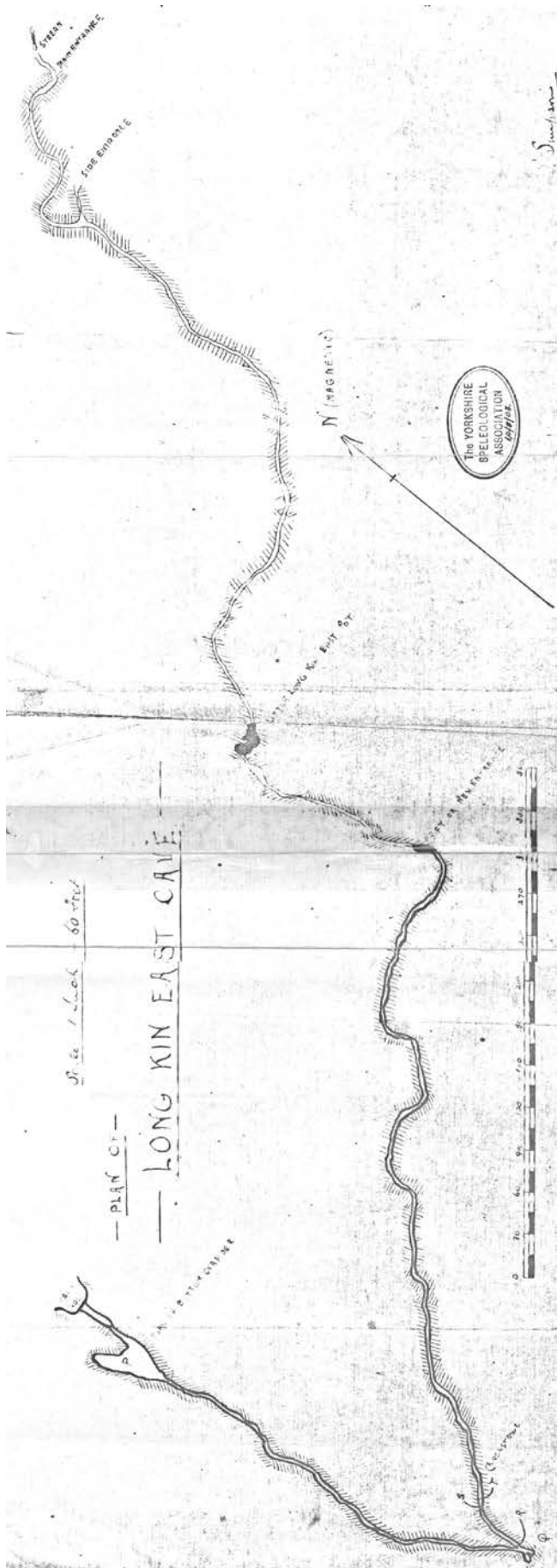
On reaching the bottom we found ourselves in a large chamber (E) probably 100 feet high.

From this chamber the water follows the course of the main cave, which leaves the chamber on the right. The cave presents no great difficulty for some 300 feet, when we come to the head of another fall (d) of 10 feet, this however can be scrambled down, only to be followed by another (e) 10 feet deep also climbable.

The passage now becomes very narrow and in about 40 feet, another fall (f) of 8 feet is reached. Descending this we enter a low chamber (F) some 5 feet high and 30 to 40 feet wide. Here is a lot of clay containing large quantities of iron pyrites. The stream flows across this chamber, and then tumbles down a series of falls of 6, 10 and 20 feet, to the edge of a pot which we estimated had a depth of 150/200 feet, though not having our plummet with us we could not ascertain this exactly.

Returning to the fall (e) we crawled along a ledge, until we entered a large chamber directly above the low chamber (F) mentioned above. Here





we came to the edge of the main pot, but being pushed for time we could not fix our ladders. I however roped and traversed round the edge, along a slope of clay and loose rocks, onto a bridge of limestone at the further end of the main pot. Here to my surprise was another smaller pot, some 30 feet deep, paved with fallen rocks.

Although I could not descend this the floor apparently falls away on the left to further depths, while on the right there are indications of a small passage.

The chamber has a height of probably 100/150 feet, but the roof could not be distinctly seen. It is necessary to use great caution while exploration is proceeding owing to the quantity of loose and rotten rocks, placed in unstable positions.

A most curious thing concerning this chamber, is that though we are some 200 feet below the surface, daylight can be seen very dimly, immediately above the bridge.

It has been said that we have reached Rift Pot which was explored by

the Yorkshire Ramblers' Club in May 1904, and which possesses similar features to the chamber just described, but I refrain from expressing my opinion for it is dangerous to make a definite assertion about the underground world.

However before another year has passed I hope that the mysteries surrounding the furthest chamber of Long Kin E. will be fathomed by the members of the Y.S.A.

My First Experience of an Underground Waterfall (pp.21-22)

Dear Mr. Editor,

Many garbled versions of my disagreeable experience are extant, so, in order that the plain truth of the matter be made known, I venture to submit my own account to your consideration. There is a place called Mere Ghyll, I believe that a worthy member of the Club intends describing it. There still exists a waterfall, I did not drink all the water. In some extraordinary fashion three brave men had gone down the rope ladder in the midst of falling roaring waters. I modestly suggested or else I was told (I cannot tell which) that my turn came next. A descent of some rungs brought my head into the water, and naturally I tried to get out of it. Anybody would. Somebody moved the bottom of the ladder, I tried to shout to them to keep the thing still. The water entered my mouth, I gurgled ...

I am told that the top members of the party asked one another what I said. No one could make out my remarks, but the next thing was that I was hauled to the top, my back to the ladder, in the fashion of a sack, just

when I was going to join my friends at the bottom.

In view of this unbiased account I ask you, Mr. Editor to say whether the rhymes unfeelingly poured into my ears, many, many times are not a great exaggeration.

There was once an explorer named
Dave,
Who went down a pothole and cave,
It was down in Mere Ghyll,
He began to feel ill,
And a fearful bee-bee he gave.

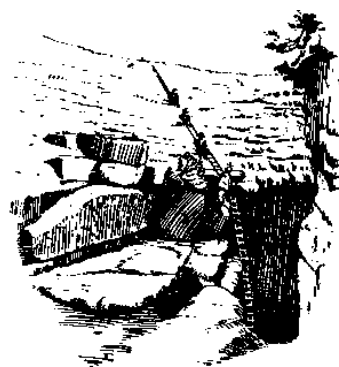
He stammered and stuttered,
he gurgled and spluttered,
Till we really felt quite afraid;
But we could not help thinking
that Dave had been drinking
The waterfall down in the cave.

I was pulled up against my will, I wanted to go down. Anyhow I am now looking forward to my next descent.

Yours truly,

D.B.

(Our friend has evidently been done an injustice. In the dark, queer things happen. We apologise to him but would like a true answer to the question:- "Was it a new way of climbing up the ladder that he was trying when he came back to the surface?")



Proceedings of the Association

(p23)

The FIRST ANNUAL MEETING was held on April 13, 14, 15, 16 & 17th 1906 at Chapel-le-Dale. It had been intended that we should finish the exploration of Mere Ghyll Holes, but owing to the unsatisfactory state of the weather we were not successful.

A change of plan was accordingly necessary, and it was decided to explore Hardrawkin Caves. The lower cave had been partially explored in August 1905, when the edge of a pot was reached, but owing to want of time could not be descended. On April 14th therefore, we succeeded in making a thorough survey and exploration, the result however being somewhat disappointing.

The following morning was gloriously bright and clear, temptation to remain above ground was too strong, and it was decided to pay a visit to the Kingsdale potholes. Rowten Pot received first attention, and it was decided to have lunch here. Most of the party descended to the Bridge Platform. Jingle Pot,

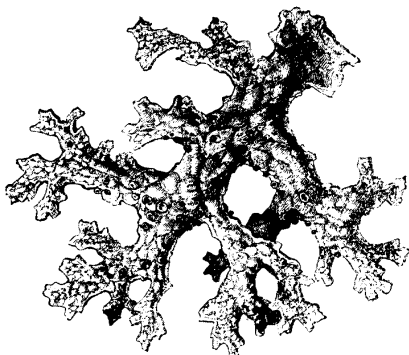
Bull Pot, Yordas Cave and Batty Pot were visited in turn. The party returned by the Whernside Fells and Weathercote to the Hill Inn.

The next morning the Upper Hardrawkin Cave was surveyed. Though very contracted it is nevertheless a very fine cavern, especially the new portion discovered on this occasion, where the calcareous deposits are worthy of note.

The last day was spent in the investigation of the river bed from God's Bridge to Gatekirk Cave.

The meet was attended by the President, (Mr. F. Haworth) and five members:- Messrs. C.E. Burrow, D. Burrow, R.E. Cook, O. Stringer, and E. Simpson.

Considering everything we must congratulate ourselves on the success of the meeting and though the exploration of Mere Gill Holes still remains unfinished, it was fully compensated for by the complete exploration of Hardrawkin Caves.



Exploration (p.24)

The following expeditions have been made by F. Haworth & E. Simpson.

1904

June 4th	Gatekirk Cave.	Total of Survey	775 feet
Aug. 21 st	Browside Cave.	" " "	393"
" "	Boggarts Hole	" " "	140"
" "	Frog Pot.	" " Depth	34"
" 22nd	Bruntskar Cave.	" " Survey-!	783"
" "	Homeshaw Cave.	" " "	304"
" 23rd	Gingle Pot.	" " Depth	51"
" "	Hurtle Pot.	" " "	55"
" 24 th	Douk Cave.	" " Survey	1998"
" "	Mere Gill. W. Chamber.	" " "	80"
" 25th	Lower Greensett Cave.	" " "	432"
" "	Weathercote Cave behind fall.	" " "	139"
Nov. 5th	Upper Greensett Cave.	" " "	386"
Dec. 4th	Long Kin E. Cave	cleared new cave.	
"	29th Thornesgill Cave.	" " " -!	575"

1905

Apl. 21st	Capnut Cave.	" " " -!	1196"
" "	Cuddy Gill Cave.	" " "	152"
" 22nd	Browgill Cave.	" " "	893"
" 23rd	Dry Lathe Cave.	" " "	1729"
" "	Old Ing Cave.	" " " -!	695"

The following by F.Haworth, R.E.Cook, C.E.Burrow, D.Burrow, O.Stringer & E.Simpson.

June	Mere Gill Holes.	" " " -!	593"
		Depth -!	176"

1906

Apl. 14th	Hardrawkin Caves.	" " "	176"
		" " Survey	2092"
June 3rd	Long Kin E. Cave.	" " " -!	1908"
		" " Depth -!	120"
Aug. 5th	Alum Pot	" " " -!	285"
		" " Survey	373"

(-!) indicates further exploration possible.

The total length of the caves surveyed by the Association's members during the last 3 years is about 20 000 feet or 4 miles.

(End of Vol.1 Part 1)

Speleo, Brazil, 2001

An account of our Club representative's visit to this key international congress.

Ged Campion

Caving took on a special meaning for the South American Continent in July this year, as Brazil was chosen to host the thirteenth international congress of Speleology. The combination of Brazilian culture, Latin style and humour and incredible opportunities to go caving really made this a congress with a difference. It may have not been as well attended as the congress in Switzerland four years previously, but the feeling of Speleological fraternity proved that small can indeed be beautiful. The supporters of this U.S. event were the Speleological Federation of Latin America and the Caribbean (C.E.A.L.C.), and the Brazilian Society of Speleology (S.B.E.). The theme for Speleo, Brazil 2001 was "Speleology in the Third Millennium: Sustainable Development of Karst Environment". The S.B.E. were principally responsible for organising the event headed by Clayton Lino, one of the former presidents but a professional conference management team were engaged to organise the operational running of the congress, i.e. registration, interpreters, transport, accommodation, technical support and so on. This obviously took a lot of pressure off the S.B.E., so that they could concentrate on providing spectacular pre- and post-congress excursions.

The use of the impressive Convention Centre in "Ulysses Guimaraes" in Brasilia, was provided free of charge to the organisers with its array of



auditoria, audio visual systems, display areas, restaurant and snack bar provided a first-class venue. Accommodation was in hotels or a nearby Youth Hostel with camping, most only a ten minutes walk away and close to city facilities. Brasilia is a very modern city situated on a plateau 11,000 metres on an area that was once wooded Savhanna. It was built to celebrate one of the former Brazilian President's, Juscelino Kubitschek. Quite remarkably, it is now a UNESCO world heritage cultural site. The architecture of the city, whilst at first seems quite imposing, is quite tasteful, especially for those who like concrete. Bearing in mind the event took place in Brazilian winter, the weather was always incredibly pleasant, very much like a good English summer.

The opening ceremony was an impressive showpiece, a huge auditorium festooned with flags from all nationalities and the delegates firmly plugged into headsets that enabled translations from a choice of six languages. The business of Speleo, Brazil was opened by the retiring President, Julia James, accompanied by Latin American and Caribbean Delegates and not least, the Brazilian Minister for the Environment. Indeed, it was quite heartening to hear how seriously the Government seemed to be taking cave protection in this part of the world, as legislative measures were announced

as part of a new package of cave conservation.

The scientific programme itself comprised of six separate sessions running concurrently with four presented as symposia. As expected, papers relating to geology, palaeontology, biology, cave diving, protection and management of show-caves etc., were presented. Amongst the English contingent were Trevor Faulkner, speaking on cave development in Central Scandinavia and myself on "The Yorkshire Ramblers' Club Expedition to China", karst scenery and cave development in Lingyun and Leye County, Guangxi, Southern China. As well as the lectures, an impressive array of scientific posters and exhibits were displayed.



The eight one day excursions at the middle period of the congress ranged from leisurely city tours around Brasilia, to an opportunity to visit nearby caves, i.e. four hours away from the centre! Myself, and Shaun Penny, plumbed for the trip to Jaboticaba Cave, a 13,000 metre through trip in the Formosa County of Gaios, four hours north of Brasilia. Water at a temperature of 15 degrees made the swimming more than bearable and a spectacular eight metre plunge from the exit of the cave into a lake, made a fantastic finale to the trip. Meanwhile, back at the Convention Centre, the group floor was taken up entirely by a formidable

display of Speleo Art, Sculpture, some Caving Memorabilia and a constant run of nineteen Speleo Media films in the snack bar area. The restaurant provided excellent meals at a very reasonable price and an amazing choice of sickly sweet desserts for the greedy. In fact, almost any where in Brazil you can get a really decent meal for just a couple of pounds. Almost daily, books were launched and impressive cocktail parties followed video presentations. In the centre of the ground floor stood an artificial cave, tastefully festooned with polystyrene Speleotherms and an array of stuffed bats to provide an air of reality! Not to be out done by Wes Sykes, Andy Eavis presented an impressive 3-D Imax blockbuster slide show on a steel screen of slides from South East Asia Caving Expeditions.

A variety of gear stalls were significantly lacking although the 'Montana' Company had a strong presence in caving gear. Evening activities were also provided including a lake-side party and a number of opportunities to have ad-hoc meetings at many of the restaurants in the City.

Of the 465 attendees, 300 were overseas visitors and 8 were from the United Kingdom, three of whom were Yorkshire Ramblers' Club members. We left the extravaganza two days before the final banquet to do some caving in the San Domingos an area six hours North of Brasilia, with a couple of local lads who promised that we could follow up some leads. But I have it on good authority that the banquet was in true Brazilian style, with a visit to the Spettus Steak House in Brasilia, where an array of barbequed meats were served on skewers.



The post congress excursions were to a number of wide ranging areas in Brazil, from the Ribeira Valley, near Sao Paulo, to Sierra Capivare near Salvador. Myself, Shaun Penny and Richard Sealey already in the San Domingos, joined a post congress excursion in that region. We visited

spectacular river caves on a par to some in China and Mulu. This was an area that had already received two French expeditions in 1995 and 1997, but with lots of leads still to follow. Particularly impressive was Terra Ronca cave (rumbling earth) which is said to be amongst one of the largest entrances in the world. Fantastic passages and daylight canyons could be followed with brightly coloured macaws screeching high on the canyon walls.

And so the conference wound up and Jose Ayrton Labegalini, Brazil was the newly elected U.I.S. President, replacing Julia James two U.I.S. Vice Presidents, Andy Eavis and Alexander Klimchouk from the Ukraine, were sworn in. Finally, much to the disdain of the French, who had hoped to hold the next U.I.S. Congress, in Pau near the Pyrenees, a fairly unanimous decision was taken to give it to the Greek competitors to hold the event in Athens in August 2005, hosted by the Hellenic Speleological Society, so now they've got the U.I.S. Congress as well as the Olympics!



In summary, Speleo, Brazil was a truly fantastic event, and I am sure for those who made the long haul to get there it will have fond memories for years to come. We would like to thank the Club for supporting this visit where the profile of our club, as being on the forefront of new discoveries, was a reminder to those already in awe of our 109 years of active cave exploration.

Newby Moss Sink – A Visitor's Impression Richard Josephy

On the Sunday after the AGM and Dinner, Tim and Richard Josephy and Tony Penny were taken to see the fruits of three years work by the YRC cave explorers at Newby Moss Sink. Tim and I had planned a rather more leisurely underground excursion, but our protests were ignored and when I found myself driving to Harvey's to borrow SRT gear it seemed too late to back out.

The entrance is in a large shakehole under the shoulder of Little Ingleborough, not far from Hurnell Moss Pot. Evidence for the diggers' efforts abounds – cables, pulleys, sleepers, even a shelter to leave rucksacks etc. A climb down through scaffolding stabilising the entrance leads to a crawl through loose boulders, again stabilised by reassuringly professional looking civil engineering. I tried not to remember that at one point in the operation this area had collapsed leaving some of the diggers inside. A short descent brings one to the top of a body-sized hole in somewhat loose surroundings. This is protected by a rope as it ends directly over a 70 foot pitch. A fine descent leads into an impressively

Brazil



large rift chamber – the roof almost out of range of my lamp. At the end of the chamber is the second pitch of about 40 feet with a slightly awkward take-off, leading to another chamber. A final (so far!) pitch of about 15 feet took us to the site of active digging in a small rift. We enjoyed a nice cup of hot water, having forgotten the tea bags. Close to this point, by dropping down a small hole and crawling into an unstable area, a stream can be heard – even in the dry conditions of our visit – after rain it is said to be a real torrent. It gives a tantalising impression of further passages to be found and a flavour of the cave diggers' obsession. The depth at present is 90 metres, but the water is believed to emerge a long long way below this giving the possibility of something really deep.

It was an very enjoyable trip, a chance to relearn and practise SRT, and a real privilege to be among the few people to have descended this new cave on Ingleborough – many thanks to Ged Campion for taking time off digging to guide us.



A photograph sent as a post card to E.E.Roberts by S.Guy (Mitchell), on 7th June 1921 showing Charles Burrows assisting Roberts to descend Gaping Gill

Iceland Diary 1998

Tim Josephy

An extract from Tim's record of this Club expedition...

Thursday 4 June

Derek Smithson, Martin Wakeman and I packed up to spend two nights at Esjufjoll, a lava mountain 12 miles up the Briedammerkurjokull glacier. Rory Newman drove us to the foot of the glacier, near a wonderful lagoon full of intense blue icebergs. We quickly passed the short terminal moraine onto the glacier and angled across to the medial moraine, which would lead us to our mountain. We soon realised two things, one that the scale of the glacier was vast - features seemingly close were hours away and second that the thaw had come early this year. There was no snow on the glacier, but a lot of rotten ice and meltwater running off under thin crusts. This made travel difficult (Rory, coming up with Sue next day to join us, fell through the crust and was completely submerged in the pool below. Despite Rory's insistence that they should carry on, Sue wisely

ordered a retreat). Strange features were the numerous cones of what seemed to be black volcanic ash. They looked for all the world like giant molehills but were in fact extrusions from the glacier bed and had solid ice cores. These, along with the criss-crossing meltwater channels up to 3ft deep, and lots of stones, made things worse. The journey up, with heavy packs took 9½ hours .

By the time we had approached a small icefall ²/₃ of the way up, the weather had deteriorated somewhat, with snow and poor visibility. The icefall went easily despite some very deep crevasses and the poor ice. Eventually we reached the foot of the mountain, passing an enormous crater in the glacier, about 200m across. We were getting worried about camping as there was still no snow and the ice crystals on the glacier would have wrecked the tents. A slight clearing in the mist, however, revealed a tiny hut about 150m up the hillside on a lava plateau. On reaching it we found a snug refuge, with bunks and an invitation from the Iceland Geological Society to all comers to make use of



Skaftafell Glacier

it. So our two-night stay was far more comfortable than we had expected.

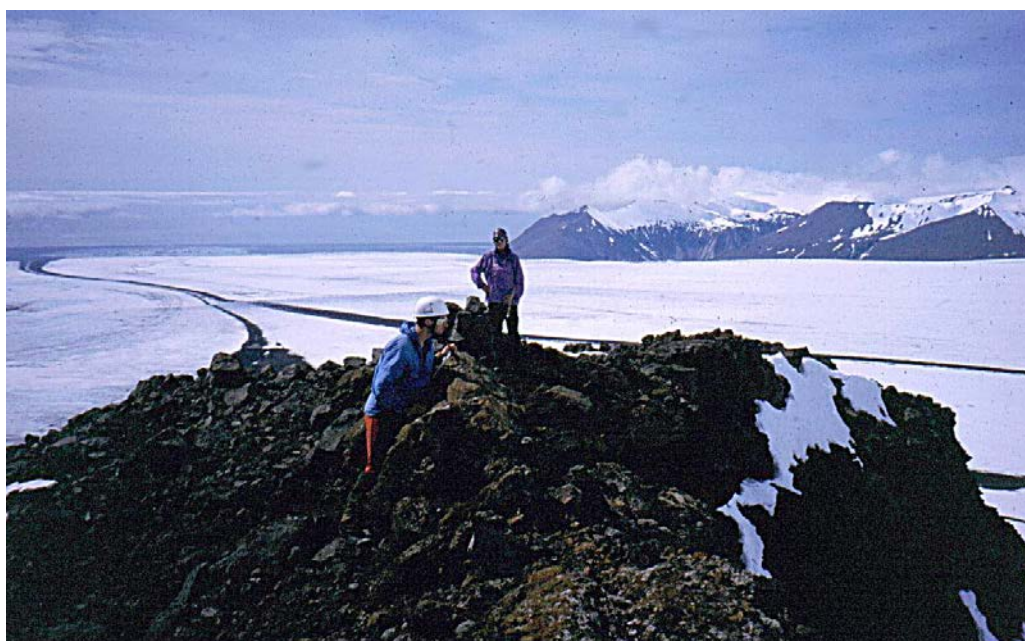
Friday 5 June

Woke to clear skies and stupendous scenery. The glacier stretched for miles in all directions, with the icecap still far distant. Spectacular mountains, ranging from rock towers to majestic snow domes were all around. Far away, the summit of Hrannadalsnukur could just be seen. It is a place out of this world. We climbed Lyngbrekkítindur, 1460m, the end of the ridge above the hut. From a col 300m below the top we traversed on very steep loose scree and old snow across the south face of the mountain. Eventually we found a trap dyke of better rock, which led through a steep band to the summit slopes. As on Kristínatindur, the hoped for continuation turned out to be a fantastically pinnacled ridge of rotten rock with gigantic chunks cut out of it. Clearly these ridges are only climbable in winter, when the ice binds the rock.

Saturday 6 June

Woke early this morning and went out to wander. You can do this at any time of night here, as it never gets dark in June. The bleakness of the landscape was broken by little clumps of alpines, scattered across the black hillside like jewels. Where small springs occurred, patches of bright green moss provided the only other colour. Crossing a patch of old snow, I heard the singing of birds. Rounding a corner I found two snow buntings, perched on a rock, singing their hearts out. Sitting listening to them in this great wilderness, miles from anywhere, was a moving experience.

It began to snow and the mist came down for the descent. The less said the better. This glacier is a nightmare to travel on and the only saving grace was that it was 3 hours quicker going down. Crossing the plain to the road we were continually attacked by great skuas defending their territories. They dive bomb, coming so close that one was never sure they were going to miss. Rory picked us up at the roadside a couple of hours later.



Lundbrekkítindur Esjufjöll

A Ski Traverse of La Meije Ged Campion

A full assessment of snow conditions in the French and Swiss Alps from a ski mountaineering point of view made it almost irresistible to head for the Dauphine Alps last Easter but, as we had learnt from bitter experience, too much of the white stuff can work against you as well. What we hadn't appreciated was the unprecedented scale of the build up of snow on the south-facing slopes in the area.

As we worked down our list of peaks to do, the Grande Ruine, Les Ecrins and even the mighty Mount Pelvoux sprang to mind but we also pondered on the idea of attempting the ski traverse of La Meije, which in Shaun's book was mysteriously graded as TD, a grading in ski mountaineering terms that many of us would not be familiar with and certainly by my understanding of the grades could only equate to a descent of something like the Gervasutti Colouir, and therefore quite insane in my book.

We left the motorway from Grenoble and rose gently up the Romanche Valley, only to be met by steely grey skies and flurries of snow that conspired to dampen our spirits. A vague weather forecast in the "Dauphine News" had predicted poor weather for at least three days so it was decided that we would sit it out in Alp D'Huez for a while and see what transpired. A visit to La Grave the next day only confirmed our worst fears, an already massive build up of snow being further exacerbated by new precipitations. Guides recounted stories of how the Temple Ecrins Hut was virtually lost under metres of snow and for weeks guides had been trying to locate its chimney. We also heard that the Warden in the Planchard Hut was under siege and couldn't get back down to the valley.

Not to be put off, we headed for the Alpe Hut near D'Arene to simply look at the approach to the Grand Ruine. The weather was claggy right from the start and we plumbed for a stay at the Hut, quite easily accessible at a mere 2079 metres. It didn't take long for us to realise that virtually everything in the vicinity was in poor condition, avalanche debris evident almost everywhere. Taking solace and advice from a Grenoble team we headed out the next day to look at a modest training peak named Combeynot, a mere slip of a peak by any standards which appeared to have compacted neve on its slopes completely deserted of new snow which could therefore provide a passage to its summit. This, however, was not to be as we discovered at our peril, as seemingly endless traversing on our telemark skis on steep neve was nothing but soul destroying and battling against the wind we decided to cut our losses and, from three-quarters of the way up, skied down a flank of half decent snow. Another night at the Hut would concentrate our thoughts on what to do next. The Hut Warden's Kitchen Assistant seemed to be doing a promotion exercise on the Queryras region, south east of the Dauphine, which amongst other good points had lots of sunshine and Mount Viso nearby. So the next day we headed over to Briancon to visit this spectacular and less regularly visited area of the Alps. We were rewarded with impressive but significantly smaller mountains that were in far better condition than their larger neighbours to the north. Viso itself was difficult to approach because of heavy snowfall, so we concentrated on one-day trips of more Scottish style peaks.

However, we were running out of time and knew that we had to make at least a go of something back at the Dauphine. Could it, we thought, be just possible to

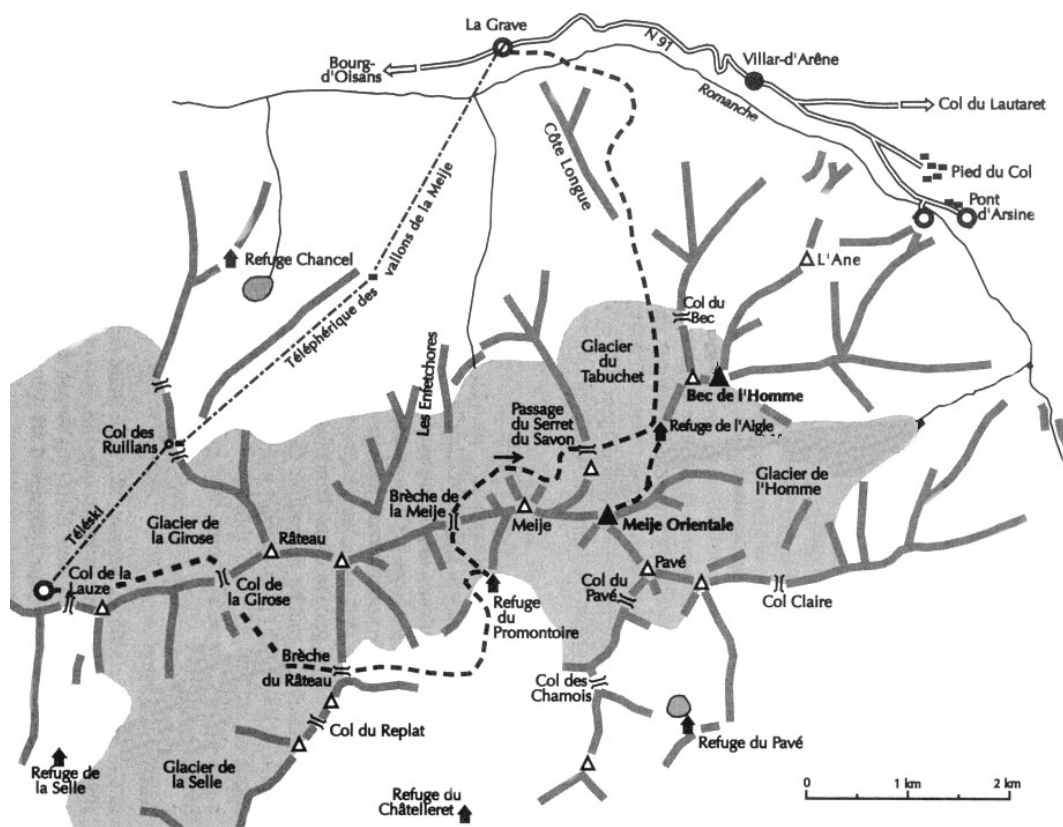
have a crack at one of the bigger peaks. So the dye was cast and after a circum navigation of the range we found ourselves heading up to La Grave where the weather had cleared significantly. As we rounded the upper section of the Romanche Valley the bulky mass of La Meije reared up magnificently. This is the mountain that held out longer against assault in any other great mountains of a similar size in the Alps. At 3983 metres, it just falls short of the magical 4000m mark, but what it lacks in height it makes up in sheer mass. Surveying the mountain from La Grave, Breche de La Meije is a good defining feature on the north side, and below the ice is continuous from top to bottom and its steep and uncompromising ground seems an improbable passage for a ski traverse.

As La Meije was a Mecca for the early pioneers of the Alps now La Grave is a Mecca for the experienced skier, snow boarder and telemarker. Its steep unpisted slopes attract only the most

confident of skiers and give the place an elitist feel. For us the Telephereque would merely provide a passage above the piste to a starting point for our traverse and it was unlikely we would rub shoulders with the ordinary plankers.. The weather forecast that afternoon promising two days of clear weather giving even more impetus to our decision to attempt the traverse.

We booked out of the hotel at La Grave and got the earliest Telephereque available.

The start of the ski traverse of La Meije can easily be accessed from the top station of the Telephereque where a relatively short climb leads you to the top of the Comb de La Girose a steep couloir with a narrow start providing a corridor down to the Selle Glacier. It is here where the delights of the Meije traverse start unfold before you.. The weather was brilliant not a whisper of wind or flurry of snow, just spectacular scenery at every side. The Comb De La



Girose is incredibly steep at the start and as we discovered can be one of those places where you could easily talk yourself out of carrying on.. As I set off and got purchase in the gully, cautious side slipping caused a massive accumulation of snow below the skis avalanching down the gully, it was reminiscent of the top of Aladdin's Couloir where side slipping techniques are equally as useful when you cannot commit yourself to the first turn! I was just a short way down and shouted back to the others to use an ice axe in one hand if they had any doubts at all. At least the run out at the bottom was safe. The others followed down slowly and I found shelter with Shaun behind a large rocky buff to the left of the debris chute.

By now it was approximately 10.30 a.m. and being on the south side of the mountain the sun was taking it's toll on the snow. A long rutted traverse leads one across to the foot of the Breche du Rateau a short friendly gully that provides an up and over to to the Etacons Glacier. The last few feet of the gully are nearly 60° but bucket steps ensure adequate security despite the skis on your back giving that familiar toppling feeling as they scrape the steep angled slope above you when you try and move upwards..

We encountered even more soft snow in the Etacons Glacier denying some of us an opportunity to exploit our telemark turns. Though Shaun's new parabolic short skis seem to be the business in these sorts of conditions much to everybody else's chagrin. Before long we arrived at the centre of the glacier, the appropriate place to change the mode to ascent. Fixing our skins we started the long slog up to the Promontoire Hut. The climb generally went without incident except that was for rescuing a beleaguered Frenchman from a small crevasse half way up!

Quite incredibly he was attempting the route with snow rackets and a snow board on his back, just as I was about to overtake him he slipped into a seemingly innocuous crevasse. Forming a bridge with my skis he managed to hang on to one of my sticks as I pulled him out unceremoniously. I left him forlornly sitting in the snow and told him that I would try and catch his friends up to tell them to send help. When I finally arrived at the Hut his friends were quite unconcerned about the snow boarders predicament and it was generally agreed that this was one of the anticipated hazards of being in the big mountains with inadequate gear! He arrived later under Shaun's supervision.

The Promontoire Hut itself is located in a spectacular position, below the final south ridge of La Meije. To the south the long sinuous valley stretches down to La Berarde. The hut is also perched strategically just below the Breche De La Meije, a much celebrated crossing point high on the mountain. The Hut was by no means crowded but at least two teams were heading the same way as us the following morning. At four we found ourselves busy with the usual ritual of trying to down a crusty bread breakfast with dry throats and apprehension with what lay ahead for us. We followed a procession of lights from the Hut, the Swiss providing us with manicured ski tracks up towards the Breche itself. The final 50m requires crampons and an ice axe. Once on the breche the position is magnificent, first light providing views right across the range to Les Ecrins, towering over the ridge to the north of what must have been the Grand Ruine, on the left side of Vallons Des Ecancons. To the right of the Ecrins comes the huge mass of Ailefroide, the finest feature of this view, a mountain bearing a strong resemblance to La

Meije, with its combination of summit peaks.

However, time was not at a premium so we started our descent to the Glacier de La Meije, the first section of this is steep and requires crampons. I remembered A. W. Moore's account of the first ascent of the Breche in 1864, where he had apparently resorted to using a clinometer on the slope to measure a reading of 55°! Lower down it eased up and we skied an excellent section of snow affording stylish telemark turns to a point which marked the start of the long traverse on the north side of the mountain. It was this section that quite surprisingly was to prove the most difficult part of our tour, where a combination of drifting snow and threat of wind slab conspired to obliterate our traverse line. Progress was so slow at one stage that we deposed the skis and moved forward in crampons, virtually up to our waists in snow. We converted back to skis but were always conscious of the precipitous serac broken ground to our left, plunging away to La Grave. In due course we arrived almost without realising at the foot of the Passage du Serret du Savon. This steep icy Scottish style gully rose up tantalisingly to provide access to the plateau where we would hopefully find the Aigle Hut. This gully is a sort of place where you would normally use two axes but ski mountaineering never affords such a luxury. With skis on your back, clattering against the slopes above, you always remind yourself that you'll buy shorter skis next time. A fall from here would without doubt land you in La Grave, some 1500m below! But front pointing gave way to an easier angle and the crest itself. Relieved to get up and for Bruce and Alastair astounded that a ski route could demand such steep climbing, we headed off along the easy slopes to the Aigle Hut.

This almost dolls house like structure is situated strategically above the Tabuchet and L'homme Glaciers. We stopped off at the Hut for an omelette and tea. It was nearly midday and the descent of the Tabuchet Glacier promised to be the real jewel of the trip if we could just catch snow in pristine condition. We knew that it hadn't been descended since the last heavy fall of snow and to get the best of it we knew we would have to miss out the summit of La Meije that was well within our grasp, and not strictly on the itinerary. With this rational and relieved when we heard our Swiss friends were heading off down the L'homme glacier we decided to head for Tabuchet that would give us a clear descent to La Grave. We bid our farewells to the Hut Warden and headed down the broad sweep of the upper glacier. This descent could only be described as brilliant, with waist deep powder snow bringing out the best of telemark turns. The spectacle of other team slogging up when you are heading down only increases that feeling of accomplishment. After nearly 13000 metres of descent we found ourselves unceremoniously finishing in boggy meadows above the Romanche River. After getting lost in a few gardens below the town we emerged by the Telefrique Station and it was generally agreed that we would rest on our laurels in the bar of the hotel where we could gaze leisurely up at our line of descent where to our astonishment, others were still slogging up through the confusion of tracks that we had left.

Sure enough the following day the La Meije was enveloped in mist, and it couldn't have been a more fitting time to head home. It was one of those trips where we just managed to pull it off; the summit and of course our skiing style being the only casualties.

Gentiana tilmanii

Ken Aldred

When the YRC party visited the Khumbu valley in 1997 a flower was seen which couldn't be identified by any members of our party. By coincidence, shortly after returning home and viewing a video of "Flowers of the Everest Region"¹ I saw what I took to be the same plant named as *Gentiana tilmanii*. A search in the Encyclopaedia of the Alpine Garden Society² disclosed no reference to the plant so a search was made in two specialist books on Gentians by reputable authors^{3&4}. Once again, no mention of this plant. A letter was sent to the Alpine Garden Society as they had produced the video. In spite of this they had no information on the plant, and the maker of the video, George Smith, had died. The Royal Horticultural Society didn't have the plant listed on their internet site and the lack of information was puzzling. An appeal was made in the Journal of the Alpine Garden Society for any information, and Mr. Peter Boardman replied to say that he possessed some of the slides and field notes of the late George Smith which gave the location of the plant and also a very brief description, but no indication of the origin of the name.

Hoping for a lead from Tilman himself, his Himalayan books were re-read and some interesting facts emerged. In 1949 he was in the Langtang valley with Oleg Polunin, a botanist who produced an excellent book on Himalayan plants⁵ but which, unfortunately, makes no reference to *G. tilmanii*. A year later Tilman was accompanied by Donald G Lowndes, a botanist who has several plants,

such as *Rhododendron lowndesii*, named after him, but who makes no reference to Tilman in any of his papers. Some time has been spent in the library of the Royal Botanic Gardens Edinburgh without discovering any direct reference to the plant but which has provided a number of interesting snippets. When Polunin's seeds were sent to the British Museum they were labelled "HWT", which possibly indicates that Tilman was recognised as a botanist in his own right. In view of his lighthearted approach to scientists in general, this may cause a few raised eyebrows. A Japanese expedition was in the Kumbu Region in 1952 and in their botanical publication⁶ they describe finding *Gentiana depressa* and *Gentiana detonsa* between Tilman's camp and Pisang. At this time Tilman was a member of Houston's party, but Houston is not mentioned in the text.

The three volumes of the British Museum publication on the plants of Nepal⁷ makes no mention of *Gentiana tilmanii* but in the list of botanists it notes that Harry Smith was in the area with Christopher Grey-Wilson, an eminent plant collector. This information led to an article by Grey-Wilson⁸ on plant hunting between Tibet and Nepal where the plant is described as having been found in the lower Khung Khola.

The final breakthrough followed valuable help from the Royal Botanic Garden Herbarium, Edinburgh. The herbarium possesses four samples of material listed as *G. tilmanii*, found at Lula Khola (1952), Muktinath(1954), above Seng Khola (1954) and Tegar, north of Mustang(1954). There is a further sample listed as *G. huxley* (syn. *G. tilmanii*). All the samples are credited to Harry Smith

A helpful note from one member of the herbarium states

“G. tilmanii is one of Harry Smith’s many unpublished names.

He sometimes put names on herbarium specimens... and never published them”.



Referring to the plants

listed above, the note continues, *“we have them under G. marginata but this is a species which needs further work to determine whether it actually includes more than one thing or not. Harry Smith obviously thought these were different.”*

From this it appears that if we wish to grow this gentian in our gardens we should start looking for *G. marginata* or *G. huxley* in the seed catalogues.

Kohlein describes *G. marginata* as follows:

“From Afganistan and Pakistan on open hillsides at 2,700 to 4,300m. Resembles G. carinata; an annual, up to 5cm tall, with pale blue flowers.” (G. carinata has a similar description except that it has dark blue flowers.)

Puloin describes *G. marginata* as:

“From Afganistan to Uttar Pradesh. 2700-4300m. Open slopes. May-Aug. Like carinata but differing in its more crowded out-curved sickle-shaped leaves, its conspicuous out-curved calyx-lobes, and its corolla-tube without scales in the throat. Flowers bright to pale blue, to 12mm long.

Plant usually densely branched and forming a nearly stemless domed cluster usually 2-5cm across, but sometimes more.”

In conclusion, did Tilman know that a plant had been named after him? During my enquiries I spoke to a contemporary seed collector. He couldn't help but he vaguely remembered coming across *Primula tilmanii* some years ago!

¹ Video, Flowers of the Everest Region, Alpine Garden Society

² Beckett, K., Encyclopaedia of Alpines, Alpine Garden Society

³ Bartlett, M., Gentians, Blandford Press

⁴ Kohlien, F., Gentians, Christopher Helm Ltd

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⁶ Fauna and Flora of Nepal Himalaya, Japanese Expedition to Nepal Himalaya, 1952-1953

⁷ Hara, H. et al., An Enumeration of the Flowering Plants of Nepal, British Museum

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Madagascar

Some Big Caves, and Some Small Ones!

John Middleton

A brief overview is given to the karst regions and caves of Madagascar together with descriptions of several small new discoveries made during a recent trip to this magical island.

INTRODUCTION.

Madagascar, the fourth-largest island in the world, measures approximately 1,580km from north to south and 570km at its widest point. The total land area is around 594,000 square kilometres – 2.5 times the size of Great Britain. Limestone covers an estimated 33,000 square kilometres and is found in two discontinuous outcrops extending down the drier western half of the country. The outer one, of Tertiary origin, is generally narrower and closer to the coast with the northern sections exhibiting some superb cones, mogotes and occasional towers. Within these are found many large, well-decorated chambers while others have massive passageways extending up to 5,330 metres in length. To the south, gentle hills and undulating plateaux predominate. Few caves are known but shafts up to 200 metres deep have been explored. The inner band of limestone, which often exceeds 50 kilometres in width, is of Mesozoic age. (See fig. 1.). This is home to the classic tsingy, a mixture of low, sharp edged rillenkarren, spitzkarren, and pinnacles up to 30 metres high often covering many inhospitable hectares. Caves are frequent and have so far been discovered up to 18,100 metres in length, many of very impressive dimensions.

Smaller areas of quartzite, granite, sandstone, and basalt in the remainder of the country have also yielded minor but often interesting karst features and caves.

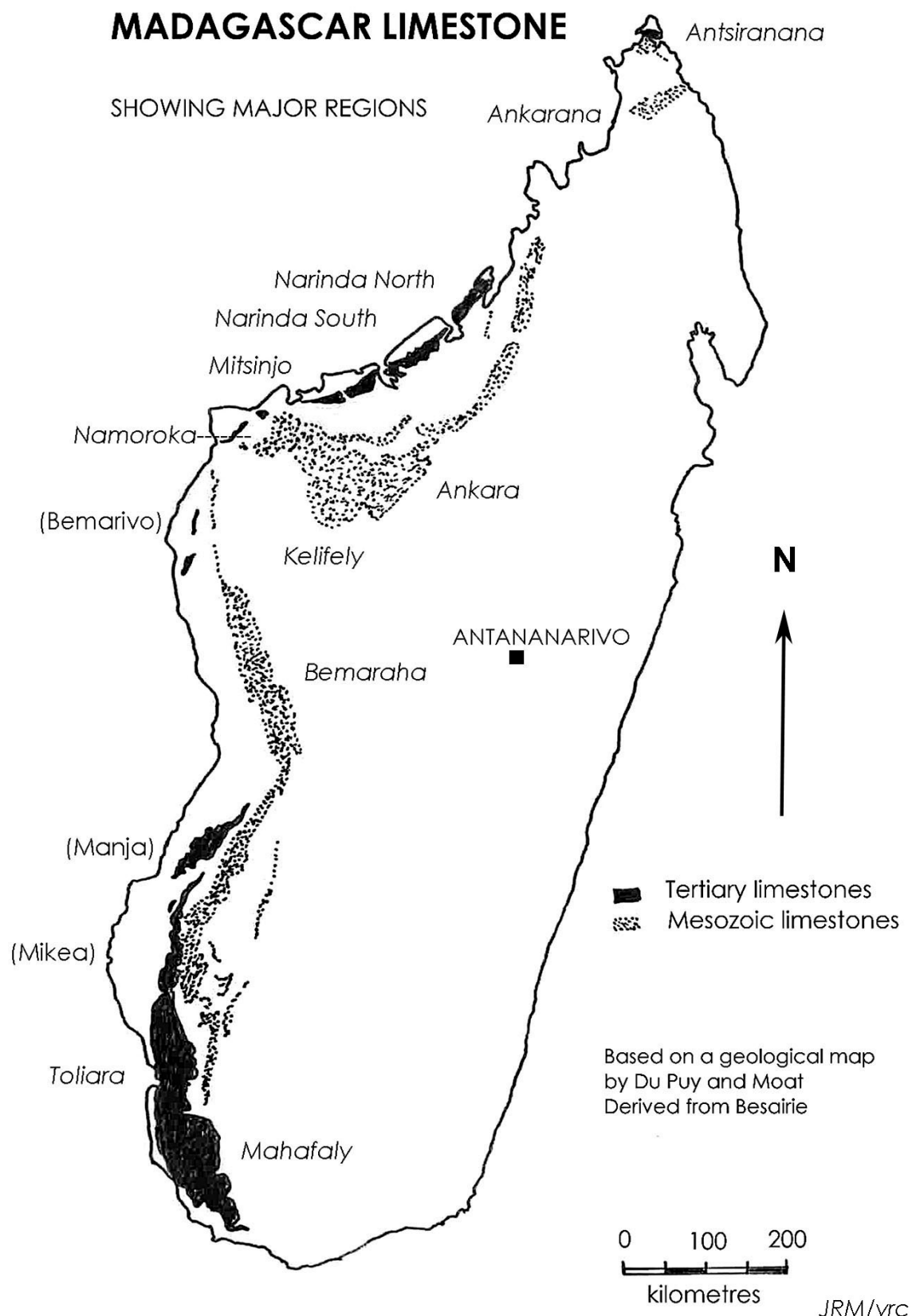
Exploration was first undertaken by French cavers in the early 1930's but it was not until a visit by British speleologists, and the "infamous" Crocodile caves widely reported that the country was really put on the international cavers map. Since then French exploration has continued apace although expeditions from other countries have also contributed some fine discoveries. Potential for further new cave exploration is considerable although these will prove to be of beauty, volume, and reasonable length rather than of great depth and distance. The maximum thickness of limestone is estimated to be around 400 metres.

The inaccessibility of the limestone regions has created oases of exceptional, and frequently endemic, fauna and flora within a landscape often reduced to an arid savannah by the local peoples. The flora in particular shows many extreme adaptations to the environment necessitating care and consideration in exploration.

SOME BIG CAVES.

The following is a summary to the caves and karst of the principle regions. It is intended to produce a more detailed account, with maps, drawings, photos, and references in a forthcoming edition of "*Cave and karst Science*", The Transactions of the British Cave Research Association. Those areas we visited are marked * in this list.

fig. 1. The limestone areas of Madagascar.



ANTSIRANANA*. Around 120 square kilometres of limestone. Grotte aux Pintades – 350m long. Many

small caves and some fine areas of tsingy, dolines and canyons. Little potential.

ANKARANA*. 180 square kilometres of limestone. Over 100 kilometres of cave passageways, often massive, explored. Ambatoharanana – 18,100m long. A 30 kilometre long by up to 8 kilometre wide massif renowned for its spectacular karst landscape of tsingy, canyons up to 200 metres in depth and its “mega” dolines (one known as Manily measures 800m x 600m x 100m deep!). Two river caves are home to up to 6 metre long Nile crocodiles! Well explored but still limited potential.

NARINDA NORTH*. 300 square kilometres of limestone. Ampanito Valakely – 605 metres long. A little visited and difficult to reach area of cone and mogote karst. See “Some Little Ones”.

NARINDA SOUTH*. 300 square kilometres of limestone. Anjohibe – 5,330 metres long. An area of reasonable access and therefore much visited. Cones, mogotes and some small towers.

MITSINJO*. 150 square kilometres of limestone. Anjohibe Lavabatu – 110 metres long. An unusual area of minor karren features. See “Some Little Ones”.

NAMAROKA*. 160 square kilometres of limestone. Anjohiambovonomby – 4,630 metres long. A little visited and highly spectacular region of small massifs riddled with canyons, topped with impenetrable tsingy, and surrounded by large depressions. Good potential but difficult exploration.

ANKARA AND KELIFELY. 8,000 square kilometres of limestone. A huge region that

maps show to have great potential with poljes to 30 square kilometres, cones, mogotes, canyons, and multiple dolines. Unfortunately few visits have been made due to inaccessibility and a problem with bandits.

BEMARAHA*. 4,000 square kilometres of limestone. Over 53 kilometres of cave passageways explored. Anjohy Kibojeny – 9,780 metres long. Similar karst to Namoroka but on a vast scale. Exploration only really commenced in 1992 and since then 81 caves have been surveyed, 12 over 1 kilometre in length. The potential is considerable.

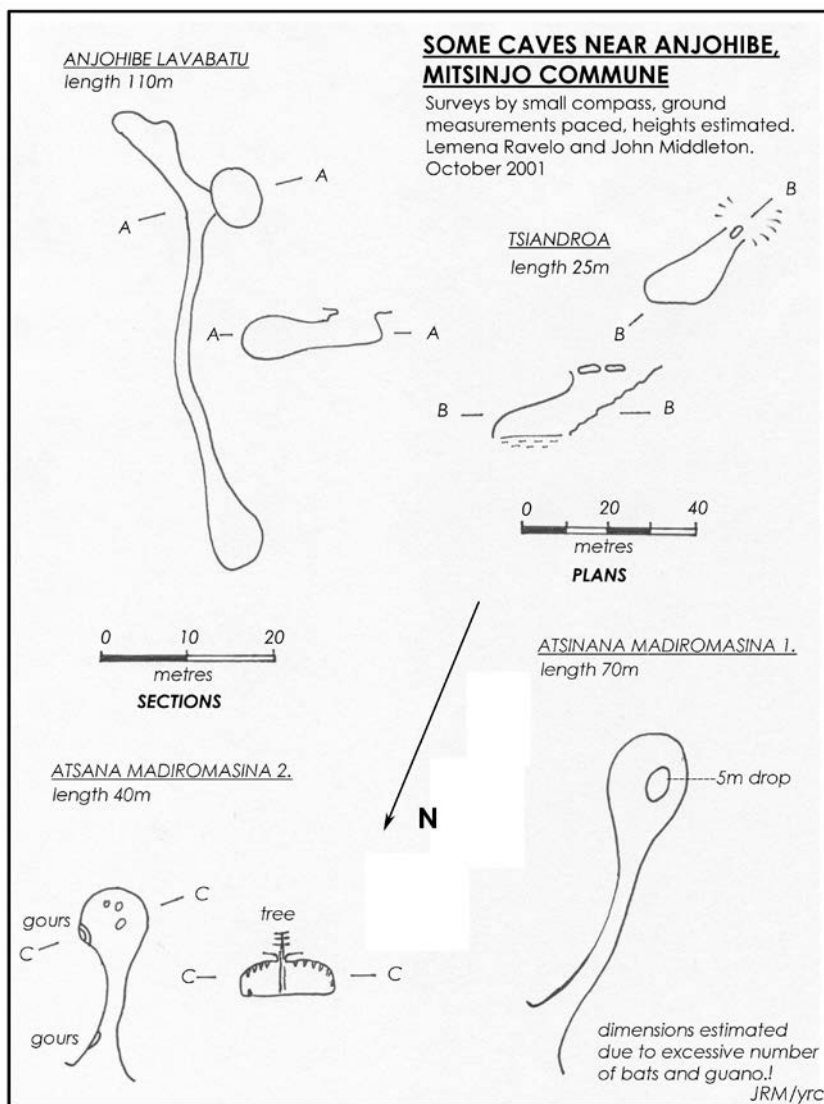
TOLIARI*. 4,000 square kilometres of limestone. L’Aven du Perroquets – 200 metres deep. This region consists of two mountainous massifs, Mikoboka and Belomotra-Vineta, each containing deep shafts and potential.

MAHAFALY. 7,000 square

photo 1. Cone karst by Amboaboaka.



fig. 2. Some caves of the North Narinda Karst.



kilometres of limestone. Lava Boro – 125 metres deep. A large region of low hills and undulating plateaux containing dolines, depressions, dry valleys, caves and shafts. Considerable potential.

SOME SMALL ONES!

An account of several new discoveries made during October of 2001.

NARINDA NORTH. The original purpose of our visit was to study the specialised adaptation of plants to the dry limestone regions of western Madagascar. However, as our travels reached Narinda Bay, a place that our

guide had visited some twelve years ago, we immediately recognised an endless line of rounded hills on the skyline as a possibly uninvestigated area of cone karst. (See photo 1.). From that point on, our educational trip “degenerated” into a fast moving and exhilarating caving expedition with, as usual, insufficient time!

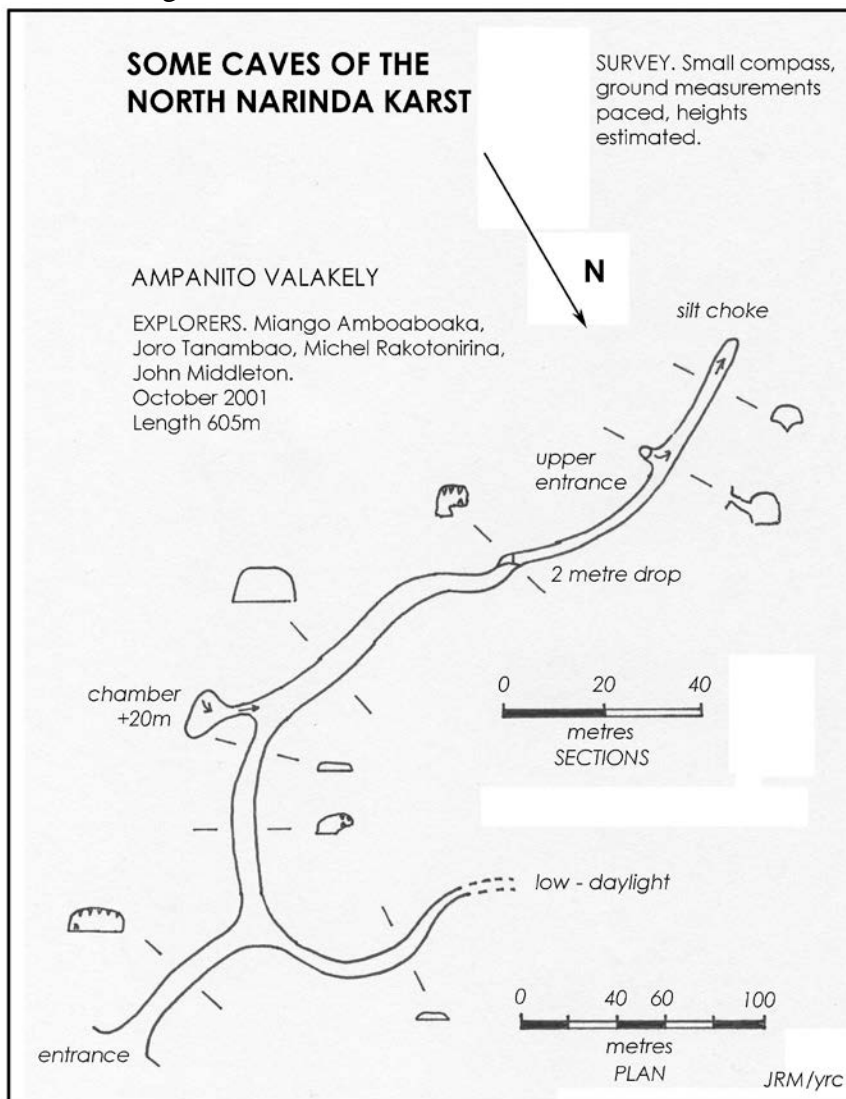
Our first base camp, after a very bumpy three-day journey from Ankarana, was situated idyllically beneath a magnificent Mango tree within the boundaries of the very friendly village of Amboaboaka. This in turn was situated on the edge of a vast area of cones and mogotes each

arising from a flat savannah covered plain. Every hill bristled with sharp edged karren upon which a by now familiar, to us, xerophytic¹ flora proliferated. Small areas of deciduous forest survived around each cones base.

After a lengthy introduction to the village headman and elders together with a discussion of why we were there (in Malagasy which we did not understand!) we were pleased to be allocated several guides (See photo 2.). The very first cave that they took

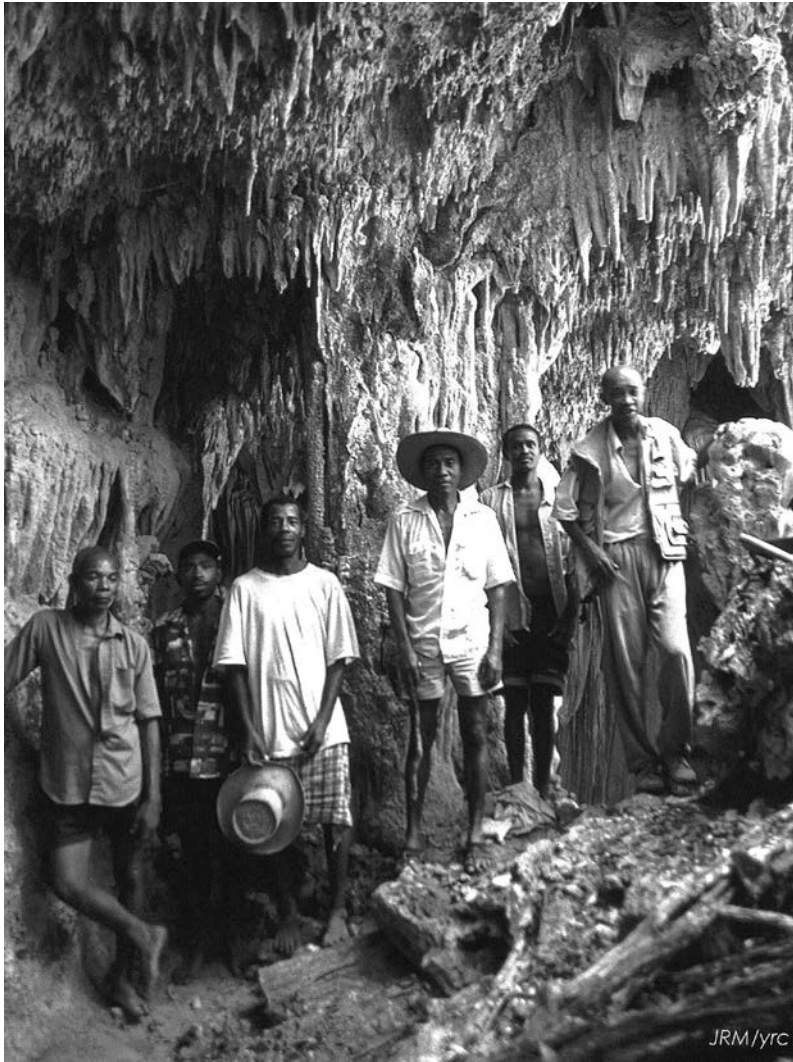
us to, Ampanito Valakely (See fig. 2.), looked amazingly promising and its 15 metre wide by 6 metre high entrance rapidly led to a major cross passage. Superb formations were in abundance and included straws and even small helictites. The areas of particular note were a beautiful chamber about 20 metres above the main passageway and again around a 2-metre scramble. After making a survey with our available gear – legs for length, eyes for height, a small emergency compass for direction, and

fig. 3. More caves of the North Narinda karst



¹ Highly specialised plants able to cope with the arid conditions.

photo 2. Guides in the entrance to Bemagandry Lavabatu.



plant recording paper for notes – we moved on to more hills passing, we don't know why, many visible openings. Each cone or mogote seemed to contain at least one entrance leading to a beautifully decorated chamber and an exhilarating afternoon and morning was spent in this locality. (See fig. 3 and photo 2). The potential here, at least for small systems, is tremendous but unfortunately, investigation of the whole region is particularly difficult due to their being no reference points e.g. each hill looks similar, there are no roads or rivers, zebu² tracks criss cross everywhere, and there are no

² A cross between an oxen and a cow.

large scale maps. We were lost after losing site of the village!"

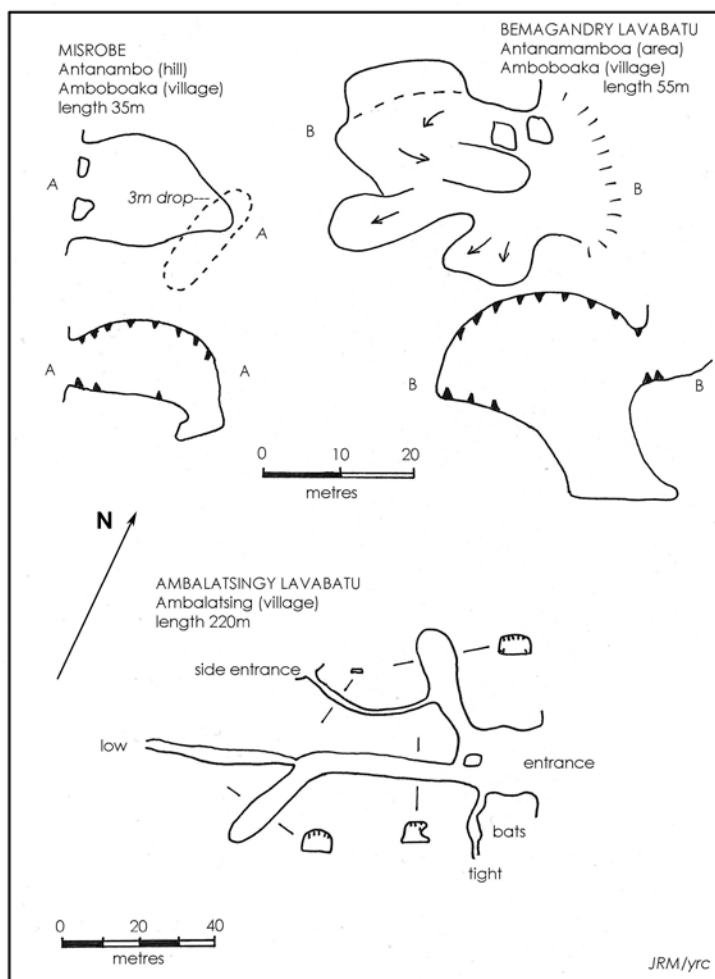
From Amboaboaka we spent an exciting day (see photo 3.) moving further northwards to Ampasindava and Ambalatsingy where a similar array of karst and friendly villagers greeted us. A full day of exploration revealed a similar situation of virgin caves and these were duly checked and surveyed as best we could. For our final day we visited a magnificent mangrove forest situated nearby on the edge of Moramba Bay.

One more, this was edged on several sides by a karst landscape and a pirogue trip into the Bay revealed many untouched, forested, cone shaped islands, dramatically undercut, and covered in karren features.

Needless to say, we plan to return in 2003!

MITSINJO. Upon returning from several days at Namoroka, and with one day to spare, we remembered having read a German report mentioning tower karst close to Mitsinjo. Duly, at the lively town of Mitsinjo we hired a guide who thought he new of such an area. Three hours and three guides later we eventually came across a small village

fig. 4. Some caves near Anjohibe, Mitsinjo.



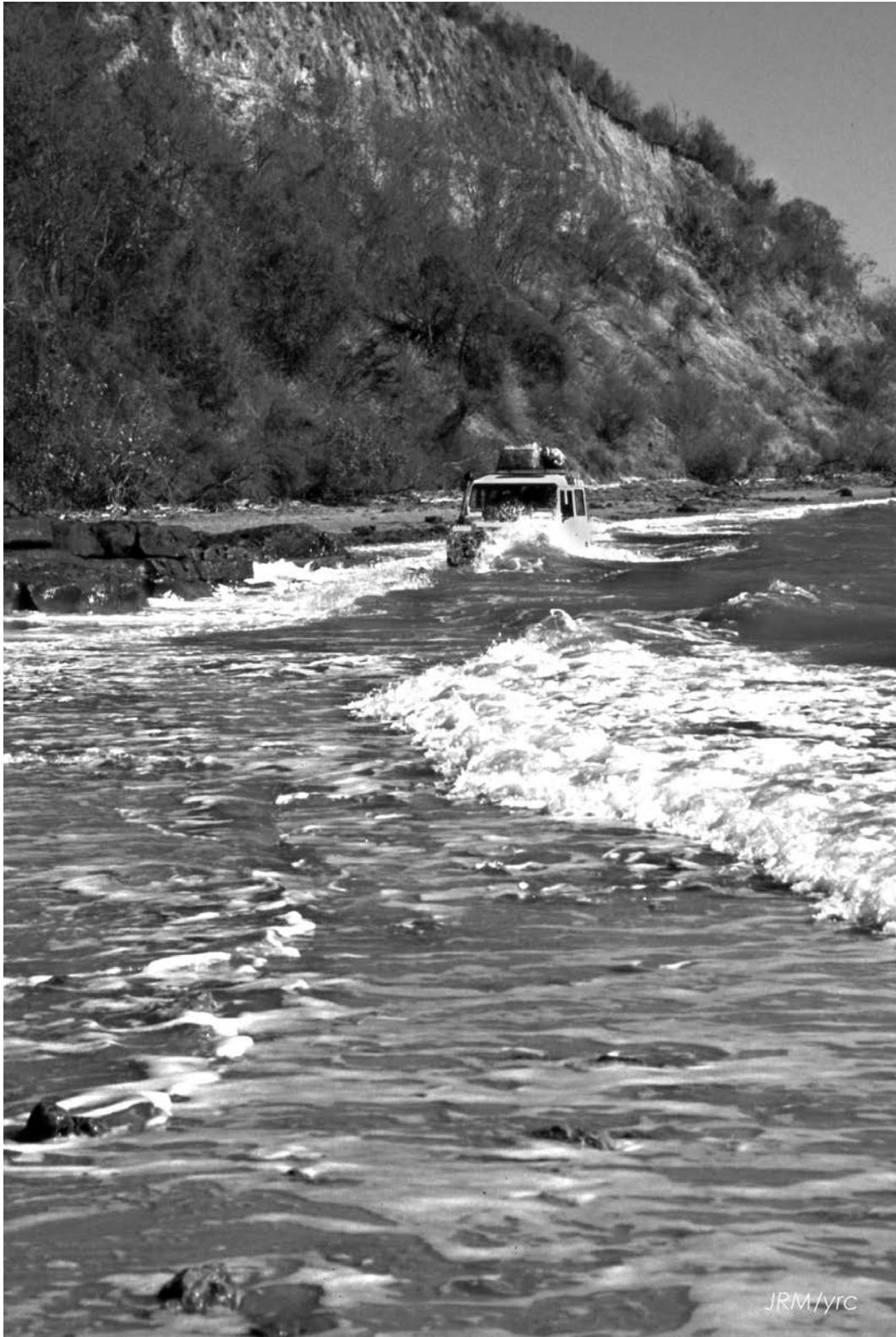
named Anjohibe that sat upon an amazing flat bed of bare limestone. Various diminutive karren forms had developed, as had small areas of dry forest. However, the most interesting features were collapsed caverns, 3 to 4 metres deep, overhanging and up to 6 metres across from which short phreatic passageways led (see fig. 4.). Access to the caves was usually a pole placed by our villager guide – easy to descend but definitely difficult to ascend without losing a considerable amount of “face”. The bare rock covered many hectares and then continued as low karren infilled with red soil and covered with occasional scrub and small trees. Our guide from Anjohibe took us to many similar and often well-decorated caves in this region. On our return home we

immediately checked the German report only to find that their Mitsinjo is situated in the Narinda South karst area! No Speleological references to this area have since been found so we can only presume that this region is unrecorded.

NAMOROKA. Whilst we did not make any new discoveries in this exceptionally beautiful reserve we did visit various major features including the complex 4,630 metre long Anjohiambovonombony cave. It was, however, a visit of amazing adventures that started on our first day of arrival at the small village of Vilandrano and as such is probably worthy of recount – this

really being typical of any excursion to Madagascar! The initial foray was to be an afternoon’s reconnaissance nearby. Our long wheelbase Landrover already contained Toto, our driver, Michel, our main guide, and the two of us. That morning, in Soalala, we had collected the ANGAP guide from the Parks office. We now added the ANGAP representative from Vilandrano and his assistant PLUS three of the villagers complete with shovels, saws, and axes! These were needed to make/remake the track into and around the reserve and then stay with us for the next three days! Needless to say this made for the ultimate 4x4 adventure!

photo 3. The main road between Amboaboaka and Ambalatsingy at low tide!



Triumphant trio triangulate Triglav! A footnote

David Handley

Three members, all with Presidential qualifications and an average age of 69, hashed and re-hashed plans for an attempt on Triglav. The final plan was agreed at about 22:00 hours on the night before departure. It bore no resemblance to the 'final' plan agreed at 18:00 hours.

The resident chauffeur was to make a wide loop east and deposit the trio in a valley north of our camp, but gaining 1000 metres in the process. The threesome were to traverse the peak and meet the dismissed chauffeur at a southern point. OK so far?

On returning, the chauffeur had a brainwave! He would drive to a high point east of Triglav, walk up to the low hut and meet them on day two. The trio hit a good window of weather and made their high hut, stayed the night, ascended Triglav in less than two hours and started the long descent to the southern rendezvous. At this point the plans began to unravel. The fastest past President, carrying little more than a muesli bar, GPS and a pristine map of the Dales (western section) suggested he hurry on and establish with the chauffeur that things were reasonably on schedule. Despite the GPS, etc. he took a wrong turn and, oblivious of the error, ploughed on.



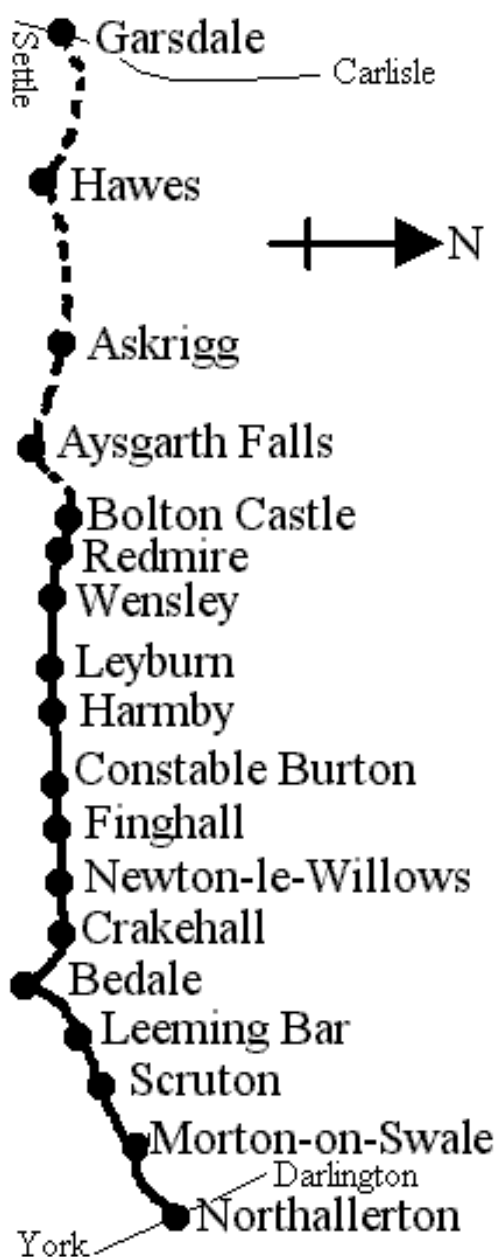
Typically his luck was in. He found the car, for which he had a key, plundered the provisions and settled in for the arrival of the duo. The night passed but no arrivals. He still thought he was in the right place. The chauffeur meanwhile was ensconced alone in the low hut.

The duo, on the agreed route, took forever to reach the forest and light was failing. This is by far the longest route on Triglav. They eventually hit the car track but there was no sign of the expected vehicle. By now exhaustion was setting in, but they happened upon a friendly Slovene who gave them a lift back to base camp by 21:00, having no clue to the whereabouts of the other two. Uneasy night for all! The one appears back at base camp next morning with the chauffeur, jubilant at his navigational skills and the lack of them by the duo. To this day he claims he was the only one on the agreed route. Others know better!

A New Training Regime

Recent publicity relating to the inadequacy of rail services may not make this a good time to draw members' attention to the possibilities of train services for supporting walkers. However planned new services could create alternatives to the usual 'rounds'.

This year may see the start of a one-train service operating between Leeming Bar and Leyburn, provided they gain agreement from the Office of the Rail Regulator, the Strategic



Rail Authority and Her Majesty's Railway Inspectorate. The service would most likely be operated by a heritage multiple unit running three or four round trips per day and will be the next step in restoring the Wensleydale rail service.

Wensleydale Railway Association (WRA) has set up a company to lease from Railtrack the existing 22 mile Wensleydale line for 99 years. A supporting ordinary share purchase scheme aims to raise up to £2½ million towards the cost of reinstating passenger rail services between Northallerton and Garsdale. Specific projects include: It is intended that funds raised by the Offer detailed in the Prospectus will be applied towards the following projects: leasing the Redmire branch; developing the stations at Leeming Bar and Leyburn; connecting with the Settle-Carlisle line at Garsdale via Hawes; and, reinstating the line to Castle Bolton and Aysgarth

The Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority and Richmondshire District Council have confirmed their support for the plans to restore the line and service.

There are already daily rail services between Leeds, Settle and Carlisle all year round, stopping at rural stations. In summer there are special DalesRail trains between Blackpool, Hellifield and Carlisle on most Sundays. All trains are operated by Sprinter diesel; the full journey Leeds-Carlisle, takes a little more than 2½ hours. Times and fare information are available on 08457 484950.

The WRA Secretary can be contacted on 01969 667487 or 650349. Also websites www.wensleydalerailway.com and www.settle-carlisle-railway.org.uk.com have more information.

Morocco 2001

Considering how easy it is to get to, it is surprising that the Atlas is not crawling with people. The central, and more spectacular massif, is becoming busy, but the western end is still rarely visited and has a remote and timeless feel to it.



We met up with Hamish Brown at Marrakech Airport and spent the first night at a busy trekkers' hotel, crowded and basic but at six pounds a night entirely adequate. To pay any more would have been a waste anyway as the muezzin put paid to any ideas of sleep at about 4:30 am. After breakfast, we loaded the Landrovers and set off on a long journey west, then south, then east

around the Atlas mountains to the fine walled city of Taroudant. Here we met up with Ali, our Moroccan version of a Sirdar and Mohammed, our compulsory guide. Mohammed had never visited the Western Atlas before, but once we got through his initial reserve, he proved to be a cheerful and able companion on the hills.



Next day saw us away on dirt tracks through wilder and wilder scenery as we approached the mountains. We stopped to watch the spectacle of flocks of goats populating the spiky argan trees that dot the countryside hereabouts. The argan tree is unique to this area and produces a highly prized oil. Because the tree is very spiny, and the goats love the fruit, the farmers let the goats climb the trees and eat their fill. They then collect the droppings, crush the nuts and extract the oil. I wonder if the London foodies really know what they are paying £25 a half litre for?





Following a lunch stop in a valley covered in brilliant pink oleander bushes, some of us walked up to a village, where we were met by the schoolteacher, who proudly invited us to look around. Schools are obvious as the only concrete buildings among the mud brick and adobe of the villages. Everyone seemed pleased to see us. Indeed, friendliness was a characteristic of all the Berber people we met. One had to feel sorry for the two teachers though. They were city-bred men who, on finishing their training, had been posted up here indefinitely. They seemed happy enough with their lot, and evidence showed a surprisingly good level of education for the children. They all speak Berber of course, Arabic so they can read the Koran, and by the time they are 10 or 11, French as well.

I never mastered three languages at all.

In the late afternoon we reached the roadhead at a soukh- a market where all the nearby villages do their trading, and met up with our mules and their drivers. Whilst they argued over the distribution of loads, we went on a short way to set up camp in a walnut grove. Next day was short in order to acclimatise and we camped near a village, by a small stream – a charming spot. Some went off to explore the village and the intricate irrigation systems which make best use of the very limited water supply, whilst two others climbed a rocky gully to the summit of Adj Taddart, 2573m. Beyond the summit, they met two shepherds, who brewed them mint tea over a tiny fire. They shared dates and chocolate and parted best of





friends. On the way down, they descended the pass that the mules would take on the morrow. They couldn't believe that mules could climb such terrain, let alone heavily laden, but they did. It was good to see that although the animals were worked hard, they were healthy and very well looked after by their owners. I for one, however, always managed to be somewhere else whenever they were crossing the passes!

Next day, some climbed the Tizi (pass) Wadder with the mules, whilst others climbed the unpronounceable Adj Wawsaghmelt, 2926m. on the way to our campsite on a green meadow – our first camp on the Tichka Plateau itself. Normally a mass of daffodils in spring, it was already turning brown, a victim of the drought which has been affecting this area for about 5 years. Indeed, the spring was only a trickle – water was to be in short supply for the whole trip. Most people walked over to the north side of the plateau to look down into the northern valleys where we were to have come up had there been more water available. One

climbed Azrou Azdim, 3143m and got spectacular views of Imaradene and Moulay Ali.

Up early, as we were every day in order to get the hard work done before the heat became excessive, the mules moved camp up to the west end of the plateau. Most of us followed the south rim over Awlim, 3043m and Askam, 3078m, some interesting scrambling and fine views south towards the Anti Atlas and the Sahara. The campsite was in a narrow valley at the head of



the River Nfis, which should have been a brisk bubbling stream. In fact, it was barely a trickle. The lack of water may have led to a laxity (bad word!) in hygiene as regards washing of cooking pots etc. as most of us suffered stomach upsets, one very badly.

Despite all this, however, we decided to celebrate Roger Dix's 70th birthday by climbing Imaradene, 3351m. We climbed to the northern rim and followed it with spectacular views to the fine summit. There can't be too many people who climb to over 11000ft on such an anniversary. On the way back, two people found a splendid swimming hole fed by a trickle in the bed of the Nfis, half an hour from the camp. It was a welcome discovery and did much for the atmosphere around the camp.

For the next ascent, Moulay Ali, 3349m, we split into two parties. Most went with Hamish (see accounts by Derek Bush and Richard Kirby), whilst the other five attempted the unclimbed south ridge. This is a really spectacular mountain, jutting out from

the north wall of the plateau, surrounded by magnificent scenery. The main problems with the south ridge were time and water – not enough of either. However they passed the main difficulty, a breche about 100ft deep, by abseil and went far enough to see that the rest of the ridge presented no major difficulties, so it was a moral victory – almost!

The ridge team had a rest day, swimming and lazing, then the following day took the main Atlas ridge westwards to Aqelmoun, 3251m, an amazing peak made of marble. From a distance it looked problematical, but ledges ran across the south side, and the ascent was quite easy.

With everyone back in camp, it was time to prepare for the descent. Ian Crowther had been very ill and it was thought he might have to be evacuated by mule down the precipitous Tizi-n-Tissel. With one notable exception, everybody was looking forward to this, but sadly he managed to revive sufficiently to walk. The trek out was the hardest day of the trip, with



extreme heat and basically desert conditions. (We heard later that the temperature in Marrakech had hit fifty degrees and it can't have been much different where we were). Salvation came in the form of a tiny shop in a small village. We sat under a walnut tree in the dusty square and drank litres of warm coke, watched with interest by sundry small children and dogs. That night we enjoyed the hospitality of a Berber house, including a banquet consisting for the meat course of a pair of chickens that had been cheerfully scratching around the floor minutes earlier.

We finally returned to Taroudant in two small lorries, following dirt tracks down spectacular valleys then across an endless dusty plain dotted with olive groves. Civilisation, with hot baths and soft beds was never more welcome.

It was a good trip, with the usual YRC facility for everyone to get on with everyone else. I was a little disappointed with the mountains, which were easier than I had hoped, but the area, with its remoteness, ancient villages and the friendly Berber people, left nothing to be desired. I would go again.

Attendance:

Albert Chapman
Derek Bush
Arthur Salmon
Ian Crowther
Roger Dix
Richard Kirby
Kjetil Tveranger
Kolbjorn Nesje Nybo (G)
David Hick
George Burfitt
Tim Josephy
Hamish Brown



Albert, Roger and Hamish on the transport.

Seeing shade at a rest stop



As an alternative to the ascent of Moulay Ali, two of the party descended the valley to the village of Assif Lahion. Highlights of the day were the meetings with the friendly and hospitable Berber people.

The colourfully dressed young Berber women we passed on our descent were climbing 1300m up to the plateau. We met them again on their return journey when they were carrying one metre square bales of fodder back to the village. They make this trip most days during the growing season.

On the approach to the village we accepted the offer of a drink from Hasan, who was returning from work in the fields, only to be treated to a meal with the men of the house whilst Hasan's wife and daughters looked on. Water for washing and many glasses of mint tea were followed by rice with goat's milk butter, a huge plate of nuts, caramel with sesame seeds, pitta bread and more mint tea.

The rest of the party who had returned from Moulay Ali waited patiently for us at the bivouac site. We neither needed nor relished the evening meal of tinned sardines. Descent rather than ascent had given us a memorable day.

Richard Kirby



Goats in a tree

The Ascent of Moulay Ali and Other Stories

Moulay Ali is an impressive cone shaped peak, whose southern face, when viewed from the northern rim of the Tichka Plateau looks almost vertical.

Our base for the ascent was a bivouac half way down a steep pass (tizi), which linked several Berber villages around the plateau. One of these villages was the birthplace of our head guide Ali.

The walk to the bivi site, carrying full gear, was a good hard day in itself but it had to be made into a minor epic for Arthur Salmon and the writer by a deliberately circuitous traverse of the hills at the top of the pass. We had reached the top of the tizi well before midday and then all it required was a straightforward descent to the bivi site. However as members will know, the YRC like to make things difficult for themselves, so Arthur and I decided to add a few more tops before we went down.

The president accompanied us to the first top to assess the progress of the climbing party who were attempting the south ridge. Having reassured himself that all was well he wisely returned to the pass. Our afternoon's adventure is another story and suffice to say that by the time we arrived back at the tizi, it was past five pm. We had walked through the heat of the afternoon, run out of water, traversed some horrible ground and to say the least, tempers were somewhat frayed.

Mohammed and Ali, who had been somewhat concerned about our whereabouts met us at the tizi and replenished our water supplies. Arthur very sensibly took the well-graded

path down. I decided to follow Mohammed and Ali on a more direct route (will I ever learn!). I ended up in terrible trouble over a dried up waterfall trying to follow instructions from the main party below. Eventually, Hussain, one of the porters, came up to help and took my rucksack from me. It was all rather ignominious but I was extremely grateful. Arthur was waiting with the rest of the party at the bivi site. Hamish made no comment, which was probably just as well.

The one redeeming feature was that whilst this was going on a group of young Berber girls were coming over the pass in the late evening sun, carrying huge bales of hay on their heads and singing with great clarity and sweetness. They were answered by the calls of two shepherd boys on the opposite side of the valley who were rounding up their flocks for the night. The scene was part biblical and part truly memorable mountain experience. It made my self inflicted sufferings all worthwhile.

The bivi site was an old sheep pen. We all opted to sleep outside the pen and after one of Hamish's Spartan meals we retired for the night as darkness set in at about 8pm. I was too tired to sleep immediately but lay on my bag watching the satellites pass overhead, and the late evening flights into Marrakech

We were awake by 5:20am and by ten past six our party, consisting of the President, Hamish, Arthur and myself, accompanied by Mohammed and Ali was away. The route took an interesting line with some good scrambling and was perhaps no more difficult than a typical Skye rock peak. The two Berbers left us at a col some 500ft below the summit to go exploring on their own. We were on

top by 9:30am. Hamish said this was about standard time – praise indeed! He also told us this was only the fifth or sixth European ascent. We were quite impressed by this until on reaching the summit a casual glance around revealed that the locals must have been dragging their unfortunate animals to the summit for sacrificial purposes for centuries!

We spent half an hour on the summit in pleasant sunshine before returning to the col by a slightly easier route. We then had some very interesting slabs to negotiate on the way down. It's funny how you don't notice the difficulties on the way up, but we were back in camp by 12:30pm just as it was getting really hot. We drank pints of tea and spent the afternoon under a huge rock in the shade, reminiscing about previous treks, boring only ourselves because there was no one else to listen. Hamish took himself off out of earshot. A very wise man!

We again listened to the girls as they came down the pass. This time I was in a more relaxed mood and it was even more enchanting. I can only make comparison with the sound of Sherpanis singing in the high Nepalese settlements. Two mountain races making divine music.

Later that evening, Roger and Richard met the girls as they ascended from the village after an afternoon of genuine Berber hospitality, but that is another story!

Derek Bush



Imaradene – Seventy One

As I awoke on 23 May 2001, I gradually became aware that this was my birthday and I had reached the grand old age of 71! If anybody had told me, before I became a Yorkshire Rambler, that I would be spending my 71st birthday in the Western Atlas of Morocco, I would have found it highly unbelievable. We were camped on the Tichka Plateau at 3,000 metres and today were to climb Imaradene, 3,351m, the highest peak on the plateau by some two metres from adjoining Moulay All.

During breakfast the rest of the group formed a circle and regaled me with “Happy Birthday”. This caused some amusement to our muleteers, unaccustomed to Western ways.

After breakfast we were led out on our ascent by Hamish. The route commenced up a wide but rocky and steep gully. At the top of this, the more adventurous ascended a large rock somewhat resembling the Cioch. We also discovered why Hamish was carrying a short-handled ice axe. This was to enable him to dig up some bulbs of wild daffodils which thrive in wet areas locally. Apparently, he has a licence to export these.

We continued over a small plateau and climbed to a bealach giving us

our first views of both Imaradene, Moulay Ali and surrounding peaks. Of particular note was Djebel Tingwert which still had patches of snow. At this point Tim Josephy, David Hick, George Burfitt and the two Norwegians went on ahead as it was their intention to continue beyond Imaradene to a further peak. Hamish also left us, to return to camp. As we followed the ridge to the summit, we were treated to views of impressive granite rock walls descending for several thousand feet. The ridge gave scrambling of varying standards, depending on the route taken. After about eleven hours we reached the summit which, whilst not being particularly impressive in itself, gave us extremely good views over the surrounding mountains.

In true YRC fashion, arguments took place over the best route to return to base and the party split into three, all eventually returning safely.

At the end of the evening meal, I had a pleasant surprise when I was presented with a delicious birthday cake, courtesy of Sammie Chapman. The cake sported three candles (some 68 short!), one of which played “Happy Birthday” persistently! All, our cook and head man, wished me “Happy Birthday” and was surprised to learn my age. After this I was known by our muleteers as “71”!

A memorable birthday. What more can one wish than a first-class day on the hills in good company?

Roger Dix

Roger between
Albert and Hamish





David Hick

Tim Josephy



Book Reviews by Bill Todd

The Climbers Club Centenary Journal.

Edited by Terry Gifford.
£16.99 pp 303 hb.

This outstanding collection of articles, photographs, poems and stories was produced to celebrate the Centenary of the Climbers Club which was in 1998. The amount of fascinating material in it makes it very good value for money for all except those who have access to the CCJ from its inception.

I recognised three articles, by Edwards, Archer Thompson, and ADM Cox which had appeared in Noyce and Pyatt's excellent 1952 anthology "British Crags and Climbers". There are many other articles and stories of a similar high standard.

Of particular interest to Yorkshire climbers is a description of Parsons Chimney at Almscliffe (p81) which was first climbed by Mr. William Parsons of the YRC. But of course the bulk of the material concerns North Wales and the Alps.

Particularly interesting are Alf Bridge's story of how he got into climbing (p85) and, even more absorbing, a history of the club by Pip Hopkinson. Really funny this one in parts, When Ken Wilson proposed the substitution of "persons" for "gentlemen" in Rule 2, the committee thought this was about letting working class men join the club.

The photographs, all black and white, are excellent and plentiful there are 86 of them not counting

the two superb colour photographs by Ken Wilson on the dust jacket. Pictures of Yorkshire climber Ian Clough appear more than once also of Eric Beard who went about with Harold Barraclough's group for a while in the early sixties. The Willie Todd who appears in a picture of Pembroke activists is regrettably no relation to this reviewer.

The verse is well worth a read too. There is a very good parody on the Hamlet "To be or not to be" but my favourite is A. D. Godley's "Ode on a Very Distant Prospect" which both rhymes and scans and lends itself to being sung to the tune of "The Road to Mandalay".

I take issue with Mr. Gifford on the layout. The book is divided into ten sections and although the thinking behind them is explained I cannot think why the material is not just put in chronological order. I cannot for the life of me understand why "First Ascent of the East Buttress of Lliwedd" 1899 is included in Section 2, Hiraeth, whatever that means, on page 44, "First Ascent of Great Gully" 1902 is in Section 3, "Spirit of the Age", on page 80, and "East Peak of Lliwedd, Avalanche Route", 1909, is in Section 9 "It Refused to be a Mountain" on page 274. Sorry Terry, I think you are trying to be too clever here.

But the peculiarity of the juxtaposition does not detract from the enjoyment of the contents and this book would be a splendid present for a climber.

The Wildest Dream. Mallory , His Life And Conflicting Passions.

Peter and Leni Gillman Headline.

£18.99 pp.304 hb.

“I was beaten by the head of the House four days running for refusing to play cricket “ No, this is not a quotation from the above but from F. Spencer Chapman’s “From Helvellyn to Himalaya”. It seems that a lot of people who are good at or even interested in mountaineering have little use for “organised games” “When you think about it the only good reason for keeping twenty-two or thirty boys kicking or hitting a leather covered ball is that authority can see what they are doing and hope they will be too tired to get into mischief when they have finished the aforesaid kicking and hitting.

George Mallory was on the staff at Charterhouse and on returning to work after the summer holidays of 1911 he “turned against organised sport on the ground that it was wrong to force boys to take part if their aptitudes lay elsewhere”.

I have vivid memories of being required to play cricket on summer evenings when I would far rather have been climbing trees in the local woods. That was the price for going to a Grammar School which was imitating what is laughingly known as a Public School.

So I am on Mallory’s side, I am also on the Gillmans’ side for writing such an excellent, insightful biography. We are told enough about Mallory’s ancestry to establish him as upper middle or minor upper class. These things are important because while he was away on expeditions, although he did his best to avoid losing

financially, there was no possibility of his dependants starving because Daddy was paying Mrs. Mallory a substantial, for those days, allowance of £750 per annum.

We get a most interesting insight into the differences in outlook and opinion between the Royal Geographical Society and the Alpine Club. Mind you, I suppose the Mount Everest Committee, the joint body, had to be a bit careful after the cashier absconded with £700, about £16,000 in today’s money.

As well as a rounded picture of Mallory the man, the Gillmans give thumbnail sketches of other expedition members and a useful summary of the ups and downs of the three expeditions in which Mallory took part. The descriptions of the Pen y Pass gatherings are absorbing and I was most interested to find that Rawson Owen, remembered as a shadowy figure in the background in the fifties, had served both in the Boer War and the 1914-18 conflict.

However carefully edited most books fail to achieve one hundred per cent accuracy but the reference to Abraham’s “Rock Climbing in the English Lake District” should have been picked up. Surely everybody knows it was Owen Glyn Jones who wrote it.

Notwithstanding this here we have an excellent book both for text and illustrations, a worthy winner of the Boardman Tasker prize. You will not be disappointed with it.

Your Editor had the privilege of attending Peter Gilman’s lecture to AC members in the north. Peter spoke authoritatively and entertainingly for a couple of hours with barely a reference to any notes.

Club Proceedings

2001

The Meets were

- 12-14 Jan Hill Inn, Chapel le Dale
- 2-4 Feb Low Hal Garth;
- 23-25Feb Tan-y-Wyddfa, N Wales
- 4-6 May Ladies Weekend Devil's Bridge, Wales
- 17-31 May Morocco
 - 1 Jun Cycling replaces walking, etc. during the Foot and Mouth Disease emergency
- 23 June, The Very Long Cycle Ride, Lowstern to Tan Hill and back
- Jun / July Lowstern and John Muir Trail, California
- 19-22 July Alex MacIntyre Hut, Onich
- 31Aug-2 Spt Working Party, Lowstern
- 17-19 Aug Lowstern
 - 7-9 Sept Llansannan, N Wales
- 31Aug-14Spt Julian Alps, Slovenia
- 21-23 Sept Joint Meet, RLH, Langdale
- 17-18 Nov AGM & Annual Dinner, Whoop Hall, Kirkby Lonsdale
- 7- 9 Dec Ennerdale, Christmas Meet.

The year started with a return to the Hill Inn after ten years in January followed by LHG in February. However the year 2001 will be long remembered as the year of the Foot and Mouth epidemic. It all started for us with a notice on the Snowdon path gate on the morning of our meet on the 25th February when at the Oread hut in N Wales and it was not until the 29th November that all the country was declared clear. Regardless of the disappointment, Club activities did not cease. The regular Tuesday day meets continued with various activities,

climbing walls, cycle rides, canal walks, town or village walks and hut maintenance. The Ladies' Meet was not called off, but we were reduced to walks in the forest and along lanes. This plus a good dinner made the event a success. Twelve members went out to Morocco with Hamish Brown of Munro fame, whilst four went west to California and the John Muir Trail.

Full marks to Derek Collins for his inspiration in replacing the Long Walk with a Long Cycle Ride in June. Scotland was clear of FMD by the end of July and we squeezed in and well-attended meet at the excellent Alex MacIntyre Memorial Hut in Onich. A new location for a Welsh meets in September was Llansannan, followed by the Harry Spillsbury Memorial meet at RLH. The beautiful little country of Slovenia saw an open meet attracting 16 people. Then in October we had a return to the first class Rucksack Club hut in Dunnerdale. The Christmas meet saw a return to the scout hut in Ennerdale for the Christmas festivities.

The 2001 Annual Dinner was quite outstanding, as Chief Guest we had the Chinese Ambassador in recognition of the wonderful support given to our team in Guangxi last year. The soon to retire General Secretary of the BMC was also invited and for the first time we had the company of the Pinnacle Club. Our friend Pamela Holt, of Bolivian and botanical fame, represented them and we also had Sue Allen, Roger's widow, to represent the Grampian Club. Arguably, the best dinner for some time. Alan Brown was acclaimed unanimously at the AGM as an Honorary Member in recognition of his continued concern for his fellow members who are unable to attend meets.

The 110th Annual General Meeting was held at Whoop Hall, Kirkby Lonsdale, on the 17th November 2001.

The following members were elected for the year 2001/2002:-

President: A. R. Chapman

Vice President: D. J. Handley

Hon. Secretary: R. G. Humphreys

Hon. Meets Secretary: J. H. Hooper

Hon. Treasurer: G. A. Salmon

Hon. Editor: M. Smith

Hon Librarian/Archivist: W. N. Todd

Huts Secretary: R. D. Josephy

Hut Wardens:

Low Hall Garth, Derek
English and

M.J.Edmundson

Lowstern, R. D. Kirby

Hon. Auditor: C. D. Bush

Committee: G. Campion,
I. D. F. Gilmour,

M. Hartland, A. Renton

Representatives to National
Committees

Council of Northern Caving Clubs
H. A. Lomas

BMC Lancs & Cheshire: C.N.Bird

Lake District: K. Aldred

Yorks & Humberside: W. N. Todd

The 88th Annual Dinner followed at the same hotel. The President, A R Chapman, was in the chair. The Chief Guest was The Chinese Ambassador, His Excellency Ma Zhengang, special guests were Roger Payne of the BMC and Irvine Butterfield of the John Muir Trust. Kindred Clubs were represented by Glyn Hughes, Secretary of the Alpine Club, Sue Allen, Grampian Club, Chris Ambler, Gritstone Club, Pamela Holt, Pinnacle Club, Brian Davison, Scottish Mountaineering

Club, David Wood, President of the Wayfarers Club and the Ambassadors aide, Chento Guo. The Ambassador generously proposed 'Chinese and British co-operation in the Hills and Caves', Roger Payne proposed the health of the 'Yorkshire Ramblers' Club'. The President responded to both toasts. Ged Campion proposed the 'Health of Kindred Clubs and Guests' with a response from Pamela Holt. Arthur Salmon led the singing of 'Yorkshire' accompanied by Neil Renton.

Membership comprised:

114 Ordinary members

65 Life Members

1 Honorary/Ordinary Member

3 Honorary / Life Members

1 Honorary Member

Total 184

New Members, Resignations and Deaths

New Members

2001 Michael J Edmundson

Edward Edkins

John Jenkins

Peter Wood

Resignations

2001 None

Deaths

2001 J Geoffrey Brook

Sidney Fry

John Gerald Lee

F.D.Smith

Chippings

The Arts and Humanities Research Board, an august body redistributing taxes to academics allocated £2529 to a Sheffield University researcher, Dr J Wylie, for “Enacting landscape” which involves walking the South West Coast Path. Dr Wylie’s approach to the walk challenges existing approaches.

Summer 2001 saw Jonathan Laing cycling a tortuous route from northern Scotland to the Dales climbing many peaks along the way and supported for over a month by parents Una and **Ian Laing**.

The whole project went to plan apart from him being unable to climb one of the Dales peaks due to foot and mouth restrictions. It proved a real endurance test with some horrendous conditions for the cycling bits such as the trip from Motherwell to Carlisle over Beattock in pouring rain. By way of compensation the mountain climbing on Skye and Torridon had surprisingly good weather.

Jonathan raised £7,500 for the charities Cancer Research Campaign and Make a Wish Foundation in memory of his brother, Andy.

The coldest night **Jeff Hooper** recalls ever spending was on the North Yorkshire Moors in April 1971 when early morning eggs dropped into a frying pan on a large primus at full blast wouldn’t even change colour.

Tips for anyone trekking independently in Nepal, from **George Spenceley**, are to employ a recommended porter who will devotedly see to your needs, rather than employing a guide who will then insist on the employment of a porter. A disadvantage is that a porter’s English conversation skills are likely to be poor.

George suggests Pokhara’s medium priced Hotel Nirvana, Lake Side, Baidam 6, contactable by e-mail at nirvana@cnet.wlink.com.np. Run by the Nepalese Ganga and British Ailsa Colston, it is welcoming, friendly, spotlessly clean and a good source of contacts and advice.

Raymond Harben was lately reading **Jeff Hooper’s** article “A Reminder of the YRC” in the Winter 2000 issue of the Bulletin. He mentioned the article to a Rotarian friend, the Director of the York Archaeological Trust, Dr. Peter Addyman and asked if he knew of Erik Addyman. He said that he had known him quite well as he was his father!

“Yorkshire, (a sort of English Texas peopled by coarse braggarts and one or two decentish slow bowlers).” from *Flashman and the Tiger* by George MacDonald Fraser.

High Moss, Duddon Valley

12 - 14 October 2001

“Go through a few gates, cross a few fields, and when you think you are lost you are nearly there.” Such were the directions from the landlord of the Newfield Inn to find High Moss, and very accurate they were too. Once found, High Moss proved to be a most comfortable, spacious establishment set in a remote position in the middle of the beautiful Duddon Valley.

Saturday dawned misty but mild but with the (unfulfilled) promise of better weather to come. One party set off westwards but found their way blocked by foot and mouth restrictions; the main area of the Lakes, however, was completely unrestricted. Several parties followed the Walna Scar road to take in various tops, including Dow Crag, Swirl How, The Carrs and the Old Man. Occasional brief glimpses of neighbouring hills threatened an improvement in the weather, but it never really materialised.

A party of three, with a combined age conservatively estimated at around 200 found themselves at the foot of Giant's Crawl on Dow Crag and decided there was nothing for it but to climb. Conditions were extremely slippery, but some satisfaction was gained by the fact that a much younger party ahead was having considerably more trouble. Eventually they were persuaded to stand aside, and our trio reached the top in some style. It being but 4:30, they decide to take in the Old Man on the way home. On the top, the fateful words were uttered - "All we have to do is retrace our steps to Goats' Hause, anyone can do that". Some time later, having inspected hitherto unexplored parts of the mountain, they did find the Hause,

and descended in time to see a gentle autumn sunset across Seathwaite Tarn. Given the choice of two paths, one each side of the Tam, they naturally chose the worst one and it was well dark by the time they had extricated themselves from the craggy hillside (of course they all had torches, didn't they?).

Back at High Moss, dinner was in full swing, an excellent repast centred on a vast Yorkshire ham. Such was the quality and quantity of food and wine that no one felt the need to venture out for further entertainment. Topics of conversation were wide ranging as usual and carried on far into the night.

Sunday saw the departure of all but three of the Meet. This sorry habit has been remarked upon before; in this case the leavers were the losers, for the early rain cleared and the remaining three enjoyed a warm day and a fine expedition around Seathwaite Tarn and Wallowbarrow Gorge. Magnificent scenery, wonderful autumn colours and good company combined to make it a memorable day. Our thanks go to David Handley for his excellent catering, and the Rucksack Club for the use of their hut.

Attendance:

The President, Albert Chapman
Derek Bush
Ian Crowther
Iain Gilmour
Mike Godden
David Handley
Robert Ibberson (G)
John Jenkin
Tim Josephy
John Lovatt
David Smith
Derek Smithson
Frank Wilkinson

Annual Dinner
Whoop Hall Hotel,
Kirby Lonsdale

17 –19 November 2001

One hundred and four souls sat down to an excellent Dinner, the chief guest being His Excellency Mr Ma Zhengang, Ambassador to the Court of St James from the Peoples Republic of China. Of no little interest to his table companions was the Ambassador's chauffeur and bodyguard, who had previously been a MIG15 pilot. He developed an immediate taste for Black Sheep beer. Wine and beer flowed; friendships were rekindled with long-lost friends and guests from kindred clubs, including the Pinnacle Club (whose representative was out on the crags with members with members), all of whom got a glimpse of the YRC's

eccentricity and style.

Speeches were brief, informative and witty, each adding to the buzz of a special occasion. The Ambassador noted that in China the number 8 is auspicious and therefore the 88th Dinner brimmed with auspiciousness for the Club's future.

The YRC filled the accommodation at the Whoop Hall including caravans, much of Hipping Hall and Lowstern in its entirety. Full English breakfast was served at Lowstern for the first time and proved a great success.

It was a weekend of stable high pressure. The weather was clear, still and cool. On Sunday groups ambled, some aimlessly and some with purpose, on local hills. Some shinned up scars and others crawled and dropped down holes. A party unfamiliar with the Club dig visited the location and were impressed with



Pamela Holt, Pinnacle Club and Alpine Club, at Twistleton Scar

both progress and potential. Something could be on here!

Thanks go to a host of members who each contributed to the success of the occasion. Black tie, menu cards and generous hospitality for our guests may be less commonly experienced now but remain the lynch pin of our annual jamboree.

DJHandley

PS Amongst several challenges issued to the Club by the President one was to compose a new verse for our song 'Yorkshire'. As far as I know there are no songwriters in the Club but there are plenty who will see this challenge as a huge opportunity.

Security amidst loose rock
at the top of Twistleton Scar



Attendance:

The President, Albert Chapman

His Excellency Mr Ma Zhengang

Aide to the Ambassador, Chento Guo

Ambassador's chauffeur

Ken Aldred

Sue Allen, Grampian Club

Chris Ambler, Gritstone Club

Andy Anderson, Guest

Dennis Armstrong

David Atherton

Denis Barker

John Barton

Bruce Bensley

David Blackburn, Guest

Adrian Bridge

Alan Brown

Victor Bugg

George Burfitt

Peter Burton, Guest

Derek Bush

Irvine Butterfield, John Muir Trust

Ged Champion

Peter Chadwick

Iain Chapman

Albert Chapman

Alan Coates, Guest

Cliff Cobb

Sean Collins, Guest

Robert Crowther

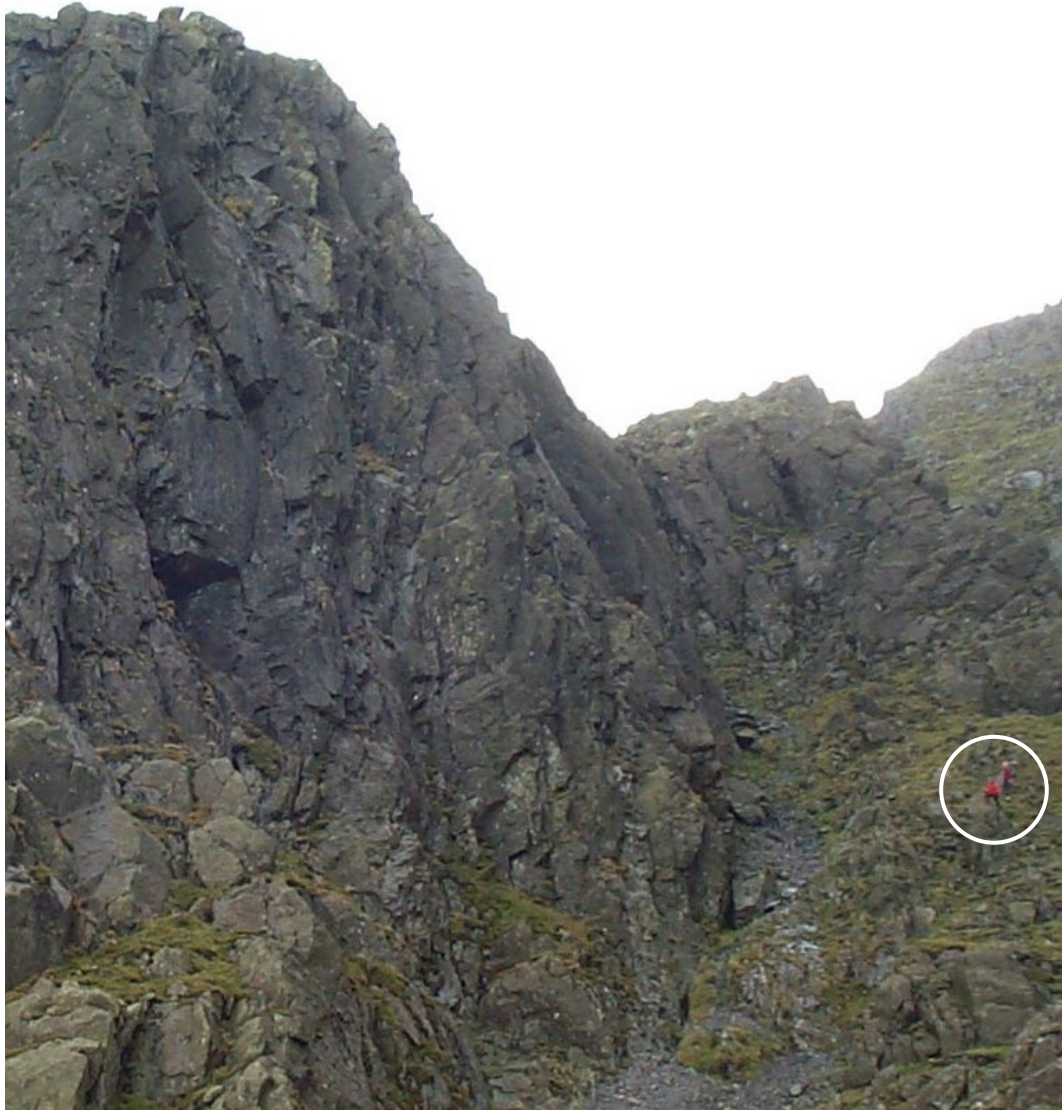
Brian Davison, SMC

Roger Dix	Harvey Lomas
Stuart Dix	John Lovett
Michael Donald, Guest	Don Mackay
Eddie Edkins	Duncan Mackay
Mike Edmundson	Dave Martindale
John Farrar, Guest	Frank Milner
Alan Fletcher	Martin Milner
Jeff Ford, Guest	Peter Moss
Jim Foster, Guest	Roger Payne, BMC
David Gamble, Guest	Sean Penny
Ian Gilmour	Tony Penny
Mike Godden	Frank Platt
Richard Gowing	George Postill
David Handley	Chris Renton
Mike Hartland	Neil Renton, Guest
Bill Hawkins	Alistair Renton
John Hemingway	Jon Riley
David Hick	Harry Robinson
David Holmes	Arthur Salmon
Pamela Holt, Pinnacle Club	Graham Salmon
Jeff Hooper	John Schofield
Gordon Humphreys	Jack Short
Howard Humphreys	David Smith
Jason Humphreys	Michael Smith
John Jenkin	George Spenceley
Conrad Jorgensen	David Stembridge
Richard Josephy	John Sterland
Tim Josephy	Trevor Temple, Guest
Alan Kay	Bill Todd
Richard Kirby	John Varney
Ian Laing	Frank Walker, Guest
Cliff Large	Frank Wilkinson
David Large	David Wood Wayfarers Club
David Laughton	Alan Wood
Alan Linford	Peter Wood
Bill Lofthouse	Martin Wragg Alpine Club
Tim Lofthouse	

Christmas Meet, Ennerdale Bridge 7-9 December 2001

I note from a previous Meet Report, that the last Christmas Meet at Cumbrian County Scout Hut at Ennerdale Bridge was in December 1997. Remarks were made in this Report to the long drives required to get there. This is amply compensated for by the beauty of the situation, the comparative lack of people on the hills and the good condition of the paths by comparison with more easily accessible parts of the Lake District.

The weather, on arrival, was dull and wet but the hut was soon made cheerful by the lighting of the open fire and the erection of a large Christmas tree. This was felled from the surrounding area with the permission of Tom Bell, the hut warden. The tree was not put up without incident as one member suffered a cut to his hand whilst trimming the tree with an axe provided by the Meet Leader. Several First Aid kits were produced and the damage soon remedied. Whilst the hut itself is fairly basic, it had recently been fitted out with orthopaedic mattresses which proved



Members (circled) considering New West on Pillar Rock

most comfortable.

After settling in, some members commenced preparing supper. Others braved the weather to walk to the Hotel in Ennerdale Bridge. Apparently, this hostelry boasted good food and drink as well as a rather attractive barmaid.

During supper and afterwards, a fairly generous quantity of liquid refreshment was consumed and the evening became noticeably jollier as it progressed.

The weather forecast for the following day was reasonably hopeful but some

doubts were felt by those of us who needed to make nocturnal excursions as the rain could be heard lashing down on the roof. However by the morning, the rain had been replaced by sunshine and much colder conditions.

After an excellent cooked breakfast (including black pudding), parties set out on various routes. Some ascended the Northern Ridge including Great Borne, Red Pike, High Stile and High Crag. One party reached Scarth Gap before descending into Ennerdale. Others walked the Southern Ridge taking in Pillar, Steeple and Crag Fell.



Tim Josephy at dusk having abseiled into the gap between Pillar's High Man and Pisgah (Photographs by Michael Smith)

One party of four set out to climb New West on Pillar's High Man but due to the extremely wet conditions, only two did the actual climb. The two who did the climb found it so wet and greasy and the going so slow, that they were included in the toast for absent friends! However, they did make an appearance halfway through the meal.

The meal was of the usual high standard, comprising:- Salmon Terrine, Soup, Roast Pork and all the trimmings, Christmas Pudding, "Marcian" Mince Pies, full Cheese Board, Coffee and Mints.

The Vice President gave the after-dinner speech in the absence of the President who was attending the Alpine Club dinner on our behalf. During the speech he quoted from records of the Keighley Grammar School Rambling Section in which our President's name occurred on numerous occasions.

Afterwards, Alan Kay showed us some of his slides from the YRC trip to the John Muir Trail in July 2001. These gave us a good idea of the grandeur of the Rocky Mountains.

Sunday was an even better day than Saturday. Some members took advantage of these conditions to venture out once more on the hills before returning home.

This was another successful Christmas Meet, enhanced by the weather. Our thanks go to Alan Linford, Ken Aldred (sous-chef) and their helpers and to Gordon Humphries for operating the Bar.

Roger Dix

Attendance:

David Handley, VP
Ken Aldred
David Atherton
Dennis Barker
Derek Bush
Alan Glare
Derek Clayton
Ian Crowther
Peter Daws, Guest
Roger Dix
Derek English
Iain Gilmour
Mike Godden
Mike Hartland
Gordon Humphries
David Hick
Tim Josephy
Alan Kay
Richard Kirby
Alan Linford
Harvey Lomas
John Lovett
David Martindale
Frank Milner
Martin Milner, PM
Frank Platt
Chris Renton
Arthur Salmon
John Schofield
David Smith
Michael Smith
George Spenceley
Frank Wilkinson
Alan Wood
Peter Wood

Hill Inn Meet, Chapel-le-Dale

11-13 January 2002

A warm welcome awaited the Friday evening arrivers at the Hill Inn. The roaring fire, glowing diners and heated conversation as everyone caught up on the latest news.

There was no shortage of space in the Old Schoolhouse bunkhouse itself though the arrangement of cars in its carpark was a feat in itself. Those at the back contented themselves with days based on Chapel-le-Dale rather than attempt an exit.

Saturday dawned clear with only flimsy mists on the hills. Some loitered over sumptuous breakfasts but newly arriving, and so not trapped, David Smith's car was hijacked Alan Kay and Michael for a lift to Ribblehead viaduct. This made their trek north to Great Koutberry and back to the bunkhouse via Dentdale and over Whernside, more practicable.

All the local hills, valleys and notable features appear to have been visited by one or more parties. Several hostelries benefited from members' patronage.



The Old School House bunkhouse



Avoiding the bogs by traversing



Saturday morning mists cloak Inglebrough's slopes



David Smith follows Alan Kay up
Great Knoutberry Hill

The weather stayed bright and cold with a brisk wind and distant views from the tops across to Pendle, the Howgills, Lakes and northern fells.



Looking from Great Knoutberry Hill's
top towards the Lake District

Gathering back at the bunkhouse, parties were able to join the President in a glass or three of warming punch. Talk of the next caving trip to China and proposals for the Nubra valley and esoteric aspects of sailing filled the large kitchen until, one by one, parties drifted up to the Hill Inn for the evening meal.

The large attendance ensured a cosy atmosphere for the grand meal.

Cauliflower and Lemon Soup,
Shoulder of Lamb with all the
trimmings, Apple Pie, then
Coffee and Mints

Albert's Presidential address was followed by an ebbing to the bar for reorganisation of the room for the flood back to see slides and video records of the trips to Morocco and China.





Weathercote Cave, Chapel-le-Dale, visited on Sunday

The evening's formalities ended with an invitation to members to visit the normally inaccessible Weathercote cave organised by Albert. This proved a popular option as the weather on Sunday was wet and the hills cloaked in heavy mist from an altitude much lower than our location.



Albert unlocks the entrance doorway

Weathercote cave is unknown the vast majority of Dales visitors being hidden away below Weathercote House whose occupant does not routinely permit access to the cave. This Victorian attraction has rough-set, leaf-littered steps leading from the south end of the grand 60m by 12m surface hole rim. These steps lead down 30m under a natural bridge to the rock strewn plunge pool at the northern end. High above a chockstone, Mohammed's Coffin, bridges the cleft. Wettened by drizzle and spray visitors gathered on the rim to the west and noticed that the wall had several large square drainage holes built into its foot – evidence that it's builders must have believed that it was likely to fill to the brim and flood.

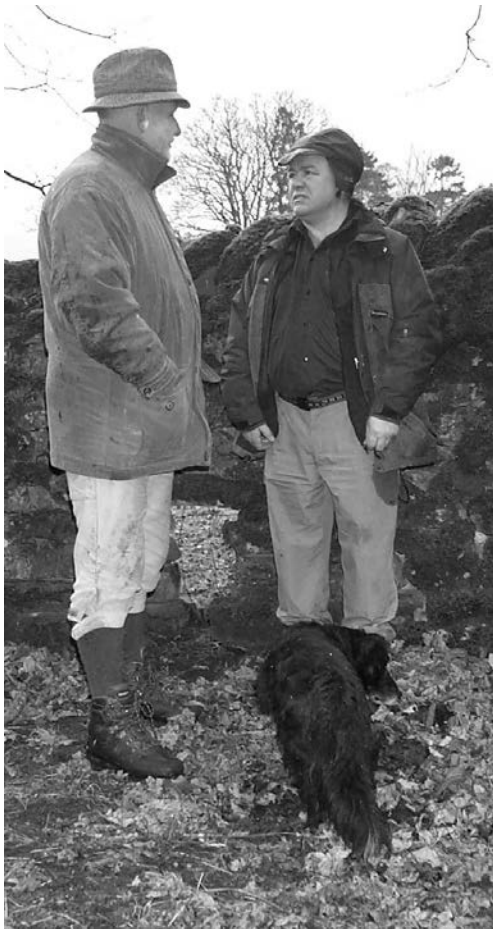
Thanks go to the organisers, that staff of the Inn and the Bunkhouse and the cave owner for making this a thoroughly hospitable and entertaining meet in a location with so much resonance for the Club.



Starting the descent of the steps with Sweep



Jason Humphreys at the foot of the waterfall



Ian Crowther, Harvey and Sweep talking by one of the drainage holes in the wall

Low Hall Garth

8-10 February 2002

Attendance:

President, Albert Chapman

Ken Aldred

Alan Brown

Derek Bush

Ian Crowther

Roger Dix

Mike Edmundson

Chris Edmundson (guest)

Iain Gilmour

Rob Ibberson (guest)

Mike Godden

Gordon Humphries

Richard Josephy

Tim Josephy

Alan Linfoord

Harvey Lomas

John Lovett

Frank Platt

Harry Robinson

Arthur Salmon

David Smith

Michael Smith

Derek Smithson

Frank Wilkinson

Alan Wood

Peter Wood

25th Anniversary Glen Etive Meet

**28 February –
2 March 2002**

The 25th Anniversary meet at Inbhirfhaolain should have been held in 2000, but due to an unfortunate double booking and then foot and mouth regulations, the meet this year was the celebratory occasion.

All but one arrived on Thursday and prepared for their endeavours the following day. With ample snow above 1500ft, and blue skies, the prospect for Friday seemed good.

Friday morning dawned favourable with the earliest parties off before eight. The weather was superb and indeed the best for many years. Those doing tops found good snow with crampons a necessity. Good skiing was also enjoyed. The evening saw many accounts of the day being traded, and a tasty meal with the usual refreshments rounded off the day.

Saturday was unfortunately a return to wet weather. A significant number enjoyed the shores of Loch Etive but bird watching was poor. The weather did improve as the day progressed and in spite of the poor start to the day, Aonach Eagach was traversed and parties were also on Starav, Beinn Trilleachan, and Stob Dubh. Further skiing was also accomplished. Expectations were great as Saturday evening drew nigh, but the celebratory fare truly surpassed all that had gone before at the Glen Etive meet.

The menu read:-

Cream of Mushroom Soup with French Bread
Boeuf Bourguignonne
Savoury Rice, Ratatouille Provencale
Blackcurrant Crumble With Fresh Cream
Cheese and Biscuits
Coffee with Anniversary Cake

All was accompanied by South African Western Cape Wine, and the usual speeches were made.

The weather on Sunday morning was very wet and many unknown watercourses became evident on the mountain slopes. The writer got off





to an early start for home as no doubt did others.

Credit and praise are due in large measure to the organiser of this meet, Derek Bush, but a special appreciation must be made to his wife for the superb food enjoyed by all.

Activities Undertaken:-

- Bidean Nam Bian
- Stob a' Choire Mheadhoin
- Skiing
- Glas Bheinn Mhor
- Stob Coire Easain
- Lairigs Eilde and Gartain
- Ben Starav
- Beinn Trilleachan
- Loch Etive shores
- Beinn Fhada
- Aonach Eagach
- Stob Coir' an Albannaich
- Stob Dubh

Mike Godden

Attendees:-

- Adrian Bridge
- George Burfitt
- Derek Bush
- Albert Chapman
- Ian Crowther
- Roger Dix
- Adrian Dixon (G)
- Mike Edmundson
- Iain Gilmour
- Mike Godden
- Richard Gowing
- David Hick
- Gordon Humphries
- Jason Humphries
- Howard Humphries
- Richard Kirby
- Alan Linford
- John Lovett
- Dave Martindale
- Roy Pomfret
- Harry Robinson
- David Smith
- Derek Smithson
- Frank Wilkinson
- Alan Wood
- Barry Wood
- Michael Wood



Jason and Howard Humphreys return from the camping area while the David's Smith and Hick, John Lovett and Mike Edmundson enjoy the warming sun at Glen Etive

