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Edited by ERNEST E. ROBERTS.

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THE
Yorkshire Ramblers' Club Journal

VOL. VI.

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NO. 19.

CORSICA IN MAY.

By THE EDITOR.

The visit of Smythe and Slingsby to the mountains of Corsica was responsible for the circulation of enthusiastic accounts of the island. Two things particularly attracted me—the first, a story that about the end of April a man could point to a cloud and say: “That’s the last we shall see for four months.” After an Alpine season in which the weather, without being bad, contrived to effect the maximum of interference, the thought of a country in which one had not to worry about weather was irresistible. Smythe has since published his summing up thus: “Bad weather is in Corsica a sneak thief in the palace of King Sol, not a feared and despotic tyrant as in the Alps, nor a luckless institution as in Britain.” He is about right, but it did not work out quite as we expected, in fact the general tone of the many recent articles on Corsica is that there nothing does.

The second attraction was that unclimbed peaks could still be bagged, and as Smythe knew where these were, this settled it, and we arranged to go out in May, 1929. During the winter Brown joined in, but the idea of a personally conducted fortnight was rudely broken by Smythe’s taking up an office job like ordinary people, with the usual holidays.

Brown simply ridiculed any idea of giving up the expedition in face of the bother entailed. To a man who had wrestled in inadequate French with Arabic speaking Berbers who knew less, the difficulties of getting into camp in Corsica simply could not exist. So I turned to read up the books, and gradually it dawned on me that the serious climbing in Corsica is all in the group of Monte Cinto and Paglia Orba, and is all worked from one spot in the Val de Viro, or has been so far.



WILLIAM CECIL SLINGSBY.

Had I known the sea voyages from Marseilles or Nice ran to 240 miles in 15 hours, or 150 miles in 10 hours, I should never have had anything to do with the venture. However, new boats have now been put on, and with ordinary luck the voyage, first class, is quite comfortable and reasonable. The time-tables are singularly confusing, but in the island the French have a simple one which shows a boat each day to one port or other. Ajaccio and Bastia alone concern the mountaineer, with Corte on the railway about half way between them.

We left Leeds early on 8th May, 1929, and all the way south noted that the trees were bare and backward. In Kent the fruit blossom was only in bud. It was the same for a hundred miles in France, till dusk came. Most trees were very bare, particularly the poplars, and the willows more backward than in England. But the thing that struck us most was that ten days before we had walked by Bishop Thornton and Sawley and seen the hedges a drift of blackthorn, and still far into France was much blackthorn without leaves.

We woke to another climate beyond Lyons. Here was that fortnight ahead—horse-chestnuts in full bloom. At Avignon poppies appeared and by the coast were a glorious show. By the sea we had entered upon summer. "A brilliant day and bare rocky country, vegetation surprising considering the thin covering on the limestone." I can guess now what that vegetation was.

Beyond Marseilles we grew weary of endless vineyards and beastly bare grey olives. It seemed a country into which all food is imported and paid for by wine. Near Nice there was more woodland and rougher ground. The palms were a miserable untidy wreck, the effect of an unusual winter, we were told.

The day was so overpoweringly brilliant, and the sea so blue we must surely have discovered that Italian blue of which our Alpine reading had told us so much, and which we had looked for in vain. Some weeks later we knew we had merely hit one of the piercingly brilliant days which precede bad weather, or what stands there for bad weather. We never saw anything like it again.

From Nice we saw land faintly and a peak which was Paglia Orba. The crowd puzzled us much, so unlike it was to what we had expected. Finally I had a brain-wave—it was Ascension Day and a public holiday.

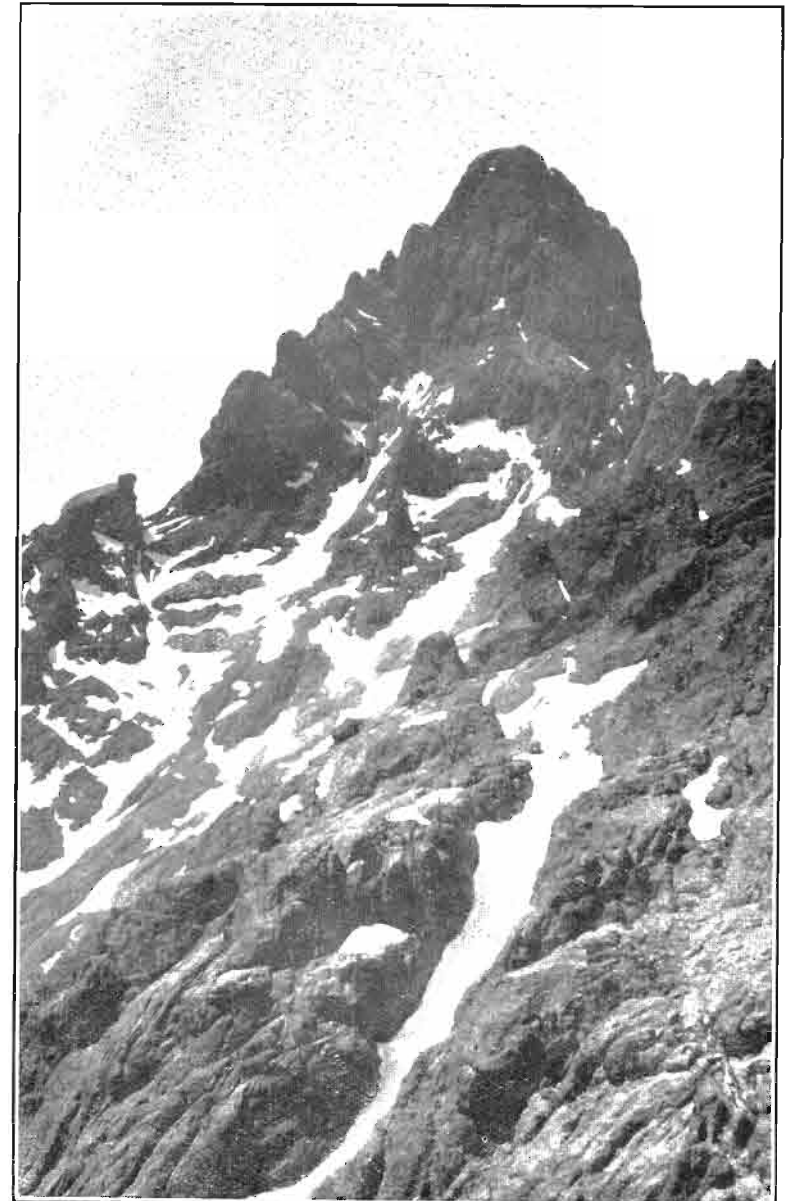
Friday we spent crossing, lost our beautiful blue by lunch time, saw some peaks above the clouds, never saw the famous view of Corsica, and reached Ajaccio in an English atmosphere with dense clouds low down on the hills. A French writer has described a winter in Corsica as a "second summer." Nothing is going to persuade me that Ajaccio does not have some severe weather. Never have I seen so many bedclothes. There were eight blankets and an eiderdown on my bed. Were the climate so equable as the books represent, the hotel would not have possessed the stuff, much less put it out.

Ajaccio we left by train at seven a.m., and learnt from some English people that the tall trees with brown rags of foliage, which annoyed us there and on the Riviera, were eucalyptus. It was summer by the sea, but as we climbed to three thousand feet through a country like the Lakes, with a scale and steepness not that of the Alps, we came to a region where the trees were a week or so behind England, yet with contradictions, for there were cherries set in a station garden. The Col di Vizzavona was cold and misty, but down near Corte we came to warmth again, with more turf and less of the heather-like *maquis* than we had seen on the west. At Corte we lunched (Hotel de la Paix, seems quite satisfactory) and shopped. Alas, that shopping! The *Mairie Epicerie* is not much good, Moench on the opposite side lower down is better. For a charge of 100 francs a motor took us 16 miles over a *col* and up a remarkable ravine, Scala di Sancta Regina, to the village of Calacuccia, along a marvellous winding road with scores of sharp corners and several hairpin bends. Brown is a bold and confident driver, but in the front seat next the Frenchman the pace round the corners put the wind up even him. In the ravine the rocks were eroded in a singular fashion, but we were reminded of the Highlands without the peat rather than of the Alps, and the rain and low clouds of the afternoon fell in with the impression. Renwick in his *Romantic Corsica* considers this the most beautiful part of the island.

At Calacuccia we put up at the Hotel de France, a small clean inn (with a shop) having all the comfort one can expect, but according to its advertisements a "first-class hotel with modern comfort." We went to bed happier, because the clouds broke, and wiser, for we had discovered the troubles we anticipated were non-existent. Corsica is simply an ordinary country. The roads are good, useful roads, and motors can be obtained everywhere at cheap rates, 6d. a mile. There is no "back of beyond," some of it caters for holiday people, most does not. You can buy anything in the shops the natives buy, and the things the natives don't buy, you do without, exactly as in London or the West Riding. The journey to camp was no more difficult or out of the local routine than to a camp in Lakeland, but our food supplies were not so satisfactory.

Bread and butter were excellent; after ten days the Corte bread was still soft, though the Calacuccia bread was getting hard, but the bully-beef and Heinz beans sort of thing was unprocurable. A bit of ham was good, a curious sort of cold pork in a cloth I could eat, but Brown could not. Jam and sardines were as usual, but we could get no tinned fruit. We went to camp firmly believing that we had secured seven large tins, but to our horror they had inside a tasteless jam made of every possible kind of pulp, which even I had great difficulty in getting used to. Then, too, at that season of the year there is only imported fruit in Corsica, principally bananas, but at Corte on Saturday afternoon the whole week's supply had gone. But heaven be praised for onions, which, eaten raw, contain in a little a whole alphabet of vitamins.

Sunday, 12th May, leaving our suit-cases and unnecessary kit, we set off under an overcast sky with a badly loaded mule, did two miles on the road to Albertacce, followed a stony track up the Val de Viro by chestnut orchards to Calasima, which we passed under a hot sun in two hours, and in another 1½ hours over a very rough path reached the big boulders called Grotte des Anges. On the only level and stoneless spot, a patch of gravel covered with thin grass, the tent went up as it usually does, in the rain, and the muleteer left us to apparent loneliness



PAGLIA ORBA.

Photo by F. S. Smythe

He charged 50 francs, but insisted on more for the return journey!

The situation was magnificent. The left bank, that of the Cinque Fratelli, was bare all the way down from just above the Grotte des Anges, but the opposite bank and the whole Val de Viro above was covered by forest of Corsican pines (*Pinus Laricio*). Castelluccia was opposite to us, further right the glorious Paglia Orba, then Tighietto, Uccello, Minuta, and Capo Larghia far up the valley. On our own side we had the Cinque Fratelli behind us and could see almost to the top of Monte Falu. There was no turf, but endless stones, and compared with the Alps, few flowers—they simply cannot survive the dry summer. Great masses of hellebore were much the most conspicuous, and crocuses abundant.

Monday's expedition was an ascent of 3,000 ft. up the broad ridge to Punta Castelluccia direct. It was very hot in the forest, and by the time we reached the limit of the trees we realised that heat is one of the impediments of Corsican climbing and that we were in for a struggle. Presently on the easy rocky ground we struck *maquis*, here brushwood growing downhill, used a snow slope, an awful grind, to avoid it, and at last reached the final rocks covered only with juniper and some crocuses. In spite of a seven a.m. start we only covered 3,000 ft., the height of Scawfell, in five hours in a very exhausted condition.

The breeze was refreshing, in fact our two hours on top became uncomfortable owing to cloud and cool wind. There was no distant view, the southern mountains being in dense cloud and the Viro group mostly so. The descent was down easy snow and we began to acquire knowledge of what *maquis* through the snow means, solid ground and not a rotten bridge over a big stream. When we reached camp the sun had gone and it was too cold for a bathe.

On Tuesday we decided just to scramble up on to one of the Cinque Fratelli, 2,000 ft. above, and enjoy the view. So we started this time at 5.30 a.m. and went first down the valley, and ascended happily for a time. But the instant the sun struck us we collapsed and it was as much as we could do to struggle up the first Brother after four hours. We visited the second, but the heat drove us off at twelve, and we walked

down the easy side of the Brothers and stumbled down the stones to a tributary beck at two. We were determined to bathe, but the sun instantly disappeared. This is a game which can be played with great success in Britain, but it does not go in Corsica, so we sat it out and after three quarters of an hour all the available supply of clouds was used up and we got our bathe.

A shepherd arrived and we held such converse as we could about many things. At one time he appeared to be telling us of the presence of woodcutters in the valley. On reaching camp we continued the experiments already begun on trout-fishing and digging for worms. Brown had provided a trout rod and a minimum of experience, my contribution was some emphatic Gritstone advice on the only place to dig. We were greatly cheered when Brown caught three fish, which went to the good against the fact that the coffee had not been ground and had to be hammered between stones, and the annoying disappearance of his watch.

It was a cold night followed by a glorious day with a very cool breeze. We bathed, caught four more trout, and slept peacefully in sunny recesses in spite of the prickly Corsican plants. In the afternoon we wandered up dale through the wood, found wood piles, then a hut, and finally eight Italians sawing planks by hand. So accurate was their work that we had supposed a machine saw to have been used. The Italians are wonderful workers—one wonders how all the stupid attacks by pro-Germans can persist.

Our walk resulted in the discovery of a faint track from above the Grotte up to a little *col* whence the Falo and Albano becks could easily be reached. But our day's observations also entirely removed the impression of loneliness. The camp and all our movements were under constant observation. Every morning a donkey or so went up and down from the woodcutters, and I frequently heard some one come past the tent in the early hours. Later came the shepherds, *bergers*, from Calasima, driving two or three hundred miserable sheep up and round the valley wherever thin grass was to be found. A week later they constructed a bridge opposite the Grotte des Anges. The *bergers* were always ready to chat and very curious about our equipment.

Our suspicions now being roused, we turned everything out of the tent, went through all our property and the powdery bracken which was the only thing we could find to put under the groundsheet, and were driven to the conclusion that the watch, left hanging inside the tent, had been stolen on Tuesday. Hitherto the Corsicans have borne a reputation for scrupulous honesty, but though our suspicions first fell on the Italians, there was later some ground for thinking the thief was a native.

Heavy rain fell all night. At five and at eight dense clouds and rain forbade a start for Paglia Orba, but soon after nine the weather set fair. A very hot walk of two hours took us to Calacuccia for lunch. We interviewed the gendarmes, and the chief, though quite hopeless of recovering the watch, promised that a detachment would visit us next day at three.

We got away well before 4 a.m. on Friday, crossed the little *col* and followed a natural line through the forest on the left bank of the beautiful Falo beck. There was a most refreshing breeze, and above the trees we made splendid progress, keeping below the masses of *maquis* and closing in on the stream until we reached good hard snow. I am unable to discover in any book which bush constitutes this high growing *maquis*. It was not in leaf, recalled alder, and it has been suggested it was a dwarf beech. Altogether *maquis* includes a dozen different plants, but only two grew near our camp.

After breakfast it began to occur to us that the delightful breeze was remarkably cold, and against it we were equipped with one thin cardigan and one pair gloves. Clouds were everywhere, there was no sun, but the group generally clear and the distance not so hazy as hitherto. We passed over Monte Falo at 8.20. The snow on the west was brick hard, there was ice in places and a troublesome wind. Instead of the direct ridge to the Col de Crocetta, the head of the Val de Viro, we used the rib to the left and had to double rope once, reaching the little peak beyond the *col* in an hour. The next bit of troublesome ridge we dodged by easy snow and stones on the right, then over stony slopes we gained a summit where commences a broken ridge reaching to Monte Cinto. Along this we went as hard as we could, in view of our engagement with the gendarmes, and I believe we reached the foot of the final re-ascent to Monte Cinto.

The wind had so far been very trying, but once we turned the sun appeared and we had a short and pleasant halt on the Col de Crocetta till noon. The snow was soft and treacherous, most dangerous we found at the top of each slope, but good glissades carried us a long way down. Then over awful ground, where we saw two *mouflon*, we at length came opposite the Bergerie de Ballone, but failed to find any path. Patient stepping over terrible stones brought us to camp soon after two.

Three gendarmes, armed, had been there since eleven, had interviewed the Italians, had caught many trout with Brown's rod, in fact had had quite a pleasant excursion, but had of course not been able to do anything for us.

Saturday was a glorious day, spent in idling. Trout fishing was pursued with increasing success, and perfect division of labour, I who refused to thread worms on hooks, doing all the gutting and Brown getting the sport. We saw no one.

The 19th was our most successful day. Provided with warm clothing this time we went up to the Col de Foggiale, most of the way on snow in a great gorge and gully. 4.50-7.10 a.m. We were greeted by a bitterly cold gale and had a most uncomfortable meal. Then on scree we rounded Paglia Orba slowly ascending, and on very hard snow passed just under the Col de Tafonato. We had had to be vaccinated before coming out to France, and the climb on to the rocks of Capo Tafonato was quite stiff enough to remind Brown that his had been unpleasantly successful. Thence by a snow patch, an obvious ledge to the left to a leaning boulder, a short climb up either to an easy or a harder ledge, the route leads to the famous hole through the mountain. The view is magnificent, but the position is not quite so sensational as is sometimes suggested. We were extremely interested to see a road coming over a high pass and descending into the valley below. The W. side of Tafonato should therefore not be entirely inaccessible. An extraordinary rake leads across to above the Col de Tafonato and an easy ascending line round the corner to a difficult slab below the summit. This Brown conquered neatly and out of the bitter wind in glorious sun we spent the hour from nine to ten. The descent by an easier but longer chimney avoided the slab.

About noon we left the snow patch on Tafonato and attacked Paglia Orba, which looked formidable. The rocks were wonderful, and some extraordinary places were conquered without difficulty. We hit the foot of a great slab half-way, bore left into a wide gully or small snowfield, had to rope because of the exit to the left not going, came out over easy rocks to the right anywhere and in spite of the top being a long way behind reached it at two. I should like to mention that Robinson and Smith (Gritstone Club) returned from Capo Tafonato by passing under the great North Face of Paglia Orba.

Under a perfectly clear sky, for once we saw a coast view to the S.W., and more mountains to the south than ever before. To the Col de Foggiale took an hour, the only awkward step being the passing of a line of crags by a snow gully where we had to kick and cut in good snow two hundred feet. With the help of glissades and increased familiarity with the less rough parts of this valley we were back in $1\frac{1}{2}$ hours. The exceptional extremes of the glorious day were followed by a cold night, and a continuing cool wind. Monday afternoon was so overcast that the *bergers* took the sheep home early and the trout would not bite, but no storm came on.

We were just off to bed when Robinson and Smith burst upon us, three days out via Bastia (5 a.m.) but at the cost of 100 francs for the evening trip per mule. Besides their company they brought all the luxuries we lacked, oranges, etc., and such uncanny skill as fishermen that it is no wonder the *bergers* complain there are hardly any trout nowadays.

On the 21st Brown and I left for Punta Minuta at 4.45, after the warmest night so far. We held the so-called path to the Bergerie de Ballone, crossed, and by easy rocks and snow slopes gained the upper Col di Minuta at 7.30. It was obvious to us that the Uccello-Tighietto traverse should include another peak nearer Minuta, and that it is one of the best things in the district, but we had missed it.

In $1\frac{3}{4}$ hours we climbed Minuta, avoiding a great green tower on its right. About ten, thick mist swept round us before we had formed any clear idea of the peaks ahead. Descending the E. ridge we had to halt for some time to make sure which of twin ribs ran to the *col*. We went straight at

Capo Larghia I. and seemed to get up very quickly (noon). Large painted letters showed clearly that there had been other visitors.

The only glimpse we caught of Capo Larghia II. did not suggest that we should have difficulty with it. However the mist remained so persistent, we hesitated before tackling the chimney straight ahead, but finally descended it, a sporting climb, and slabs to a *col* which was not, I think, the lowest between C. Larghia I. and II., and thence to snow. Once on the main snowfield we went down fast. Past the place of the *moufflon* we picked our way steadily in heavy rain to the Ballone "path." The storm did not quite fill the day, which closed round a huge log fire and a tremendous feast of trout.

We now decided to give up camp and make an excursion to Asco, a much talked of village, "the most beautiful in Europe," on the N. side of the group. I went down to Calacuccia on Wednesday and had to beat down the muleteer to 70 francs before he would come up for the baggage. On the Thursday morning, a day of extraordinary extremes after a fearfully cold night, I climbed in three hours to the featureless skyline to the south. It was most interesting to find that the highest patches of wood were beech, the old Corsican forest, growing almost up to 5,250 ft. level. The mountains to the north were clouded, and I gained no information. Those to the south cleared a little after a fierce thunderstorm at noon, and left an impression of a Scotch rather than Alpine character. The Tavignano gorge between us seems to be extremely fine. Following a broad ridge a mile over gravel and grass, I descended by a very rough mule path from the Col de Rinella.

Brown had come down with the caravan and we spent the evening at hard mental work, finding a route to Asco over an intricate country from the old black and green French Ordnance map without contours. This is out of print, but Wade had very kindly lent us his copies, now of considerable value, as there is no other map of Corsica other than the cycling variety, and we were relieved to return them undamaged. The trouble was the absence of indication as to whether the three gorges to be passed on the long route to the pass required serious descents and ascents, and the ignorance of the natives as to whether it could be done.

We left on Friday at 6.30, went two miles down the road to a big bridge, then by mule paths by Corscia to Costa and in great heat a good 500 feet down to cross the Radda. We felt the day was lost, but the move up developed into a mule path of obvious importance and continuity, if not much used, leading us for hours over rough and steep ground high above the Radda, turning over a ridge, high above a second gorge and up through its forest to a critical position on a little *col* whence we viewed the Ancino. Our luck was in, the gorge was below us and an almost level traverse landed us in the upper regions which reminded us of the head of a Highland glen. At this point we finally lost the amusing company of a man, a boy, a donkey, and three pigs who had been within hail since the Radda. The flora had been more copious and varied than hitherto, while some erosion forms were rather staggering. I admit that the hollow boulder with a door and window may have been trimmed up, but smaller hollow boulders were certainly not artificial.

Avoiding the *maquis* we took the west branch of the Ancino past the Bergerie de Galghello to the Pass, where we arrived with joy at 12.20. The contrast of the truly Alpine character and steepness of the northern side was surprising, though there was only one strip of snow. Clouds prevented a full view of the end of the Cinto range, and presently the noon thunderstorm swooped upon us, and greatly refreshed us.

On the long steep 3,000 ft. descent we luckily bore left to the Bergerie de Pinnera and avoided difficulties. Down through the pines with great fat cones (*Pinus Pinea* or Stone Pine), and at the end of 1¼ hours the sunshine had come again, and we were ready for a glorious bathe. It made us very slack and when we arrived at Asco Bridge at five, we looked very sadly at the 400 feet of ascent and wondered gloomily where we should that night lay our heads, for Calacuccia openly said there was nothing at Asco. By great good luck, the first group of men addressed put forward the *patron* of the Hotel de Cinto and having convinced him in emphatic terms that we were not Germans, in two minutes we were sitting in a comfortable simple room.

Later we ate a splendid dinner and had the best breakfast in Corsica, that is with jam and butter instead of bread only,

bill 70 frs. Asco may be the most beautiful village in Europe, but the singularity of its access is now ruined by the trace of what is to be a road, and there is no forest, no shade, no place for a bivouac in the two hours long valley. At length we emerged and held on for miles along a road over unenclosed heath in terrific heat, then we saw a man cutting hay, the road to Calvi, and came in four hours to the railway station at Ponte Leccia, horse-chestnuts and roses, and a much needed bath.

On the way back to Calacuccia by rail and bus we came across a local party and a German party both bound for the Grotte des Anges, which seems to have become a crowded neighbourhood.

On the following day we went to Bastia, where we do not recommend the bathing. We further entirely contradict Renwick's *Romantic Corsica* on the serious question of afternoon tea. Except at the hotel of many names, the Palace, it cannot be obtained in Bastia. The voyage to Marseilles with a night on board was very comfortable, but the landing, due to Corsica being outside the French customs, is a terrible affair, and is probably a less serious business at Nice. Otherwise by spending an afternoon in Lyons and the night in the train to Paris, we made the journey work out comfortably.

A thunderstorm in Lyons was accompanied by a long continued fall of hail of the kind one hears of with scepticism. Lumps of ice as big as eggs we saw with our own eyes, traffic was stopped, twigs torn off the trees and a great deal of damage must have been done.

Minor misadventures followed us to the end. We did get our property in time, but the trout-rod was left in Bastia, and the van containing our registered luggage was derailed in Kent, without involving the rest of the train, and left behind.

If the mountains of Corsica have not the tang of the Alps the rocks are good, and there is much snow in May. In summer they must be a waterless desert, and climbing impossible. The May visitor will never regret the long journey.

HEIGHTS.

Calacuccia ..	2,780 ft.	Grotte des Anges ..	4,300 ft.
Paglia Orba ..	8,278 ft.	Monte Cinto ..	9,121 ft.
Capo Tafonato ..	7,687 ft.	Monte Falo ..	8,304 ft.
Punta Minuta ..	8,501 ft.	Capo Larghia ..	8,268 ft.

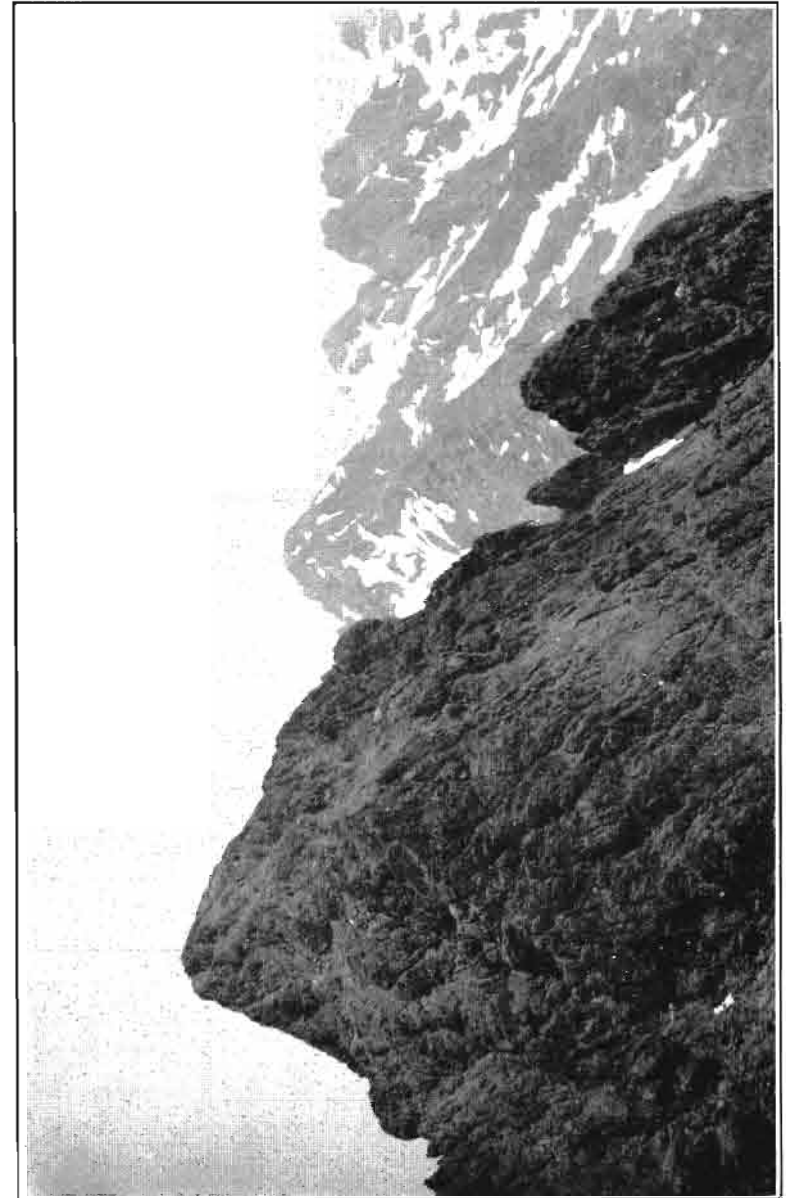


Photo by T. S. Smythe

UCCELLO, MINUTA, AND CAPO LARGHIA

THE OUTER HEBRIDES.

By MATTHEW BOTTERILL.

I. HECLA.

“ These delightful Islands have probably never been explored by any climber in search of rock scrambles It seems probable that many a sporting face might be found.” *S.M.C. Journal.*

This passage has always seemed to me a direct challenge and in 1927 I laid plans carefully to see how far the theory held in respect of S. Uist. Amongst its hills (none over 2,000 feet) is one with a fascinating name, “ Hecla.” This romantic name alone drew me to the group.

An ornithological D.P.C. member wanted to get records in that very area, so the expedition was organized.

Of the feathered aspect of this trip I shall say nothing, my limited knowledge being confined to sea-bird life, but in prosecuting its purpose we had adventure in plenty. I was alone with *Molly* in Mallaig when the crew arrived, with its luggage, or reverse the order, for the luggage bulked large.

Cinema and other photographic apparatus worth about £50 had to be carefully handled. The crew having travelled all night were sleepy but keen, so we set sail and made Loch Scavaig (Skye), spending a quiet night under the Coolin summits.

The next day—unprecedented effort!—the little canvas boat was carried to Coruisk and we boated on that sublime Loch to its unvisited islets. On returning I tried to float the boat down the Scavaig River. The press of water pinned the boat to a boulder in one place and I got out to push off. The hole I got into was intended for a taller man!

In the afternoon we sailed off in the yacht to Bracadale (Skye). Some time after passing the entrance to Loch Brittle I sailed the yacht “ off and on ” whilst the crew rowed to a large cave. By the smell which still clung to them on returning I think they only found cormorant. Loch Bracadale has many islets and on the following morning a cinema photo of the swell breaking on one of them was tried. We made a landing on Wiay by a little narrow cove which just allowed a passage for the boat.

I had planned to anchor in Loch Skiport (South Uist), since its waters caress the foot of Hecla. We went in very gingerly; the place was new to us and strewn with rocks. It was a relief to me when the anchor was let go in the official anchorage, though the place seemed rather too open to leave a yacht untended. I mean of course on account of weather; I have not yet met a dishonest Islander and only lock up the yacht on the South Coast of England and any part of Wales.

It was late when dinner was finished, but still broad daylight, and a native came out to greet us. He had been in the war and could speak English (many of them do not). He gave valuable information to the ornithologists and I put one question. "Could we navigate the yacht up the inner recesses and find good shelter?" "We might," he said, and the following morning we did, almost to a point where a sluice gate barred the sea's access to a brackish inland lake, Loch Bee. The four of us hoisted the little canvas boat over this obstruction and proceeded to traverse the Island to the Atlantic. On the little islets hundreds of swans nested. We cinemaed them taking flight close to the boat. What a wing spread—four yards! I had the unique pleasure of seeing a nest with five eggs, like small cocoanuts.

The next day the Mate and I ascended Hecla. It was a perfectly easy stroll without a bit of cliff anywhere! Our sole recompense was the extraordinary view.

To the northward the flat lands, so intersected by arms of the sea and fresh water lochs as to be more water than land, and still further north, the hills of Lewis and Harris looming faintly in the blue distance. We had a good light and the whole of the Western seaboard gleamed golden with its sands ceaselessly fretted by the Atlantic swell. The Monach Isles looked unreal and their guarding lighthouse—a toy.

Eastward the Coolin and the beautiful line of the Rum Mountains hid part of the mainland, already almost obscured by distance. But to the southward lay at our feet Glen Ushinish and some five miles away, partly obscured by the intervening ridges, was the largest hill of the group, Beinn Mhor. Only the last 250 feet was visible but it was fissured with the heads of half a dozen gullies. Surely there was a rock face!

But our trip was drawing to a close and I could not get to the peak to see.

II. BEINN MHOR (S. Uist).

I had the whole winter in which to plan the assault. Loch Eynort opened up to the southward of the mountain, indeed its inner reaches (if navigable) go to its very foot. The sailing directory was frankly pessimistic about this loch and spoke of the ten foot passage to the inner waters as only navigable to local boats. Plainly we could not leave the yacht without attention in the open loch; it was the 10-foot passage or nothing.

Spring came at last, and a stormy afternoon found us taking refuge by the Isle of Canna. The morning dawned with a thick fog which thinned sufficiently by afternoon to enable us to pick up the Outer Islands. By 5 p.m. we were passing Glen Hellisdale and the fog lifted to shew us rocky pinnacles peeping through a misty blanket.

Loch Eynort is fairly open and the underwater rocks easy to place, but right in our course were three ominous black heads. They were not marked on the chart. We held on and found they were fish.

It was calm and the engine running but these fish were not concerned. One swam alongside. I could have touched the fluke of its tail sticking up about eighteen inches, without letting go of my tiller. Further along was its back-fin and almost abreast the mainmast its head. That is to say the thing was over twenty feet long.

I have been told that these are basking sharks and perfectly harmless. This is easier to believe when ashore and I do not like such large cruising consorts.

We anchored in a little bay in perfect calm and after dinner spent the evening taking soundings in the 10-foot channel. The matter is complicated by what one naturally expects, a hot tide; for vast inland areas have to be flooded through this channel. Starting at low water next morning we very carefully worked the yacht into a tiny land-locked basin giving perfect shelter. We were ready for a reconnaissance of the mountain!

My plans had failed, in that I had not been able to get a climbing companion so early in the year and my boots had gone astray. The mountain offered no difficulties we could see, and two of us gaily set off, leaving one man with the dinghy. Almost before we had gone a hundred yards we found ourselves cut off by an arm of the sea.

The dinghy was still within hail and my companion got in and it was rowed along the coast until an entrance to this inner arm was found. I waited 20 minutes or so, a target for the covert glances of about twenty very shy but still more curious seals.

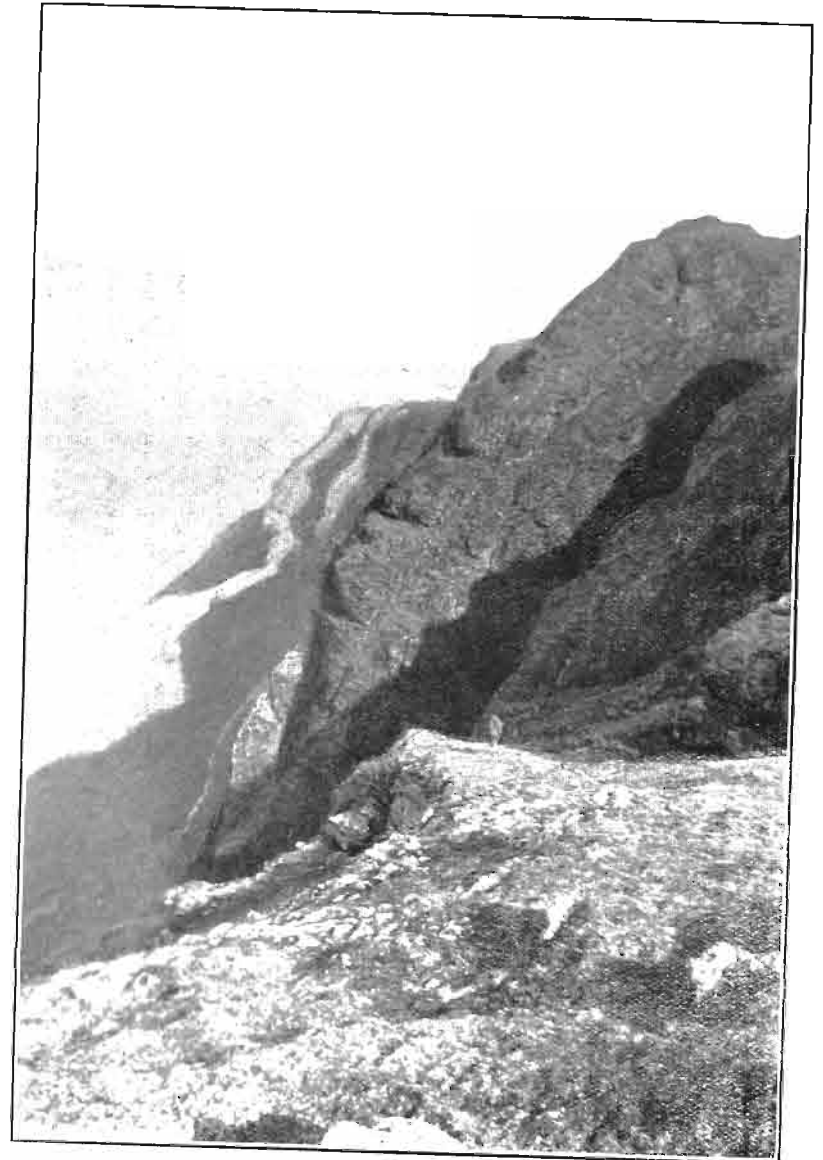
At last we were fairly launched on our climb. The first and only stiff scramble brought us to the lower *col*, on the further side of which I expected to see a rocky face. There was no rock. We followed up the broad ridge to the summit of Beinn Mhor and there discovered that we had been looking not into Hellisdale but into Glen Liadale.

On the summit we got our first look into Glen Hellisdale and found ourselves over a great rocky precipice.

After lunch I went alone down the furthest gully (it was scree) to the foot of the cliff intending to see the whole face from below. I came to a fine though somewhat short rocky gully and must needs go up a little to see what it looked like. Then I climbed another pitch to see what was beyond. Then came a stiff broken pitch. By taking off my boots I found it could be turned on the left wall. And so, unroped, no nails, and with curiosity as a leader, I eventually found myself at the top again on the summit ridge.

There was no time to go down again for further exploration, and I spent a happy ten minutes, for was it not a first ascent? And there was a wonderful view—crystal clear for twenty miles, and beyond that only a suggestion of haze in the incredible distance.

The Atlantic lay like some sleeping monster at my feet; not dead, for his breathing caused an edging of white lace where he ceaselessly frets the golden sand. Somewhere in the distant haze was the horizon—it seemed very remote, but just within the haze and apparently quite near was a group of islands. Was it possible that between us and them lay



CRAGS OF BEINN MHOR (S. LIST).

Photo by M. Bottrell

forty miles of stormy Atlantic? One by one I identified the group. It was St. Kilda.

III. CLISHAM.

Clisham (2,622 ft.), N. Harris, lies near to the road from Stornoway to Tarbert-Harris. It is flanked by a magnificent cliff in Glen Scaladale and as the said road crosses the entrance of the Glen only two miles from the cliff, the latter cannot have escaped notice. Nevertheless there seems never to have been a rock climbing party in its gullies. The yacht was anchored in Scaladale Bay two and a half miles from the cliffs, and the gullies, particularly the deep cut Central Gully, were particularly attractive, lit by the early morning sun.

Clisham is probably unique, in that the steep cliff is in a comparatively low flank, thus affording a short, almost level walk to the rock climbing, and a grind after that to the summit of the hill—if one wants to go to the summit. This is much nicer than sweating up a Gavel Neese or a Brown Tongue . . .

The cliff faces N.E. and is about half a mile in length. From the foot of the rocks at the E. end there rises diagonally a broad grass ledge. This traverses the face completely to the summit of the crag at the W. end.

Sunday, 11th May, 1930.—A. H. and I walked up stream until the Eastern Gully showed as a straight line, then crossing the stream we made a bee-line to the foot of the gully which was also the commencement of the grass traverse. We decided to inspect all three gullies from this traverse before trying one.

Ultimately the Central Gully was chosen. It commences at an elevation of 525 ft. above sea-level and presents no great difficulties as far as the grass traverse, save that of avoiding a wetting, and one does that by taking to the steep slopes of heather. The grass ledge is broken by the gully at 650 ft., and here is the first pitch. It may have holds and there may be a belay, but all are hidden by moss that runs with water. We made an awkward traverse up the left wall, most of the holds being clothed in vegetation, and got back to the gully just as the rain came on. It had been so hot and sunny early on that we had reduced clothing to shirt and trousers. With the rain came cold, and accentuated our difficulties. The gully presents the usual stretches of scree with patches of

jammed boulders. Some of the scree is steep and ready to go, and some is steeper than it should be, and is held only by vegetation.

The last pitch but one proved difficult. A forty foot slab on the right offered poor holds and no belay. We achieved this slab on the extreme right up to a corner where there was a belay, but could not get back to the gully at that level.

We had to rope down to the foot of this slab, and Skipper made two thirty foot runs out only to go back again. This slab (Skipper's Slab) would surely go when not streaming with water. During these efforts the rain became snow!

We traversed on to the Western Buttress, meeting a fine chimney (Cox's Chimney), and so to the summit of the cliffs, thirteen hundred feet by pocket aneroid.

There are two exits to the gully, and the eastern one is in a perfectly straight line from the bottom, so one looks down the whole length with a drop of 775 ft. The eastern wall is sheer and has a second level ledge a hundred ft. down, which runs from the gully on to the face of the crags and is a really sensational promenade.

We threw pebbles down and in their five hundred feet fall they passed a lower ledge where a raven was nesting. Mrs. Raven was very annoyed and screamed ravenous curses. Her cries brought Mr. Raven back into the gully from his sentry-go on the face, to see what it was all about. Presently we heard a terrific whirr of wings followed by Mr. Raven's cries. Mrs. Raven flew to help to scare off an eagle. This gentleman made a vicious jab at her, but she looped the loop, and he missed. The eagle was driven off. We had a fine view of this first class show from our airy perch.

What the quality of the rock-climbing might be if one could readily get down to it, I can't say, but it is so grown over that most of our belays had to be dug out with fingers! This vegetable climbing is very difficult, which makes one realise that the first ascent of Moss Gill must have been a very different problem to the ascent as we now know it. One must never lose sight of the fact that vegetation is frequently attached to very inadequate ledges, and not infrequently comes away at a touch after frost.

SOME NOTES ON THE SAUERLAND.

By J. D. ELLIS.

The Sauerland district of Westphalia, although practically unknown in England as a holiday ground, is extremely popular in Germany and also with the Dutch, who probably regard its hills and valleys as affording a pleasant relief from the monotonous flatness of Holland. The name is a corruption of Suederland, and indicates the southern corner of Westphalia. Roughly speaking, it is a triangular tableland scored by many deep and winding valleys. It is drained by the Ruhr and Lenne, which unite on its borders and flow into the Rhine at Ruhrort, by the Lahn and the Sieg, which also feed the Rhine, and by the Eder, a tributary of the Weser. These last three rivers rise in the Rothaargebirge, which form the watershed between the Rhine and Weser.

The country is well wooded, principally with pine and beech, and agriculture and forestry are the main industries. Numerous metal-working trades are, however, carried on in the small towns and villages in the main valleys.

The so-called "mountains" are only the highest points in the various ranges (*Gebirge*). Trees are almost invariably grown right up to the summits and, to get any view at all from the top, one has to climb an *Aussichtsturm* (view-tower). Naturally, fine views of the country can be obtained from the slopes and ridges wherever there is a clearing. I only know two hills, Wildewiese and Heiligenstuhl, where there are uninterrupted views from the actual summits.

It may be of interest to give the heights of a few of the summits in the various ranges. The figures in brackets indicate the height of the starting point in the main valley:—

Lennegebirge.—Kohlberg, 1,681 ft. (Werdohl 621 ft.); Hohe Mohmert, 1,885 ft., Heiligenstuhl, 1,915 ft. (Plettenberg 705 ft.), and Wildewiese, 2,125 ft. (Roenkhausen 754 ft.).

Ebbegebirge.—Nordhelle, 2,181 ft. (Werdohl or Plettenberg). At Nordhelle a substantial stone tower has been erected on the summit to the memory of Robert Kolb, who took the lead in getting the series of footpaths through the Sauerland properly charted and indicated. I shall refer to this later.

The tower and its surrounding pine-trees are reminiscent of Leith Hill in Surrey.

Rothaargebirge.—Haerdler, 2,489 ft. (Lenne, 1,148 ft.); Schanze, 2,345 ft. (Schmallenberg 1,344 ft.); and Kahler Astenberg, 2,761 ft. (Winterberg 2,197 ft.). The last-named is the only hill mentioned which I have not been up. I only visited the Rothaargebirge twice, once by motor car for the day only, and the other time for a long week-end at Whitsuntide. We made the Hotel Stoermann at Schmallenberg our headquarters, and were most comfortable there, only paying 6s. a day each for full pension.

There are no lakes in the Sauerland, but their absence is compensated for by the many reservoirs (*Talsperren*, i.e., dale dams) which have been constructed among the hills at the river-heads. It is scarcely an exaggeration to say that every river and stream of any size has been dammed near its source. In addition to fulfilling useful functions, these reservoirs, which are really artificial lakes, afford excellent facilities for boating, bathing, and fishing. On the larger ones there are motor-boat services. Each reservoir has one or more hotels or restaurants where good food and sleeping accommodation at reasonable prices can be obtained. The surroundings and banks are extremely picturesque, the slopes being planted with pine and birch, or left in their natural condition.

The Edertalsperre is by far the largest. It has a total length of about seventeen miles, an area of 463 square miles, and a capacity of 44,000 million gallons.

The next largest is the Moehnetalsperre, at the head of the Moehne, the northern branch of the Ruhr. This reservoir has a capacity of rather more than half that of the Edertalsperre, and a length of about seven miles, not counting a rectangular branch about three miles long. It is crossed by three arched stone bridges, the longest being about one-third of a mile in length. The Haus Delecke on its shores is an excellent hotel with a delightful garden; pension terms are about 8/6 a day.

Most of the reservoirs are, of course, much smaller, some being only a mile or so long. They fulfil a double purpose:

(1) to regulate the water supply in the valleys so as to minimize floods in wet seasons and to ensure a supply of water in dry weather; (2) to provide water power for the generation of electricity.

Some of the larger reservoirs have a generating station at the base of the dam, but current is mostly produced at stations in the main valleys near the various works and townships. The Lenne, for instance, is dammed every three or four miles over a long stretch in the industrial district.

I suggest that it would be worth while for some one to study the Sauerland hydro-electric scheme carefully with a view to its application in the hilly manufacturing districts of England, such as Lancashire and the West Riding of Yorkshire. The Hebden Bridge-Halifax district appears to me to be particularly suitable for a start. All the water in the Pennines cannot be needed for household and manufacturing purposes!

In my opinion, a great deal is to be said for the method of using the *same* water to work small generating stations every few miles if necessary. Start near the source of the stream and work down. Capital could be easily found by a group of works or a township for the erection of its own generating station, and the tax-payer need not be called upon as he probably would be in any large centralized national scheme.

I should like to say a word here on the vexed question of overhead transmission of electricity. The standards which one sees everywhere in the Sauerland are really no uglier than telegraph poles, once the eye has got used to them. If electricity, as it will, is to benefit Sussex or the Lake District, a line of overhead cables supported by well-designed lattice girder standards is a small price to pay for the cheap distribution of electric current which is as important for agriculture as it is for industry. In the Sauerland the smallest and most remote villages and farms use electricity for light and power.

Generally speaking, the summer is warmer and the winter colder than in Yorkshire. At Winterberg and elsewhere good ski-ing can be had, and special trains are run there from the towns whenever there is good snow. I returned to England before the severe winter of 1928-9 and unfortunately the four preceding winters were too mild to enable me to get any practice, as the snow only lasted a few days at a time.

The flora is similar to that of England, with some differences. There are no wild hyacinths (*Scilla nutans*), primroses, or gorse, but the true oxlip (*Primula elatior*) grows profusely in the meadows, and there is abundance of broom. White heather (ling) is also common in places on the hills, growing in large patches among the purple. Of flowers rare in Britain we found the May lily (*Maianthemum convallaria*) carpeting the beechwoods, and a rampion (*Phyteuma spicatum*), which is only found in England at Waldron, Sussex, is common on roadside banks. We also found a Solomon's Seal (*Polygonatum verticillatum*), another rarity with us.

Limestone occurs round Attendorn, at Letmathe, and in the Hoennetal, a delightful valley with many similarities to the Derbyshire dales. Near this valley is the Felsenmeer, a wooded dell about a mile long and half a mile wide, full of strange blocks of limestone and pits where the roofs of caves have been worn through by water. Here a promising pot was disclosed by heavy rains, but it turned out to be an old mine-shaft. When I revisited it I found it had been blocked up by a concrete slab twelve inches thick—a characteristic example of German thoroughness.

What caves there are seem to have been explored and exploited. There are only two show caves worth mentioning: the Attahoehle at Attendorn, which has some extremely fine curtain stalactites hanging in folds with red stripes just like blankets; and the Deckenhoehle at Letmathe, which is smaller, but also has some good stalactites. Both caves are well lit by electricity.

The iron-working industries of the Sauerland date back to the Middle Ages, when iron was rudely puddled in forges driven by water power, and land-owners restricted the number of these to preserve the fish. As in Surrey and Sussex, "hammer" frequently occurs in place names, and "Osmunds"—bars of iron of fixed weight—were used as currency. In those early days the Hansa merchants travelled the country, and many of the towns belonged to the Hansa League. The many churches of the picturesque walled town of Soest bear witness to its prosperity and importance at that time.

Near Soest, and now overlooking the Moehnetalsperre, is the hamlet of Drueggelte, with a little round chapel built

by some Crusader after the Church of the Holy Sepulchre at Jerusalem. Not far from Plettenberg are the ruins of a castle of the Knights of the Teutonic Order, who, when the Crusades were over, established German supremacy in the Baltic Provinces. One of the von Plettenbergs was an early Governor of Riga.

The country districts are entirely Roman Catholic. The widely-spread fortified farms, each with its little whitewashed chapel, are reminders of the days when the Prince-Archbishops of Cologne were the feudal lords.

There are many interesting old churches, but the scope of this article does not allow detailed description. One curious feature must, however, be mentioned: in some cases, as at Balve, when a new church became necessary, the orientation of the new building was diverted from the East in order that the old church might be incorporated intact. At Affeln we found a fine 16th-century Dutch altar-piece with elaborate figure-subjects carved in wood. It was in a very bad condition, and we were instrumental in getting it repaired by the Provincial Archæological authorities at Muenster.

The old Westphalian black and white farm-house accommodated the family, farm servants, stock, and stores under one roof. In plan it is a long rectangle, of which one end is occupied by a wide doorway high enough to allow a loaded harvest wagon to enter. This doorway leads into a large T-shaped hall, called the "Diele," which serves as harness room and threshing-floor. Above the "Diele," under a high gabled roof, is the barn, and on each side of the main doorway are smaller doors leading into the cow-sheds and stables. The rest of the ground floor is occupied at the back by the kitchen-living room and bedrooms. Many of these extremely picturesque old houses have been modernized, but a few still survive in their original state. The beams over the main entrance are often carved with the names of the married couple for whom the house was built, the date of building, and a prayer to certain saints for protection against hail and thunder, and to S. Agatha against fire.

Safety while crossing rivers is secured by erecting on many bridges a statue of S. John of Nepomuk, a 14th-century

martyr who was thrown over the bridge into the Moldau at Prague for refusing to reveal the secrets of the confessional.

At Altena on the Lenne there is a most interesting "Folk" Museum, housed in a very fine twelfth-century castle, which was formerly a stronghold of the powerful Counts of Mark. As in so many other cases, this castle has been carefully restored.

I cannot conclude this article without expressing my appreciation of the Sauerlaendische Gebirgs-Verein (S.G.V.) which has planned and mapped out twenty-six main routes for pedestrians along existing footpaths throughout the district. These routes are clearly indicated by white crosses, and any number of walks and tours can be arranged, as the various routes intersect each other and auxiliary routes are maintained by local committees. In addition to this work the S.G.V. runs a comfortable hotel and restaurant, the Ehrenmal, just below the summit of the Kohlberg, near Werdohl. In connection with the hotel there is also one of the many *Jugendherberge*, where boys and girls can obtain separate shelter for the night and can cook their meals. It is the usual sight in summer to see large and small parties of school children, generally under the leadership of a teacher, out for a week-end in the country and carrying all their equipment on their backs.

I hope that I have said enough to indicate that the industrial district of the Ruhr has delightful country within easy reach. My work frequently took me to Werdohl, a pleasant little town of about 12,000 inhabitants, situated in a narrow valley, and surrounded on three sides by the Lenne. Whenever possible, we spent our week-ends there and so got to know the surrounding country, the Lennegebirge, the Hoennetal, and the Ebbegebirge, better than the other districts I have mentioned.

THREE SUMMERS IN THE CLUB.

By S. H. WHITAKER.

My first experience of pot-holing was the 1927 Whitsuntide Meet at G.G. Quite a number of new members were in camp by Fell Beck, and it had been decided that a good initiation would be to do the Flood Entrance. Those who didn't wish to make the complete journey, and indeed the parties to do this had to be kept small, could get quite a good idea of what pot-holing was really like by helping to carry the tackle to the foot of the 150 ft. pitch, a journey which was made by six men from the Main Shaft in 35 minutes.

Early on Whit-Monday the surface party, consisting of Frankland, D. Burrow, and Hilton, let themselves down through the Narrow Gauge and started on their long crawl. They were given a considerable start before the G.G. party started down the Main Shaft. Even so a long wait of an hour or more at the Flood Pot was necessary, which was partly spent in tying together the 150 feet of ladder and preparing the tackle, until a pin point of light announced the presence of the surface party at the top of the pitch. The beam of an acetylene light at last picked up the paper-decorated end of the cord dropped by the surface party, and first the life-line and then the ladders were hauled to the top and fixed. The members of the surface party then changed places with H. S. and F. S. Booth, Taylor and myself, one man from the surface party coming down, then one man from the G.G. party going up, and so on.

Long shall I remember that ladder climb; being new to the craft I had rushed the first part of the climb in order to get out of the water as soon as possible, consequently when a sharp knock on the head and a concentrated stream of water down my neck told me that I had come to the lip of the fall I was uncomfortably blown. As the pin point of light at the top seemed as far off as ever I tried stopping on the ladder to see if the pull on the life-line was any good; it wasn't, the Yorkshire Rambler at the top didn't believe in doing another man's work for him. I no longer rush long ladder pitches in the dark.

After the last man of the G.G. party had reached the top and recovered his breath, the ladders were lowered and the end of the life-line dropped down the pitch. The G.G. party having burnt its boats moved on to the next difficulty, or rather to the next place where the difficulties were more concentrated. This is a ladder pitch and the surface party had left the ladder complete with the life-line doubled over the top rung.

As the leader of our party seemed to find some difficulty in getting off this ladder, which was rather short, the top eight feet having to be climbed up the mooring line, a timidly expressed hope that this was not as hard work as it sounded brought down a typical pot-holing answer, and we learnt that we too would blow and pant had we to lead such a place with a rucksack.

The chief snag about it is that the party is afterwards encumbered by the ladder and line in passages along which one has difficulty in dragging oneself. A short way beyond this pitch a small waterfall is encountered about 12 ft. high, which has to be climbed direct and was led by Fred Booth.

Some time was lost in finding the proper exit to Cigarette Chamber, where strangely enough we found a pipe in quite a good state of repair. From Cigarette Chamber to the foot of the long squeeze is merely a long crawl, and our main difficulty was to find the proper place to start climbing this 40 ft. squeeze; we were engaged, in fact, in solving this problem when C. E. Burrow's cheery voice hailed us from the top and under his direction we went on to the end of the passage where he let down a rope for us, which simplified our ascent very considerably.

The last of our problems, the Gauge, was overcome by each man removing all but an irreducible minimum of clothing, a stirrup being let down and used as a movable foothold, with vigorous help from Seaman at the top.

The Three Peaks.—The meet at Horton-in-Ribblesdale in July 1927 was well attended, but its official reason, a Mid-summer night walk, seemed to lose some of its popularity, for only H.S. and F. S. Booth, DeLittle and myself turned out, although I believe another party did the round during the next day.

We were fortunate in our weather conditions for when we started at about nine on Saturday night there was hardly a cloud in the sky. We reached the cairn on the top of Penyghent in daylight to witness a remarkably fine sunset. It was not thought advisable to spend too long admiring this, but to get back to Horton as quickly as possible in order to take advantage of what light there was before it got really dark.

From Horton to Ribbleshead is rather a monotonous tramp along the high road, but the time was found useful to discuss the details of a coming holiday in the Pyrenees.

The ascent of Whernside was more difficult, as a considerable amount of open country has to be crossed to reach the mountain from the main road, and at night a boulder and a stray sheep look very much alike, and the way is very much more difficult to find. However, Whernside is hard to miss, and at length we arrived at the top, where we had an encounter with a little sheep in a more pleasant form (mutton sandwiches).

From the top of Whernside we took a line due south and day was just dawning by the time we reached the Hill Inn. Ingleborough was attacked in a thick mist, and perhaps as a result of this we got too far round to the west and had some very steep clints to climb.

Over Simon Fell very frequent recourse to the compass was necessary, as at times on taking a bearing we found ourselves almost at right angles to our proper course, visibility being confined to about twenty yards.

Pyrenees.—A fortnight's holiday at Vernet in the Pyrenees with the two Booths led to only one serious expedition, an attack on the Barquette, one of the peaks of the Canigou. To start with, except for the Canigou the district is all wrong, and secondly the inhabitants do not understand the requirements of mountaineers. Among its recommendations, however, are a glorious warm swimming bath, and a peculiar liqueur, 'Liqueur de Canigou.'

We started our attempt on the Barquette at 4.30 a.m. one morning, first following the main road to Fillol to a point where a mountain track leads off to the right, marked by a signpost 'Canigou 6 hrs.' No anxiety was felt when this track was lost in the darkness; Belloc's maxim for ramblers

in the Pyrenees was not then fully appreciated (it soon got to be).

No serious attempt was made to find the path; we merely continued up the valley where we thought it ought to be. On climbing a steep slope at the end of this valley we came across another track where we had our second breakfast, the early morning sun shining over the mountain into Spain making a beautiful background to the sardines and various interesting kinds of cheeses. We followed the path we had found until the main peaks of the mountain came into sight, and left it soon afterwards, as it appeared to have no connection with the top. We struck straight up the shoulder which seemed to offer the most direct way to the top. My next memories are of unbelievably steep scree and perfectly diabolical heat. It soon became obvious that we had gone wrong somewhere; however, it seemed preferable to go on rather than to lose the height we had already gained by going down and starting the difficult task of finding a path. We accordingly carried on and eventually reached the top very thirsty and very hot.

We tried to traverse from the top of the Barbette to the main peak, but the rotten rock made any such attempt unjustifiable. We were also anxious to get back to the nearest water, one of us having mistaken the complete water supply of the party for his own ration. The ascent had taught us the importance of keeping to the track and Belloc's rule was religiously adhered to on the descent, with the result that we got back to Vernet in quite good time.

Lost Johns'.—Two camps were run at Whitsuntide 1928, one at G.G. and the other at Lost Johns'. Several new long passages had been discovered in the latter, and it was hoped to follow some of these right to the end. Six of us assembled in the Camp at Leck Fell House on the Saturday afternoon and carried in a considerable amount of tackle in preparation for the first long day.

My chief memory of the pot is one of appalling mud beyond the Centipede Pot, and also the climb up the Centipede after a hard day. It seemed difficult to keep the life-line on the right side of the ladder, one of our men having a



Photo by E. H. Sade

THE RIINGSBRAE FROM SOLETTIND.

particularly bad time through not climbing round at the proper time.

Only three of us braved the mud below Centipede Pot on Whit-Monday, the other two arranging to meet us on our way back at its head, and help to carry out the tackle. All went well until a pitch, which we have since heard is the last but one, was reached where we found we were a ladder short. It was arranged that I should go to the top of the last ladder climb, let down the ladder used there on a line, and if possible go to sleep until I heard from the other two, when I was to let down the line, and haul up and fix the ladders in position again so that the other two could get up.

I did not go to sleep. Hilton going down the ladders first had gone on ahead to explore—nothing was heard of him for some time—the other man began to get anxious, and a loud cry of 'Jack' rent the air, and, as there was no response several more appeals followed. Some time elapsed before the missing man turned up, and we learnt that the passage went on to another vertical. The Editor then went down to see what he thought about going on, but the obvious conclusion was that we could get no further.

Soon after this I felt a tug on the line and I accordingly hauled up and fixed the ladder. Approaching Centipede Pot with three ladders, etc., the mud seemed thicker than ever. Truly the mud here is the worst feature of Lost Johns'.

I think we were all three very glad to meet the others at the top of the long climb, and the rest of the day was spent in getting all the tackle on the entrance side of all troubles, where it was dumped, each of us taking a light load back to camp, which we reached just as it was getting dark.

Tuesday dawned very wet and the morning was spent in yarning in the tents, Roberts and I going for a shot at Short Drop later.

We unfortunately turned up at the entrance to this hole without any dry matches and only one electric torch. The expedient of drying matches in one's hair did not work, probably because the matches were too wet. We fancied that a crawl of about 200 yards would bring us into Gavel Pot, but we followed the windings of the passage with our single electric light for what must have been at least quarter

of a mile without coming to any sign of the waterfall. As we wanted to strike camp the same day we did not persevere, but turned back and made for the entrance, having an exciting moment when we nearly lost the battery out of our lamp. Had we done this things might have been exceedingly awkward. My chief impression was the discovery of how very difficult it is to get along a low passage filled with every conceivable sort of obstacle, or so it seemed, without a light.

Skye.—A fortnight is not a very long time to do anything in Skye, especially if the fortnight has to include the journey there and back. The journey from Leeds to Mallaig is not one to be undertaken lightly, without an ample supply of provisions, as the long stop at Crianlarich, to enable passengers to get breakfast may, or may not, materialize. In our case it did not, and it was a hungry party of five climbers, Crossley, DeLittle, H. S. and F. S. Booth and myself, who rushed wildly out of the station refreshment room to the already moving train, the last man having just time to complete his purchase of a large bag of buns; however a good lunch and tea were available on the Portree steamer. We eventually arrived at Glen Brittle at about 7.30 p.m.

Early next morning we made our way up the Coire Na Banachdich, intending to reach the top of Sgurr Dearg by way of the Window Buttress climb, probably the best, and certainly the most interesting, way to the summit of Sgurr Dearg. Graded in the S.M.C. Guide as a 3, it starts in a 40 ft. crack which is probably the most difficult pitch; there is also another interesting pitch near the top, from which the climb gets its name of the Window Buttress.

From the top of this climb an easy scramble and walk leads to the summit of Sgurr Dearg, passing the Inaccessible Pinnacle on the way. We climbed this pinnacle by the long east ridge, the wind, rain, and extreme coldness of the rocks making this ordinarily quite easy climb not without its difficulties.

To this day we have not even yet succeeded in coming to a decision as to what climb it was we tried first on Sron Na Ciche; the descriptions of the Cioch Direct fit it nearer than anything else, but whatever it was we had to turn back and eventually reached the top of the Cioch by means of the

well defined terrace which crosses the face of Sron Na Ciche at a steep angle, and then by the very steep slab leading to the foot of the Cioch itself.

The second week of our holiday was spent at the Sligachan Hotel, the weather remaining exceedingly misty and wet, our first expedition, the Pinnacle Ridge of Sgurr Nan Gillean, being done in a thick mist. We were fortunate, however, in having one really beautiful day when we climbed the West Ridge of Sgurr Nan Gillean and along to the top of Am Bhasteir, whence we got a wonderful view of both Black and Red Coolins, and indeed, of many mountains on both the mainland and Outer Hebrides.

The climb from the top of Am Bhasteir to the top of the Bhasteir Tooth entails a descent of about eighty feet in which there is one interesting pitch, and then an easy scramble to the top of the Tooth. We climbed off the Tooth by Shadbolt's Chimney and returned to Sligachan over Sgurr Bhasteir, getting another particularly fine view of the Red Coolins from the top.

There are some very interesting crags about half an hour's walk from Sligachan, Eagle Crags, and a very pleasant day can be spent climbing there; but as the route entails crossing a fairly big tributary of the Red Burn, parties should remember that Coolin burns rise and become almost impassable very quickly in wet weather, and in such cases it is better to send a man across on a rope, as the human chain method has nothing but simplicity to recommend it.

Norway.—The question of going to Norway for the 1929 holiday was first broached on a trip to Doe Crags, Coniston. The snag seemed to be that most of us could only manage a fortnight, and this had to include travelling time. Good and faithful staff work by Robinson, who was unable to go at the last minute, elucidated the fact that, although the only available Fjord boat left Bergen the day before the steamer from Newcastle arrived, it was possible, by travelling overland via Voss and Stalheim, to catch this same Fjord boat at Gudvangen.

Our party, by some additions and subtractions, at length found its level at six. Creighton, Sale, Elliott, DeLittle, Fred Booth and myself, followed the itinerary previously

mapped out by Robinson and arrived at Gudvangen in plenty of time to catch the Fjord boat to Skjolden. The walk up from Skjolden to the small hotel at Turtegrö proved valuable training for the more serious work ahead.

A 5 a.m. start was made next morning, in good weather, in an attempt to make the first ascent of the season of the Store Skagastölstind, the hut being reached about 8 a.m. Here a second breakfast was cooked and all the blankets taken out of the hut and spread on rocks to dry in the sun.

From the hut a steep snow slope was utilized, but this unfortunately involved us in scrambling up some nasty, greasy, steep slabs before another snow slope brought us to the foot of the main peak. From here we used Heftye's traverse, which is a somewhat exposed traverse on good holds to the foot of an exposed difficult chimney, for the entrance of which a shoulder from one's second is necessary. From the top of this chimney about 200 feet of rough scrambling lead to the top.

The same route for the descent was followed, with the exception that the slabs were cut out and we arrived back at the hut at about 8 p.m. Even with three blankets each, all our spare clothing, two Primus stoves, and six pipes going, we had a cold night and found another early start next morning for the Midt Maradalstind no hardship.

On looking at this ridge the night before we had seen a convenient snow filled gully leading on to a low part of the ridge and from thence the way along the ridge to the summit we hoped would go.

When ascending this gully next morning we took to some rocks on the side of the gully, which looked as though they might save us a long snow trudge, but in practice these rocks turned out to be more difficult than they looked, and as a consequence a good deal of time was wasted. In fact it soon became evident that if the peak was to be conquered that day, another night in the hut was inevitable and as our stock of provisions had by now run somewhat low, the wiser course seemed to be to go back to Turtegrö and do the peak later on.

The weather was too good to permit of an off day before something more was done, so another 5 a.m. start was made the next day for the traverse of the Soleitind.



Photo by E. H. Sate

ON THE WAY UP SKAGASTÖLSTIND

After some deliberation it was decided to tackle the main peak first, and then come back over the horseshoe to Turtegrö, taking in the two rock peaks on the way. The main snow peak went quite nicely, but the centre rock peak proved more troublesome, nobody in the party knowing the proper route from that side; two or three ways that seemed to offer possibilities were tried, but each one, in the end, had to be reluctantly abandoned. We did, however, succeed in forcing a way to the top of the smaller rock peak, by descending a snow slope a little way, then traversing and taking to the rocks. Our time for the traverse of the Soleitind from Turtegrö, back to Turtegrö, was 13 hours.

Our next trip was another attempt on the mountain that had turned us back on our second day, the Midt Maradalstind. This time we determined that any error in the commissariat department should be an error in the positive direction, not in the negative, consequently a pile of provisions was assembled in the hotel porch for dividing up into loads, sufficient, if the comments of the other people in the hotel were anything on which to judge, for at least a week. After afternoon tea on Sunday we strolled up leisurely to the hut in preparation for an early start next day.

This time we made the top of the snow gully in an hour and five minutes. We soon afterwards reached the point where we had turned back the first time, but the weather, which up to this point had been good, made a change for the worse, and the climb to the summit was made over difficult rocks in a partial blizzard, the return to the hut being particularly wet.

We had hoped to be able to go back to Turtegrö over the Dyrhaugstinder, but after waiting about all afternoon without seeing the weather get any better, we decided to go straight back that night. Having once made the decision we felt justified in really letting ourselves go on the provisions and reached Turtegrö about 8 p.m.

Not being so pressed for time on the return journey to Bergen, we were able to take the Fjord boat right through, a delightful trip across the North Sea making a fitting wind-up to a really splendid holiday.

Long Kin.—Owing to bad weather in August this year, 1929, pot-holing in both Lost Johns' and G.G. has been nil; also there do not seem to have been many private pot-holing expeditions organised for the smaller pots. One exception however, was Long Kin on Newby Moss.

For this it was arranged that a working party should turn up on the Saturday afternoon, carry up as much of the tackle as possible, and also rig the first two pitches.

Roberts, Fred Booth and myself accordingly met for lunch one Saturday at the Flying Horseshoe, Clapham. Six ladders, six ropes, candles, blocks, etc. were loaded into Roberts' car and with Fred Booth sitting on the tackle in the back, and Roberts and I in front seats we started out for Newby Moss. The carrying up of all this tackle from the car to the pot was hot and thirsty work. It is interesting to note that the surface water round about the pot, whilst being excellent for acetylene lamps, is certainly not pleasant to drink.

Probably the best way to do this pot-hole is to rig both the first and second pitches from the surface. A good safe belay for the first pitch ladders was found, which brought the foot of the ladders to the extreme end of the first platform, about 70 ft. below the surface. The second pitch starts more or less directly at the other end of the platform and about 10 ft. away from the first pitch ladders. We had heard tales of a man standing on the small chockstones for three quarters of an hour; if this was so, a good deal of weathering must have taken place, for it would be absolutely impossible now.

The ladders for the second pitch, 150 ft., were tied together and lowered until the top rung was only a few feet above the platform, then made fast on the surface; the life-line for this pitch being also worked from this platform through a block attached to the surface.

The next day our party was augmented early by Sale, Gowing, and later by Burrow Taylor, C. E. Burrow and Brown, and the serious descent was made. The first and second pitches worked excellently (if the fact of the man stepping off the ladder at the bottom of the second pitch and stirring up a dead rabbit is taken as being irrelevant, which of course, it is). The greatest difficulty that this expedition had to face was undoubtedly to find a really satisfactory

belay for the third and bottom pitch; the belay which eventually was found, however, proved extraordinarily satisfactory, because (by good luck) the surplus ladder at the bottom of the pitch could conveniently be utilized, without any further rigging, to descend a little final hole about 20 ft. deep. Minor accidents unfortunately prevented two of the party from making the full descent, but the presence of a large party pulling at the life-line at the top of the big pitch was very helpful to those coming up.

The journey down from the pot with nine men to carry the tackle was a delightful experience after the journey up.



ABOUT NOTHING IN PARTICULAR.

By C. E. BENSON.

At the last General Meeting our honoured and Honorary Editor, commenting on the reluctance of members to supply him with accounts of their holiday doings, suggested that they should remedy this deficiency, if not by writing up their own experiences, by stimulating others to send in theirs. I propose to endeavour to respond in both ways. The general excuse is, I understand, that this or that member has nothing in particular to write about. That is no excuse. If you have nothing in particular to write about, why not write about nothing in particular? We cannot all carve out colossal routes on the Courmayeur face of Mont Blanc or make history on the crags of Scawfell or Pillar, but we can enjoy ourselves and perhaps pass on some of our enjoyment to others.

I always take my holiday at Ogwen Cottage, pull down the blinds, bid dull care begone, and lead the simple life. These conditions are greatly helped by the facts that the Cottage is five miles from the nearest Post Office or Pothouse, that the news is restricted to a two-days old *Daily Wail*—when you get it,—that the air is like Thor's Hammer and the water of a quality you would pay three pence a glass for in Leeds or London. I always go to Ogwen for my holiday. I pay my doctor's bill there. I take a rest cure. Ogwen is the place for a rest cure, and I needed one last year.

You know the poetic remedy :—

"If thou art worn and hard beset . . .
Go to the woods and hills. No tears
Dim the sweet look that nature wears."

That last sentence is poetic licence. Early June dimmed the sweet look so effectually that it drove away two delightful anglers. It was bitterly cold and one of the anglers was from the central Soudan. I was not surprised then at his producing a whisky bottle. I was surprised at his doing so openly. I had reason.

One day a Fellow Rambler incautiously asked me, and in the porch, if I had any whisky in the house. Instead of replying that I had lost the best part of my luggage on my journey,

I replied incautiously, "Yes." It was the reply of an idiot. On one side of the porch was a lean parson, equipped with rod and waders, on the other a somewhat rickety old craft. No sooner was the magic word uttered than the padre set out with resolute brow and determined stride for the far side of the lake. Fool that I was, I wished him a tight line. I did not know at the time that he had been cautioned against wading there, as he was likely to slip in.

Quick and unswerving as he was, that old wreck went one better. Without hoisting Blue Ribbon—I mean Blue Peter, he bore up for the boat-stage, pretended to look about, and contrived to fall waist deep into a foot and a half of water. He was retrieved, taken to the Cottage, coddled what time his garments were getting dried, protesting the while that he would surely catch his death of cold, unless he had some whisky—my whisky, of course, and two wine glasses at least.

Troubles never come singly. The padre "fast on his dripping traces came and all but won that desperate game." He had, or said he had, fallen into the lake on the other side and was also in danger of death by cold. Anyhow he wanted whisky—mine, and he got it. Never again.

The weather was not all bad. There were fair intervals and in these we climbed some of the Standard Courses. What a blessed word is "Standard." It is not half as long as Mesopotamia but it is more than twice as comfortable. It comprises everything needful, from the Nor' Nor' Gully to the Grooved Arête, the Bristly Ridge to the Oblique Buttress, the Idwal Staircase to the Holly Tree Wall. A blessed word is "Standard." We did some "Standard" climbs.

My holiday was over. The blinds were pulled up to admit the gloomy twilight of business. I have one advantage. I can work where I like. I am my own Director, Manager, Clerk, and Office Boy, a kind of Pooh Bah on the ramble. Still, even when the holiday time is over, I do take an occasional day off, snatch one in fact. Even so the total does not amount to one week. I went to Beddgelert.

Beddgelert is a beautiful spot. Its chief attractions for the motor-tourist are four hotels (two with Yorkshire proprietors), a gross of pictures illustrating Llewellyn clad in an up-to-date ladies' skirt (about half-way down to the knees), about to slay

a heraldic dog, and Gelert's Grave, to which they "longen to go on pilgrimage." If you quote Zangwill's lines:

"Stay, sympathetic traveller. Dry your eyes!
Here not a wolf hound but a landlord—lies."

and mention that the real Simon Pure was one Gelart, an Irish Saint, they get quite cross.

As a rambling centre Beddgelert is delightful. For climbing—there are many preferable. Craig Cwm Silin may be all right if you have a car. If not, I have my own opinion; but for the ridge walk from Y Garn to Craig Cwm Silin or Y Garnedd Goch, or *vice versa*, it is worth a car every time. One is recommended, and with justice, to take the walk from Nantlle to Rhyd-ddu, as thus you have the best of the scenery in front of you, and on no account to omit to visit the Llyniau at the foot of the Craggs. Nevertheless, if it is a hot day, by the time you have reached the summit ridge up that easy, stodgy slope with its ever receding skyline, you will have cursed and cursed the man who gave that advice.

Taken the other way one must be careful if the weather is at all thick. The fantastic crags which crown Mynnydd Drws y Coed literally overhang the precipice all along the line. Near the commencement of the ridge there was a place where you had either to swing round a boulder by stepping over nothing at all, dragging your waistcoat part with you, or shamefully tack to port to dodge the obstacle. I never quite liked this place. On an ordinary walk it seemed an imperinence. On a climb I might not have quite liked it either, as I might have felt a bit nervous as to the stability of the boulder. The last time I was there, my companion hunted about in vain for this obstacle and was much disappointed in not finding it. I was not. It seems that nervousness as to its stability would not have been unwarranted.

That is not all. At the end of the ridge you come to a grass slope and right in front of you Trum y Ddysgl looms invitingly. The inclination to put on the pace is natural but unadvisable. The ridge here swings abruptly off almost at right angles and as a consequence the head of the cwm to the right cuts right in across the apparent track. Going at speed, one might have great difficulty in pulling up before stepping down a great deal further than is healthy.

Clogwyn du'r Arddu is quite reasonably accessible if you take the 'bus to Snowdon Ranger. It may be noted that now access from Cwm Brwynog is barred by one of those horrid wire fences, cut in squares, which you can neither climb over nor wriggle through. There is a place where you can wriggle under but it is an exasperating process, and on a wet day would be beastly to boot. Now, if you observe the outline of the Clogwyn as you walk up, you will note a place where it flattens a bit, not very far above Bwlch Cwm Brwynog. Take the tourist path as far as this, turn over to the left and you will find a track which leads you easily down across the rough slope to the base of the Far West Buttress. We planted a cairn or two for guidance and information. I chanced to see a party on that appalling West Buttress Climb. It was not pleasant watching. The climbers looked as if they were strung out along the sloping edge of nothing, and I could not banish the idea that that relentless slanting groove might at any moment spill the whole lot out. Ghastly! I suppose it was not so bad as it looked, but I felt fear in the pit of my stomach. Now had I been fit and skilful enough to be on the climb I should probably have been enjoying myself to the utmost—which is insane.

Another grand walk is from Nant Mor over Cnicht and Moel Meirch. It is a bit sloppy in parts, but any such inconvenience is more than compensated by the superb views of Snowdon. The numerous little lakes, too, are a delight to the eye. We were further exhilarated by making a discovery, or at least noting an unrecorded feature. Hitherto we had believed that there were only three "true peaks" in Wales, the Little Glyder, Crib Goch and Y Tryfan. We found that Moel Meirch was a fourth, and what is more the peakiest of the lot. Also it is unique, I fancy, amongst home summits. No living man, except a tight-rope dancer, could stand on its tip.

The ground between this ridge and the main road is much more broken up than appears from above or below, and intricate withal, the more so owing to the existence of a lot of stubbed up gateways. One of these was on a "right of way," but obviously intended to scare away all passengers. It bristled with briar and wire and the walls on either side were

high and forbidding. The solution was simple—back up till above the entanglement, traverse six inches to the right, descend in like manner. Applied Mountaineering.

The discovery, however, was at Capel Curig. It was a well scratched antique, truly, but it was new to us. The weather behaved badly to us at Capel Curig and played us one singularly scurvy trick. A friend from abroad had motored over to climb with us and arrived in torrents of rain. Should we motor to Ogwen on the chance? The vote was against it, as the rocks would in any case be in a ghastly state. So we sat tight and jawed and enjoyed ourselves immensely in the circumstances till next morning. Then we heard that the rain had stopped at the watershed and that all the day Y Tryfan and the Glyders had been bathed in sunshine.

Still we had to keep fit as we might. I suppose most of us know that singular cluster of spiky crags just behind Capel Curig Church. It is called the Pinkin. We had often looked at the Pinkin. We had sometimes wondered whether there were any scrambling there. If so, no matter! Was it not visible, conspicuously visible from the road? So is the Milestone truly, but people take some detecting thereon—none whatever on parts of the Pinkin. One day we greatly dared—and found scratches and problems abounding, mostly out of ken. The Bryn Twrch Arête however is plain for all men to see, but what matter? It is quite stiff to get on to and once on the crest you feel, as Mr. Hughes of the Guest House truly says, hundreds of feet up in the air. It has two faults: (1) it is much too short; (2) when wet, its surface gets covered with a kind of greasy coating, something like the soap you find in a railway carriage lavatory, and quite as dirty withal.

From Wales we migrated to the Lakes, as usual, and managed to put in a few more standard climbs. Weather very evil. One day going up to Doe Crags, it was stuffy as the bottom of a stewpan. I am dead certain we were both listening for the faint rumble of thunder to give an excuse for retreat, but thunder it would not and we had to go and do another "Standard."

Towards the end a young friend, whom we had taken for a first climb the previous year, turned up with another friend who had never been on a fell before, let alone on a climb.

However, a-climbing he must go! After much debate internal we decided on the Little Gully on Pavey Ark. Ideal—enclosed walls to ensure confidence and short pitches. If they were stiff, that would not harm our recruit—six feet odd, about eleven-seven, lish as a cat. We took the 'bus to Skelwith and thence return tickets to Dungeon Ghyll. Naturally we had rather more rope with us than we could comfortably stow away in our waistcoat pockets and this attracted notice. Presently an elderly passenger addressed Madame thus:—

"Are you going up there?" "Yes."

"Are you going rock-climbing?" "Yes."

"You seem very cheerful?" "Of course."

"And," in the voice of a Sexton, "you've got Return Tickets."

Just as she was recovering, the passenger's son caught sight of me and said, in an awed whisper, "Look, father, there's another of them."

That settled it. I thought my good lady would absolutely go to pieces. We came back by the same 'bus, even more cheerful. As for the passenger, he suggested the Beaver in *The Hunting of the Snark* and "looked unaccountably shy."

As for the Langdale Meet, is it not, or will it not be written in the Chronicles of the Club? Suffice it to say that it started raining as we got into the 'bus at Coniston on Thursday—we wanted an extra day so as to get into top-hole form—and left off as we tucked ourselves away in the President's motor on Monday morning. That was a morning to make a Boy Scout, keen on kind acts, green with envy. We had got our traps together and were waiting for the 'bus when Miss Dawson apprised us that the last Dungeon Ghyll 'bus had gone on Saturday and that there was no public conveyance nearer than Chapel Stile. That is where the President came in. He was taking along Slingsby to drop him at Ambleside or somewhere, and then proceeding home. On the way to Ambleside he must pass Skelwith Bridge where we could pick up a 'bus. Therefore we were to tuck ourselves away in his car as far as Skelwith Bridge. Of course we could not think of such a thing (with our subconscious minds probably thinking hard t'other way about). At any rate our resistance was overcome, and we were duly packed away. Kind Act I.

Kind Act II. As we reached Skelwith Bridge and were preparing to untuck ourselves, the Coniston to Ambleside 'bus hove in sight. "That'll suit me just as well!" exclaimed Slingsby. We started to expostulate but—

"All the chivalrous blood of long generations of Slingsbys Throbbled in their scion's veins. With a bound he leaped from the motor,
Rushed at the oncoming 'bus with a shout that arrested its progress
No road-agent's revolver could ever have been more effective.
Baggage was quickly transferred: the whole thing was done in a jiffy.
Off with a hoot we sped o'er the bridge in the President's motor,
Waving hands of adieu to the 'bus and the chivalrous Slingsby."



THE TOAST.

(Adapted from *Slet Fortuna Domus*).

Pray charge your glasses, gentlemen,
And drink to Yorkshire's honour.
May Fortune's hand defend our land;
May glory shine upon her!
Lo, here we meet, a band élite
Of sportsmen bound together
Beneath the spell of dale and fell,
Of moorland and of heather.

We toast with cheers the pioneers
Who tramped by moor and burn side,
And stood the test with laugh and jest
From Penyghent to Whernside.
They gave the Club the priceless wealth
Of manful, high tradition.
May those who will not toast this health
Be toasted in perdition!

We toast the man who leads the van,
The man who keeps the figures;
We toast the two who scribe work do,
For all have worked like niggers.
But if we toast each worthy name—
And would that we were able—
Our rest instead of being bed
Would be—beneath the table.

So once again your glasses drain,
And may we still continue
To seek our sport as Ramblers ought
With nerves and brain and sinew,
On crag and hill, in cave and gill,
Through fair or stormy weather:
A loyal band in heart and hand
Of Yorkshiremen together.

C. E. BENSON.

LOST JOHNS' CAVE.

By INNES FOLEY.

In composing this tale of wanderings in Lost Johns' Cave, the writer has been perplexed as to the proper course of action, whether baldly to describe the layout of the cave or give an account of each expedition in turn, whether to be geographical or to be human, and the narrative as finally written will, it is hoped, be such a compromise as will provide human interest without glossing over the technical details. The story is complicated, first by the long period over which the expeditions have been spread, and again by the amazing complexity of the passage systems.

I am well aware that experienced cave explorers will be pained at the immense time taken to achieve finality and at the slow and laborious nature of the assaults. To these I reply that this was the first cave of any size ever explored by the party, and to their inexperience was added the restraint of the conversation of local enthusiasts. "There is nothing in Lost Johns'," "It peters out quite soon," and so on. All this tended to limit our outlook, and so at each assault to leave us faced with some strange and unexpected obstacle. There was no inkling that the cave went down to five hundred feet below the entrance and three quarters of a mile in distance. Moreover, the original members of the party were split up in a very remarkable fashion so that they could only meet on rare occasions. Thus P. F. Foley was at Nottingham and later at Epsom, Lipscomb in London, Kennedy at Devonport, Hicks in the Air Force at Chester, I. C. Foley at Newcastle, and so on. Gathering together was no easy business.

Many know the two entrances just over the wall at the top of the lane leading from Cowan Bridge up on to Leck Fell, and equally well known is the stream cave leading one hundred and thirty yards north-west to a small pitch where the course is altered to south-east. (There is a tributary branch on the left bank halfway in). Beyond the little pitch the cave leads on past another pitch till the big fall marked as "Pitch III." on the map is reached. This fall is about a hundred feet deep. All this is common history, but it is apparently not

well known that above the little Pitch I. there is a passage which leads to two other complete systems which eventually join up with the main stream some two hundred and fifty feet below. It is about these systems that the following paper is written.

It was in September 1923 that the writer and his brother, Captain P. F. Foley of the Royal Engineers, first thought to explore the cave. With a candle or two and an electric torch and a length of Woolworth's clothes-line they penetrated as far as Pitch II. Their tale inflamed the imaginations of the writer's friends in Newcastle in after years, and in June 1926 a party consisting of George Hicks, J. R. Kennedy, Steve Mudge, and the writer, went over to have a try at it. After a try-out in the through passage from Rowten Pot to Jingle Pot, and a trip on the lake at White Scar they tackled Lost Johns' with grossly insufficient lighting. A passion for overhead traversing led the writer to go aloft at Pitch I., and so the New Roof Traverse was found, but the show was brought to a sudden end by his mistaking No. 1 Hole, about fifteen feet deep, for a pool of water and nearly stepping into it. This hole was afterwards named "Innes' Terror," Terror becoming a general term describing any deep hole in the floor of an otherwise level passage.

The same party with P. F. Foley, Mrs. P. F. Foley and R. Lipscomb attached, but Kennedy away, attacked the Cave again in August 1926 and began by trying the branch at Quicksand Cave. It is hoped the reader will always have the map before him, as to describe the exact position of each name would make this tale too cumbersome. This was the old course of the stream and is blocked by falls of stone very near the surface. Mudge found a horrible little wet corkscrew passage in the roof of the Cave and, wriggling up it, discovered "Steve's Grotto," a little cave full of fine stalactites. A very narrow passage leads away from it, but it is full of falls of roof and has never been completely explored.

The party then proceeded to the New Overhead Traverse, passing over "Innes' Terror" and over two more similar holes, Nos. 2 and 3, which had been dimly seen in June. The passage then began to drop and finished up in "Hammer Pot," our first dry Pot and though only fifteen feet deep, something

of an obstacle. The rope or ladder anchorage is queer, as it is necessary to belay either to a small peg of stalactite right up under the roof or to go some distance back up the passage. P. F. Foley and Lipscomb were lowered down and went along the Mud Passage. This drops very steeply and is floored with abysmal mud, but there are fine stalactites and the roof is high overhead. They were stopped by the thirty-five foot drop of Mud Pot and shortage of rope.

On the way back the writer persuaded the party to lower him down No. 3 hole. Here he found a tiny passage which dropped into a larger but still very narrow one which, leading back, joined up Nos. 1 and 2 holes. Hicks and Mudge followed the writer and turning down the new passage away from the holes found it to drop sharply and to increase in width and height until the climbable pitch of about ten feet into the "Vestry" was reached. This is a circular chamber with the usual conical roof, and there is a crack across the floor, widening and deepening at the far end. Then ensued perhaps the most crazy exploit of the whole affair, for Hicks and Mudge followed the crack down without ropes till it opened out into the "Cathedral," a pot which is some seventy-five feet deep from the Vestry. The crack goes down in a series of steps to the Pulpit about thirty-five feet below, a long ledge running along one side of the pot. The name Cathedral will explain more graphically than any description what the place looked to our uninitiated eyes. The evacuation was not so easy, for though Hicks climbed out unassisted, when Mudge's turn came, and the writer, jammed without foothold in the crack above, threw him a line, he contrived to lash himself to the ledge on which he stood, and for a long time all that we above could see of his struggles was one hand groping out of the gloom.

The descent of the crack into the Cathedral requires a rope or ladder, which may be made fast to a big yellow stalactite pillar on the left side in the narrowest part of the crack. This ladder should reach to the Pulpit, where a second ladder is needed for the forty feet sheer drop. For lowering ladders, tackle etc., there is a series of very fine footholds leading out from the top ladder anchorage to the outer edge of the crack vertically above the Pulpit, where a clean lift may be obtained straight from the floor of the Cathedral. To a rock climber

there is an interesting little problem in the possibility of climbing out of the Cathedral without a rope. On the far side from the Crypt there is an annexe in which it is possible to climb to a level with the Pulpit, finishing up on a ledge a few feet from the last fragments of the Pulpit ledge. The crossing of these few feet might prove quite amusing.

The discovery of the Mud Pot and descent of part of the Cathedral gave us some idea of the possibilities of the cave, and during the winter there was much speculation about its course. The general opinion was that one or other of the passages led to Gavel Pot some half mile away down the fell side, and it was determined to make a really big effort at Easter to go right through.

At Easter 1927 the party consisted of Hicks, Lipscomb, Jack Kennedy, Alec Kennedy, Mrs. and P. F. Foley, Stephen Arthur and the writer. Mudge was ill and did not again join in until April 1929. A large number of ropes were brought and some time was spent in exploring the passages of Gavel Pot. When the party did enter Lost Johns' Cave, P. F. Foley, Jack Kennedy and the writer carried out a prismatic compass survey of the known portion of the Cave while the remainder went down the stream passage. Following the old going aloft policy Lipscomb traversed over Pitch II., a most intriguing business, and found the Old Roof Traverse which leads to "Hampstead Heath," where there is a sort of slide and a lot of broken glass. Here there is a short dry pitch down which Alec Kennedy was lowered. The stream was rejoined immediately after, and the party pushed on down the narrow main passage, dropping sharply all the time, till they were held up by Pitch III., the stream being in half flood and running very deep.

Next the Mud Passage was tried, and Lost Johns' dealt us out with dramatic suddenness another of the surprises which seemed to come with such regularity. Following the idea that people who led on each new passage should follow it to the end, P. F. Foley and Lipscomb were lowered down the Mud Pot, which is a tube of about ten feet diameter and about seventy feet from roof to floor, though the pitch is only thirty five feet deep. The floor is cup shaped and filled knee-deep with mud, while a narrow passage leads away a few feet.

P. F. Foley followed this up and promptly remarked that he had found another pitch and wanted the small plumbline. This was sent down, only for another request to be made for the long plumbline. The hole turned out to be ninety-four feet deep, and the edge of it was as sharp as a doorstep. It is a very wide, awe-inspiring place, and a continual dribble of mud splashes on the black rocks below. As it was nearly a hundred feet deep and very horrible we named this place "The Centipede."

That night the survey was plotted out, and the surprising turns and twists of the cave realised for the first time. The plotting was actually, afterwards, done on the ground, and the absurdly small space covered was painfully noticeable. The Quicksand Cave was only surveyed in the early, wet and uncomfortable morning after the first map was plotted, and when the positions of the first falls of roof were plotted on the ground they were found to coincide exactly with some half blocked holes in the ground at the end of a long depression, obviously an old stream bed.

After the Easter show it became quite obvious that we could get no further without rope ladders, and we set to work to acquire these. Lipscomb evolved a very neat design with hollow bamboo rungs through which both ropes passed, ensuring safety in the event of the breaking of a rung. It was very light and delightful to handle as there were no projecting rung ends to catch on rocks, but being the first of its kind it was an awful brute to climb owing to the wide spacing of the rungs. P. F. Foley also acquired an immense ladder sixty feet long and heavy as lead. With these and another shorter one the party assaulted the cave in August 1927.

This time Hicks, Lipscomb, Mrs. and P. F. Foley and the writer were left of the previous crowd, while C. E. J. Dingle and S. T. Waite were new to the game. The last, a geologist, proved very useful, but as all his notes were lost and he himself is in the jungles of Borneo none of his information is included in this chronicle. Our first attempt was on the Cathedral, where much delay was caused by the writer getting hopelessly entangled in coils of ladder at the Pulpit. He eventually attached Lipscomb's ladder to P. F. Foley's all crooked. The discovery of this when swinging for the first

time in the darkness induced a condition bordering on panic, and he came up again. Eventually Hicks and P. F. Foley went down, and Hicks reported it no good, chiefly owing to the narrowness of the passage which is now known as the "Crypt." The Crypt afterwards turned out to lead to the "Dome," a seventy foot pot which provides by far the easier way down to the lower part of the cave.

As it was, the party turned back and next day had a look at the main cave, but again balked at the hundred foot fall of Pitch III. It was almost decided to go home, but mercifully we remembered the Centipede and attacked it instead.

In those days we were still exceedingly cautious on ladders, employing a life-line even on the Mud Pot. P. F. Foley remained at the top of this while Hicks, Lipscomb, Mrs. Foley, Dingle and the writer went down. All the ladders were lowered to them and made fast to an anchorage at the back of the pot. After a considerable amount of argument Hicks and Dingle were lowered into the blackness, while the other three waited in the Mud Pot, soaked in mud and bitter cold. Here it may be mentioned that the Centipede, being our first really deep pot, seems to have inspired us with a peculiar horror which in the future cramped our movements not a little. The vast size, the overhang of the ladder face, the incredible sharpness of the edge at the end of the connecting passage, and the continual dripping of the mud, all combined to make the place more loathsome. The actual ladder pitch is seventy three feet to a ledge, and the overhang is such that after the first ten feet the ladder does not again touch the rock till the ledge is reached. The descent to the rift passage at the bottom is quite ordinary climbing. Incidentally, there is a passage leading away at ledge level over the top of the main bottom exit passage, but it is too narrow to follow. There was also another passage which the party noticed at a later date entering the Pot some fifty feet from the floor on the left side looking from the Mud Pot. This may be marked by its proximity to a remarkable stalactite formation like an octopus with tentacles dangling, and it would seem to be possible for determined climbers to reach within a few feet of it up some stalactite steps from the ledge.

Dingle and Hicks were away two hours. They reported having followed a continually dropping passage to a big junction. Turning to the right they went along a very narrow high passage and passed over a hole in the floor, afterwards called Bob's Pit, which was explored by Hicks and the writer in August, 1929. [The Pit was found to be twenty-two feet deep and an impossibly narrow passage led away, the walls coated in the most disgusting slime the writer has ever encountered.]

Hicks and Dingle carried on until they were held up by the sixteen foot sheer pitch of Candle Pot, in a part of the cave remarkable for the strange rock formations. They could hear water roaring quite near and they imagined that they must have hit off the main stream again near Pitch III.

On their return they helped each other up the two ten foot pitches of the other branch at Dome Junction and reported having looked out into a big pot. The formation here is very queer. A few feet from the top of the upper pitch a narrow tunnel branches away to the right, an unpleasant, jagged flat crawl ending in a deep rift. Further on past the tunnel the passage becomes higher and in the right side, some six feet off the ground, is a complete window. Climbing up into this embrasure Hicks and Dingle looked out into the blackness of the pot which was afterwards called the "Dome." The bottom, a rift passage, was some twenty-five feet below and the top some fifty feet overhead. They did not, however, descend, and it was left to a Y.R.C. party led by Mr. E. E. Roberts next Whitsuntide to make the first crawl through the tunnel into the bottom of the Dome.

Hicks and Dingle then returned to the Centipede, where the watchers gladly dragged them up, after which there ensued a fearful struggle with the big ladder, which was finally dragged into the starlight at 11 p.m., the party having been eleven hours underground.

Again there ensued a winter of argument and speculation. It was generally agreed that the water heard was the main stream, but where was it? The idea that the cave led to Gavel Pot cropped up again with the change in direction, for it had been imagined since the plotting of the survey to Pitch III., that the main stream continued in a southerly

direction, following the line of the valley which runs along the side of the Leck Fell Lane. In order to facilitate the descent of the Centipede, Hicks, Dingle and the writer visited the cave on December 17th, 1927, measuring up the Mud Pot for safety tackle, and Lipscomb evolved his famous counterbalance gear by which the life-line passed over one sheave of a double block at the top of the pitch, back to a single block at the ladder anchorage and so over the second sheave to a bag suitably filled with mud. The haulage party had then only to overcome friction losses, and the writer can testify that the ascent was a speedy business at Easter, so swift indeed that he missed most of the rungs with his feet as he shot heavenwards. This gear of course was only necessary in this particular instance, where the great depth was a trial to a tired man and where it was impossible for a haulage party to find a decent stance close to the edge of the pitch.

At Easter 1928 only Hicks, Lipscomb, the writer and R. Stephens were available. The last named was a brother officer of Hicks in the R.A.F., and though it was his first cave he achieved considerable glory by his tenacity of purpose. He strained a foot severely the first day, but though in considerable pain he insisted on coming in to help, taking a useful part in the evacuation of the ladders in record time.

The ladders and counterbalance gear were installed on Friday, and on Saturday Hicks and Lipscomb descended and pushed on past the limit of the previous August, Candle Pot. The pitch is easy with a good ladder anchorage. The next obstacle was Shistol Pot, a nasty wet little ten foot pitch with at that time the most hair-raising anchorage any party was ever foolish enough to use. Later on the Y.R.C. used a very startling "bayonet" of rock some yards back up the cave. At this point there is an abrupt change of course from south-east to north-west, and soon afterwards the party reached the stream at a point which they named the "Battleaxe," from a very curious knife edge of rock on the side of the cave. There is no chamber here; the dry passage running north-west just ends in the narrow stream passage running south-east, the water being some thirty-five feet below. Climbing down by a short ladder and a rope, Hicks and Lipscomb pushed upstream, since their progress downstream was immediately

checked by a ten foot pitch, quickly followed by another pitch of unknown depth. Upstream the passage is very narrow and quite clear of stones till a very remarkable check is reached at the point marked "Dam." Here there is a big buttress on the right bank of the stream with a little tunnel for the water, while a dry by-pass goes round, floored with a conglomerate of stones and sand. There is a hole in the roof here which is thought to have some connection with Bob's Pit. From here upwards the stream is one long pool which slowly increases in depth, while the roof which descends abruptly at the Dam, becomes lower and lower. The party ploughed through the pool for about sixty feet and eventually turned back when the roof, which was very soft and treacherous, was about a foot above the water.

Very little was done in this expedition. On Sunday night Hicks and the writer visited the Pool again, afterwards revisiting the Dome Window, where they noted a passage coming in at the top of the pot. It was afterwards regretted that nervousness about the Centipede and a knowledge of the arduous task awaiting such a small party in evacuating the ladders prevented them from entering the Dome. Ladders were left fixed in position on the climb from Dome Junction and a depot of bully and candles was established at the Centipede.

It was during this assault that the principle of the "out-by party" was instituted, which was employed on all future expeditions. It was arranged that the men left at the top of the Centipede went right out of the cave altogether, returning fit and fresh at stated times to haul the "in-by" party out. In this way the "in-by" or exploring party were not cramped by the thought of the poor souls waiting in misery above, while the "out-by" party were to carry out the odd jobs necessary in camping.

The survey carried out enabled the position of the Dome to be fixed, and it was noticed that the passage at the top of it came very near the Cathedral. It therefore afforded no little satisfaction when a party from Manchester led by J. R. Kennedy visited the Cathedral during May 1928 and surveyed the Crypt passage, the end of their survey corres-

"LOST JOHNS" CAVE

LECK FELL
(Innes Foley)

NOTES

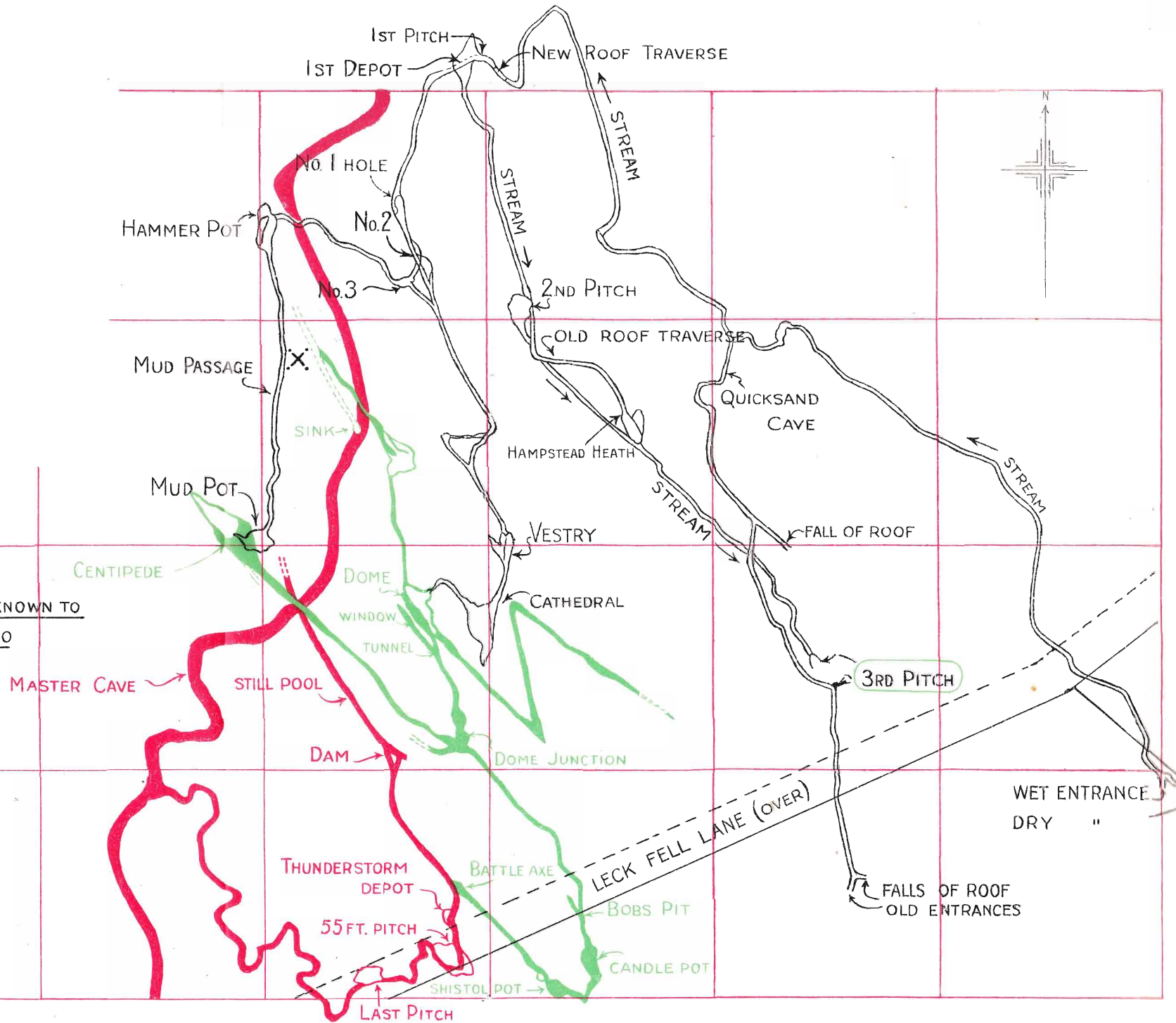
PASSAGES FROM ENTRANCE LEVEL TO 200 FT. LEVEL SHOWN BLACK

FROM 200 FT. TO 350 " GREEN

" 350 DOWNWARDS " RED

MAP DIVIDED INTO 100 FT. SQUARES

NOTE THAT COURSE OF MAIN STREAM FROM 3RD PITCH TO POINT MARKED X IS NOT KNOWN TO PARTY CARRYING OUT THIS SURVEY ALSO THAT STREAM CANNOT BE FOLLOWED FROM "SINK" TO "STILL POOL"



ponding exactly with the top of the Dome. They did not, however, verify that it was the Dome.

At Whitsuntide, 1928, five of the Y.R.C. led by Mr. E. E. Roberts descended the Centipede, climbed through the Dome Tunnel and descended into the rift at the bottom for the first time. This rift is continued in a passage leading sixty feet due north, ending in a double pitch of five and ten feet. The chamber at this point has apparently been formed by the removal of a remarkable bed of shale some four feet thick, the water afterwards scooping out a narrow channel in the limestone floor, leaving a wide flat ledge on each side. The flat ledges continue at roof level but the narrow channel ends in a forty foot pitch to the main stream. Mr. Roberts' party descended to the stream which was running north-west to south-east, but were stopped downstream by a complete dead end in a pool of stones, while progress upstream was barred by a twenty foot pitch. Here it may be mentioned that at Easter 1929 Lipscomb, Hicks and the writer tried to circumvent this pitch by traversing over on the roof level ledges aforementioned, but they were stopped by the shelving of the rock some twenty feet beyond the forty foot pitch. This party never descended the forty foot pitch, but from Mr. Roberts' survey readings it was found that the sink which he found was quite close to the long still pool which stopped Hicks and Lipscomb in their upstream progress from the Battleaxe at Easter 1928.

The Y.R.C. party also went down to the Battleaxe, descended the little ten foot pitch and the following pitch, which proved to be fifty-five feet deep, afterwards following a narrow winding passage to a pitch which they could not descend for lack of ladders, though they reported it to be quite small.

At August Bank Holiday, 1928, the next assault was made and it was determined to try to get through from the Cathedral to the Dome. In a preliminary week-end the hole at the end of the Crypt passage was descended and after a little doubt was proved to be the Dome, the depth being seventy feet with sixty feet of ladder pitch. This is much the easiest way down to the lower parts of the cave, being dry all the way and the only difficulty the annoying scramble through the tunnel.

This attack was an extremely dramatic affair. We knew we were near the end, for we knew the limestone to be at the most six hundred feet thick while the Y.R.C. limit at Whitsuntide was four hundred and fifty feet below cave entrance. Mr. Roberts had prophesied another pitch followed by a long passage ending in a sink, and whatever the true nature of the end the party were full of excitement at the prospect. The exploration began with a side show when Lipscomb, Dingle, Sale and the writer took the ladders down during a preliminary week-end, and by way of exercise tackled the very narrow passage leading out of the Dome on the opposite side to the Shale Cavern. The passage leads about sixty feet south-east, seventy feet due north and eighty feet south-east with remarkably sharp corners. However, at the end the passage becomes too narrow for any but small and very determined children, which is much to be regretted, as the sound of falling water is very clear and the narrow place is by the map only seventy feet from Pitch III. R. Lipscomb tried it after the Y.R.C. had reported failure, but he could make no progress and later on Hicks and the writer tried, but only succeeded in getting a few feet further by climbing up to the roof.

On the first day of Bank Holiday week-end the following arrived and promptly dropped a ladder down the fifty-five foot pitch below the Battleaxe: P. F. Foley and Mrs. Foley, Dingle, Hicks, Lipscomb, Sale and R. Wilson the writer joined the party after this hard work was done. The ladder work at the Battleaxe is queer and a small dissertation may be useful. First a short ladder is necessary, hung on the opposite wall of the stream cave and reaching down to the first ledge. Then it is best to walk up the ledge and drop a ladder or lashing to the stream, thus at the same time avoiding a nasty little dribble of water from the roof and providing by means of the bottom of the rope or ladder a hand-hold with which to surmount a surprisingly awkward little slope of rock on the way up to the Dam. A rope is sufficient for the ten foot pitch while there is a splendid ladder anchorage for the fifty foot pitch which, barring the depressing effect of the torrent of water on the climber's head, is an easy climb owing to a slight slope on the rock face. The little round chamber between the ten foot and fifty-five foot pitches is so drenched with

spray from a projecting seam of shale under the fall that we called it "Thunderstorm Depot," and any wretch who is forced to stay there any length of time is earnestly advised to climb on to a big ledge some feet overhead where it is dry and comfortable.

At the foot of the fifty-five foot pitch is a narrow, serpentine passage which winds about in the floor of what appears to be a single immense cave. We have never ascertained the upper limits of this pot, which appears to continue to Last Pitch, and all we know is that from below the fifty-five foot pitch and at Last Pitch we could see unfathomable depths of gloom all round, from which projected buttresses of rock stretching up into the darkness overhead.

At Last Pitch, the limit of the Y.R.C. exploration, the stream falls through a narrow opening twenty feet into a large round pool of uncertain depth. On the right side, however, is a dry by-pass leading to a ladder pitch of twenty-seven feet on to the shingle bank at the side of the pool.

So matters stood on the Sunday morning of August 1928 when, leaving Captain and Mrs. P. F. Foley as "out-by" party and the writer at Thunderstorm Depot, a party comprising Lipscomb, Hicks, Dingle, Sale and Wilson pushed on into the unknown. The passage continued from Last Pitch, winding and looping for some hundreds of feet on a westerly course and then debouched, not into another pitch, not into a sink, but into a master cave which dwarfed all the passages yet encountered. Running due north and south, ten clear feet in width and anything up to a hundred feet high, this cave, of which Lost Johns' is but a tributary, appears to run along the bottom of the limestone, gathering the water from each small cave in turn. The stream flows rapidly over a pebble bed, cutting deep under the rock at each corner and leaving banks of a sort of concrete of mud and black pebbles. The walls of the cave are not of clean bright rock, but are coated with the mud and grime of ages.

The party turned north or right-handed at the junction and for three hundred yards or so proceeded in moderate comfort along the wide cave. Then the stream ceased to flow, and the pools became gradually neck deep, while the roof of the cave

descended till there was only six inches of clearance above the water.

Ploughing through knee-deep mud and nearly out of their depths in water, the party were glad when the roof receded, and the pools became more shallow. At about four hundred yards a large stream came in overhead which was thought to be that from Gavel Pot. And so the party splashed on. The compass was waterlogged, so that no idea could be got of direction, and the poor souls could only press ahead, hoping that the ordeal would soon come to an end. Another narrow place was passed where quite a moderate rise of water would be sufficient to bring the level up to the roof, and at last some thirteen hundred yards from Last Pitch the roof again shelved until it disappeared under water. This point must necessarily be the end of Lost Johns' since the assault was carried out at the end of a long spell of fine weather, and it is unlikely that that the water level would ever be lower. The first three hundred yards of the Master Cave have since been surveyed, showing a northerly course, and a continuation of this course plotted on a six inch map brings the end no great distance from Easegill Kirk, where, near the Witches' Cave, there is a great rising.

When the water of the Master Cave touched the roof our party had done their work and turned homeward, plodding wearily and hopelessly along. The writer gathered that none of them expected ever again to see the light of day, but that they thought they might as well go on as stay, so on they went, counting the paces and only stopping to rescue Dingle who was seized with cramp. At last the writer on his ledge at Thunderstorm Depot heard voices mingling with the roar of the water, voices raised in a ribald song. A joyful shout; down went the lifeline, and soon the five soaked adventurers were once again at the Battleaxe, safe, if somewhat surprised at their safety.

Most of the party were too wearied to take much interest in caves on the Monday, so the ladders were left in place for three weeks till they were evacuated by a party consisting of Hicks, Lipscomb, Dingle, Sale, Gowing, D. Reid and the writer. Besides the ladders all stores of candles and food were also removed, and during a quiet interval Hicks and the writer

explored Bob's Pit. This party also tried the narrow passage which seems to run from the ledge of the Centipede to Dome Junction, but they could not get far. The Junction end of this passage is fairly obvious among the jumble of weird rocks on the opposite side to the Dome.

At this time there was a mistaken idea that the party had finished the cave, but as the horror of that trip through the mud wore off, the memory of the other branch of the master cave at Groundsheet Junction became clearer and quite oppressive, until it was definitely decided to continue the exploration. Lipscomb was convinced that the biggest stream dropping into the master cave was that from Gavel Pot, and he insisted that this would be a better start for the assault than Lost Johns' as it was a hundred feet lower down the fell side. We were assured by Mr. Roberts that Gavel Pot was a dead end at the bottom of a seventy-foot shaft, but it was decided to have a shot at it. A party in December did not get very far, Lipscomb reporting from near the bottom of the shaft that it was no good.

At Easter 1929 an assault was made which, though not as complete as was desirable, finished off the lower parts of the cave. It was a very leisurely show, carried out with due regard for comfort. The weather was fine and it was a glorious night when the party gathered on Thursday, March 28th. There were nine men this time, and it was noted that for the first time the original four who began the show were together again; Hicks, J. R. Kennedy, Mudge and the writer. There were also Lipscomb, Dingle, E. K. Scott and R. D. Crofton from Kennedy's Manchester party and J. Markby, a New Zealander and friend of Hicks in the R.A.F. On Friday the party took the ladders down as far as the fifty-five foot pitch, while Lipscomb and Dingle arranged a sandbag dam at the point marked "Dam" on the map. Hardened cave explorers will probably scoff at this, but it has always been our endeavour while getting ahead as far as possible to do so with the maximum of comfort. Lost Johns' Cave, with the exception of the Centipede route, is very luxurious, and it was pleasant to be able to go down to the Master Cave comparatively dry. The Dam, like the counterbalance gear at the Centipede, was the product of Lipscomb's imagination, and proved a

wonderful help, since, being at the end of a long pool, it took half an hour to fill, allowing the whole party to go up or down the fifty-five foot pitch.

Next day Dingle, Markby and Mudge remained as "out-by" party, the last having done very well the previous day in reaching the Battleaxe with a helpless leg. The rest of the party went on, leaving Lipscomb to work the Dam. Kennedy, Scott and Hicks were a survey party and surveyed from Fifty-five foot Pitch, past Groundsheet Junction to a point some three hundred yards along the Master Cave, while Crofton and the writer went ahead, turned left at Groundsheet and entered the unknown part of the cave which kept a steady general course due south. The great width made the going very easy, it being possible to walk along the hard shingle banks without touching the stream. At fifty yards and again at a hundred there were big branch caves coming in at a considerable height, the flow of lime from the second one being a very fine sight. It came rolling down in great waves, finally forming a complete bridge across the cave. An attempt was made to climb up here, but the black mud with which everything was coated made the holds so treacherous that no progress was made.

Beyond this point the writer's recollections are vague, as no notes were made of the sequence of the features of the cave, Rocks from the roof lay about in ever greater profusion, at one point a huge block ten feet high completely filling the passage. At about two hundred and fifty yards there was a very surprising change, for the ninety foot high roof suddenly descended until there was only a little round chamber not ten feet in height, from which the only outlet was a circular tunnel, along which it was necessary to creep on hands and knees. This tunnel lasted thirty feet or so until the cave opened out larger than before, but with the falls of roof even more frequent, more recent looking and more terrifying. Then at last at three hundred yards the end came when the party were brought up by a tremendous fall, towering up to the roof, rock on rock and piece on piece. The broken rocks looked yellow and freshly broken, and the nearest pieces moved when touched, but there was just one passage on, a tiny aperture under the overhang of the wall on the left hand side.

A torch beam showed that this passage was blocked some distance further on, but it has always been a matter of self reproach to the writer that he did not climb in and verify by actual touch that there was no possible way through. [He has done since.—Ed.]

That was the end of the exploration of Lost Johns' Cave, and it will be seen that there are still riddles and problems to be solved. The writer doubts whether the Master Cave can be traced any further either way, but even if no further progress is made, the Master Cave is a sufficiently remarkable spot to justify a visit, and the whole cave, barring always the Centipede route, is of such a comfortable nature with its high passages and its continual dryness and cleanliness that the least enthusiastic of cave explorers may conceive an affection for it.

In conclusion, it is well to point out the main question which has never been solved by the parties which carried out the work described in this paper. We have never been down Pitch III. on the main stream, and though we know this has been descended we have never seen any plan showing the lead of the cave beyond. Moreover, no one has climbed the twenty foot pitch which balked the Y.R.C. party when they reached the main stream, from the Dome. To any enterprising explorer, therefore, there is this one final problem, definitely to map the lead of the main stream from Pitch III. to the block below the Dome.

[Knowledge of the story of the two lost Johns, and the evidence of the books which mention the cave, have compelled the Editor to revise his grammar and adopt a plural form.]

GAVEL POT IN 1885.

By CUTHBERT HASTINGS.

[This article appeared in the *Gritstone Journal* for 1926 under the title, "Low Dowk Pot—1885," and solved the mystery of the old iron ladder in the long passage. The name used seems to suggest that the present names on Leck Fell were fixed by the publication of Balderston's *Ingleton* and Speight's *Craven and N.W. Yorkshire Highlands*.]

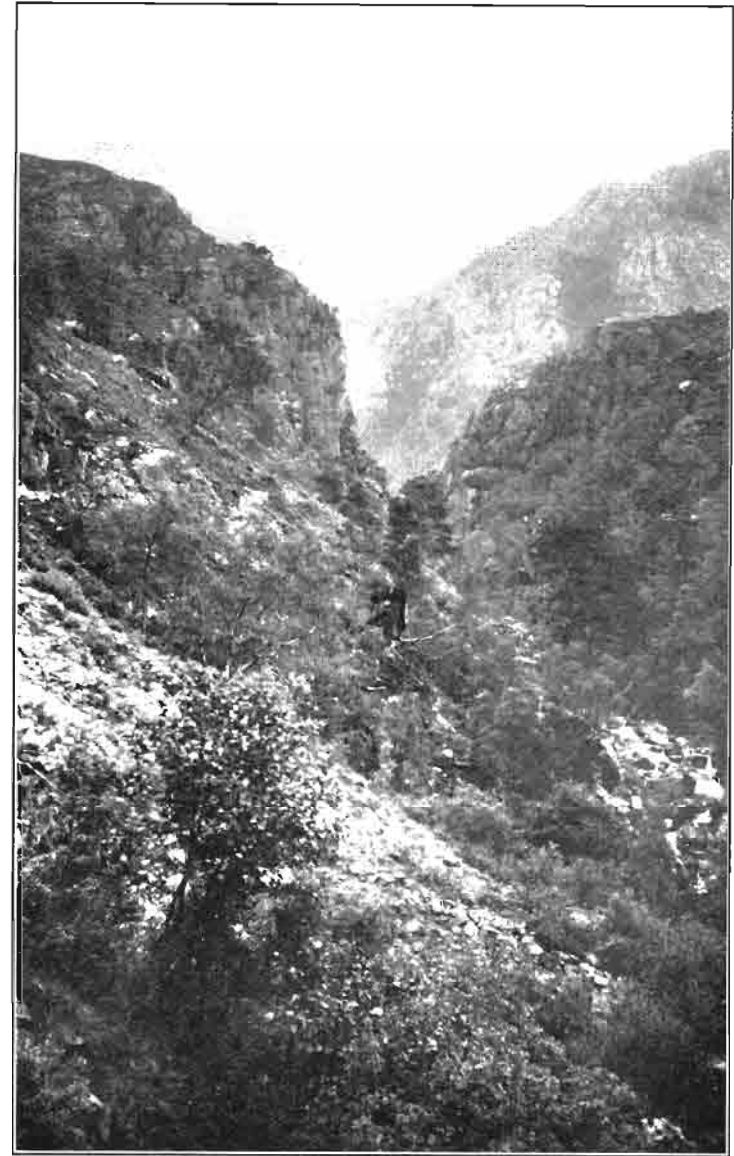
When my brother asked me if I would join a pot-holing expedition to Leck Fell, I naturally agreed, as he was the leader in all our expeditions. I had then a very faint idea what a pot-hole was or how it was formed or what there might be at the bottom. I had certainly looked down Gaping Ghyll Hole and Alum Pot but that was as far as my knowledge went.

The party consisted of five, two of them, the seniors, being married men, the others bachelors; one of the bachelors, Eckroyd, had been to the pot-hole before and knew what the difficulties were, the chief being the ascent of an underground waterfall some distance away from the foot of the big pot-hole, Low Dowk (now called *Gavel Pot*). Eckroyd got the mechanic at the mill where he worked to cut two lengths of iron piping the height of the waterfall, cord rungs were fastened to them, and kept tight by iron rods fastened to the uprights with nuts and screws both top and bottom. We had also a rope ladder which was needed to descend Low Dowk pot-hole.

Just before the day of departure arrived the wives of the seniors objected to their husbands risking their lives down a pot-hole; they might climb any mountain peak but must not go down pot-holes. That reduced us to three.

A start was made one Saturday in August, 1885, the party meeting at Melling station with all the luggage and tackle. E. had arranged with a farmer to meet us at the station and find us accommodation for the night. A short drive took us to the farm where we got out with our luggage, the farmer taking the tackle up Leck Moor and depositing it by the road side.

After changing into more suitable garments we followed the conveyance and when we were approaching the moor we



UPPER GLEN NEVIS.

Photo by C. F. Benson

met a shooting party returning. Eckroyd knew the keeper and stopped to speak to him, but when the latter heard of our proposed expedition he said, "Well, you may come out alive." We found our tackle, carried it to our pot-hole and soon had our rope ladder in position for the leader to descend ; then we sent down the rest of the tackle and followed.

Near the foot of the ladder was the entrance to a cave which soon opened out above an underground watercourse, and on the left was a steep slope up to daylight. The stream was about ten feet below us* and to get down to it we had to cross over to a ledge on the other side. Here our iron ladder came in useful. It was an easy climb down from our ledge to the stream, each one taking his share of the tackle. A start was made up-stream, we found the channel very lofty and wide enough to make progress easy and as we had not much time we hurried forward until we got to the waterfall and, leaving there our ladder and other tackle, hurried back and were soon out again on the moor.

Next morning we made an early start, the weather favouring us. On arriving at Low Dowk (*Gavel Pot*) we arranged our packs, leaving dry clothes on the surface to change into. We soon descended the ladder and started forward on our underground journey, having now time to examine the water channel more closely. The roof was at places a great height above us, and the side walls bulged inwards towards each other but allowed ample room for us to walk upright. This formation seems very common in underground watercourses, suggesting that there have been two stages ; at first the stream flows along an upper channel, then opens up a fissure and proceeds to make another channel at a lower level, the intervening limestone being ultimately worn away by the carbonic acid in the water.

There was a fair sized stream but it delayed us very little, and on arrival at the waterfall lunch was eaten, the ladder put in position, and soon the whole party was at the top. We were all of the opinion that the waterfall could not have been climbed without the help of the ladder. The stream channel

*There is a second more difficult route to this point.

The steep slope which is crossed in the daylight ends above a 70 ft. shaft into which the stream falls.—Editor.

continued still very high, so progress was easy; no survey or measurement of any kind was taken on this expedition. In a little while we came to a junction of two passages, one a dry passage on the left and a watercourse on the right. We decided to take the dry one, why I do not remember, but I expect we thought it was not possible to follow the water channel any further, but I have heard since that it is possible and has been followed several times.

Very soon we came to a very narrow place. Eckroyd leading, got through and my brother followed, only just managing to squeeze through, but try as I would I could not get through and although I wanted the other two to go on and see what was in front, they decided not to separate and so we returned. It has been rumoured that had they gone on they would have come out at the bottom of High Dowk pot-hole (*Marble Steps*). We decided to return and were soon back at the waterfall, and found no difficulty in climbing down the ladder, which we left there, and so downstream and out of Low Dowk (*Gavel Pot*). So ended my first pot-holing trip and a very successful and enjoyable one.

Some ten or a dozen years afterwards a party of Yorkshire Ramblers spent one or two weekends on Leck Fell. Descending a pot-hole (now called *Short Drop*) they discovered a cave and after passing a narrow place without much difficulty entered a roomy waterchannel which they followed downwards, coming to a waterfall and finding to their astonishment the remains of our ladder; up to then they thought they were the first to discover the existence of this underground watercourse.

[*Note by the Editor.*—This determined and almost successful attempt by Messrs. W. Eckroyd, Geoffrey and Cuthbert Hastings is shown by the internal evidence of the narrative to have reached within hail of Short Drop, a hole which was probably not open then. The pioneers had no idea that they could get through to daylight.

The complete traverse of the magnificent tunnel from Short Drop to Gavel Pot was made by Cuttriss, Swithinbank, and J. H. Buckley in 1898. See *Y.R.C.J.*, Vol. V., p. 63.]

THE CHARLES INGLIS CLARK HUT, BEN NEVIS.

By THE EDITOR.

Captain Charles Inglis Clark died of wounds in Mesopotamia in 1918. In memory of the sacrifice of his life his mother and father have presented to the Scottish Mountaineering Club a hut of the Swiss pattern, built in the Allt Mhuilinn Glen at the foot of the Tower Ridge of Ben Nevis.

The terms of the lease laid down by the freeholders, the British Aluminium Company, confine the use of the hut *strictly to members of the S.M.C. and their guests*, and exact the condition that the *route of approach shall be by the path from Glen Nevis, and over the moor* and not by the ancient route via the Allt Mhuilinn from the highroad.

The Hut was formally opened and presented to the S.M.C. on Easter Monday, 1st April, 1929. The Editor had the honour of being present as official representative of the Yorkshire Ramblers, and of enjoying the hospitality of our kindred club. This he endeavoured to return in part by carrying up the hut book and its zinc case.

Ben Nevis is Dr. Inglis Clark's favourite mountain, and reference to the Ben Nevis Guide will show that he took part in several first ascents. The Memorial Hut is a magnificent gift, and the donors look forward with confidence to the diagrams of the great North Face being strung with routes as thickly as Scawfell or Lliwedd.

The S.M.C. mustered in strong force at Fort William, soon to be turned into an industrial town by the great aluminium works building at the foot of the pipe lines from the mouth of the tunnel on Meall ant' Suie, which delivers the water from Loch Treig and elsewhere.

The weather was magnificently warm, the crags bare of snow as they usually are only in summer, for the rainfall and snow of the W. Highlands during the three winter months had only amounted to 2½ inches instead of 25 to 40.

Smythe arrived by the Friday a.m. train, and he and the Editor got no further than the lowest snow patch on Carn Mor Dearg, where they lay all afternoon. On Saturday however with Bell and Parry they bore provisions to the hut, discarded all garments but those suitable to a midsummer day and

attacked the N.E. Ridge. With the exception of the "man-trap" near the top all the difficulties lie on the lower portion. Feeling hopelessly unfit, they attacked the by no means easy slabs, promptly lost the route and after pleasant climbing by the line of least resistance found themselves off the crag at the bottom of Slingsby's Gully. By two-thirds of this and the traverse to the left they attained the first platform. The rest was a long and glorious climb under perfect conditions of the Swiss type.

Meanwhile Bell and Parry were making an ascent of the rarely climbed Observatory Ridge, and were met at the top descending the N.E. Ridge. Further off three parties were seen doing the Tower Ridge and the top was quite busy. Plus fours were quite popular and there were many opportunities of observing the usual manner of wearing these as climbing kit. The gentleman on the snow by the Observatory in the photo which appeared later in the *Times* is not wearing a garment of his own design, but merely indicates how the thing is done, in the best circles.

The hut is well equipped and a most comfortable night was spent there while outside the weather went to the bad. The stove burns anthracite, at £28 per ton, but lesser quantities can be purchased!

Sunday morning revealed mist and cold. Three of the party had old defeats and many vain attempts to revenge on the Tower Ridge. The snow slopes were frozen hard, but at first the rocks went well enough. The first great step was passed and the "false tower" attacked. Here the rocks were glazed and covered with frost feathers, a snowstorm began and passed away, but as the glazing was obviously increasing and footholds becoming treacherous, the onset of another storm forced a retreat. This snowfall did not cease and there was quite a respectable covering by the time the gap by the Douglas Boulder was reached. Tea at the hut and so some two hours back to Fort William, mostly in the rain, but for British hills rain in very poor wetting form.

It must be stated that there was a pronounced feeling in the hotel that evening that "the Ben" had played a good game, that the defeat of the heroes of the Plan and the Brenva was entirely fitting to the occasion.

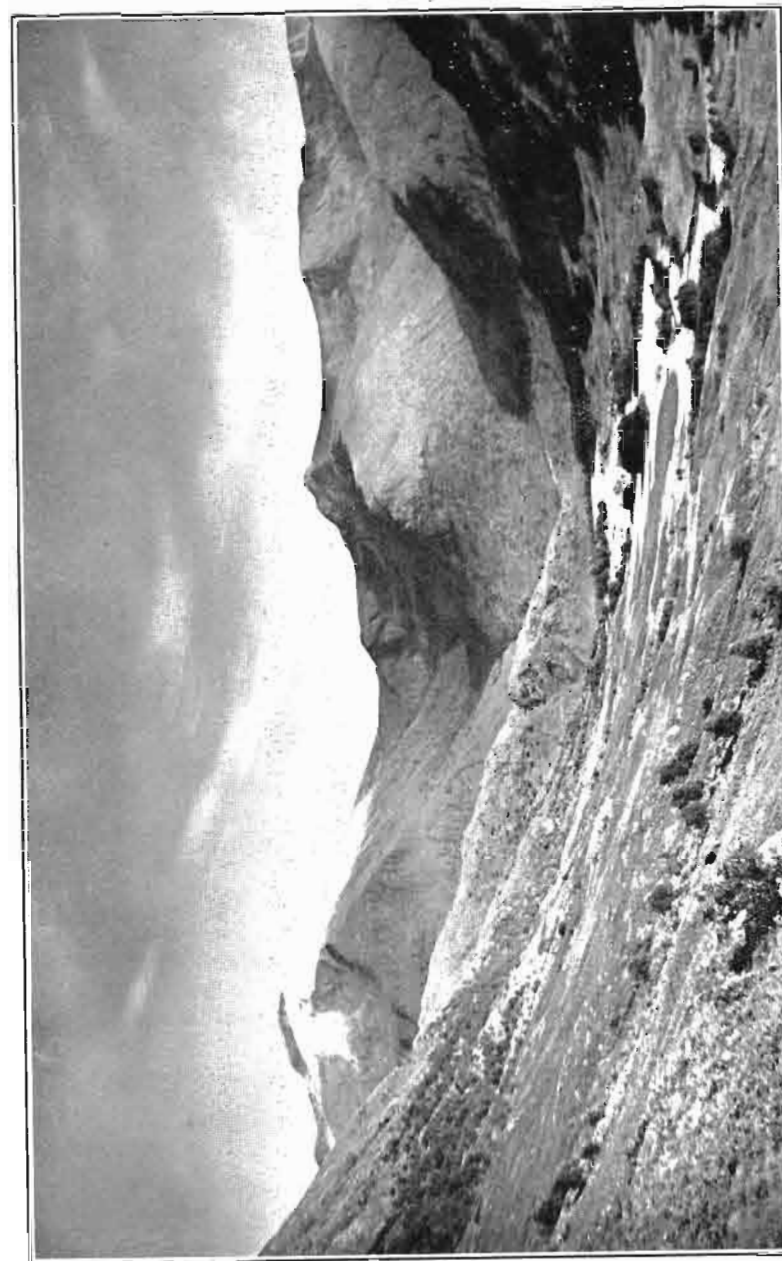


Photo by G. C. Marshall

GLEN NEVIS IN SUMMER.

Easter Monday opened with cloud and sharp showers, but from noon there was nothing but an odd snow squall. All morning the Scottish Mountaineers streamed up, with twenty ladies from the kindred club meet at Ballachulish, and people from Fort William. The Editor found the hut packed and great preparations for tea.

At 3 p.m., the President, Mr. G. T. Glover, cleared and locked the hut. Short speeches were made by him and Dr. Inglis Clark, then Mrs. Inglis Clark unlocked the door and the donors entered. Three tremendous cheers filled the corrie, with great effect on three belated parties struggling in the mist and eddying snow down the gullies. Then the crowd, some eighty strong, went in out of the cold and refreshed themselves with tea and cakes. There remained even sufficient fragments to feed the climbers who came in too late for the buns.

A great dinner the same night at Fort William, Scottish Mountaineering Club, Ladies' Scottish Climbing Club, Junior S.M.C. and representatives from kindred clubs, completed the ceremonies.

We congratulate the S.M.C. most heartily.

I don't think much of one's chances with W. Highland weather in August, but this second defeat on the Tower Ridge rankled so badly that I drove up later in the year to meet Bell, in the gloomiest of weather. His first remark on appearing was, that it was idiotic to be there, and his second that climbing the Tower Ridge in the summer did not count. However, the one day of that dreadful week which had any daylight at all was a perfect Sunday.

To the hut we bore food and then went straight up the Douglas Boulder, rather slippery for nailed boots in places. By the ordinary route the Ridge is, of course, quite good going. Bell climbed straight up the Tower, a long lead. I found the start very stiff, and being far more interested in the route we tried under Alpine conditions years ago, came round on the east side with my mind full of that marvellous day, and of the masterly retreat which makes it good to look back on.

IN MEMORIAM.

DOUGLAS GORDON CULROSS.

Douglas Gordon Culross died in his 28th year on Whit-Saturday 1929, in a Nursing Home in Manchester, as the result of a poison germ contracted through drinking water on the football field at Easter. Of fine physical development and the picture of health, he was the last person we would have expected to succumb to such an enemy. Educated at Ripon Grammar School, where he learnt his "Rugger," he later played with the Harrogate Old Boys and on business taking him to Manchester, with Heaton Moor, and was a very good forward of the fast winging type.

Before joining the Y.R.C. in 1928 he had done a large amount of walking in the Highlands and Yorkshire, and also a little, but first-class rock-climbing, with his cousin, R. B. Goodfellow, on Lliwedd and Doe Crag. He joined his uncle, Mr. F. De Gisbert, in an expedition to the Arctic shortly after leaving school, as ornithologist; and only last year made a flying trip to the Pyrenees. His first pot-holing expedition was at Alum Pot, on my invitation, and he later did good work at Blayshaw Gill Holes in Nidderdale, finishing with a descent of Gaping Ghyll in 1928. Essentially a sportsman—Culross cared more for sport than games—he was fond of anything connected with open-air life, and drawing near the end of his football career was inclined to take mountaineering in all its branches more seriously.

But he, one of our youngest, now lies near one of our oldest Ramblers, Jack Green, on Harlow Hill, where the setting sun over Simon's Seat lights up both their graves.—F.H.B.

WILLIAM CECIL SLINGSBY.

(1849-1929).

Cecil Slingsby has been so happy in his biographers that I can do little but add the tribute of a friend and companion of many years. His work in Norway and the Alps is well known, but it was not confined to them. He was a pioneer also of



DOUGLAS GORDON CULROSS.

strenuous mountaineering to his fellow Yorkshiremen. For a young cotton-spinner in a rather remote Yorkshire dale to explore his native fells was perhaps not remarkable—I believe in his early days Slingsby with his brothers and cousins was accustomed to make a yearly excursion up Ingleborough where everyone had to speak broad Yorkshire all day—but it *was* rather remarkable that he should “break-out” of the common rut and go in for real mountaineering and exploration. The rather Philistine society of Airedale in the “seventies” looked on this form of self-expression as an amusing eccentricity—his bold riding to hounds was better understood—but all the same his friends enjoyed the distinction his exploits conferred upon the district.

It was in 1891 that I first knew Slingsby as a climber, when at Wastdale with my brother, Alfred Holmes and Eric Greenwood I first began to climb and for several years I often saw him. His business brought him once or twice a week to Bradford and I can still see him walking in his quick impetuous way and bringing a breath of the hills into those grim streets. Many a time have I ridden home with him in the train and joined with him and Greenwood in discussing “the newest Alpine routes” or in listening to his stories of Alpine adventure. I spent many Saturdays with him on the gritstone rocks of Crookrise and Simon’s Seat or in walks on the Craven fells and I still treasure his words of commendation on Crookrise, “keen as mustard.” Among those who were with us at various times were G. Hastings, Solly, Greenwood, Priestman, I. Firth, Cuttriss, Alfred Holmes, Tupper-Carey, Woolley and Ellis. I remember in 1903 crossing Ingleborough with Slingsby and one of his daughters and a school friend, a daughter of the late Admiral von Tirpitz.

He was always the same, never out of temper, a delightful companion, full of reminiscences, the anxious mentor and guide of untried youth, and deferential almost to a fault to what he conceived to be superior information or experience in others.

He loved the hills and not least the hills of Craven, his own country. In the Lake Hills his skill and passion as a rock climber made him perhaps a little oblivious of humbler scenes, and I remember him confessing that he had never visited

Loweswater. The difficult and the unusual attracted him, once on the Barden Moor road as we were sedately crossing the bridge over the beck he skipped on to the parapet and ran along it with the remark "Always choose the most sporting route."

Once only in 1902 I was with him in the Alps when with Hastings, Greenwood, Carson-Roberts and my brother we had a shot at Mont Blanc, crossed by the Lognan Hut and the Col de Chardonnet to Bourg St. Pierre, climbed the Vélán and the Grand Combin, went on to Binn (where I have pleasant recollections of a tea-party at Heiligkreuz), crossed to the Falls of Tosa and returned by Macugnaga and the New Weissthor to Zermatt.

I never went with him on any of his great ascents but I shall always remember the great year 1893 at Montanvert when we used to see him with Mummery, Collie, and Hastings bringing back in their rucksacks the heads of conquered peaks.

"Last scene of all," at his home at Cartmel close to the grey Priory. He had forgotten much, but I remember how he was carrying a well-worn copy of Murray's Guide. His thoughts were still with the hills and valleys he loved so well.—J.J.B.

To the Yorkshire Ramblers elected since the War, Slingsby is a figure of glorious legend, a hero of a Golden Age and of two books, *Norway, the Northern Playground*, and Mummery's *My Climbs in the Alps and Caucasus*. How great a figure he was in Norway only those discovered who crossed the North Sea to the Horungtinder.

To the many who came in before the War, Slingsby was a hero too, but a living personality, full of life and vigour and joy, an active Yorkshire Rambler and the greatest.

The name, Slingsby's Chimney, here and there on our crags, notably on Ben Nevis and Scawfell, will keep his memory green as a pioneer of British rock-climbing, and it is bound up for ever with Store Skagastölstind, the Requin, and the Plan. It is only fitting that the *Journal* should attempt briefly to summarize the order of his deeds.



WILLIAM CECIL SLINGSBY
(1893.)
President of the Yorkshire Ramblers' Club, 1893-1903.

Slingsby first visited Norway in 1872. In 1874 he made by the Riingsskar the first traverse of the awe-inspiring Horung group, and continued till 1877 his campaigns in Jotunheim, the famous ascent of Skagastölstind being in 1876. Then he visited the Alps, was elected to the Alpine Club in 1880, and made another great campaign in Norway in 1881, including the descent of the terrible icefall of the Kjendalsbrae.

His attacks on the British crags began in 1885, his new climbs at Arolla were in 1887. He joined the Yorkshire Ramblers' Club as Honorary Member, and was President for ten years from 1893 to 1903. The great climbs on the Charmoz and the Plan were in 1892, and the conquests of the Requin and the Plan the year after. New climbs on the Fusshorn and Nesthorn followed in 1895.

By 1904, when *Norway, the Northern Playground* was published, Slingsby had done some fifty good new expeditions and had spent fifteen seasons in Norway.

He was Vice-President of the Alpine Club 1906-8; President, Climbers' Club, 1904-6; President, Fell and Rock Climbing Club, 1910-12.

So great was the veneration his name inspired in Norway that it was to him fell the honour of unveiling at Bergen, in 1921, a memorial to commemorate the thousands of Norse seamen done to death by the Germans during the Great War.

Tributes to Slingsby's memory appear in the *Alpine Journal* (Nov., 1929) by Messrs. Gönsberg and Sundt, Alfred Holmes, and G. W. Young, and in the *Fell and Rock Climbing Club Journal* (1929) by Mr. L. Pilkington.—ED.

CHIPPINGS.

FRIENDLY ITALY.—The closing of the high Alpine passes into Italy continues to cause much annoyance and criticism, and it is well that from time to time mountaineers should be reminded that the Italians are reasonable and efficient people, even if they have views of their own.

Last year a British party were forced by bad weather from a bivouac on Mont Maudit to descend the Brenva glacier, the only route open. The gendarme stationed at the Torino hut had warned them that a descent into Italy would lead to trouble. At a bad place Parry of the S.M.C. was involved in a fall of moraine and seriously hurt, though we believe no bones were broken.

Smythe made a risky descent alone to the road, and called up Courmayeur on the telephone. *In three-quarters of an hour* a rescue party, provided with a peculiarly efficient form of stretcher, came up by motor, and not only reached Parry and Harrison the same day, but brought Parry in by 9 p.m. No trouble was made for the party, and the gendarme from the Torino who would, under other circumstances, have quickly run them in, beamed affably upon them.

TWO NARROW ESCAPES.—Two recent incidents have emphasized the need for the greatest caution underground. Solid as limestone may be where it is waterswept, it is often a treacherous material.

In August, 1929, the pioneers who had turned Swinsto Hole from an amusing bathe into a great cavern were tempted to hang their top ladder out of the water on very doubtful projections. Hainsworth of the Gritstone Club was badly hurt when these broke off, but most fortunately not entirely disabled. Both the landing and the short tunnel to daylight are such that otherwise we cannot imagine how he could have been extricated.

In Lost Johns', in December, Lipscomb was apparently trying to traverse the wall from the ledge in the Cathedral to an interesting route which comes up from below when a huge block came away and he fell forty feet, being held by Kennedy and the others just above the floor. Lipscomb's

knee-cap was fractured when he grazed the opposite wall, but he too was able to get out with assistance.

We congratulate both men on their pluck, and on having made good recovery.

THOSE UNDERGROUND LAKES.—Legends of any kind, historical or scientific, die very hard, and one of them is the idea that the streams of limestone districts go underground to swell vast subterranean lakes. The popular belief is confirmed for all time by Jules Verne's thrilling story, in which all ends happily in an underground town of coal-miners by an underground lake somewhere in Scotland.

A delightful article appeared in the *Yorkshire Weekly Post*, September 28th, 1929, headed, "UNENDING DROUGHT—WHAT ARE AUTHORITIES DOING?". After referring to Ossett's bold and successful move to use the water from a flooded colliery, the writer stated that no one knew how many huge lakes the limestone uplands contained, and said, in extra thick print, "Has not the time come when the exploration of these caves and pot-holes should become the work of practical men and not be left any longer to the efforts of Ramblers and speleologists?"

Alas, the practical men we know of do not believe in subterranean lakes inside mountains! They would pipe the water at God's Bridge or Keld Head, or worst still, run a concrete trench round upper Ingleborough.

ALPINE HARE.—The white hare occasionally seen on the moors and fells is not the ordinary brown hare in a winter dress, but the Scotch or Alpine Hare. *The Naturalist* (January, 1929), has an interesting article revealing that the white hares only occur in the Pennines between, roughly, Kinder Scout and Blackstone Edge, and that their occurrence at all is due to colonies released near Penistone and Greenfield as late as 1870 and 1880. The Editor can testify that with Ellis he saw them in extraordinary numbers on Kinder eight or nine years ago.

ON THE HILLS AND ELSEWHERE.

The Editor has received surprisingly little news as to the doings of the Club during 1929, evidently owing to the bad weather both in the Alps and Britain during the main holiday season. In the Alps the weather is said to have been the worst on record, worse even than 1912, and people returned home in despair, but *Die Alpen* states that September was fine.

The week following the unfortunate Gaping Ghyll Meet was, in the Editor's experience, one of the most trying he has experienced in this country. It was impossible to get dry. Ireland and Scotland had a bad time after the weather broke, but it is stated that the weather during August improved and was dry in England. In the Highlands, however, the deer-stalking season is reported as the worst ever, not only from incessant rain, but from lack of light. This pronouncement came as no surprise to one who recalled a week of it.

The doings of the Corsican and Norwegian parties are dealt with in two articles of this number.

F. S. Smythe, at New Year, ascended the Mönch, Gespensterhorn, and North Eiger Joch (first in winter). An attempt on the Eiger failed. In the summer he did little and returned home.

W. M. Roberts climbed the Tschingelhorn, Gspaltenhorn, Wilde Frau, and then became involved in continuous bad weather.

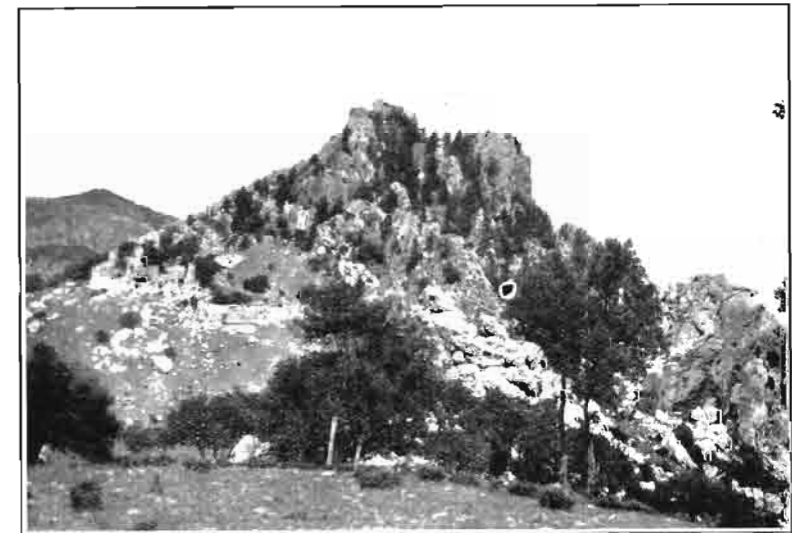
Botterill was as usual yachting off the Highlands, and for six weeks had no day without rain. In the Coolins he and Cooper did the Dubhs, Alaisdair, and down the Sgumain ridge, and had one good day on Alival in Rum. "If you cannot set off for the Highlands before June 30th, don't go at all. As for N. of lat. 58°, June 30th is too early, and July 1st too late."

Bentley Beetham is known from mention in foreign periodicals to have made another expedition to Morocco at Easter, 1929, and he has been out there again this year. No doubt we shall presently have from his pen a book on the Atlas.

A Cook's Tour.—F. H. Slingsby, giving the mountains a miss, went with his sister to Palestine and Cyprus. They



BROOK KFRITH, PALESTINE.

Photo by F. H. Slingsby.

CASTLE OF ST. HILARION, CYPRUS

Photo by F. H. Slingsby.

stayed a week in Jerusalem, an absorbingly interesting medley of old and new, East and West, and visited the Dead Sea and Hebron. The country round consists of reddish limestone moors, fertile in the valleys. The Dead Sea water shows from the Mount of Olives as a light green, with the mountains of Ammon and Moab a palish blue in the distance beyond.

Motoring to Nazareth they visited the Crusaders' castle of Athlit, one of the last to be lost to the Saracens, and a cave which is in process of excavation by Miss Kitson Clark's party. Thence to steamy Tiberias, and so into Syria past the long range of Hermon, over Anti-Libanus to the ruined temples of Baalbek, over Libanus to Beirut, and across to Cyprus.

Landing at Famagusta, they moved on to Kyrenia on the north coast (good bathing), and returned through Nicosia, the capital, by car over Troodos, where there is a hotel half an hour's walk from the highest point of the island, 6,000 ft., to Limasol. From Troodos at sunrise can be seen almost the whole of Cyprus. Cyprus is a pleasant island, but not another Corsica. The two ranges run east and west; the northern range is the lower but more attractive, its limestone crags being occasionally crowned by castles.

As first the Lusignans, put in by Richard I., and then the Venetians held this island, there are many ancient buildings of Northern French and other European types, but the present-day Christians in Cyprus being mostly of the Greek Orthodox Church, the Cathedrals and Abbeys of Lusignan times are now mosques, barns, or ruins.

Kangchenjunga.—The mountaineering event of 1930 has been the attack on what is now considered to be the second highest peak of the Himalaya, 28,222 ft. A determined attempt was made on Kangchenjunga in 1929 by a Bavarian party which spent weeks cutting, and even tunnelling, on an ice ridge, but could not attain 25,000 feet.

In February, 1930, a second party, recruited from Britain, Austria, Germany, Italy and Switzerland, sailed for India, led by Dr. Gunter Dyrhenfurth, a German geologist, of the University of Zurich. It included F. S. Smythe, who acted as correspondent for the *Times*, and M. Kurz of the Swiss Survey, and was joined in India by G. Wood-Johnson, and

two transport officers, Hannah and Tobin, all three of whom appear to have accomplished wonders in handling the natives and keeping the expedition supplied in Nepal.

The 1930 expedition came within a little of being swept away altogether by an ice avalanche of prodigious volume, which wiped out the step-cutting work of days and days, and took toll of one life. The difficulties of Kangchenjunga proved so great, that in Smythe's opinion it is for another generation to solve them.

A second route proved equally hopeless, but Smythe and several others succeeded in the ascent of Jonsong Peak, so far the highest mountain top which has been attained. The expedition thus returned home with very definite results, among which is the benevolent attitude of the Maharajah of Nepal, at the moment, towards high mountaineering.

We must express our pleasure at the issue, fortunate on the whole, of an attack which has been compared to war, and our thankfulness that the losses were not greater. It is probable that the aim of following Himalayan expeditions will be to pick out those giants which give most possibility of ascent. Neither K2 nor Kangchenjunga are among these.

We expect a lecture from Smythe during the winter, and no doubt an English translation of the book of the expedition, to which he will certainly contribute, will be forthcoming. He is organising an expedition to try Kamet next summer after the monsoon.

The Alps in 1930.—The weather in the greater part of the season was described as very uncertain, but the last week of August and the first of September were exceptionally brilliant and remarkably calm.

We are glad to hear that W. A. Wright's health is sufficiently restored for him to go out again. He did the Cima del Largo, Passo Casnile, and Piz Sprazzo Caldera.

W. M. Roberts and the Editor did the Mettelhorn and Strahlhorn. In a week at Binn W. V. Brown and the Editor did the Grampielhorn, Cherbadung, Ofenhorn, and almost but not quite, Hüllehorn. Only the Mauvaise Poupée was added, but Brown and Humphreys also did the Hohstock.

CAVE EXPLORATION.

I.—NEW DISCOVERIES.

Ingleborough, Gaping Ghyll.—Whitsuntide, 1928. At this Meet the first crossing of the Pool Canal was accomplished on a petrol tin raft, two Ramblers succeeding in making a through passage from the Pool Chamber to the West Chamber. Owing to the difficult nature of the landing at the northern end of the canal, about 8 feet above the water level, it was not found feasible for a journey to be made in the other direction with the craft available. The canal is 87 feet long and the distance from its northern extremity to the West Chamber another 79 feet. The depth of water varies from a few inches to six or eight feet, whilst the width is fairly uniform between four and six feet. A rock barrier about half-way along its course stretches right across, but affords a good landing. The true bearing of the canal fissure, which extends into the West Chamber, is 339 degrees.

Kingsdale, Swinsto Hole.—August, 1929. Hainsworth, Walker and others. Completed, June, 1930, Gritstone Club.

Along the "unpleasant passage" and through the "deeper water" at which everyone else has stopped, Hainsworth and his Ingleton friends crawled for 350 yards—a gallant effort only to be fully appreciated by those who have done what appears to be several miles with all the benefit of a lower water level. The remarkably regular tunnel has little fall, and gets gradually worse up to a desperate place, seventy yards from the end. Here a strong tributary joins in and an easy 15 ft. pitch is followed by vigorous waterfalls of 30 feet into a short high passage, and of 12 feet into a big pool at the head of the fifth pitch. Six ladders were dragged in in three trips.

In May, 1930, led by Hainsworth, the Gritstoners descended the long wet pitch, by passage and crawl went 500 yards to a dry 70 ft. pitch, then down another of 40 feet, and stopped at the head of a 20 ft. drop, which they proved in June to be the last of all. A formidable cavern.

Leck Fell, Three Trees Pot, etc.—Whitsun, 1929. A long way down the wall from Leck Fell House and near to Easegill, a well marked line of sinks is crossed. There is a minor pot-hole on the west side, but two larger ones lie 200 yards east.

Three Trees Pot contains an open hole of some size, 25 ft. deep, but in the east bank of the sink a 75 ft. ladder climb through a small hole leads into a fine chamber. The rock at the head of the next shaft is in most places extremely dangerous. At the bottom a narrow slit opens into a 40 ft. pot-hole. Wood and Griffiths first reached this point, but Lipscomb of the second party is the only man who has risked the chance of not being able to get back through the window, and therefore the first man to reach the bottom of the cavern.

Number Two begins with two simple pitches, but the third has its difficulties, and we will not spoil the entertainment by describing them.

Leck Fell, New Pot (unnamed).—Whitsun, 1929. Lipscomb and Innes Foley. An amazing crater, 30 ft. in diameter, not far from Easegill Kirk, developed in the winter of 1928. It is reported to go down only 15 feet below the loose slope, and in spite of a nasty climb over a mud bank and among loose stuff to lead to nothing much. The storms of a few winters will probably open out something better.

Swaledale, Hollow Mill Pots.—(Yates & Roberts, August, 1929).

This group is within 300 yards of the road over the Tailbrigg Pass, north of Hollow Mill Cross, the highest point. Four daylight shafts up to sixty feet were descended. The pot-hole, 22 ft. deep, into which a beck tumbles, was found to possess a dark shaft. Heavy water on a frosty day forbade more than one descent to what proved later to be a pinnacle in the floor.

In May, 1930, Butterfield, Marshall and Wood were added to the party, and an almost dry descent made of 100 feet from the moor. No outlet at the foot of the shaft.

Jingling Cove, an open pot-hole just south of the Cross was also descended.

Swaledale, Lamps Moss, Blue John Hole.—(Yates and Roberts, 27th October, 1929).

Near the Tailbrigg Pass to Kirby Stephen, about 400 yards east of the road, a strong beck is swallowed in an imposing cave entrance. A striking passage closes abruptly against a rock face after only fifty yards. We cannot trace any reference to the cavern, although the name is shown on the six-inch map.

Wensleydale, Cotter End, Scots Hole Pots.—Four pot-holes up to 25 ft. deep on the Highway between Tarn Gill and Scots Hole have been descended, August, 1929, as well as *Tarn Gill Pot* and some minor shafts near it. The same expedition also took the trouble to make quite sure that the only one of the *Buttertubs* which cannot be climbed was descended. It proved to be a double shaft of fifty-eight feet.

Nidderdale, Goyden Pot.—16th June, 1929. Brown, Hilton, Yates, Marshall and Roberts invaded the Labyrinth and made half a dozen new connections. The Timber Jam was found to be open as in 1922, and the belfry to the south to connect with the adjacent passage. Five Ways was found to be Six Ways. The furthest belfry, on the stream, proved to have a short passage beyond it to the south, with an amusing finish.

Beyond the High Fissure and the Pot-hole, three connections, two by sight at an upper level, and one by repeated journeys, were made with the Carbide Tin Passage.

Yates has since returned with Armstrong and others, climbed from the first belfry up into a new and very awkward passage, dragged a ladder along, and, bad luck, has found himself descending into the second belfry instead of into a new area. These two belfries are marked "High" on the map.

In 1930, Yates, Butterfield and Nelstrop met with more important success. The Cap Passage was followed about 150 yards until it subdivided and closed. Then the low crawl at the entrance to the Carbide Tin Passage was attacked, and followed with difficulty for 50 yards until it broke into the roof of a fine stream channel 8 ft. high, 3 ft. wide, which ran down 130 yards to a water-trap of great depth, and upstream 160 yards to a low bedding plane.

II.—OTHER EXPEDITIONS.

Clapham Cave.—8th March, 1930. Low Level Area. Hill has shown from Mr. Farrer's Cave Book (*Y.R.C.J.*, IV., p. 108), that the first party in 1837 did not enter the Giant's Hall but gained the low level some other way. A visit by Bonner and the Editor in 1920 showed that this was probably through a slit in the S. wall of the Gothic Arches opposite the entrance of the Giant's Hall. At this date the descent from the latter was hopelessly buried, but in 1930 the Club found it far more open than it was in 1913. On the other hand the sand was banked high against the S. wall of the Gothic Arches.

The party of three who reached Lake Avernus report that Brodrick's plan (*Vol. IV.*, p. 106) is no doubt sternly accurate horizontally. Turning right after sliding down the sand, they crawled a bit and found on the right bank an important landmark to the way out, namely, a round pot hole, 2 ft. above the floor, in which one could stand up. This is Hill's "chamber" from which one can talk to a man 12 ft. above at the end of the Gothic Arches and is probably also "The Hole" of plan on p. 60, Vol. II. A by-pass tunnel off this dodges the water, and it seems to be a little longer than shown on Brodrick's plan.

To gain the "dry crawl" of Calvert and Green (*Vol. I.*, p. 223), it is necessary to cross the stream when entered again and keep up its left bank.

Downstream comes the worst bit, which the 1930 party take oath is not 3 ft. high as on the plan, or even 2 ft. The next incident is a sheet of water, from which they did not observe two streams ran, though this would seem not to be always the case. Keeping right they arrived at "False Avernus," passing a noisy little tributary which evidently came from the sink of the Cellar Gallery water. The tunnel to the right in line with "False Avernus" they miserably failed to explore. Brodrick does not show it. Returning by the left bank they were rather staggered to find the water suddenly going the wrong way, but persevered, reached the real Lake Avernus, turned right and waded up into False Avernus and round the corner for home, somehow not feeling up to tackling after dinner the "long dry crawl," of which the right branch is rumoured to go for ever.

Ingleborough, Long Kin West.—30th June, 1929. A most successful day without a hitch was spent over what appears to be the fifth descent, six men reaching the bottom. The pitches were considered to be 70, 150 (not 160), 70, and 20 feet.

The second descent, Whitsun, 1905, not hitherto recorded, was made by Booth, Parsons, Buckley, Hill, Brodrick, Hastings, Green and Lamb.

Leck Fell, Lost Johns' Cave.—At Whitsun, 1930, three of the original explorers, Innes Foley, J. R. Kennedy, and Hicks with Nuttall and five Ramblers, Brown, Hilton, Yates, Marshall, and E. E. Roberts all went down to the Master Cave, using ten ladders. The one on the Bayonet can be replaced by a rope. The Battleaxe ladder, 36 feet, is long enough for the little pitch below as well. The dam held for 2½ hours, giving time for the work below.

The block upstream could not be penetrated. Downstream Roberts and Yates turned back at 960 yards from Groundsheet Junction in the final region of deep water and sticky mud.

On 13th July, Hilton, Yates, Nelstrop and Roberts supported by Brown and Bottomley, made what appears to be the only descent to the end of the Old Cave since that of Booth and Parsons. They tied the ladders to the beam put in 32 years ago, still perfectly sound. Some change has taken place below. Clean rock now, with a narrow lofty crack running away. Yates chimneyed out furthest and is of the opinion that when short beams are jammed in, a descent can be made to the water.

Leck Fell, Death's Head Pot.—This was descended by four Ramblers in July, and we believe it has also been done in 1929 by the Gritstone Club.

Somerset, Swildon's Hole.—13th October, 1929. In spite of heavy rain during the previous week, Devenish and E. E. Roberts were able to go right to the end of the magnificent cavern, the pipe which some benefactor has concreted into the top of the only serious pitch shooting the water far out over their heads. The point between the Twin Pots at which Baker and the Editor were stopped in 1914 is not difficult when you have a rope or when you know it.

REVIEWS.

CLIMBS AND SKI RUNS. by F. S. Smythe. (*Blackwood & Sons, pp. xiv. and 308, 21s. net*). Quite literally "to the true-souled climber who can enjoy a tough bit of rock, even if it is only fifty, aye, or twenty feet high" and to the Alpine expert who is qualified to tackle the most serious ascents guideless, as well as to all the intermediate gradations of mountaineers and mountain lovers, Mr. Smythe's book offers most attractive reading. Quite literally, for he conducts us from a small outcrop of gritstone close to Leeds, up the Welsh Crag, the Dolomites, Alpine peaks, passes, and glaciers to an unprecedented ascent of the Courmayeur face of Mont Blanc, and we are glad to be with him all the time. In fact Mr. Smythe is gifted with a happy aptitude for catching the correct atmosphere, and that without effort, and as a consequence we are now and again surprised into finding ourselves in spirit actually with him in many places where we fain would be, and, it must be admitted, in some where we had much rather not, from juxtaposition in a hut to a horror who has filled himself with odorous *salami* to the ascent of the four *arêtes* which form a series of Bridges of Paradise on his great Courmayeur face ascent.

One word of warning. It would seem to be exceedingly risky to accompany Mr. Smythe in the flesh when there is electricity about. He seems a very storm focus and on one occasion came as near as no matter to featuring as a lightning conductor. Fortunately his clothes were saturated and the direct hit slid off him very much after the manner of water off a duck's back, leaving him, however, temporarily stunned. In the description of these storms Mr. Smythe's powers are admirably illustrated. There is nothing forced about them here, or in fact anywhere. There is indeed one little passage on page 247 which leaves quite as eerie an impression as anything in E. A. Poe, yet, unlike that writer's work, it is quite without affectation.

Purists will doubtless find opportunities in criticizing Mr. Smythe's style, but he will be well advised to pay no attention to these critics. Its individuality constitutes one of the charms of the volume and no writer who values that great asset should be over attentive to critics.

In his last chapter, Mr. Smythe has greatly dared, and ventured into the Region Perilous of the Philosophy of Mountaineering. He has come out of the ordeal as well as most, better in fact, for he writes just as he feels and thinks, not as he wants other people to think he feels and thinks, and the distinction is to his credit.

The various chapters have not been touched on in detail. They should be read for themselves.—C.E.B.



Photo by W. L. Krug.

DENT BLANCHE.

OXFORD ANNUAL FOR BOYS.—November, 1929.—*Homeland Mountaineering*: by C. E. Benson. This magazine article is a plain setting forth of the first principles of fell walking and rock climbing in Britain for the guidance of those growing lads who, fed up with the mechanization of car and cycle, yearn for the greater glories of the fell side and the mountain. Mr. Benson, in that quaint *staccato* style which he has made his own, deals with Walking, Scrambling and Climbing in their natural order. Of Walking he rightly points out how large a part it plays in the "ascent" of any mountain, even of Scawfell by Deep Ghyll; and insists on a reasonable pace and a zig-zag track, with a swing from the hips, not the knees. "Immer langsam," as the Swiss guide says, or to vary the wording, "Never take one step where two will do."

"Climbing" he describes as "an ascent entailing the constant use of hands and feet, together with such other portions of the anatomy as may be requisitioned," and Scrambling as "betwixt and between, entailing the frequent but not constant use of hands, as well as feet, over sections of no great length or difficulty"—both very good definitions.

Scrambling is dismissed with the remark that it is the best all round school for a beginner, if taken with a companion. Climbing is dealt with in more detail, and after admitting its risks but comparing them with those of motoring, he lays stress on two points, the choice of easy climbs first and the paramount use of the feet and not the hands in climbing. This latter point and the need for deliberation (to which the writer might have added "balance," *i.e.*, the *gradual* shifting of the weight or grip), if obeyed, the lucid description of the components of a climb—pitch, stance, etc., and the compendium of particular suggestions for leader, second, and third man, if followed, would go far to make the "complete" climber of rocks. Snowcraft is not touched on, of set purpose, but surely a climbing party in Deep Ghyll at Easter might find an ice-axe make all the difference and should be told how to use it. May we suggest also a note of warning against trusting *any* handhold without testing it, and not too much then—*experto crede!*—W.A.B.

ALPINE JOURNAL (twice a year, 10s. 6d. net).—Looking again through the last three numbers, one cannot help but think that the *Alpine Journal* grows more thrilling than ever. Nowadays new climbs in the Alps are of the most prolonged and most difficult type, and seem to be only for super-men who regard a bivouac as a trifle and can climb severes under a big load.

The last number (May, 1930) contains accounts of the Bavarian attack on Kangchenjunga, of the Scheidegg face of the Wetterhorn, and Slovene climbs on the Triglav, where impossible places are forced by hammering in a succession of *pitons*.

To the pot-holer M. Blanchet's accounts of long descents by means of the doubled rope, in which he now specializes, will be of much interest and amusement. In the course of rediscovering the amazing way in which ropes close together can twist round one another, M. Blanchet almost came to disaster, and his experiences will remind veterans of painful experiments in fancy methods of tackling pitches which shipwrecked on the same difficulty.

The number for November, 1929, contains three tributes to the memory of our ex-President, William Cecil Slingsby, one of some length by Norwegians.

HIMALAYAN JOURNAL, Vol. I., No. 1, April, 1929. Edited by Kenneth Mason. (*W. Thacker and Co.*, 150 pp., 8s.).—The two Indian Clubs of recent formation are now amalgamated, and an important result is the issue of a Journal, to which the *Alpine Journal* intends to leave in future the detailed recording of Himalayan expeditions.

The wealth of interest and the vastness of the range are reflected in the variety of the articles. Sir Geoffrey Corbett tells us with authority that the first *a* in Himalaya is long, and the last two short, while an article on "The Attraction of the Himalaya" explains how it is that the latest calculations of the height of Everest arrive at 29,146 and 29,149 ft. and then apply a correction which reduces it to 29,075 with a possible error of 25 ft.

There is not in this first number a great deal of sheer climbing, but the contents and the formation of the Club will be of the greatest service to men serving in India who desire to accomplish something in reasonable time.

BRITISH SKI YEAR BOOK.—This sumptuous publication deals as usual in the completest possible manner with the ski-ing technicalities of the day and the racing of the past winter. The British preference for down-hill racing seems to be making converts among other nations, even among the Norwegians, and some good British jumpers are arising—forty-one metres!

The members have not, we fancy, given Mr. Lunn so many mountain articles as in recent years, but Smythe has done his share and furnished an account of his winter attempt on the Eiger.

SCOTTISH MOUNTAINEERING CLUB JOURNAL.—The S.M.C., while confining its articles to Scotland, always contrives to make up pleasant reading with the aid of its meets and short notes on the members' doings. Dr. Inglis Clark has written delightful reminiscences of Ben Nevis, while the reader will find amusement in following the new "Munro," and the invention of "sub-Munros."

PINNACLE CLUB JOURNAL, No. III. (1927-8, published 1929).—Of the contents it is sufficient to say that the Editor, Mrs. Armstrong Richards (Miss D. E. Pilley), sums up in *Climbing Notes* the remarkable achievements of the women's club, the traverse of the Coolins, several guideless climbs in the Graians, a lead of the Crowberry ridge direct, a lead of the Grooved Arête, most enterprising wanderings in Iceland, and striking new ascents with guides, Dent Blanche N. ridge and variant on N.E. face, Roc du Grépon, Kilimanjaro, etc.

The advance in technical skill and endurance is startling, but the Editor draws attention on that point to the prominent part played by women in winter mountaineering before ski.

JOURNAL OF THE FELL AND ROCK CLIMBING CLUB, (No. 23 for 1929, published 1930).—The numerous membership has supplied Mrs. K. C. Chorley with interesting articles outside the perennial subject of Lakeland, on Mont Blanc, Lofoten, Sikkim, Corsica, and British Columbia.

Miss Thompson records the first lady's ascent of the Brouillard Ridge of Mont Blanc, made in very quick time behind that crack guide, Joseph Georges. Mr. Wood-Johnson is now a very experienced Himalayan mountaineer, and we sincerely hope that he will have better luck next time than in the expedition recorded and in the Kangchenjunga journey, and reach the top of a big peak. Easter in Corsica seems to be a wintry and unpleasant time.

After reading the discussions on the protection of Lakeland, we feel a good deal more hopeful than we did about public opinion and the possibility of repelling the intrusion of monstrous motor roads. The danger is that any single proposal will split the would-be protectors into equal bodies, for and against, and that the commercialist will triumph.

RUCKSACK CLUB JOURNAL, Vol. VI., No. 4.—Another thrilling serial was perhaps too much to expect, but the 1930 number does not fail to give us another lively skit on climbing matters, a review by Scott of a German Mountain Climbing Encyclopædia in his own droll manner.

There are two most useful articles on Western Ireland and the Pyrenees, with sketch maps. The former gives valuable information as to inns, but apart from that, might well be reprinted in *Geography*. In the latter, Hughes has saved the world much repetition of labour by discussing and making out a bibliography of maps and books on the Pyrenees, while he has also given his recent experiences of butts and refuges.

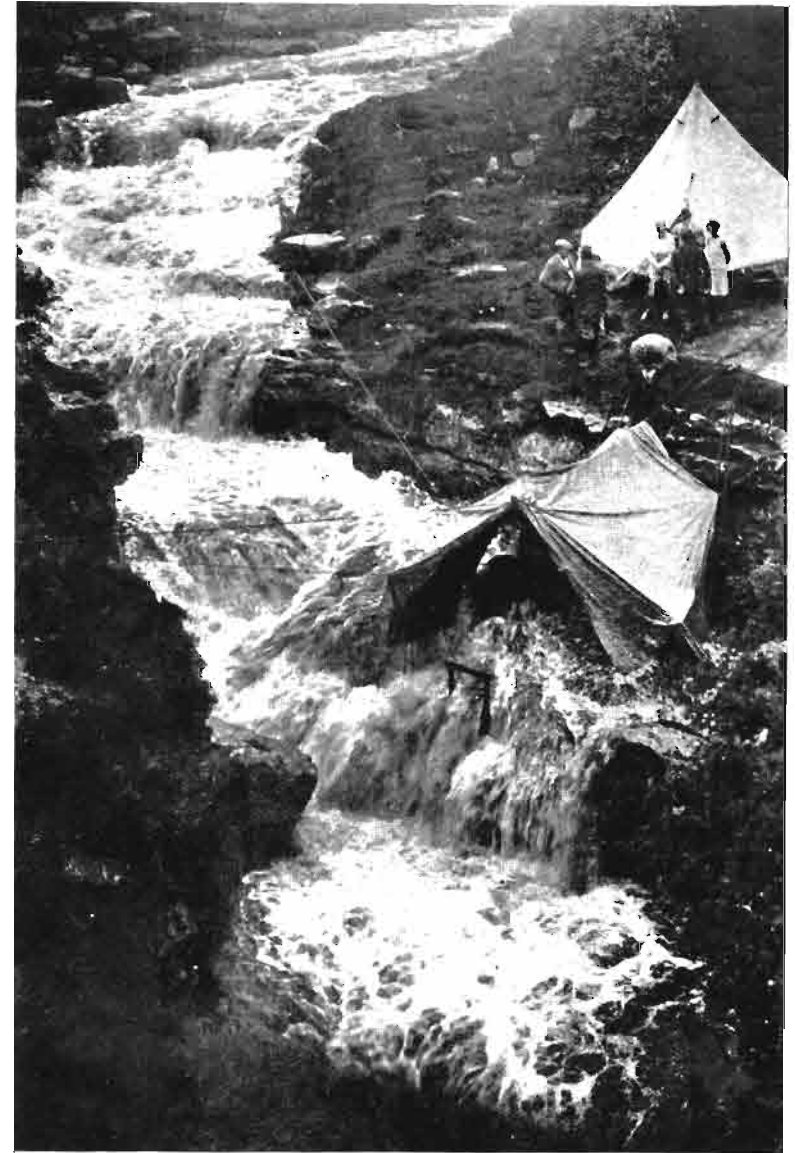
CLIMBERS' CLUB JOURNAL, 1929, Vol. IV., No. 1.—According to his own account, a new Editor, Mr. J. D. Hills, has only been found with great difficulty. He has written one of the several current articles on Corsica, and is very hard on the food there. The party had a good expedition on the ridge from the Pietra Nella to Monte Rotondo.

Four new expeditions abroad are recorded, and detailed descriptions given of many new rubber-shoe climbs in North Wales, which are continued in the *Bulletin*, April, 1930. The Editor prefaces the latter with an "Insurance Policy warning."

WAYFARERS' JOURNAL, No. 2.—Twenty pages are filled with a detailed guide, on the lines now usual, to the climbs, mostly very difficult, on Helsby Crag, between Warrington and Chester. The number is otherwise of interest in that it contains, not only an article of the sort many rock-climbers have thought of writing, sorting out their impressions after two or three seasons in the Alps, but also a piece of fiction introducing a song which follows (but some people say by accident), and an account of Lost Johns' Cave, in which apparently a Wayfarer had made an expedition but which the Editor happily discovered to have been the object of more serious work by the Foleys' party. We note too the discovery of a cave entrance on the Eglwyseg, near Llangollen.

GRITSTONE CLUB JOURNAL, Vol. III., No. 3.—Three of the four articles in this *Journal*, still gallantly produced by typing, are of interest in that they amplify the mention of the expeditions in the present issue of the *Y.R.C.J.*

We acknowledge with thanks the receipt of the *Cairngorm Journal* and the *Proceedings of the Bristol Speleological Society*.



GAPING GHYLL FLOOD, 1929

Photo by S. J. Swales

CLUB MEETS.

1929.—Hard frost (but not *the* frost) and brilliant sunshine reigned on the first day of the Hill Inn Meet, January 26th. Some twenty-five mustered at dinner, of whom Devenish and Slingsby had detrained at Hellifield, 3 a.m. and come via Gordale and Fountains Fell. A famous mountaineer with a singular name paid us a flying visit and gave us a lecture illustrated by unique slides, some of them produced by very simple effects. We were never quite clear as to what station the Professor was driven to catch a train at the late hour of his departure.

Sunday was a wild day, one party, after watching two cars come to grief on Buckha' Brow, deciding to return home by train.

February 10th was the first of eight days continuous frost with keen east wind and very low temperatures, followed by a fortnight of severe night frosts which have entirely cured the British nation of any further wish for an old fashioned winter.

The idea, inevitable among a club of townsmen, that it would be worse in the country must have been responsible for the failure of the Meet at Middlesmoor, March 2nd-3rd, at which only four turned up. The weather was glorious, and on Sunday summer-like. Such snow as there was lay in shadow on the slopes; from the tops it had gone.

The Easter Meet had to be transferred from Ogwen to Pen-y-gwryd, and Lockwood saw to it that men enjoyed themselves.

Glorious weather at Whitsuntide favoured the Club's first visit to Wastdale since pre-war days. Eighteen attended, and much fine climbing was accomplished.

Spring and Summer were exceptionally dry, but people seem to have forgotten that it was often unpleasantly cold up to the middle of June, especially in the south. Even pot-holing was unable to break the drought, till August, though all the rain there was occurred for the benefit of three cave expeditions in June, and ruined one.

The Hawnby Meet, 13th-14th July, came in the glorious heat. It is singular that this delightful spot and its opportunities for magnificent walks from and to Thirsk again attracted only a small number, five.

For the first time, and probably the last, August Bank Holiday (5th) was chosen for a Gaping Ghyll expedition. No worse weather has been experienced at our camps there since the Great Flood, 20 years ago. The break up of the weather began a week before, and culminated in a storm which lasted from 2 p.m. Saturday until late on Sunday. The Derbyshire Pennine Club, who were with us, had an unfortunate experience, but each man had on Monday afternoon an opportunity of making the descent.

September was a good month, except the days of the Langdale Meet, 21st-22nd. The rain was not, however, heavy enough to stop some climbing being done on Pavey Ark.

In October a return meet with the Derbyshire Pennine Club was held at Castleton, when sixteen members were conducted through the Blue John Cavern after dinner, and visited Bagshaw Cavern at Bradwell next morning. Unfortunately a correspondent of one of the papers which cater for "hicks" got into the Blue John Cavern, and represented the visit in his rag as an all-night search for radium, with scare heads to suit. Puttrell came off worst, as the romancer got hold of his name. Some doubt as to what was at the bottom of the Glory Hole in Bagshaw Cave led to a return visit in May to tick it off, a very simple but very muddy job.

1930.—Beautiful weather attended the Chapel-le-Dale Meet, January 25th-26th. More men than ever, forty in all, sat down to dinner, the President was duly invested with the "Chain of Office," and a presentation made to Jack Buckley after ten years of office as a Secretary.

Later on the President disappeared, and was only found after a long search by a roped party which extended from cellar to garret and over the roofs of the Hill Inn and adjacent barns.

From the Flying Horseshoe, Clapham, 8th-9th March, a good muster along with the Derbyshire Pennine Club went out into the darkness after dinner and visited Clapham Cave, some even reaching Lake Avernus. Sunday was devoted to Pillar Pot. Unfortunately a wet cold mist came along after one o'clock and drove us away. A number of men made the descent and some did also the shorter Fluted Hole, adjacent.

The official Meet at Easter, 20th April, was at Coniston, and it is understood the weather was not particularly good. A party of nine visited Fort William and came in for the right side of the average. The Highlands were perfectly dry (bar some slight showers on Tuesday morning) for the whole Easter week. Monday was a scorching day without a single cloud. Under such conditions, as seen from Carn Mor Dearg, Ben Nevis resembles a magnificent Alpine peak. The Tower Gully was climbed by all parties, and in addition a Castle Gully, while Carn Mor Dearg and Aonach were traversed over interesting snow ridges, and Stob Corrie Easain above Loch Treig done later on.

Kettlewell, May 10th-11th, saw the revival of "Scouts and Outposts." Half a dozen men were driven round to Middlesmoor and endeavoured to pass through a line strung out along the Wherside Fells. Everyone had a good day in spite of the Arctic weather, but the continuous mist interfered with scientific scouting.

Whitsuntide this year was favoured with almost ideal camping conditions, at least until Monday evening. Members of the Rucksack Club had been invited to attend and a dozen or so of their number had responded. Probably the largest camp Gaping Ghyll has ever seen was pitched on Saturday night. It must be recorded that Justice Thomas achieved distinction by driving his car right to the camp, the first time this had been done, though motor bikes are now a regular occurrence. Two large parties, Ramblers and Rucksackers combined, did the Flood Entrance and Exit in splendid times. It would seem that this route is becoming less difficult, or is it that the leaders are getting more accustomed to it? The Booth-Parsons crawl was done twice, Slingsby in a fit of enthusiasm at having achieved it one way, insisting upon doing it the other! The original string laid by Booth and Parsons still remains; without it the route would be much harder to follow. This was a most enjoyable Meet and though the engine caused us some anxiety, for the most part it did its work well, but we should like to see a new one installed the next time we go.

CLUB PROCEEDINGS.

1929.—The week-end meets held during the year were:—27th January, Chapel-le-Dale; 3rd March, Middlesmoor; Easter, 31st March, Pen-y-gwryd; Whitsun, 19th May, Wastdale Head; 14th July, Hawaby; 4th August, Gaping Ghyll; 22nd September, Great Langdale; 6th October, Castleton. The Gaping Ghyll and Castleton meets were jointly with the Derbyshire Pennine Club.

The eighteenth number of the Club Journal was published in March.

With deep regret we record the deaths of Wm. Cecil Slingsby, our President for ten years, and of D. G. Culross.

1929-30.—At the Annual General Meeting held 9th November, 1929, the following were elected to hold office during the year:—President, T. S. BOOTH; Vice-Presidents, C. E. BURROW and W. A. WRIGHT; Hon. Treasurer, B. A. BATES; Hon. Secretaries, D. BURROW and F. S. BOOTH; Hon. Librarian, W. ALLSUP; Hon. Editor, E. E. ROBERTS; Committee, H. S. BOOTH, J. BUCKLEY, A. BUTTERFIELD, W. S. HARRIS, J. HILTON, R. RIMMER, H. B. TAYLOR.

The twenty-third Annual Dinner was held at the Hotel Metropole, Leeds, on 9th November, 1929. The President, T. S. Booth, was in the chair, and the principal guest was Mr. George Sang, Alpine Club. The kindred clubs were represented by Mr. H. J. Mothersill, President, Rucksack Club; Mr. C. K. Brunning, Wayfarers' Club; Mr. J. F.

Wells, Derbyshire Pennine Club; Mr. M. Pool, Climbers' Club; Mr. C. E. Riley, Scottish Mountaineering Club; Mr. C. Hastings, Gritstone Club.

1930.—Hon. Librarian. JOHN BUCKLEY was elected by the Committee in place of W. ALLSUP, who went out to India in April.

NEW MEMBERS.

1929.

HUMPHREYS, HAROLD, 8, Southway, Hollins Green, Oldham.
 PORTER, ROBERT JAMES, 11, Arlington Street, Hull.
 FOLEY, PERCY FITZGERALD, West Hill Avenue, Epsom, Surrey.
 ARMSTRONG, HAROLD, 2a, Burton Road, Dewsbury Road, Leeds.
 WILSON, ROBERT ARTHUR NOBLE, 2, Spring Mount, Harrogate.

1930.

BOTTOMLEY, ALBERT EDWARD, 50, Copgrove Road, Leeds.
 GOGGS, ARTHUR BERNARD, 93, Norton Avenue, Norton-on-Tees.
 NETTLETON, THOMAS, 13, Bank Villas, Horbury.
 MITCHELL, THOMAS CORLETT, Thorpe House, Norton-on-Tees.
 SHAW, DONOVAN, 74, Albemarle Road, York.

BACK NUMBERS.—These, which are limited in number, can be obtained from the Hon. Librarian (108, Wellington St., Leeds). Prices:—Nos. 1, 3 and 4, 5s. each; Nos. 2 and 5, 10s. each; Nos. 6, 7, 10, 11 and 12, 4s. each; Nos. 8 and 9, 2s. each; No. 13, 3s.; Nos. 14, 15, 16, 17 and 18, 5s. each. Specially designed green buckram cases for the five volumes, 2s. each. Postage extra.