

THE
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CLUB JOURNAL
1957

Edited by HAROLD G. WATTS

VOLUME VIII NUMBER 28

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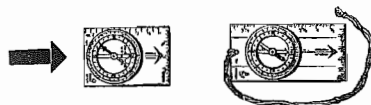
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SOUTH GEORGIA

by G. B. Spenceley

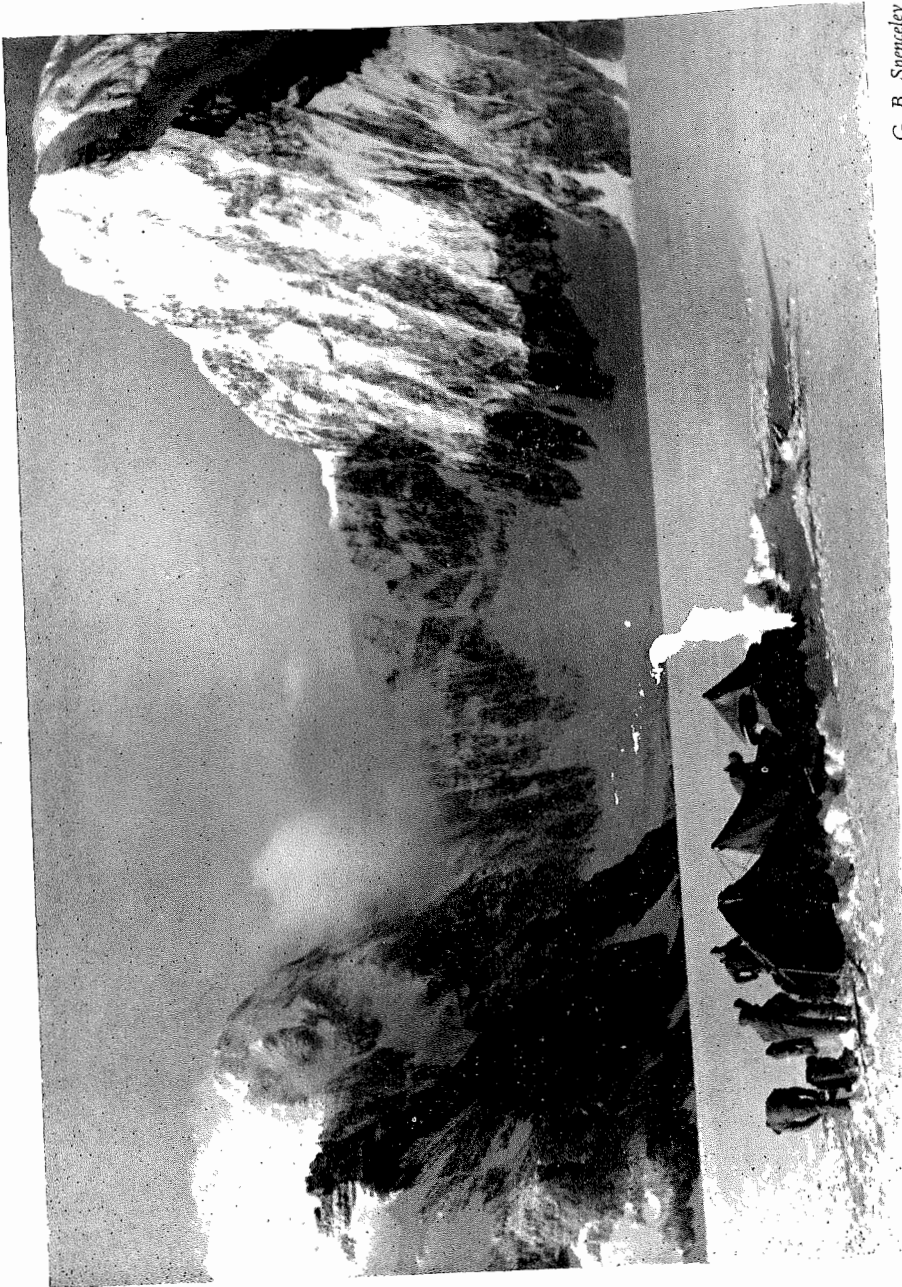
ONE writer has described South Georgia as like the top ten thousand feet of the Alps set in a stormy sea. And that is how it seemed to us that morning as we stood by the ice encrusted rigging and watched the early sun light up the mountains of this fabulous island. In the half light we could see fifty or sixty miles of glaciers, snowfields, and now at their crest tinged brilliant orange, high peaks, all but one unclimbed, all but a few unnamed, rising seemingly straight out of the ice mottled sea.

South Georgia, not really so very far south, but, unlike Cape Horn in the same latitude, lying within the Antarctic Convergence is an important centre for whaling and sealing. Sheltered in the deep inlets of the north coast are three whaling stations. One might expect that on an island where there is so much activity there would be little work left for explorers. But of the hinterland, distant only a few miles from these isolated pockets of industry, nothing was known, even the coastline was only incompletely and imperfectly charted.

Duncan Carse had led two previous expeditions to South Georgia and in spite of a climate as difficult as any in the world, ten months' sledging had been sufficient to map two-thirds of the island. Our task was to complete the job.

We were an eight man party, Duncan Carse being the leader. Second in command was Dr. Keith Warburton. We had two surveyors, Capt. Tony Bomford and Stan Paterson. Louis Baume, Tom Price and John Cunningham reinforced the climbing element. I was the photographer.

The ten days of hard work that followed our landing, setting up base and preparing for the first journey I largely escaped, for I was away visiting the bays and fjords round the island in an Argentine sealer taking photographs of this strange and bloody occupation. It was a fascinating experience.



G. B. Spenceley

MOUNT SPAARMAN, SOUTH GEORGIA

Immediately after my return we departed on the first 60 day journey. After a boisterous passage we were landed with our three sledges and 3,000 lbs. of stores at Fortuna Bay. We were to travel by a known route to the Kohl-Larsen Plateau, an elevated snowfield in the centre of the island and just to the north-west of the main Allardyce Range. From the Plateau we hoped to discover and follow a route more or less along the central watershed of the island until a junction could be made with the country already surveyed at the head of the Brunonia Glacier.

Sledges were manhauled, an exhausting and painfully slow method of travel. But in South Georgia where distances are not great, where much time must be spent at one camp for purposes of reconnaissance and survey, and more time spent waiting for good weather, the use of dogs would hardly be economical.

The first day of travel we had gained from our camp on the beach little over a mile in distance and perhaps 500 feet in height. Fortunately on few days was our effort so little rewarded. Once established on the glacier and on a surface hard frozen we had made better progress, sometimes putting a distance of twelve miles between camps. But such days were exceptional. Rarely were we on a level surface and when mounting to a col sledges had to be relayed. If in an hour one made one and half miles it was good travelling, and on unbroken snowfields and glaciers interminably long, in a landscape to which nothing gave scale, sledge hauling became not a little tedious and the order to make camp most welcome.

We sledged up the Konig and the Neumeyer Glaciers. On the latter we camped below the 4,000 foot face of Mt. Spaarman, a face no less steep and almost as high as the Brenva Face of Mont Blanc. It was impressive country.

Ten days after landing at Fortuna Bay we established Camp VIII on the Kohl-Larsen Plateau where the work of exploration and survey was to begin. More than anywhere else the landscape here had a Polar aspect. It was an extensive and elevated snowfield surrounded on all sides by mountains icy and austere. We were camped on the plateau a week and on all but one day the weather was perfect, cold indeed, but Alpine in character, brilliant days of sun above an unbroken sea of cloud. It was a fine setting for the opening scenes of the Expedition's work, but later we were to see

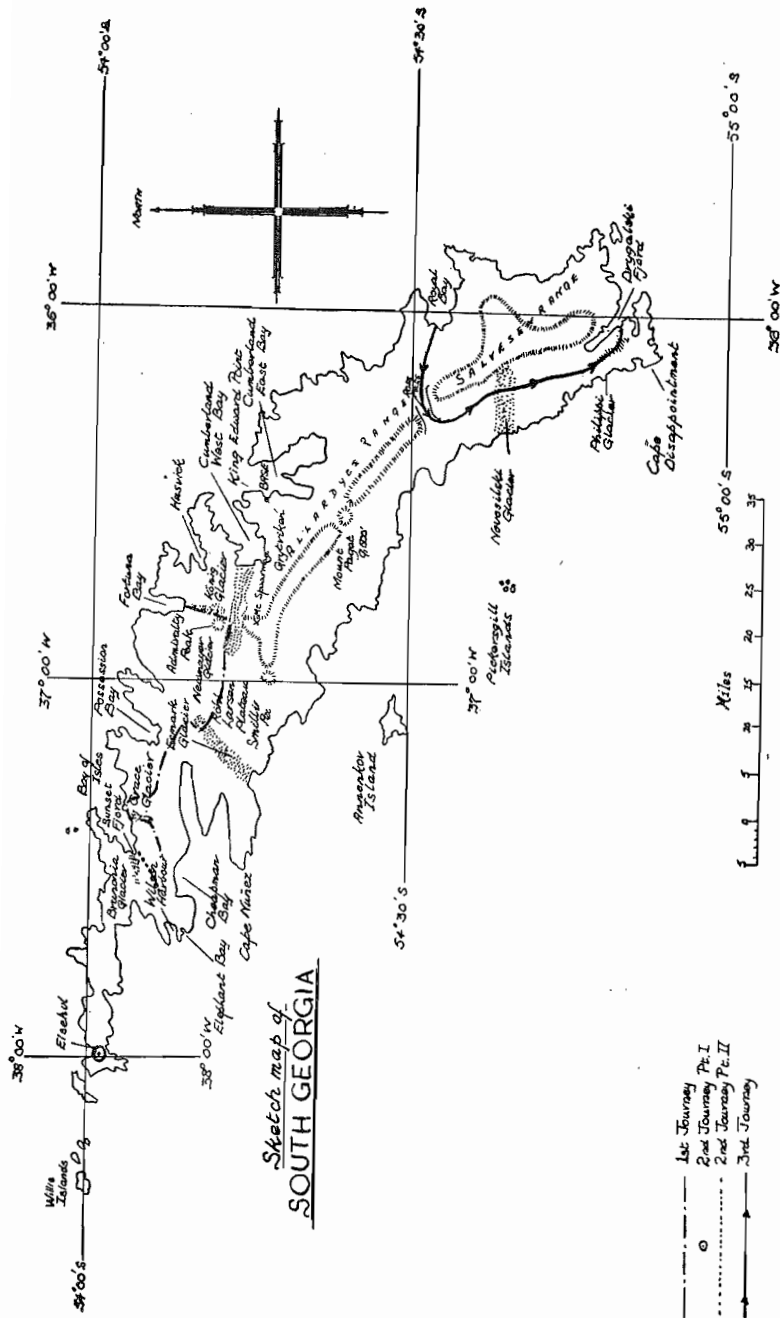
it in another mood, for the Kohl-Larsen Plateau was also the stage on which was played the dramatic close of the enterprise.

We took full advantage of the kindly weather. Every morning we were called at 3.0 a.m. and after a breakfast of porridge and cocoa, cooked and eaten by candlelight, we set out on skis in parties of two or three, either heavily laden with theodolite and tripod to a survey station or on a reconnaissance with only a light rucksack. Every day first ascents were made and every day, from peak or col, we viewed country unseen before.

The mountains were not high and perforce for survey purpose, we selected for ascent the lower and least difficult peaks. Mount Paget, the highest peak in the island, is only 9,500 feet, and there was little that exceeded 6,000 feet in height that we could see from the Plateau. But the worth of mountains is not measured in feet. These peaks had the form and individuality of the best in the Alps, and if the climb of an Alpine peak is measured from the hut, they had the height too. But they are not to be climbed in the same slightly casual fashion of an Alpine peak. Many would call for the greatest mountaineering skill, not a few might prove, if not unclimbable, certainly unjustifiable. These southern mountains carry in summer a winter garb where ice hangs at an impossible angle, and no one can overestimate the severity and danger of the weather in South Georgia. Where there is a greater cold to consider and frequent storms, unheralded and prolonged, liable to come with dramatic suddenness from any direction, where winds come in gusts of exceptional force and may blow without respite for many days, then no margin of safety can be wide enough and the line of retreat never too secure.

Had Stan Paterson worn his goggles when using the theodolite we should not have climbed Spaarman. But he did not do so and when the surveying from the plateau was complete, Stan, his eyes hidden behind plastered goggles, was lying in the tent in the agony of snowblindness. Baume stayed behind to minister to his needs while the rest of us moved camp seven miles to the west. In the evening Keith Warburton and I skied back to the patient.

We returned not in our sledge tracks but on a route more direct and on a glacier unknown. We skied by peaks like fancy cakes all icing sugar and whipped cream, over miles of level snowfield where distance lost all meaning, to our col, reached steeply at the edge of a giant windscoop guarding a slender rock tower rich



brown in the evening light. Far below were the two tiny dots of our camp and rising majestically beyond, Mount Spaarman. Now with no surveying we had hopes of gaining its top and so making the first major ascent.

It blew hard the next day, but the day following was all for which we could have wished. Travelling in a slight arc to avoid a section heavily crevassed we skied to the foot of a couloir. To our right, separated from us by a rock ridge and another arm of the snowfield was the peak the surveyors called 'Dimple.' Cunningham, Baume and I had earlier made the first ascent as amateur surveyors, taking with us the lightweight theodolite. We had not been able to take the instrument very far: the ridge was too narrow to set up and the summit itself, gained by a steep slope of dangerous snow, proved to be a cornice of the utmost delicacy overhanging on its far side an appalling void, and barely safe as a restricted stance for one man.

The ascent of Spaarman presented no great difficulties: a couloir followed by a long undulating ridge led us to the summit. But had we reached the top? Beyond was a second summit, perhaps no higher—we hoped not as high—but separated from us by a deep cleft and an arete narrow, twisted and tortuous. It was really a rock arete, guarded by many gendarmes but clothed in ice so thick that nothing of its structure could be seen. From its base rose abruptly a 200 foot tower encrusted in pillars of vertical ice. If that is the true summit then Spaarman will long remain unclimbed.

The next day we joined the others at Camp IX and settled down to three days of blizzard. We were to experience weather more typical of South Georgia. Rarely now did we enjoy two consecutive days of fine weather and almost half our time was to be spent lying up in conditions that made either travel or survey impossible. Yet we travelled in all but the worst weather and seized every opportunity of going to a survey station. Often before the day had shown its hand, we had dug out theodolite and tripod, unlashd rope and iceaxes and set off on skis for some neighbouring peak, hurrying to beat the onset of cloud, only a few hours later to return disappointed, anxiously searching for tracks fast disappearing in a fury of wind and snow. Often on a morning full of promise, we broke camp, only shortly afterwards to be forced to

halt, and after struggling in the rising wind with billowing tents, again seek refuge in our fabric homes.

On October 27th we were travelling across the narrow isthmus between King Haakon Bay and Possession Bay. It was into the former that Shackleton had brought the James Caird after his perilous open boat journey from Elephant Island and he must have crossed this isthmus. By a strange accident we were to follow in reverse his route more precisely than we had intended.

We were travelling in low mist. At the foot of a steep slope we left the three sledges and skied up into the sun. Directly ahead was the col for which we were aiming. We returned and taking one sledge at a time laboriously hauled two of them up on to the sunny snowfield. We would make camp here and there was time enough left for a climb. We ran down for the other sledge.

It was some time before we realised what had happened. We came to the bottom of the slope and were again in the cloud. Without thinking we walked past the area of trampled snow and chocolate wrappings peering forward for the sledge. It was not there. Anxiously we hurried forward; then we saw them. Two parallel tracks veering away from the others, disappearing into the mist down the glacier, lonely sledge tracks unaccompanied by ski or foot marks. Somehow set in motion, the sledge had gone and with it two of our tents, all our Primus stoves and all but one of our sleeping bags. The glacier, the same one up which Shackleton had toiled, descended to a maze of crevasses and ended abruptly in an ice cliff falling into the sea. It seemed that the sledge and its load must be a total loss and with its loss, not only was there a situation fraught with hazard and hardship, but we were faced with the effectual end of the expedition.

Such were our thoughts as we despondently followed the tracks, as sad and gloomy now with the bleak prospects as a short time ago we had been gay with the promise of a good climb. Not until we had dropped below the mist did we have a glimmer of hope. The sledge by a miracle had kept to the side of the glacier. There were crevasses here too, but fewer in number and smaller. For about three miles we followed the tracks until they led to a slope, more of ice than snow, and very steep. At the bottom was the moraine and there, mounted high on its side, its load widely scattered, was the sledge. It rested but a few yards from the site of Shackleton's "Peggotty Camp."

I did not expect always to enjoy sledging any more than I expect to enjoy every moment of an Alpine holiday or any moment of a very hard rock climb. I was pleasantly surprised. There was sometimes a degree of discomfort, but no hardship. There were periods too of monotony, but the scenery, when we could see it, was full of variety and the weather, more varied than the scenery, gave not only an element of uncertainty to any day, but the contrast between complete relaxation and idleness and hectic and prolonged endeavour.

Even in bad weather our camps were for the most part comfortable. The tents were effectively sealed against wind and snow and our only enemy was condensation. Irritating rather than uncomfortable were lying-up days in high wind when the flapping fabric caused internal draughts that made us forget our books and unwritten diary and burrow deep into our bags. Such was the noise that conversation was impossible and lighting the Primus was wasteful of matches, Meta and temper.

We lived in sturdy two man tents whose simply laid out interior became through long days of lying up the scene most familiar to our eyes. Once installed in our sleeping bags we were not in the least cramped and without undue discomfort we could devote the hours of enforced leisure to reading and writing. Thus ensconced and protected we travelled far from the stormy snowfields of South Georgia immersed in the great literary masters. And so the days passed pleasantly by.

But there came times when our peace was broken and our little sanctuary of learned and lofty thought was invaded by the insidious intrusion of snow trespassing upon our treasured space. I do not mean that it entered the tent. I mean the snow outside that fell and drifted and built itself up in banks around us, mounting ever higher and consolidating in solid walls so that the sides of the tent collapsed and the ridge sagged.

This invasion was never deeper and more prolonged than at Camp XII. For seven days it snowed almost without ceasing. The level of the snow rose until it was nearly four feet above the level of the ground sheet and close to the apex of the forward poles—the space inside grew limited. The centre of the tents hung down under its increasing load, dividing the tent into two compartments. With outstretched legs pinned down, restricted of movement, in hollows moulded to their shape, we sat, huddled

close together in a small triangle of space. We were free now from the hammering drift and the flapping fabric, inside the tent it was strangely quiet. The wind could do its worst. We felt safe and snug in our little hole.

High mountain ridges with unsledgeable cols cut across our route. One such ridge took us five days to turn and we did so only by descending to the beach. But the warmth and colour of the seashore was a refreshing change from the barren, hostile wastes in which we had so long been living. We killed and flensed a young seal whose meat gave a welcome change of diet, and collected a store of red yolked penguin eggs. Our camp there was a pleasant place, noisy with the cry of the tern and the Antarctic skua.

Three days later we were fully returned to the turmoil of wind and drift. We made Camp XVIII on the lee side of a steep col at the head of the Glacier. It was a bad site. Our tents had so far stood well up to the threat of the wind, but here we were to be exposed not only to a wind uncommonly strong, but a wind that came down from the col above in gusts of unequalled force. We estimated their velocity at 110 knots.

The hurricane blew for sixty hours. From the first we realised the danger. There was little sleep for anyone; the noise, the hammering of the drift and the constant lashing of frenzied fabric might not have prevented sleep—we were familiar with such disturbance—but anxiety was now added to our discomfort and we felt compelled to brace the poles with our backs and with outstretched arms ease the tortured cloth.

In the early hours of the second morning Duncan Carse's tent was ripped open and a few hours later a second tent became untenable. With both surviving tents now sheltering their maximum number we were without a margin of safety. In preparation for an emergency move we sat booted and in windproofs, our sleeping bags rolled into rucksacks. And so we sat through the second day and the third night and the worst hours of the blizzard, cold and cramped, fearful for the fate of our tent; four silent shivering shapes, vaguely outlined in the occasional glow of a pipe. There was a strange macabre atmosphere about the scene.

But by first light we could discern a reduction in the frequency of the gusts. By 8.0 a.m. it had so far lessened that we were able

to leave the tents and we moved down the glacier away from this malevolent spot. We repaired the tents, struggled into the wet sleeping bags and fell into a long sleep of exhaustion.

Now with two tents weakened and time running short we modified our plans. Only four men went forward to complete the junction with the known country to the north-west. But crossing the col, an arduous backpack, was a task in which we all shared. Of course by the time all the loads were up it was again snowing and blowing. Quickly we wished the others luck, ran down to the glacier and on skis raced along our fast disappearing tracks.

The next few days provided the wettest camping I remember. This was only partly due to the fact that Louis Baume had spilled on to my sleeping bag a full pot of Pemmican. The greatest measure of its cause was the profoundly disturbing practice which changing winds reluctantly forced upon us, of swinging tents. Our tents were wedge shaped to point tail to wind. In view of recent experience we could afford to take no risk. When the wind changed so had we to change the direction of our tents.

When we returned from the backpack the wind had changed to the north and for forty minutes we struggled with tents perversely ungovernable before we could claim their shelter. Twice the next day we repeated the performance. It was devilishly annoying. Cursing we struggled into wet windproofs and crawled out into a torrent of wind and drift. Sledge boxes were passed out. Other figures emerged, bent against the wind. Only one man could be spared for digging; the rest of us hung on to the tent. Sledge boxes were put in new positions ready to place on the flap. Holding tightly to each pole and to the sides, ready to fall on to the billowing cloth should the wind take control we shuffled round pivoting on one tail guy left embedded. When both tents were again secure, bringing with us much snow, but too cold to bother, we crawled thankfully back into the chaos inside. After a few hours we were out again doing the same thing.

Ten days later the two parties were again reunited and we started the long trek home. Space does not permit me to give details of these events, of the weekend of lavish hospitality we enjoyed as guests of the Norwegian Whaling Station on our return, or anything but the briefest account of our other journeys.

On December 13th two four-man parties were landed at Sunset Fjord and at Elsehul. Carse, Paterson, Price and I were on the latter.

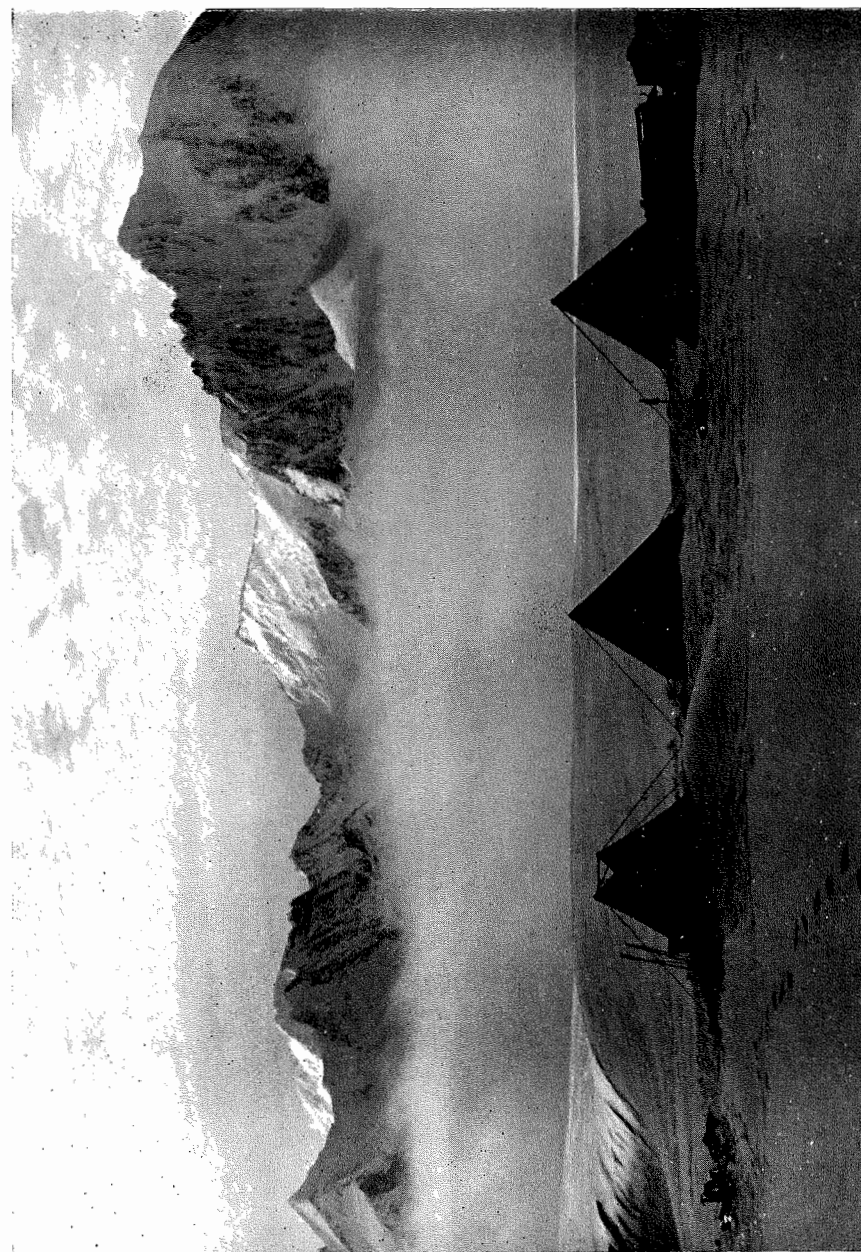
Elsehul at the extreme north-west end of the island enjoys a climate less severe than the remainder of the island. There was little snow, much vegetation and an abundance of fearless wild life. For four weeks we camped close to the shore in a situation and scenery that reminded me much of Loch Scavaig. It was a static camp and although the weather permitted only limited climbing and survey we thoroughly enjoyed living in this nature lover's paradise.

We were sledging again on our third journey. Landed at Royal Bay we crossed the Ross Pass and entered the unexplored country to the south of the Salvesen Range. An excellent sledging route was found rising at one point to over 4,000 feet; it took us through the finest country we had yet seen. The surveying went well but unfortunately bad weather and lack of time permitted only one major ascent, an unnamed peak of 7,200 feet.

On February 22nd we made Camp XIV at the head of the Philippi Glacier. We were only one day's march from Drygalski Fjord where we were to be picked up. But here we suffered a setback. We were entombed in our tents for eight days while it blew almost without interruption at hurricane force. Fortunately the wind was constant and there were none of the dangerous gusts that were so damaging on the Grace Glacier, but the abrading action of the icy drift on the suffering ventile was such as almost to wear through sections of the fabric. It had been our intention to be transported direct to a landing on the south coast but now we must return to base for repairs.

On March 1st we sledged down the glacier. It was a perfect day. The mountains fell in great cliffs of rock or ice nearly 8,000 feet to the sea. It must be amongst the finest coastal scenery in the world. Far below drifting among the ice debris in the black waters of Drygalski Fjord, patiently waiting for our appearance, was the sealer Diaz.

The last journey was quite abortive. Unable now to land on the south coast we were to travel again to the Kohl-Larsen Plateau where by crossing a high col we could reach the glaciers and snowfields that descend to the south of the main Allardyce Range. It was our earnest hope that we should be able to



MAIN ALLERDYCE RANGE, SOUTH GEORGIA

G. B. Spenceley

complete the season's work by making an attack on Mount Paget. But we never reached the unknown country and we got no nearer to Paget than we had been before. Yet for five of us there was to be an experience that at least in retrospect, we should not have liked to miss.

There was now little snow cover on the lower glacier, the crevasses were open and after landing in West Cumberland Bay we had three days of arduous backpacking before we were established on sledgeable terrain. Camp VI was pitched on the Kohl-Larsen Plateau. We were on familiar ground.

March 14th dawned fine. We were out of tents by first light and while three set off for a trig. station, Carse, Warburton, Baume, Cunningham and I moved camp across the Plateau. Soon after midday the wind freshened. A blanket of cloud was already sweeping up from the Neumeyer Glacier and filling up the Plateau, although as yet we were above it. We deemed it wiser to halt and pitch camp.

At 3.0 p.m. the others had not returned. We felt some anxiety, our tracks were rapidly drifting over. Accordingly we decided to go out and walk in line abreast on the line of their return. And so we left the tents, not imagining we should be away for long and neglecting to take with us those items of equipment essential to our safety.

With Carse in the centre of the line, holding the compass we staggered forward half against the wind. After thirty minutes we halted and waited, all the time the weather worsening and our line narrowing. It was evident we must go back while we still could. No longer now was the high ridge behind our camp visible.

Carefully we walked back on the reciprocal course, but a course in this wind was not easy to hold. After twenty minutes it was obvious we had overshot the tents. We turned and punched against the wind, but we could not keep it up for long. Eyes froze up and lungs filled with fine powder snow so that we gasped for breath. Backwards and forwards we went for two hours searching in a zig-zag pattern.

Short of finding camp our only safety lay to the north, back down the Neumeyer Glacier, but that was against the wind and was not to be thought of. Downwind was unexplored country and crevassed glaciers falling steeply from the Plateau. We had

no skis, no ice-axes, no rope, nothing to make travel safe. We had no food or spare clothing and we had left but one hour of daylight. The position was not a pleasant one.

Then Cunningham put a foot through into a crevasse. We peered down into black emptiness, but at one end it was shallow and friendly. A steep slope led to a platform beyond which the crevasse opened out and plunged into greater depths. Immensely relieved we sought its shelter. It was quiet and peaceful, our voices absorbed by the icy walls were hushed and the wind could only be heard now like the faint rumbling of distant artillery. We were lucky to find this refuge and our spirits were high.

We were for the moment safe, but there was little comfort. For ten hours we stood and shivered, vigorously stamping our feet, too cold to relax, not daring to sleep. We had little reason to believe dawn would bring relief. The recent eight day blizzard was vividly on our minds. When grey light filtered through the hole above and we looked anxiously out we found no visibility and the wind still blew with fearful force. But there was one vital change; it blew now from the south.

We were worried for the others' safety. They were better equipped for it but presumably, they too, were suffering similarly. Our physical condition was fast deteriorating and after a second night there might be little help that we could offer. It was decided then to get out and to risk the fight back to the coast and the safety of a Whaling Station. We knew the compass bearings and the wind would be at our backs.

Outside it seemed so impossible we wondered for the moment the wisdom of our move. But action was better than this soul destroying inactivity which so insidiously sapped our strength. We made rapid progress but by late morning we were again in trouble. Off course on the slopes of Spaarman which fall steeply on to the Neumeyer Glacier we had wandered into a mass of large crevasses. Gingerly we crawled over them where bridges could be found until the slope became too steep. Back we went, the worst moments of the whole episode, crawling, blinded and choked by drift, seeing only occasionally the feet of the man in front, fearful lest the slender link between us was severed. We could only struggle thus for a few minutes and when we found a shallow crevasse we got into it, resigned now to a second night.

But it would hold only three of the party and unexpectedly while searching for alternative shelter a way down was found.

Our hearts were immeasurably lightened. Only one further peril remained; the maze of narrow but deep and thinly bridged crevasses that lay four miles down the glacier. We crossed them in a line diagonal to the fissures with arms tightly linked. At almost every step one or the other of us would go through. Only once did the chain break. Cunningham disappeared altogether, happily to wedge unhurt some twenty feet down. He was able to climb out.

That was the last of our trials. Only straightforward walking separated us from the food, comfort and safety of Husvick into which after thirty-six hours of almost continual effort the five exhausted explorers thankfully staggered.

There is little more to tell. While we visited base to equip ourselves for a return to the Plateau, Carse and Warburton, thanks to the co-operation of the Captain and Flying personnel of the whaling factory ship *Southern Venturer*, made a reconnaissance by helicopter. Coming down the glacier, hauling two sledges, were the missing men. They had found the tents and had suffered nothing worse than anxiety.

So ended our six months of endeavour and a wealth of experience. Virtually our work was completed. Explorers and surveyors will find now South Georgia is a poor field for their efforts. But for the mountaineer the work has hardly begun.



FAIRY HOLE CAVE—WEARDALE

by D. M. H. Jones

"THE wettest, muddiest, vilest, most miserable cave it has ever been my misfortune to enter." Such is a characteristic comment on Fairy Hole, and certainly a more inept name than "Fairy Hole" could never have been chosen. However this stream passage, running through a 67 foot bed of limestone, has a certain claim to fame if not to beauty. It is already the longest single passage in Britain, and its furthest depths still offer scope for further exploration. For those wanting an arduous day's caving it stands, I am told, second only to Mossdale.

The cave lies in Weardale, between Eastgate and Westgate, on the south side of the valley. Its entrance at O.S. 1,150; grid reference 944374, is the smallest of several holes lying in a hollow thirty feet above the source of the Ludwell Burn. Local inhabitants apparently explored its lower reaches over 100 years ago, but since then its entrance has been partially blocked. An account of first excavations and explorations can be found in the *Fell and Rock Journal* No. 49, Vol. XVII, "The Blind White Trout of Weardale" by D. H. Maling.

The cave is one long passage either in the stream or following its line. Off-shoots are small and with one or two exceptions run for no more than a few yards, yet it is surprising how many obstacles make route finding difficult and progress arduous. The entrance is a short belly crawl with a puddle for your stomach. It leads to an antechamber from which a 20 foot slide down a chimney brings you to the stream. After a few yards the passage opens into a chamber with a 14 foot waterfall at its end. I am not sure of the depth of the pool beneath this, (having so far managed to avoid falling in). An underwater ledge skirts the right side of the pool and so the wall is best hugged closely. You now have to reach the top of the waterfall. For the lazy and the confident the wall to its right may be climbed diagonally upwards and to the left. For the more energetic and those who fear a wetting there is a narrow passage leading upwards in the right wall of the chamber which, after suitable contortions, leads above the waterfall.

The water over the next section of passage is deep. You traverse ten feet above its murky depths on ample calcite ledges.

The walls are close together; one hand can rest on each wall. Sometimes one walks on one side, sometimes on the other, sometimes one straddles. Odd obstacles disrupt the steady progress; a wide stride across a side passage, a five foot step up, a six foot drop down. The passage, as in the whole of its course, twists and bends but keeps its main direction. Two pools block progress; pools with vertical walls disappearing into dark and deep looking water. These on closer acquaintance prove to be no more than knee deep. An enjoyable traverse on good stalagmite holds can be made round the left side of the first pool. This saves a vertical pull up on poor holds, made awkward by the vast weight of water in one's clothes. The second pool can be traversed on its right wall. But this is quite a delicate procedure and many, including myself, find it quicker to submit to ordeal by water. Indeed from this point it is possible to travel the whole time in the water. This is quicker and easier, but less interesting, and, needless to say, wetter. The upper route, again on limestone ledges, may be followed for a further 70 yards, but as this point, 210 yards in, descent into the water can no longer be avoided. The early, cleaner, drier, and more interesting section of the cave is over.

The next section is a wade along the water passage, punctuated by numerous small rocks to trip over, and several large obstacles to climb over or duck under. The walls are a thick layer of mud which covers everyone from helmet to boots. It has an abrasive quality which wreaks havoc with ungloved hands. Only the hair remains really clean and dry, and offers a suitable surface on which to wipe muddy hands! The water is sometimes ankle deep, usually knee deep, occasionally deeper. These levels refer to times when the stream is low. High stream levels, or saturated subsoil and threat of rain make long expeditions inadvisable. Rainfall causes a rapid rise in water level. In the lower part of the cave this will probably not be serious; the wade out may be acutely uncomfortable but there is at least air to breathe and room to swim. Even the "Duck" further into the cave may be circumvented (by a route 10 feet upstream in the left wall). But water levels in the upper part of the cave show that the crawl passages may become completely filled with water. Even the Choir (a higher chamber) may be partially submerged, and attempts to camp in this region are most inadvisable.

At 470 yards in, there is an inscription scrawled on the left hand wall : " June 8, 1844, J. D. Muschamp " with more names on the opposite wall. Thus far we presume the early explorers reached, and certainly the further reaches of the cave were quite unpenetrated before the recent wave of exploration. At 650 yards in, you walk into the Boulder Chamber, 30 feet across, more or less circular and needless to say a mass of boulders.

The stream is reached again by slipping down through a small hole in the far left hand part of the chamber, a manoeuvre which entails squatting in the water for one brief but unpleasant moment. From here there lies ahead a long steady wade with few obstacles to interrupt progress. Such long wades seem terribly dull on the way in, but a great relief on the way out. For when you're tired it is change that is unpleasant ; be it descent from dry rocks to cold water or the hauling of a wet body over awkwardly placed boulders. All that you desire is to be able to wade onwards monotonously, thinking only of dry bed or bacon and eggs. This long steady wade has one notable feature, a point where roof nearly touches water. Now there is a foot of air space ; first time through there was only six inches. It was a little unnerving to squat on one's haunches, throw one's head back, and with nose in air edge under the constriction. But the roof was only low for two feet ; the pleasure of watching one's companions negotiating " The Duck " proved more than ample compensation.

This is a region in which it is common to see white trout—although they have been seen in most regions of the cave. Several inches long, and apparently blind, these fish are rare in Britain, and had not previously been caught or studied closely. However, J. Newrick knocked one out with a detonator explosion, and managed to collect the stunned fish as it floated downstream. It was duly despatched (alive) to the British Museum.

From 1,300 yards a series of petty obstacles begin to obstruct the way ; awkward lumps of stone to climb over, a narrow squeeze round a rockfall, steps up, slides down, the odd deep pool. But deep pools in Fairy Hole just aren't what they used to be. In " the good old days " a deep pool was arm-pit depth (or nearly) ! But time and sand have filled most of them up, and " Ashworth's Swim," a pool originally thought to need swimming, but on third exploration, when someone fell into it, found to be only chest deep, is now completely silted up.

At 1,790 yards you reach the Vein chamber. Here the passage is completely blocked by boulders. This small chamber lies above these and you have to climb vertically upwards and squeeze through a hole to reach it. A small mineral vein crosses its low roof. From the roof hang the first large collection of straws to be found in Fairy Hole. Some are now broken off, others spoilt by mud ; nevertheless many remain and it is a pleasing sight.

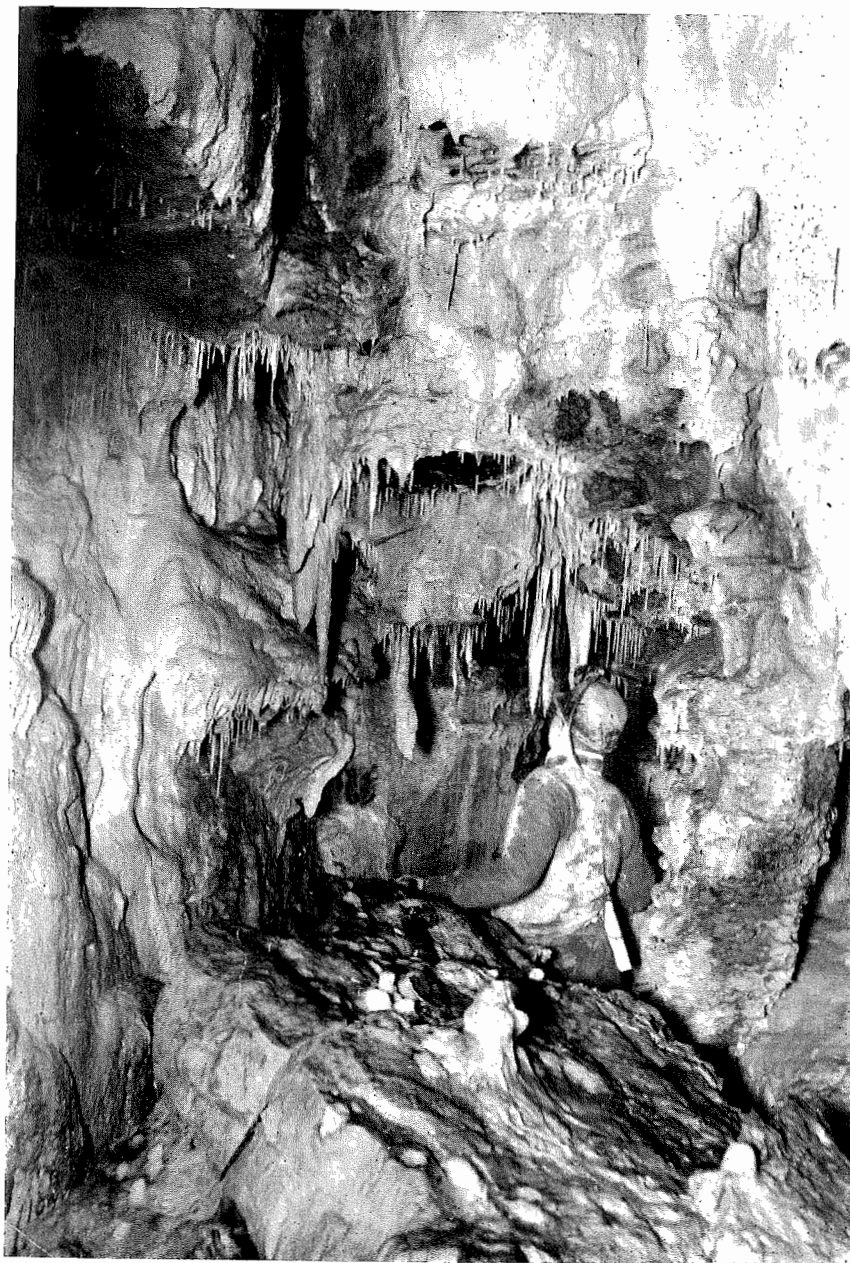
Though there are several routes out of the Vein chamber only one is advisable. An upper passageway leads to the second Coral Gallery—now out of bounds in order to preserve these fine formations. The first Coral Gallery lies further downstream, a little way before Ashworth's swim. In spite of frequent visits to the Vein chamber, I still find myself about to crawl along the wrong passage or to descend the wrong slope. It is quite surprising how often one manages to lose one's way in a cave where by and large there is only one route. For instance the route back through the Duck is not the apex of the pool of water but slightly back along the right hand wall. One duck is bad enough ; to fumble around trying several in succession is no fun. And so, by trial and perhaps error, you reach the water again and continue wading upstream. After a while a choice of two narrow fissures presents itself—both mercifully widened by the passage of many bodies. Then more wading, past " Corbel's Waders Pool "—once deep, now shallower ; so called because the French speleologist Jean Corbel came to grief in enormous waders in this pool. These superb objects had kept out water in many continental caves, in Fairy Hole they met their Waterloo ! Forty yards on another rockfall necessitates a vertical climb upwards between two massive boulders, followed by a slide down a pleasantly nobby slab. More wading still, round corners where the water reaches higher and higher for longer and longer—groin, then middle, but when the stream is low, no deeper. Various small unremarkable obstacles punctuate this watery journey, then at 2,425 yards there is again a choice of two narrow parallel fissures. At the downstream end of this a sizable tributary stream joins the main passage. This becomes comparatively small after 100 yards, but with more exploration and with digging and blasting might well provide a short cut into the cave.

At 2,490 yards a large rockfall completely blocks the passage. You must climb up a chimney which lies between the face of the

rockfall and the roof from which it has been separated. You soon peer into a sandy chamber above the fall, but it is not so easy to squeeze your body over the lip and into this chamber, indeed unless you adopt the correct procedure you are apt to writhe and struggle there for some time. The secret is to keep in the farthest corner of the chimney until as high as possible, and only then to traverse right to the widest point of the chimney. Grave Chamber is small and sandy and pleasant, and it needs to be. You cross to the far right hand corner of the chamber on to a slab, and roll off its edge into a 6 foot long grave. Then follows an extremely tight stomach crawl. By dint of manipulating one shoulder under a prominent bulge, by kicking and squirming, by disentangling the rim of your helmet from one knob and your torch wire from another, you attain a comparatively spacious crawl. This ends in a doorway looking through into another boulder chamber. Across this chamber and down to the stream again—this is the last stretch of stream wading for some time. After another 210 yards, 2,735 yards into the cave, one reaches the Choir.

The Choir is perhaps the most interesting chamber in the cave. It is long and low, and large areas of its roof are covered with delicate straws. Its floor is almost completely covered with sand which gives it a soft friendly character. Along one side a row of stalagmites stick upwards through the sand like surpliced choir-boys in a pew. An excellent spot for lunch.

A short crawl through a passage which at one time contained numerous straws, leads to the Vestry—another boulder chamber. At its far side the stream passage continues, but its roof soon descends to water level and further progress is blocked. Fortunately an upper passage leaves the Vestry above the stream passage. This, the *Via Dolorosa*, is sandy and dry, and guaranteed to warm any person cold from water wading. Progress varies from "monkey run" to "leopard crawl." Sometimes the floor is smooth, but more often strewn with boulders which manage to tear to shreds all but the strongest boiler suits. An oxbow loops off to the left, both entrances of which are more prominent than the main passage. At the furthest entrance boulders reduce the route onwards to a letter-box slit. The original explorers swung back down this oxbow and discovered a fine new chamber which turned out to be the Vestry! After the letter-box slit the crawl becomes particularly devilish; Easegill's "*Poetic Justice*" is



FAIRY GROTTTO, FAIRY HOLE

R. T. Hylton

“prose” by comparison. After 150 yards of total crawling a small chamber gives access to the stream again. But another syphon blocks progress and the upper passage has to be followed. This chamber, 2,950 yards into the cave, is the furthest point so far surveyed. Fifty yards more crawling brings you to another fall blocking the passage. At this point the passage is only 2-4 feet wide, but the exploring party managed to spend two hours finding a route through. This was due to three levels of passages. (1) The passage you have just come along ; (2) a sandy crawl ten feet lower down ; (3) the stream six feet below this. The key to the problem lies in the sandy crawl which you reach by a simple climb down a chimney. In a forward direction it is narrow and ends in an impassable boulder block. However, just before reaching this a very unlikely upward sloping crawl strikes sharply to the right. A sharp left bend and a few more feet bring one through the fall into a wider passage. The same point can be reached by a squirm through the boulders in the floor of the upper passage, a route not to be recommended. On no account follow the much more hopeful looking end of the crawl passage going back downstream.

A twenty yard stoop brings one to the Sarcophagus. This is so far the largest chamber in the cave, It has the length of the Choir, the height (at least) of the Vestry, and is wider than anything else. The stream winds its way beneath the boulder floor—accessible at two points in the cavern. The chamber is shaped like an H. One enters by the bottom right limb ; the stream passage leaves by the bottom left limb. In the top right limb a sandy funnel leads up to a crawl passage. The top left limb is the longest, its boulder floor mounting up towards the roof. Near its apex there is a very beautiful, very concentrated group of straws—worthy of the Upper reaches of Lancaster Hole. Beyond this, a small opening leads down into a spacious sandy passage which soon descends further to the stream. The stream passage here is most accommodating ; wide, no deep pools, no obstacles, you forge ahead at great speed. For four hundred yards you maintain progress which would soon bring you to the upper limit of the cave, but alas, this progress is stopped quite suddenly ; the roof sweeps down to water level—to drought water level.

So far, this is the furthest point reached in the cave, and indeed it has only been examined once. Fresh eyes may detect fresh lines

of attack, but at the moment the picture is not cheerful. To the right of the syphon, at waist level a hole, which must be one of the muddiest in a very muddy cave, leads to a channel of water about 2½ feet wide. The water depth is uncertain—by sounding it seemed about eight feet. By straddling along crumbling mud ledges it is possible to look beyond a dilation to a point where the channel becomes a narrow slit. This reaches its maximum width of eighteen inches for only one foot above water level. A strong draught is present and may come from a fissure above one's head—a fissure which would not be easy to climb. No other signs of a route over or under the syphon have been seen.

And what of the crawl passage leading from the right limb of the Sarcophagus. It was hoped that it might provide a more arduous but surer route to the far side of the syphon. It too is blocked—by a rockfall—about three hundred yards from the cavern. Nor would it seem to follow the line of the cave at all. According to one hurried series of compass readings, it runs at right angles to, then doubles back on, the line of the cave. Numerous oxbows provide further scope for exploration, but don't seem very hopeful. So another subsidiary passage must be found, or else the syphon or channel braved. Epic swims are not popular with five hours hard caving both before and after.

This description gives some idea of the cave, considered as one long continuous trip. It does not properly portray the cave as it actually unfolded itself to its explorers—in little bits, and to parties of different size, strength and composition, chipping away fresh sections of the unknown passage :—

The Northumberland Mountaineering Club excavating the entrance.

Newrick and Maling descending to the stream and reaching the first pool.

Chapman, Butcher and Conn exploring the first and second pools, discovering their depth by jumping in, and pushing onwards towards the Boulder Chamber.

A large rambling expedition, a few of whom reached the Boulder Chamber : the first hesitant explorations beyond—the Chapmans and Jones turned back by the first pool of any depth at all.

Fawcett, Ridley and Jones covering the long, easy plod in water, negotiating the Duck, and being turned back by the rockfall beyond.

Newrick and Myers negotiating this rockfall and exploring the first Coral Gallery in the roof beyond, while Riley and Ashworth pressed on below over numerous small obstacles to Ashworth's Swim.

Newrick, Heys and Myers crossing Ashworth's Swim, reaching the Vein Chamber, and exploring the second Coral Gallery above the stream beyond.

Fawcett and Jones squeezing through the first fissure, floating across Corbel's Waders Pool (then unnamed) on a rapidly leaking lilo and pushing onwards to a point just short of Grave Chamber.

Newrick, Chapman and Jones enjoying perhaps the most exciting day's exploration forcing a route through the Grave Chamber and tight crawl, and discovering the Choir and Vestry.

Railton, Little, Corbel and Newrick discovering the syphon beyond, digging to lower the water level, then exploring the beginning of the Via Dolorosa.

Newrick, Keegan, Huntrod and Jones exploring the next section of the Via Dolorosa, taking a wrong turning and re-discovering the Vestry.

C. Brindle, Holden, Bradshaw and Myers finding the way on through the narrowest part of the crawl which Bradshaw pushed as far as the descent to the stream.

Chapman and Jones adding 70 yards the following day.

Sherratt, Fawcett and Jones worming their way through the four foot wide rockfall, at one point all three becoming stuck in different tight squeezes simultaneously, and being rewarded by the Sarcophagus.

Sherratt, Belshaw and Jones stopped short by the syphon, sounding the channel with an ice-pick on the end of a nylon rope, and having equal lack of success in the upper sandy passage.

And parallel with these explorations the survey work carried out by Myers, Heys and Newrick.

So much for Fairy Hole from its downstream end. The water which causes so much discomfort to the caver disappears underground 2 miles 360 yards away from its point of emergence, at grid reference 926343. Of this distance 1 mile 600 yards as the crow flies has already been covered below ground. Several

attempts have been made to force an entrance in this upper region, but so far all have met with failure. By diverting the stream, Newrick and Hilton were able to descend along its course for a few yards. It soon became an impassable bedding plane. A lead mine, unworked for 100 years, enters the hillside 500 yards away. It is believed that its workings sweep across the line of the cave. Two days' digging forced an entrance. Driven in shale, with a limestone roof, rotten pit props, and a major rockfall one hundred yards in, this route is best left alone. A vertical fissure close to the sink has been enlarged by blasting and leads to a horizontal fissure which needs a similar treatment. Again it is doubtful whether even this would force an entrance.

So we are left with several "possibles" but no "probables." It is unthinkable that with such a large part of the route explored, it should not eventually be forced through in its entirety. The stream passage at the furthest point is still of large size, and should remain passable for a long way when once the syphon is negotiated. Indeed it has been suggested that since the large chambers are so deep in the cave, the original stream must have entered the ground much further away, and once we reach the present water inlet a dry cave will stretch onwards!

The geological and natural history side of Fairy Hole, together with a detailed account of the exploratory journeys, is being covered by J. Myers in an article to be published in the Northern Pennine Club Journal, Vol. 1, No. 1. In the same Journal, J. Newrick is writing a full account of the white trout. Here I should like to acknowledge the debt I owe to both these for their help in compiling this article.

Permission for entry to the cave, which is on private property, should be obtained from the President of the Durham Cave Club, J. A. Newrick, High Whitestones, Ireshopeburn, via Bishop Auckland, and will normally be withheld during lambing time.

BIRD WATCHING IN THE HILLS

by W. P. B. Stonehouse

THE true bird watcher tends to be a bit of a fanatic. His hobby slowly grows upon him until it possesses him entirely, so that he can think and talk of nothing else. When he has reached this state he may be considered a fully fledged bird watcher, and he is certainly completely happy because he is extracting the maximum amount of interest and pleasure from his curious pursuit.

Now the mountaineer is usually an obsessionalist in his own right. He also has an interest which is completely absorbing, and since it is difficult to serve two masters it is easy to see why so few climbers have any knowledge of bird life. Nevertheless, I believe that the mountaineer can obtain a great deal of additional pleasure by taking an interest in the bird life of the hills, without in any way interfering with his sport.

The only equipment needed is a good pair of field glasses, which need not be very heavy, a magnification of x7 or x8 being quite sufficient. They should have a wide field of vision, a central focussing screw and a high light gathering power.

A good pocket book for the identification of birds is "A Field Guide to the Birds of Britain and Europe" by Peterson, Mountford and Hollam, which is equally helpful in this country and on the continent.

Before considering the individual birds likely to be seen in the mountains it is worth while noting that comparatively few species nest above the 1,000 feet level in Britain and fewer still reside there throughout the year.

Fortunately, although the number of birds is small it includes some of our most interesting species, and the lack of cover makes their presence obvious to an observer.

What birds are most likely to be seen on the hills? Probably the most conspicuous and the most exciting are the larger birds of prey, together with the raven, which make themselves obvious to the least observant by their habit of soaring across vast tracks of countryside. The Golden Eagle is a true mountain bird, breeding in the hills and resident there throughout the year. Its stronghold is the Scottish Highlands, but very occasionally immature birds penetrate further south, even to Yorkshire, the last fully authenti-

cated occasion being on the 17th November, 1902, at Kettlewell, when the bird was killed. The last occasion when Golden Eagles actually nested in Yorkshire was in 1753 or 1754, when a pair nested on Ravenstones in Saddleworth. It is a magnificent bird, rather like an enormous buzzard, but the neck, wings and tail are relatively long, and the occasional slow downward beat of the wings interrupting the soaring flight give an impression of enormous power even at a considerable distance, so that confusion between the two is not really justifiable. Immature birds have white tails, and should not on that account be confused with the white-tailed eagle.

A very vivid personal memory is an encounter that I and a friend had with a pair whilst walking on An Teallach during August, 1950. We had stopped for lunch on Bidein a' Ghlass Thuill and had found a conveniently sheltered spot just below the summit. The weather was glorious and we lazed about there for some time, basking in the sun and idly viewing the tangled hills of the mainland. Suddenly, an outcry arose amongst the meadow pipits and I looked up just in time to see two golden eagles about to land on the summit; only a few feet above my head. The great wings were already fully extended to act as brakes, and the legs, feathered to the claws, were outstretched to make the touch down. The birds caught sight of us, wheeled gracefully, and flew rapidly away towards the East.

In the Lake District and North Wales, the buzzard takes the place of the eagle. It is a beautiful bird with a wing span of four to five feet, and is usually seen soaring in magnificent wide spirals, making its plaintive mewing call. The nest is usually on a rocky ledge and there is considerable competition for suitable sites between buzzards and ravens, so that aerial battles between the two species are common and can be very fascinating to watch.

The raven is rather more common than the buzzard and makes itself equally conspicuous by soaring. It looks rather like a crow, but is much larger and has a tail which is much more wedge shaped.

The call is very characteristic, a deep "Pruk, Pruk," and so is its soaring flight, broken by all sorts of curious dives and turns. Frequently it turns completely over, and glides upside-down for a short distance, or it may suddenly make a nose-dive with half-closed wings. Apart from its "Pruk, Pruk" it has many other

calls, a favourite one being a noise remarkably like a cork being withdrawn from a bottle, called, appropriately enough, "cork-popping." Usually a solitary bird, it sometimes collects in parties, and numbers of 100 or more are said to be not uncommon in the Outer Hebrides.

I have seen seven ravens cavorting together along the cliffs of Helvellyn and Lower Man, indulging in all sorts of aerobatics. That was in mid-March and as the breeding season starts in February, I imagine that they were probably a flock of non-breeding adults or yearlings. Their courtship is rather charming, and it is an extraordinary thing to see two such sinister looking birds standing side by side, gently rubbing each others necks and making curious soft calls.

The peregrine falcon is another bird that may be met with in the hills, though it is much rarer and less conspicuous than the buzzard or raven. It resembles a large Kestrel in shape, with sharp pointed wings, but the flight is quite different, incredibly fast with winnowing beats alternating with long glides on extended wings. When it has outflown its quarry it makes the famous "stoop," diving with half closed wings and at such speed that a rushing sound is produced. The glimpse of a scimitar winged bird flying with grim purpose and great speed is all that is normally granted to the casual observer.

Some years ago I was watching the ungainly and rather comic antics of a family party of five ravens on a crag overlooking a Pennine Valley, when their activities were rudely interrupted by an indignant peregrine falcon which appeared from across the dale at tremendous speed and made a stoop towards them. In an instant all was confusion but before the ravens were fairly airborne the peregrine was well on its way back to the fells on the other side of the valley. A few peregrines still breed in Yorkshire, and others may be seen in the course of their winter migration from Scandinavia.

Two other birds of prey are not uncommon on the moors, the merlin, and the short eared owl. The merlin is our smallest falcon, the male being about the same size as a mistle thrush. It is usually seen flying fast, rather close to the ground with rapid wing beats and frequent changes of direction. The short eared owl is a somewhat eccentric member of its family. It nests on the ground and is quite prepared to go hunting in full daylight,

although it prefers the dusk. It is a magnificent bird, about the same size as a tawny owl and has a most curious flight, typically owl like one minute, and resembling a hawk the next.

But the hills have much to offer apart from birds of prey. In the Scottish Highlands, the Ptarmigan is reasonably common in rocky places at heights of over 2,000 feet, looking something like a white grouse as it creeps over the rocks, and at higher levels still we may have the great good fortune to see the two rarest of our mountain breeders, the snow bunting and the dotterel.

The snow bunting likes scree, its range being from Sutherland down to Perthshire and it breeds usually at the height of 3,500 feet or above. It is a smallish bird, attractively got up in black and white. The dotterel is to be found on stony ridges and also on tussocky ground in the Cairngorms and the Monadhliath where it breeds down to the 3,000 feet contour. It is an attractive plump wader and is normally ridiculously tame. There are still a few breeding in the Pennines at heights of over 2,600 feet, but it has been exterminated in Yorkshire, where one of its last strongholds was probably Mickel Fell.

At lower levels on the moors are the golden plovers and curlews, with their beautiful melancholy calls, and less commonly other waders such as dunlin, common redshank and, on some of the wilder moors of the highlands, the greenshank. A list of moorland birds would also include meadow pipit, twite, whinchat and many others.

Moorland streams have their own bird life, such as the common sandpiper with its habit of perching on low rocks and bobbing up and down, the white chested dipper, the graceful grey wagtail and the white collared ring-ousel.

In the winter the hills are largely deserted, but upland sheets of water such as tarns and moorland reservoirs are often visited by wildfowl including many that have come south from Scandinavian and Arctic breeding grounds. Mallard, teal, tufted duck, wigeon, pochard, golden eye, scaup, merganser, goosander, may all be seen at one time or another on such waters, especially during the autumn and spring migrations.

Sometimes a visit to a familiar water may be rewarded by the unexpected sight of a party of wild swans. These are usually whoopers, rather talkative visitors from Iceland, which are easily

recognised by their upright necks and their lemon yellow bills which lack the mute swan's black knob.

In recent years whoopers have wintered with increasing frequency on certain Lake District meres, including Elterwater in Great Langdale, and they are also fairly regular visitors to Gowthwaite reservoir and Semerwater in Yorkshire.

This is a very brief and incomplete account of bird life in the hills. No mention has been made of any of the extreme rarities, nor of those birds that can be seen more commonly and conveniently at lower altitudes. Nearly all the birds mentioned, with the exception of the snow bunting and the dotterel, are either fairly common or else very conspicuous.

I would like to add a word of warning. The mountains represent the last refuge for many of our most magnificent birds of prey. They have been relentlessly persecuted elsewhere and are only just managing to hold their own in the very wildest parts of our country.

The climber can help to preserve them by avoiding their breeding ledges when possible and above all, by refraining from talking in public about any eyries he may happen to come across.



THE ANGLO-FRENCH EXPEDITION TO LABOUÏCHE, JUNE, 1955

by A. N. Patchett

AT nine o'clock on the evening of 21st June, the electric train slid quickly out of Paris while Phil Price, Lewis Railton and I slaked the dust of the Capital in the buffet car. The train sped southwards through the clear night . . . Orleans, Limoges, Toulouse, where we changed trains and drank coffee at 5.30 in the morning.

We arrived at Foix three hours later, to be met by Bob Davies, the Leader of the Expedition, Bob Hastings, 'Bugs' Woolhouse and Bill Little. They were full of the civic reception held in our honour the night before, soon after they arrived.

At breakfast on the balcony of our hotel overlooking the River Ariège we were introduced to Norbert Casteret, Joseph Deltiel, Robert Vergnes and of course Pierre Salette, Mayor of Ax-les-Thermes, who was running the financial side of the expedition.

After we had told various press representatives our names, addresses, occupations and caving clubs, the small motor bus belonging to the Syndicat d'Initiatives de la Rivière Souterraine de Labouïche drove us to the fabulous cave some 6 Km. from Foix.

We did not change our clothes that morning but were shown the tourist part of the cave. We went down a little path to the cave opening, which was not particularly impressive but quite large, and contained water deep enough to float two big barges; one of these was enough for our Anglo-French party of fifteen.

We were soon on our way and were at once amazed at the extremely well lighted lofty roof and the wall formations of a size and splendour not seen in England. The barge was propelled by two guides who stood one at each end and pulled at a rail fixed to the side of the cave. The journey along the underground river continued for 2½ Km. to the famous Cascade Salette, named after Pierre Salette.

Cascade Salette falls from a high level passage into a deep lake about 25 feet in diameter. The tourist boats use this to turn round and go back downstream about 1 Km. to a landing stage from which concrete steps lead upwards to Salle Renald, a fantastically beautiful chamber. Further steps lead out of the roof to another chamber higher up, and eventually the tourist emerges into

daylight from a spiral staircase to the roadway some 250 feet above the underground river.

The hospitality of the French knew no bounds; after aperitifs a splendid lunch was awaiting us, cooked on the spot in a way only the French seem to know how. Two hours of pleasure and no more caving that day until early evening!

The next two days were spent in reconnaissance—in Labouïche itself, where we managed to reach the final syphon, in Le Plagne and in Terrefort. These two caves are some five miles up the valley from Labouïche; Casteret took us to them because fluorescein tests had proved that their waters find their way into Labouïche. The first two nights were spent under the stars, but on the Friday night we returned to Foix for dinner and a good night's rest at the hotel so that we might be in good condition for the grand assault planned for the Saturday and Sunday.

Early on Saturday morning, after making good small (and large) leaks in our elephant suits which preliminary excursions had revealed, we were rushed up to the cave entrance. The four French divers led by Michel Letronne had already arrived with their bottles of compressed air. Deltiel handed out great quantities of provisions; Vergnes was everywhere with his ciné-camera; the press reporters and photographers dashed from one group of cavers to another—among the reporters was Geoffrey Hoare, the Paris representative of the "News Chronicle." Bob Davies was in deep consultation with Casteret and Salette. The Bishop of Palmiers was instructing the seven priests from the surrounding district. A large motor lorry disguised as a sailing ship drew up and the "sailors" handed to every caver, press man and assistant a bottle of Ricard. Groups of men, women and children from Foix and the surrounding villages completed the animated scene.

Eventually everyone was ready. Down the spiral steps we went to find the Bishop about to conduct Mass in the beautiful Salle Renald and to bless the Expedition. Fortunately we had taken much of our equipment and stores into the cave the previous day, and not being overburdened on this occasion we could enjoy the unique experience to the full. After the blessing we went down to the landing stage and embarked, to be followed by the Bishop and his assistants as far as the Cascade Salette. Here he watched us as we ascended the waterfall by means of the steel hand and foot holds let into the rock, and hauled up the rest of the tackle.

What a scene it was. Magnesium flashes and cine-cameras, the Bishop in all his colourful regalia along with his priests and attendants filled one boat, the press filled another, whilst from our own boat men passed countless items of tackle from one to another for me to hand up to the men at the top of the cascade.

From the top of the Cascade Salette we made our way by wading upstream in alternate deep and shallow water, and by dinghy, in a wide and lofty passage for some 500 yards till we came to an old wooden ladder propped up against the wall not far from the first syphon. This ladder led almost (I repeat—almost !) to the 'Wedding Ring' which gives access to a stalagmite-filled gallery over the river. At the end of the gallery a narrow crack leads by a steep mud slope to the famous Pont du Diable—a spacious chamber on an upper platform where we were to camp for the night and where a telephone point was installed to maintain communication with the surface.

Then came the descent to the river again, through the muddiest tunnel I have ever encountered. The tunnel finished by overhanging the river at the precise point where it plunges down a sixty foot drop to the syphon which we had just circumvented. A tricky climb down to the top of the fall (Cascade Casteret) was negotiated by all—Anglo-French party, press photographers, reporters and other intrepid French friends. After this there was more deep water, which sometimes rose to our armpits—how much we appreciated our elephant suits ! Davies and Price were of course wearing proper diving dress. After a further 500 yards the Grand Siphon appeared at the far end of a large chamber, where the pale blue water welled up to form the river.

After what seemed an age the divers were ready. "Après vous" said Davies to Letronne. "After you" replied Letronne. These exchanges of 'politesse' threatened to go on indefinitely until finally Davies gave up. In went the French ; a deep silence followed, broken only by the lapping of wavelets against the fretted walls. There was nearly a calamity when Letronne kicked his companion's mouthpiece out of his month while under the submerged roof and both came back post haste. Another French diver went in with Letronne while the other recovered his breath. These two were away just long enough to buoy up everyone's hopes, but they returned to say that the syphon water went down to the staggering depth of 40 feet and after 75 yards the passage

narrowed down to a mere slit. It was obvious that the syphon was not going to "go" and the five of us removed our breathing apparatus with mixed feelings, for if it had we should all have gone through, after a line had been fixed, to what must be a vast series beyond. Davies and Price went in as a matter of form but soon came back and confirmed the worst.

This result ought to have been an anticlimax, it probably would have been in England. Yet the atmosphere remained tense and the French, still full of resource, made use of the cable laid by the intrepid military during one of our reconnaissances the day before ; a switch connected the Diving Base with Radio Diffusion Française !

That night all the French left and possibly reached the surface by daybreak. We English decided to stay at Pont du Diable and camp there. We soon dug out the petrol stove and pumped away until a steady roar enabled me to make a supper of hot paté de foie gras, fried ham and gallons of coffee.

After breakfast—porridge, fried ham and still more coffee, we decided, in spite of three men feeling off-colour, that Davies, Hastings, Railton and I should try and find some way over the Grand Siphon while the others took it easy and later lowered the tackle to the river and possibly loaded the dinghies.

Several large passages abandoned by the river countless centuries ago had actually been found by Casteret at an upper level between the Pont and the Cascade Salette, and these in fact lay over the first syphon. Thus there must surely have been at one time an active upper passage of no small dimensions which carried the river over the final syphon.

Lightly laden we descended once again to the muddy tunnel, made the further descent from the overhang towards the Cascade Casteret to the smooth flowing river and, halfway to the final syphon on the left, entered a previously noted and partially explored small opening . . .

Here I must digress and tell of the first exploration of this side passage which we had made two days before. After the first horrible initial wriggle, a narrow but very high passage appeared ahead. As I was last I stopped, intrigued by a wall formation, while the others followed the passage for some distance. I turned

round and made an easy climb to get a closer view—about two thirds of the way up was a large opening into a circular chamber about 15 feet high and 10 feet in diameter. It had a crocodile floor and obviously had never been entered before. In one corner was a large flat table, the underpart of which was cut away in tiny inverted steps at an angle of 45 degrees down to the floor. Rising from the floor at the side of the table was a four inch thick stalagmite some eight feet high. As I went in the stalagmite cast its great shadow across the table and on to the wall beyond. My friends were now well out of earshot and as I stood there alone my hair threatened to lift the helmet off my head.

I shouted, but hearing no sound climbed out of the chamber and immediately saw a large opening about 12 feet higher up. I shouted again and then at last I heard a voice from below, that of Woolhouse, and soon the four of us stood together. After having shown them the "Salle Patchette" as they called it, Hastings scaled the steep slope, reached the top and, having gone through the hole, called out "it's as big as a bus station." The others followed him very gingerly as the slope was covered with tiny flower-like deposits and it seemed sacrilege to have to tread on them. They reached the Bus Station safely while I kept vigil at the entrance to my 'Salle,' and I soon learnt from them that a great variety of ways lay ahead. Shortness of time compelled a fairly quick return, but not before several lengthy passages had been partially explored.

On Monday however we had most of the day before us by the time we once again reached the Bus Station. Soon we were in a long gallery—a good-sized abandoned river passage; its walls were smooth and on its floor was a layer of clean dry sand. The passage went on and on—surely it would pass over the final syphon far below. Then, just as our expectations were growing the passage came to an abrupt end in a pitch into a vast chamber. Without sufficient rope it was impossible to get down, so there was nothing to be done except go back and try the roof, but before we did that we planted a lighted candle in the sand at the brink of the pitch.

We explored a number of other ways, which we named Gallery Little, Bugs Passage, Railton's Crawl, Hastings Passage, not to mention Phil's Folly, but none had a really successful sequel.

Davies and I left Railton and Hastings, made our way down to the river and waded upstream nearly to the syphon, where we found a rocky slope on our left up which we climbed, shortly to reach a very roomy place, really part of the syphon chamber. There, up on the left, some thirty feet from the floor nearly at the top of the wall was a lighted candle on the sill of a cave opening!

Without further ado we turned our backs on this bitter disappointment and immediately stumbled across another series of complicated and intriguing passages down some of which water had obviously flowed during some far-off era. We must have spent about an hour following various passages when suddenly a stalagmite slope appeared and led us up a fair height, but on rounding a bend about twenty feet from the floor our upward climb was brought to an abrupt end by a stalagmited choke. Somewhere up there was surely a resumption of the sandy passage on the opposite side of the chamber. If we could only get high enough there might be some hope of getting into such a passage—if it did exist—and then the way over the top of the syphon would be at our mercy!

Time, relentless as ever, was against us. We felt that Railton and Hastings would be getting anxious, so reluctantly we turned back to report; besides, the other three were presumably waiting a mile or two downstream and almost a whole day had gone since we had left them... and so the riddle of Labouiche remained unsolved. I feel that if only I could go back and have another look before I finish this story I should be able to record a thrilling climax.

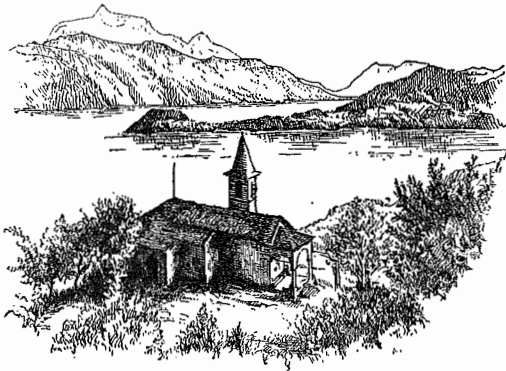
The next day was spent at Niaux inspecting the famous cave drawings and for the two days following Gouffre Terrefort again claimed our attention. If the syphon would not yield from upstream we intended tackling it by going downstream through Terrefort, some five miles up the valley.

After blasting away an offending piece of rock (Bill Little in charge of this operation) halfway down the very narrow pitch, Davies made a successful dive through the syphon at the bottom, greatly to the delight of Casteret, Deltiel and Salette. So on our last day Hastings, Little, Woolhouse and I put on our breathing apparatus and followed Davies who had laid a line through the syphon. The breathing apparatus was in fact hardly needed for on Bob's second trip he found a way with a small air space. Casteret

and Vergnes ducked under without breathing apparatus and soon we were all out of the water and crawling along a mud terrace at the side of the stream, only to reach another syphon after about 100 yards.

Undaunted, Davies entered the water again and after an age returned thumbs up. A line was fixed and off he went again with the other three following while I stayed behind with Casteret and Vergnes in a filthy and comfortless chamber. Hastings followed Davies for some 500 yards to reach yet another syphon at the end of an appallingly dirty and featureless cave. For much of the way the water literally came up to the eyebrows and at one point the air space consisted of a tiny equilateral triangle the sides of which were no more than two inches long. It was a valuable addition to the Cave Map, but hardly the place to open up for tourists.

When we emerged from Gouffre Terrefort that evening it was still daylight and the press reporters and photographers were there in full force thirsting for news and views. That night yet another memorable dinner marked the end of the expedition and we left the next morning with cries of "L'Anné Prochaine" ringing in our ears.



“ THE SEVEN PEAKS WALK ”

by C. Large

IT was late in 1953 when I first heard rumours that the club was proposing to tackle a seven peak walk. The plan was to include, in addition to the usual three peaks, the summits of Buckden Pike, Great Whernside, Fountains Fell and Great Coum. To do this involved a journey of some forty miles with over 10,000 feet of climbing.

My first impression of this proposed walk was that it was only for the tigers and not for those who, like myself, are content with a mere 20 to 25 miles in a day. When the list of meets arrived for 1954 a week-end in May had been fixed for the walk. Arrangements were to be made to stay at Buckden on the Friday night. The participants were to leave early next morning and finish the walk at Dent in the evening. The older members planned to provide refreshments at selected points en-route, and generally keep up the morale of everyone taking part. Nearer the time of the meet all those who were to be present received a brilliantly conceived table, with all the distances worked out, compass bearings, and an estimate of 12 to 15 hours total walking time.

When the appointed week-end arrived, I could not get Saturday morning off work, so I arranged to travel to Dent on Saturday afternoon with Nevil Newman. We met at Leeds station on a beautiful spring day thinking how fortunate the walkers would be with such glorious weather. A change was necessary at Hellifield and it was here that we met Bill Lofthouse who had been travelling on the same train. Both Nevil and I thought he would be doing the walk that day but he also had had to work that morning. Nevil and I had been planning to walk over the hills to the north of Dent; we were both secretly thankful it had been necessary for us to work. But when Bill joined us he was full of the idea of doing the walk in reverse on the Sunday. Nevil and I were still not impressed with the idea when the train jerked to a stop at Dent station. It was now about 6 p.m. A cloudless sky with a mellow evening sun shining on the bright green fields enhanced the pleasure of the walk down the valley.

Talk on the way to Dent still centred on the Seven Peaks. I was out of practice, Nevil had been having trouble with one foot, and neither of us felt up to it. Bill was keen to tackle it and

tried his utmost to persuade one of us to accompany him. Eventually we came to our destination, the George and Dragon in Dent. No one had arrived yet but we were soon joined by Harry Stembridge and Fred Booth. They had been giving sterling service providing refreshments for the walkers.

We got all the news from them, the times of leaving, the points where each one was last seen and the physical condition of each. At tea everyone present tried to persuade us to tackle the walk and our opposition gradually wilted against such determined pressure. The problem of transport back from the other end arose but this was soon dispelled by the offer of Harry Stembridge to leave his car in Kettlewell for our use. With such generosity as this who would dare refuse?

The first point to decide was our time of departure. We knew the others had left about 6 a.m. and the shortest time taken was $14\frac{1}{2}$ hours. If we left at this time it would mean a late arrival in Kettlewell and driving home in the dark feeling very tired. Eventually we asked the lady of the house to call us at 3.15 a.m. thus allowing us to leave on the first light of dawn at 4.00.

The next question was what route to take. Would any variations be necessary? We had already decided to finish at Kettlewell so some alteration would have to be made to do this. The map showed that the obvious way from Arncliffe was over Old Cote Moor to Starbottom and then up Buckden Pike, leaving Great Whernside to the last. After a short reconnaissance to make sure of the road out of Dent on the way to Great Coum, we turned in to get some rest before our early call in the morning.

At 3.15 hrs. we were duly called and given a breakfast of bacon and eggs. With a packed lunch reinforced by a few bars of chocolate and a thermos flask of tea, we set out at the appointed time of 4.00 a.m. It was a fine morning with the first light of dawn showing in the east. The first part led along the road into Deepdale for about $1\frac{3}{4}$ miles. Here we turned off on to the fell and started our first ascent. This was taken easily and the only difficulty was deciding which hump was the summit. This conquest served as a stimulant for us on our way down to the head of Kingsdale where we had a rest and a bite of food. We were soon at grips with the west flank of Whernside hoping to see the sunrise from the top; we reached the cairn about 6.30, but

clouds were beginning to build up in the east; up to now the sky had been clear.

The next step was to reach the Hill Inn. We all knew this part of the journey well and it was soon done. All seemed to be still slumbering at the Inn so we did not call in but pressed on taking the track round the back. Ingleborough was reached without incident except that the sky was almost completely covered with clouds when we reached the summit.

On over Simon Fell and down Sulber Nick into Horton where we hoped to get a meal and see the first signs of life since leaving Dent. We got to Horton about 10 a.m. but had to enquire at four places before any refreshments were forthcoming; and then only bread and jam with tea, but very welcome in view of our meagre rations. The sky was getting ominously dark and it started to rain when we were by Hull Pot on our way up Pen-y-Gent. Up to now all three of us had been moving very well and Pen-y-Gent was no exception; the summit was reached at 11.50 a.m. Fortunately the rain was only slight but heavy enough to make us realise how unpleasant it would be if it persisted.

We knew that once we set off we had to reach Kettlewell to collect the car and we would have little time to waste if the walk was to be completed. Fountains Fell was clearly visible and our route easily spotted. A short dash down the steep east side of Pen-y-Gent brought us to Blishmire House, the start of the next climb. The pace we had set was beginning to tell now. Fountains Fell was taken at a crawl followed by a steady downhill walk via Darnbrook Beck to Darnbrook House. Here we reached the start of our longest stretch of road walking. Before starting on this we had a rest to wash our tired feet and change our socks. At Arncliffe our way deviated from that taken by most parties the day before. We had to find the track over to Starbottom instead of Kettlewell. It was located without difficulty and we were soon making our way through the heather of Old Cote Moor, looking eagerly for the first glimpse of Wharfedale. The weather had improved since leaving Fountains Fell, giving hopes of a fine evening to finish the walk. On Old Cote Moor, Nevil started to have a recurrence of his foot trouble and consequently was walking rather slowly. He finally suggested that Bill and I should leave him at Starbottom. We were to continue the walk

while he would make his way down the valley to the waiting car at Kettlewell. The track we were following petered out above the steep wooded hillside overlooking Starbottom. There was nothing else for it but to go down through the steep part. Our objective was clearly visible but to get to it we had to struggle along, tripping over rocks, continually scratched by tree branches until we reached the easier going in the fields of the valley bottom.

At Starbottom we bade farewell to Nevil, arranging to meet him in about four hours' time. Before he left we had a check on food supplies. All the sandwiches had been eaten leaving us with two oranges, three bars of chocolate and two glucose tablets. Nevil left his share with us and departed down the valley. We ate half a glucose tablet each and set off at a cracking pace up the long shoulder of Buckden Pike. Going was good on a cart track which we left after almost two miles' walking and from there it was easy work to reach the top. The next stage was strange to both of us but we intended making for the highest point on the Park Rash Road. We followed a wall on the first stretch but finally had to leave it to cross open moorland with no signs of tracks, intersected by innumerable small streams and peat hags.

This proved to be the most tiring part of the whole journey, hard going any time but after thirty miles of hill walking almost too much for a tired body. For a long time Great Whernside seemed to get no nearer as we stumbled our way across seemingly unending moor, getting more tired every step and wondering if we had not been too hasty with our estimate of four hours for this part of the walk. We were spurred on to greater efforts by the sight of the road coupled with the knowledge that only one more top was left to conquer. Great Whernside presents a steep rocky flank to the north and it was up this side we had to go to reach our objective. Our feet were aching as we struggled upwards. A dry stone wall called for an almost superhuman effort to climb over it. At last the ground flattened out into the long level summit ridge, and all we had to do was walk half a mile on a rocky path to the cairn.

We had made it at last. Sitting down at the top eating our remaining food we enjoyed a magnificent view of the hills we had covered that day. All was laid before us in a glorious panorama with the pale evening sun going down towards our starting point. It is

an exhilarating feeling at the end of a long days walk to be able to look back over the ground covered and to wonder how one managed to walk such a distance. Time was pressing, we had to be on our way, there was still $2\frac{1}{4}$ miles to be covered to reach Kettlewell. Every step now jarred the whole body and the road on reaching the village made us thankful that such a small amount of road walking had been necessary that day. We reached the car at 7.45 p.m. to find Nevil asleep in the front seat. It had been a long time since we left Dent that morning and a long distance covered. I had completed a walk I had never expected to do when I set off for the meet. Here we were in Kettlewell, tired but well satisfied at having just completed what must surely be one of the finest hill walks in England.

SEVEN PEAKS WALK

AVERAGE TIMES (INCLUDING STOPS FOR MEALS)

(Done by 12 members—May 15th and 16th, 1954)

1st. Party	Hrs.	2nd. Party	Hrs.
Cray	0630	Dent	0400
Buckden Pike	0700	Gt. Coum	0515
Gt. Whernside	0835	Whernside	0628
Fountain's Fell	1230	Ingleborough	0821
Pen-y-Gent	1350	Pen-y-Gent	1150
Simon Fell	1635	Fountain's Fell	1253
Ingleborough	1705	Buckden Pike	1720
Whernside	1950	Gt. Whernside	1850
Gt. Coum	2125	Kettlewell	1945
Dent	2215		

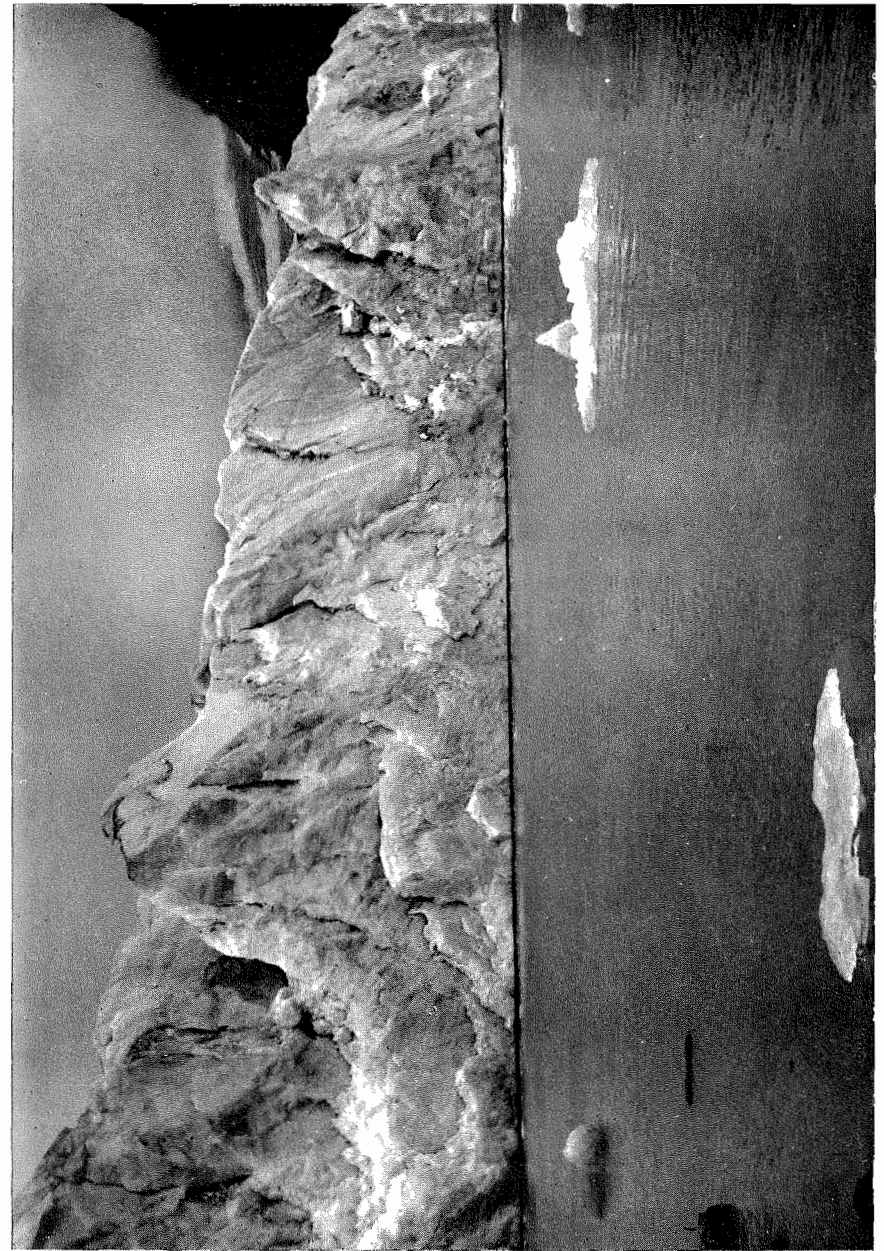
WE CAN'T ALL BE EXPLORERS, BUT—

by W. Lacy

STANDING on the deck of the "Erling Jarl" I glided across the Arctic Circle, but to all appearances I might have been within 20 miles of Glasgow. As a very young boy I had read of Nansen, Scott and Amundsen and had dreamt that one day I might visit the Arctic too. Forty years later that oft repeated dream had come true. But not on an expedition—just a dash along the route real explorers had taken and back home within 30 days. Within an hour of crossing the line, however, the Svartisen glacier could be seen glistening in the morning sunlight, and shortly afterwards the ship stopped at Gronoy (Green Island). This is a surprising haven of peace and beauty amongst the seawashed rocks of the Norwegian coastline. The Svartisen is the largest glacier in Europe and produces a local area of high pressure, which in turn creates a belt of good weather, tall trees, long hours of summer sun, and a fine centre for walking and climbing amongst the neighbouring rocks and more distant icefield.

Midnight found me at Svolvær in the Lofoten Islands. There I saw cod hanging out to dry, rock climbs starting from the harbourside, and a pale moon shining over the jagged peaks, houses, sheds, boats, and over all a strange peace in the reflected light of the midnight sun.

We then went on through winding fjords to the Vestmann Islands and back to the coast of Norway and Tromsø. For 130 years this town has been known as the Capital of the Arctic—70 degrees North latitude with a population of 11,000, all busily engaged with ships, fish, seal hunting and furs. I stayed here a short while with Karl Lindrupsen, the Engineer Director of the Arctic Broadcasting Station. Being summer, he was not living in his house in the town but out in his cabin at the other side of the island. It was a peaceful yet fascinating time. A vase of antirrhinums was on the dining table and in my sleeping hut wallflowers were in a jar beside my bed—Spring and Midsummer together. At midnight Karl would say "Come, let's go fishing" and we would go out in the motor boat. The tide would be running so fast in the middle of the fjord that it sounded like a rushing stream. Across on the other side lay the wreck of the Tirpitz. Back we came, wet and tired, and went to bed under a



polar bear skin. There was a model farm on the island, but the only person I saw working it was a young pretty girl wearing only gum boots and a bikini, hoeing cabbages. Three thousand mink were squealing on an adjoining fur farm. Whilst walking in the town I met a Lapp and his wife in their best Sunday clothes, shopping. Later I was attracted to the quayside by most peculiar cries, and I found a sealer had just come in from the East Ice with 12 young polar bears aboard, three to six months old. The mother bears had been shot for their skins, and if the young ones had not been caught they would have died, as they stay with their mothers until two years old.

The Northern Lights Observatory is at Tromso. The Aurora Borealis occurs chiefly in that belt of the heavens between Tromso and Spitzbergen. The people of Spitzbergen strangely enough look south to see them.

I joined the "Lyngen," a small steamer which sails between Tromso and Spitzbergen. As we cast off, an old man was standing on the quay, waving and wishing us well, Helmar Hansen, Amundsen's old dog driver, one of the few men alive who have stood both at the North and South Poles. In the Town Square behind, Amundsen, carved in granite, was pointing the way ahead. Very soon, the tail end of an Arctic gale was making life uneasy and not until we were in the lee of Bear Island did things become comfortable again. There we ran in towards the coast, stopped the engines, threw hand lines overboard and took on a supply of fish for the voyage. The line no sooner touched bottom than one began to haul in again. No art, just hard work with line cutting into the hand with the weight of the cod. It was between Bear Island and Spitzbergen that Amundsen was lost on his search by plane for General Nobile. Sharing the cabin with me was a Norwegian Meteorological Inspector who was paying an annual visit to the lonely posts set up along the coast of Spitzbergen. After a visit to one of these, he returned very annoyed, as he found that during a particular spell of bad weather, one of the men had failed to turn out to take the recordings, thus breaking a 20 years' chart.

The ship entered Ice Fjord, Spitzbergen, and then sailed in calm water to the Coaling Station in Advent Fjord. Here the coal from the mines is stored throughout the winter and shipped to Norway during the summer months. We then moved to the

quayside of Longyearbyen—Longyear City—the capital of Spitzbergen, the home of the Governor, and where there are 1,000 miners, 100 women and 30 families. The main street is a rutted track which leads two miles up a valley, ending at the foot of the Longyear Glacier. Three mining camps are spread along the valley, each half a mile from the other in case of fire, especially in winter, when there is no water. Just prior to my visit an avalanche of mud and rocks had crashed through the men's large canteen hut in the lower camp, so in case of such disaster each camp has to be capable of supporting the men from the other two. Apart from the mining engineers, most of the miners are recruited on an 18 months' contract. During that time they reckon to save sufficient to return to Norway, buy a house and marry. Only few do a second spell.

After a most interesting scramble on the Longyear glacier, where I found some fine specimens of fossilised leaves on its moraine, and on the way down, I happened to meet the chief electrical engineer and he suggested a bottle of beer might be welcome. He occupied a flat in one of the newer blocks which was most pleasantly furnished in modern Scandinavian style.

Coal mines exist in other parts of Spitzbergen. Some are manned by Russians at Grumantbyen and other places.

As we sailed from Longyear, the Governor and his wife came down to see us off. At Kap Linne we dropped David Atkinson, a member of the Oxford University Arctic Expedition. He was going to rejoin his companions on Prins Karls Forland after visiting the doctor at Longyear.

The ship turned North up the coast until we reached King's Bay where, at Ny-Alesund, is the most northerly settlement in the world; a coal mine, miners, radio station, doctor, children, two cows, two ponies, a railway engine, arctic foxes in the wood pile and delightful alpine flowers. There is also a stone monument on which is carved

AMUNDSEN
DETRICKSON
ELLSWORTH
FEUCHT
OMDAL
RIISERLARSEN
21 Mai 1925

to mark the first but unsuccessful attempt to fly over the Pole by plane, and an airship mooring mast from which the Norge set out to reach the North Pole with Amundsen and General Nobile aboard one year later. All these are set within a circle of intense grandeur of mountains, and glaciers, with ice floes drifting slowly by under a brilliant sky; truly a scene to be ever remembered.

North again to Magdalena Bay surrounded by peaks and glaciers coming right down to the sea with their ice cliffs 100 to 200 feet high.

Onwards again to Dansköya and a safe anchorage between two islands at the north eastern corner of Spitzbergen. It was here in Smeerenburg Fjord that the Dutch built a whaling station in the seventeenth century which prospered until the middle of the eighteenth century, by which time all the whales were killed, 60,000 having been caught. The station was deserted, all now remaining being the graves of those who had once dared to venture there and who had stayed too long.

But in 1897 Andrée, the Swedish scientist, with two friends came to this place, made a camp, inflated his balloon and set off for the Pole. Nothing more was heard of them until their bodies were found on Kvitoya in 1930. Walter Wellman, an American, followed and built a camp close by Andrée's, but his balloon for one reason or another never got away and Wellman lived to return. Piles of timber and old iron filings are stacked around. It was from these filings gas was made to inflate the balloon. Rummaging around, I found two horse shoes and brought them home as mementoes.

From this point, 80 degrees North latitude, 600 miles from the North Pole, the "Lyngen" had to turn south. Rolling in a heavy swell, black smoke belched from the funnel and, trailing behind us, mingled with the ice glint in the sky.

So we left this strange land of musk oxen, reindeer, polar bears, mountains up to 5,000 feet high, glaciers, birds and flowers, seals, fishermen, miners and trappers—a land of summer sun and polar night.

And so you see, we can't all be explorers, but—

PRARAYÉ

by H. G. Watts

IT was already past midday by the time we crossed the river and got on to the Bertol track. The morning had been spent in Arolla packing rucksacks, buying provisions, sending off luggage to Zermatt and paying Follonier's bill at the Hotel de la Poste. Such operations are time-consuming.

There was some doubt as to where we had to leave the track, but we cut off to the right after the first zig-zag, crossed a steep scree slope and found the line of cairns. Packs were heavy on the long trudge up the Arolla glacier. The north wind blew colder and colder on our backs and we got into mist near the top, so roped up and went on on a compass bearing.

We reached the Col de Collon (3,117 m.) at 5.30 and crossed into Italy, passing immediately under the Mitre de l'Evêque which we had climbed the previous week. We soon passed a forlorn looking hut, the Rifugio dei Principe di Piedimonti; further down the moraine the way was hard to find, being in Italy it was not clearly marked and obviously very infrequently used. However, by following the indications of the map and keeping well to the left we avoided a steep descent down a couloir and found the path zig-zagging down a cliff.

It was getting dark when we came to the first cow chalets. Here we met a couple of peasants, they spoke only Italian so conversation was restricted, but we gathered that Prarayé was about three quarters of an hour down the valley and to the left. We plodded on in gathering darkness across very rough country with no sign of a path till we heard a shout to our left and Peter Mayo appeared. He had gone ahead, reached the village, and made arrangements for a meal, and beds at the so-called 'hotel.' Then he had nobly come out again to guide us in.

Soon we were all seated round the table in a warm and cosy little room looking for all the world like a Lakeland farmhouse dining room. An old lady, Madame Blanc, and her daughter waited on us, bringing us soup, omelette and delicious Barbera wine. Madame explained that the hotel was really closed, it had been damaged during the war, but she and her daughter kept some of the bedrooms in order for mountaineers, feeding them in their own farmhouse. She also explained, to our dismay,



TSA DE TSAN GLACIER FROM CLOSTA HUT

H. G. Watts

that she only had a licence to sell milk, coffee and wine, but was not allowed to sell food. The frontier guards, who had nothing else to do, watched her carefully to see that she did not break the law.

We were all very tired so soon rolled into the reasonably comfortable and scrupulously clean beds in the old hotel, disturbed only by the voices of several families of Italian squatters who had taken possession of the lower floors.

The next day was clear and fine, so we loafed, explored the valley and were shown by Peter Lloyd how to make Sherpa Chupatties over a pine-wood fire with maize flour and butter. There was a little anxiety over food supplies, we had calculated on being able to stock up in Prarayé, not knowing that the 'village' consisted only of the old hotel, a ruined chapel and Madame Blanc's farmhouse. So while we enjoyed the sunshine two members of the party nobly took the track three hours down the valley to find eggs and bread. They came back with a dozen eggs but the bread was so stale that teeth wouldn't go into it.

It was a long hot climb next morning to the Col de Livourne. This is at the head of a pleasant green hanging valley with a little lake on one side, to the south west of Prarayé. The Cime de Livourne, to the right of the col, is approached by a steep ridge of rotten looking rock. Peter Lloyd, Jim Graham and Peter Mayo decided to try it while Basil Goodfellow, his son Terence, Peter Bell and I tried a peak to the left of the col called Redesan.

Redesan proved to be most excellent rock and a pleasantly exposed ridge of just the right length, we thoroughly enjoyed every moment of the climb and the half hour in the sun on the summit, from which we could just make out the other party on the top of their peak. On the way down the valley the peasants gave us milk warm from the udder in exchange for Cadbury's chocolate, and we swam in the little lake. But the only two consecutive fine days of the worst season for 30 years were finished ; at 5.30 the clouds rolled up the valley and within half an hour it was raining.

After supper, again soup, omelette and four bottles of the excellent Barbera, Madame showed us the Visitors' Book, which went back to 1900. It was a great delight to us to find that E. E. Roberts and J. M. Davidson had signed it on August 16th, 1908.

Praraye is a very lovely district, isolated and accessible only by a footpath up the Valpelline or over the high passes. There are beautiful flowers, fine waterfalls and a local industry—cheese making. But the hydro-electric vandals are already busy spoiling it, a dam is being built three miles down the valley, which will be flooded to within half a mile of the hotel, and a motor road is to be made. So, although no doubt the hotel will be rebuilt and modernised and will no longer be just a doss-house for mountaineers and half full of Italian squatters and their families, the peace and solitude of the valley will be no more.

It rained all night ; had we not asked Madame to get us breakfast at 4.30 we would have been tempted to stay in bed. However after stiff porridge and tea, and jam out of spoons because of the shortage of bread, we saw a patch of blue sky above the Dent d'Herens and set forth in spotting rain at 6 o'clock.

Three hours' march up the Valpelline brought us to the icefall on the Tsa de Tsa glacier, and another half hour across ice slope and scree to the ruins of the Rifugio Aosta, wrecked by an avalanche in 1951 and, in true Italian fashion, not yet repaired. Traces of occupation and remnants of food showed that it had evidently served as a bivouac to unfortunate people who had arrived there not knowing of its destruction and too late to go elsewhere. While we ate a second breakfast an impressive mass of ice fell down the glacier with a roar.

We left at 10 o'clock up a faint track which led us on to steep and rotten rock in a wide couloir to the right of the glacier. Half an hour of struggling up this and we emerged on to a long snow slope up which we trudged for another half hour, the snow getting deeper and the slope steeper till we reached the rocky face below the Col de la Grande Division. Here we roped and had 20 minutes' rather unpleasant rock climb to the top of the col. The rock was crumbly and plastered with new snow, there was a thick mist and it was cold.

At 11.50 we emerged at the cairn on the col, and during the ten minutes' halt for drinks and sugar and bringing circulation into chilled fingers the sun began to break through the mist and we could just see the Tête Blanche ahead of us. Going due north on a compass bearing up a gentle slope in a foot of new soft sticky snow we crossed back into Switzerland at 12.45 on the Col de Valpelline (3,600 m.). At that moment the mist cleared, revealing the Dent

Blanche covered with new snow and with magnificent clouds swirling round it and going on down towards Zermatt winding their way round the Weisshorn, the Rothorn and the Obergabelhorn.

It had taken nearly seven hours of hard work to reach the col but it proved once again that, with a proportion of experienced men in the party, it is often worth while starting out even in the most unpromising weather.



THE LAKELAND 3,000's

by W. J. Anderson

WE chose our date well in advance—a week-end in September with a full moon scheduled for Saturday night ; no funny business about completing the job in daylight. Cross sections of the route were plotted and distances and times estimated. Many excuses for not undertaking the walk were put forward and rejected and at last the fateful day arrived and I found myself being shaken into life at 3.30 a.m. to the sound of torrential rain. Here was a gleam of hope, but since it had been raining like this continuously for the past three days it was deemed too late to bring this forward as an excuse. Valuable time was lost in argument and it was not until 5.00 a.m. that a miserable party of five assembled outside our headquarters in Little Langdale and proceeded at their several interpretations of a brisk pace up the road, towards Blea Tarn.

It was fine when we left. Had it not been, perhaps we should have been spared the tribulations of the succeeding hours. It rained several times before we reached Middlefell Farm in Great Langdale and we arrived at Esk Hause at mist level at 7.20. Our passage over Broad Crag and on to Scafell Pike was made in under scheduled time thanks to the well marked track. We did, however, get a little astray on our way down to Mickledore but fortunately retrieved ourselves before much harm was done. Our passage up the streaming rocks of Broad Stand was enlivened by its effect on Vibram wearers who are always known to boast that, "Vibrams are all right on wet rock if you learn to use them correctly." The occasion did not produce evidence to support this ; unless of course, experienced rock-climbers are normally given a hand-up when negotiating wet rocks of moderate difficulty with this type of foot-gear !

Scafell summit was reached without delay and Broad Stand "went" more quickly in reverse as gravity came to our assistance. We followed the Corridor route to Sty-Head and had the pleasure of coming out of the mist at Piers Gill. Some patches of sunshine threw the Napes Ridges on Gable into fine relief. This path although a very fine route, is not made for speed and we were 13 minutes behind schedule at Seathwaite, where we arrived in another torrential downpour to be welcomed with steaming bowls of soup by our support party. No praise is too high for this

team who had over a period of some weeks been variously cajoled, persuaded, and finally browbeaten into performing this very necessary service. A half-hour's rest and we were away again in steadily improving weather along the road to Keswick where we arrived some two hours later in glorious sunshine with the clouds just clearing from our next objective—Skiddaw. Our support party again awaited us a couple of miles up the road, at Applethwaite, having re-equipped themselves in Keswick. Just in case anyone should have become confused between the Assault Group and the Support Party let me hasten to point out that the former travelled on foot whilst the latter, car-borne, gave such undoubted moral support as a cheer and a wave as it passed the A.G. on the Borrowdale road.

We loitered too long at Applethwaite. I found myself a comfortable place on a pile of chippings exposed to the health-giving sunshine, and absorbed nourishment ranging from sugar-saturated tea through orange juice to raw egg and milk. We did at last make a move at 2.45 p.m., 42 minutes behind schedule, but arrived on Skiddaw summit 1 hour 45 minutes later in the teeth of a ferocious gale which almost blew us off the mountain. On our way down the normal tourist route we lost more time being too tired to run fast down hill as anticipated, but eventually arrived at a delightful spot on the south bank of the River Greta, at least, Brian and I did. We seemed to have lost touch with the others since leaving Skiddaw summit. Brian, as he himself was at some pains to explain when I suggested later that he continue up Helvellyn with me, had only joined in the walk at Applethwaite because it was a nice day and he needed the exercise. He did, however, at my insistence carry the rucksack and at this point produced quite unexpectedly a most delicious tin of pears.

We pressed on for a further six weary miles of road. down St. John's Vale. Our Support Party was waiting at Thirlspot where I now found myself the only surviving member of the Assault Group. The others arrived during the course of the next half hour, but owing to certain misunderstandings regarding my state of sanity, when it was learnt that I intended to push on up Helvellyn in the gathering darkness, they decided that it was better to lose one insane climber than to jeopardise the lives of four more responsible members of society. I was therefore sent on my way

with many good wishes, admonitions, pullovers, sweets and headshakings.

I was able to cross most of the boggy patches, where the otherwise well-marked path tends to disappear, before the light became too bad. Although it was now overcast and rain was coming down in the usual torrential showers, I found enough diffused light from the obscured moon to follow the path at my present slow climbing pace and proceeded better thus than with the aid of my torch. I had one or two anxious moments about the path and whether I were still on it, but fortunately I made no mistakes and arrived in what seemed a very short time at the summit shelter at 9 p.m.—on schedule in fact from Thirlspot but by now one hour behind on the day. Using my torch on the way down I came out of the mist above Grisedale Tarn to find the sky clearing and the full moon beginning to assert itself, giving a magical aspect to the Tarn and surrounding slopes. I found my way down Green Tongue in brilliant moonlight and was able to call off potential rescuers by a telephone call from The Travellers Rest where I also got my last cup of tea of the many drunk that day. The moon guided my now faltering footsteps over the last six miles to Little Langdale where I arrived at 12.40 p.m. to complete a circuit of some 50 miles and 12,000 feet of ascent.

MOUNT ARROWSMITH—VANCOUVER ISLAND

by H. P. Devenish

CANADA has plenty of magnificent mountains to suit all tastes, but I have never had time or opportunity to do any serious climbing in the Rockies, Selkirks or Coast Range. Vancouver Island, where I live, has mountains running up to 7,000 feet or more, but nearly all are practically inaccessible. There is however one, Arrowsmith with its Siamese twin, Colclough, which relenting Nature has planted just off a main highway. Even so it is a worthy foe for it stands 5,958 feet high and, since the ascent begins near sea level and involves two long descents, the total climb cannot be less than 6,000 feet.

My companion was a young German of magnificent physique, and something of a poet and philosopher. We drove up to the mountain one evening, parked the car in a small wood just off the highway, spread our blankets on the ground and turned in.

Next morning we started at 4.30 while it was still quite dark. We followed a rough road for half a mile, and then the trail began, climbing in steep zig-zags up the tree-covered side of the mountain. After over an hour of this the gradient eased and the trail straightened out a little, leading back, still climbing, over the top of this first massif. It was now quite light, but very cold. Finally, nearly three hours from the start, we emerged from the trees on to a small plateau where lay the remains of a log cabin, erected many years ago for climbers, but neglected and abused until it fell to pieces. On the grass lay a neat row of bed rolls—we evidently had not the mountain to ourselves. Here for the first time we saw the sun, so took a few minutes' rest.

At this point the trail changed its character, passing the tree-line and often leading over bare rocks, where the way was marked by small cairns. One or two patches of snow were passed, and soon we reached the foot of the great ridge of Colclough proper. The trail faded out and we scrambled up on rocks and heather as best we could, until our way was barred by a steep snow slope. Hans went at it where he met it, at its highest, kicking steps in its soft surface. At 28 you can do these things but at 58 you have to economise, so I made a short traverse to the right and cut my snow climb in half. Once past that we were on the crest of the ridge, which led by an easy gradient to the summit. Most people

content themselves with this and say they have climbed Arrowsmith, but we were after the real thing and had no energy to spare for the cairn on Colclough. Instead we crossed the ridge and sat down for breakfast.

It was now eight o'clock, the sun was warm and we enjoyed perhaps the finest view of the whole climb. Below lay a huge remote hollow, covered with trees and floored by a tiny lake; on the right was the mile-long undulating ridge which connects the two mountains, while straight in front the jagged silhouette of Arrowsmith stood up black and stark against the clear sky.

We were soon on the way again, and at once there came a sharp though easy descent down a rock gully, then a short ascent, then a really big descent, just steep enough to need the occasional use of hands. Later came a razor edged snow ridge, which could however be avoided by tramping through the heather below it, and finally a long hard pull up over earth, boulders and stunted trees. This landed us on the extreme end of Arrowsmith and, the peak being at the other end, we now had to traverse seven gendarmes in order to reach it. These were all good clean rock and presented no problems, though there was occasional slight exposure, and one descent needed care. As we progressed we heard a shout, and saw that the summit was dotted with figures.

Soon we topped the last knob but one, and there before us stood the last and greatest. Rather formidable it looked as it towered, apparently vertically, far above us. The lower part consisted of a steep and narrow ridge, sloping away sharply on either side to tremendous precipices. This broadened and steepened to a face of about 100 feet and then eased off quickly to the almost flat top. We descended to a tiny col, scrambled up a steep earth gully and emerged on to a grassy slope just below the rocks where we discarded our rucksacks and I changed into rubbers for the final assault. The rocks were warm and dry in the hot sun and we soon scrambled up to the foot of the climb proper. We climbed into a narrow chimney which split the face, went up it until stopped by an overhang, and traversed back on to the face by a broad ledge. A few more short pitches, all on good holds and the climb was over. As we walked to the cairn we passed a deer's hoof print, so there is evidently some other access.

In spite of slight haziness the view from the summit really was superb, on one side the Pacific sparkled in the midday sun, while



MOUNT ARROWSMITH, VANCOUVER ISLAND

H. P. Devenish

on the other, over the black bulk of Colclough, stretched the Strait of Georgia, dotted with islands and backed by the tremendous screen of the Coast Range. Far below, to the north-west, lay the twin towns of Alberni and Port Alberni (Spanish names abound all along the coast), and beyond them showed peak after peak to the limit of vision.

We sat and sunned ourselves for a short while and then turned to the descent. This looked horrible, for a slip would obviously land you on that narrow ridge, where nothing could save you from rolling down and shooting off into space. However, the holds were universally good and the rock sound, so it did not take long to reach the grass. We made our way back over the bumps and down on to the ridge, until we reached a tiny stream. Here we flopped on to the heather and had a long rest, eating our lunch and drinking the delicious mountain water. Then we set off again, doing the rest of the descent non-stop and reaching the car at six o'clock, with several hours of daylight in hand.



BRIMHAM ROCKS—AN INTERIM GUIDE

by D. McKelvie

BRIMHAM ROCKS lie approximately one mile South of the Pateley Bridge—Ripon road (B 6265) and about three miles East of Pateley Bridge itself.

The best approach from Leeds and Bradford is probably via the Otley—Pateley Bridge road (B 6451) as far as Summerbridge, at which place the valley road is left and a steeply ascending and narrow road on the right, leading up to Brimham Moor, taken. A crossroads is passed and after about two miles signposts and a battered wooden kiosk may be seen on the left of the road. Cars may be parked here or further along the track going past the kiosk to Brimham House. The Rocks may also be approached from Ripley (B 6165), again turning right at Summerbridge or from Ripon (B6265) turning left at the finger post $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles east of Pateley.

The best map for the area is undoubtedly the 25" O.S. plan (Yorks. (W.R.) CXXXVI. 6). The rocks have long been famous as a geological curiosity, but their history as a climbing ground dates from much more recent times. The general standard of the climbs is high; a large proportion of the routes being severe or more so. The accepted grading is adhered to, but, since many of the climbs here have been done only a few times, the grades must be taken as provisional ones only.

The rocks are scattered over an area of some 60 acres, but the climbs are mainly concentrated in two areas. For the purposes of this article I have named the first of these the Escarpment. It is a broken line of cliffs and rocks about 1,000 yards long, running in a great curve approximately North to South. The other area lies East of the escarpment and South of Brimham House, which itself lies roughly in the middle of the area and makes a good rendezvous for parties. Scattered about the whole area are numerous other rocks and groups of rocks, many of which may be climbed by one or more routes. This article deals only with the main routes and such of the boulders as are well known however, since to catalogue all the routes on all the boulders of Brimham would take a climbing lifetime.

The newer climbs at Brimham have been made mainly by a very active group of Yorkshire Mountaineering Club members. They have not only pioneered, between them, most of the climbs,

but to them, and in particular R. B. Evans, I owe the greater part of the material making up this interim guide, since my own part has been merely that of assembling and cataloguing the information provided by the group. Groups from the East Yorkshire Mountaineering Club and the R.A.F. Mountain Rescue Team, Topcliffe, have also been active at the rocks during recent years.

The rocks are of gritstone, similar in texture and formation to those of Almscliffe, but, away from the escarpment, weathered into their well-known fantastic shapes. The area is perhaps more exciting and less frequented than Almscliffe, not least because it is haunted by a custodian whose over-riding purpose in life it is to pursue climbers or cataloguers with frightening assiduity until, at bay, they buy him off with silver. However there is less broken glass than at Almscliffe and climbers of the quality of the writer may fall off in decent privacy and comparative safety.

CLIMBS ON THE ESCARPMENT

The climbs on the Escarpment are steep and uncompromising. There is plenty of variety, ranging from chimneys to walls, slabs and cracks.

For the sake of simplicity the Escarpment is taken as being in two sections. The first begins just North of the High Wood farm gateway west of the derelict kiosk, and extends as far as the path which bisects the escarpment and leads deviously to Brimham House. This section is mainly broken rocks, and contains only one good climb—Notice Board Crack at its extreme northerly end. Good scrambling may be had however, and there is a moderate but energetic chimney half way along it. Cubic Block is within this area but is not actually part of the escarpment.

The second section extends from the bisecting path in a generally north-westerly direction but bends, dog's leg fashion, halfway along, finally to run north-east. Cracked Buttress, Lovers' Leap and the Hatter's Groove groups of climbs are all in this second section.

The climbs are described beginning at Notice Board Crack which, though lying south of the path, belongs in spirit and quality with those on the north of the path. Thus the routes are described from right to left of each succeeding buttress as the climber faces them.

1.—Notice Board Crack. 30 ft. V.S.

This climb lies on the wall just south of the path bisecting the escarpment. Climb a narrow crack to the right of a weather worn notice board. The middle section is the hardest part.

Cracked Buttress

2.—Right-Hand Crack. 40 ft. S.

An obvious crack. Mostly by layback moves.

3.—Central Crack. 40ft. S.

Up a groove, then step right onto the face. Layback up the crack to a small ledge. The 10 ft. crack has not yet been led.

4.—Parallel Crack. 35 ft. V.S.

Left of Central Crack. Climb the cracks on good holds to a ledge. From here the left hand crack is taken until just below the top, where a delicate step into the right crack enables the top to be reached by jamming. The hardest route on the buttress.

The Escarpment Lovers' Leap Area

These climbs lie on the very prominent buttress split by a great arched chimney.

5.—Lichen Slab. 25 ft. V.D.

This short slab climb lies on a boulder at the foot of the right hand end of this buttress. It gives a short, delicate, right trending climb.

6.—President's Progress. 30 ft. V.D.

On the buttress proper, between Lichen Slab, and the Nameless Chimney. Begins at a recess above a sandy platform. Has a difficult start by a semi-layback move or bridging to a ledge with a rotten holly tree. Go left over the chock stone via a high hold.

7.—Nameless Chimney. 35 ft. V.D. perhaps severe.

The wide chimney narrowing to a crack lying between Lovers' Leap Chimney and President's Progress.

8.—Lovers' Leap Chimney. 50 ft. Difficult.

The popular chimney. A pleasant climb.

Start up a steep crack on the left wall then traverse right on to the chock stone and the floor of the cave. Go to the back of the cave and climb the chimney.

9.—Birch Tree Wall. 50 ft. V.S.

A very good climb. It lies on the face left of the chimney. Climb the wall for 10 feet to a small ledge. About 10 feet higher

another ledge is reached. A very delicate left traverse and mantel-shelf lead to a corner at the top of which is a tiny tree. Above the corner an easy scoop leads to the top.

10.—Birch Tree Wall Variant. Severe.

Avoid the hardest part of the Wall by reaching the groove from the left along an obvious ledge.

11.—Difficult Crack. 20 ft. Difficult.

Lies left of and higher than Birch Tree Wall. Eight feet of semi layback climbing are followed by a left trending move round a chock stone.

The Escarpment North West Section

Going from Lovers' Leap along the line of crags a small crag is passed, then a larger crag is reached at the right end of which is an overhanging V groove.

12.—Hatter's Groove. 40 ft. V.S.

A very fine and serious route. Looks magnificent from its foot. The overhanging V groove to the right of Slippery Crack is ascended facing right until above a piton runner and below the first overhang. Swing to a layback facing left onto a stance just below the huge final overhang. A good thread belay is awkward to fix here. The leader sits in slings on the belay to serve as foot-hold for the second to overcome the overhang on its left side.

13.—Slippery Crack. 40 ft. S.

Lies on the wall left of Hatter's Groove. Needs cleaning. Mainly climbed by layback moves and jamming.

To the left of Slippery Crack is a square recess, reached by scrambling up to a level pulpit.

14.—Graft Crack. 20 ft. S.

The right hand corner crack of the recess is climbed by layback.

15.—Brief Crack. 30 ft. Hard Severe.

To the left of Graft Crack. The corner crack is climbed to a good ledge just below the top. Traverse right to the top of Graft Crack. The finishing crack has been climbed on a rope.

To the left of the recess and starting at a slightly lower level is a prominent steep crack. This is —

16.—Last Crack. 30 ft. S.

Climb the first part by layback and finish by jamming.

17.—Duggie's Dilemma. 25 ft. Severe.

This climb is 30 yards right of Slippery Crack, on the small

crag which is passed on the way to Hatter's Groove. At the right hand end of the crag is a steep wall which is climbed. The hardest part is a mantelshelf halfway.

Some yards to the left of the buttress on which the above climbs lie is a line of buttresses and slabs, fairly easily identified by three trees growing at their foot about half way along. On the extreme right hand buttress, partly hidden by boulders and starting in a cave formed by a boulder leaning against the wall is —

18.—Corner Crack. 30 ft. V.D.

This is climbed to a small overhang which is climbed by layback moves.

On a buttress some yards to the left is —

19.—Mantel Shelf. 25 ft. V.D.

Starts from a sloping boulder. Step onto the right side of the wall. A mantel shelf is followed by a long reach to the top.

Left of the trees a large block rests against the main edge. At the foot of the block is a stone wall. Here is —

20.—Pig Traverse. 40 ft. V.D.

Easily identified by the name scratched at the start. Start at the wall and climb up to the overhang. Step right onto the wall and traverse horizontally to the edge of the buttress. Finish up the arete.

To the left of Pig Traverse is a long slab with a route up the left hand side.

21.—Fag Slab. 30 ft. S.

A groove is climbed for about 12 feet where more delicate climbing leads to the top. This climb needs cleaning.

22.—Fag Slab Variation. 30 ft. S.

Harder than Fag Slab itself. The final section of Fag Slab is reached by awkward layback moves on the slab to the right of the usual route.

Round the corner is a steep slabby wall with an overhanging flake running up it. This has now been climbed without a piton.

23.—Allan's Crack. 40 ft. Hard Severe.

Layback up the flake until below the overhang. Lean almost horizontally until an undergrip flake can be reached. An awkward move left is followed by a layback up to the second overhang. Step to the right and climb the wall above.

Beyond this point there is little of climbing interest.

HAWK CRAG AND CANNON ROCKS

This is the other main climbing area. It lies South of Brimham House between the edge of the Escarpment and the road leading to Brimham House. It consists of an area of large and scattered boulders, but although scrambles of all grades of difficulty may be had the best climbing is on Hawk Crag and Cannon Rocks.

Hawk Crag lies near the roadside at the last bend before it reaches Brimham House, and faces about South-East. On it are, from right to left, Cakewalk, Jabberwalk and Desperation Crack. There are all good climbs.

24.—Cakewalk. 40 ft. Severe.

On the buttress to the right of Jabberwalk. A 20 foot vertical wall, containing a crack which peters out, is climbed to a good thread runner. Step up and traverse right along a good ledge to a large platform on the corner of the buttress. There is a 10 foot wall above.

25.—Jabberwalk. 40 ft. Severe.

Start at a steep wall below a large overhang which is split by a chimney crack. The wall is climbed on good fingerholds to the overhang. A short traverse to the right brings the chimney within reach. Wriggle to the top.

26.—Jabberwalk Variation. 40 ft. V.S.

Starts well to the right of the usual start. A short wall is followed by delicate climbing on a steep slab, with a thin crack providing aid for the right hand, until a traverse brings the easy chimney of Jabberwalk within reach.

27.—Deperation Crack. 40 ft. V.S.

A fine crack left of Jabberwalk. After a strenuous start on good holds the crack becomes very rounded but yields to jamming. The last few feet are the most difficult part of the climb.

About half way from the kiosk to Brimham House a huge boulder with a hole through it near the top is seen, together with several others, on the West side of the road. These are the Cannon Rocks.

28.—Maloja. 30 ft. Severe.

Starts almost directly below the hole through the rock. Up to a broad ledge, then a layback move and a delicate step back to the left is followed by an easy finish.

29.—Frensis. 30 ft. V.S.

The steep crack to the right of Maloja. The initial crack is

ascended on good holds and the twin cracks climbed until below the overhang, at which point an escape is made to the Right. The continuation of the crack proper has been top-roped.

CLIMBS ON STELLING CRAG (CUBIC BLOCK)

From the derelict wooden kiosk standing at the beginning of the road leading to Brimham House a track leads west through a gateway and eventually to High Wood Farm. By going through the gateway and then turning north along the line of small crags which form the beginning of the Escarpment one arrives in some 150 yards at a huge boulder easily identified by its slabby eastern side and acutely overhanging western side. On the 25" plan this is marked as Stelling Crag but it is generally known as the Cubic Block. On the east side are four good routes. They are described from North to South.

30.—Cubic Corner. 35 ft. S.

Up the right hand edge of the arete, the hardest move being near the top.

31.—A Route. 36 ft. S.

Starts a few feet left along the face. Climb, trending to the right.

32.—B Route. 35 ft. S.

A short delicate wall left of A Route to a dirty mantelshelf. Traverse a few feet to the right then climb upwards to the left.

33.—C Route. 30 ft. V.D.

The well scratched route up the left corner of the block.

On the rock mass facing these climbs is a low 20 foot traverse ending in a high step upwards and to the right. Moderate.

BOULDERS

There are so many boulders of all shapes and sizes that only a few of the best known ones are here mentioned. North of Brimham House on the right of the path leading along the escarpment are the Dancing Bear, the Druid's Idol and the Indian's Turban.

34.—The Dancing Bear gives a moderate to difficult climb according to individual fancy.

35.—The Druid's Idol, a great boulder balanced on a ridiculously small pivot, has several easy or moderate ways to the top, despite its appearance. Nearby is the Indian's Turban. A difficult chimney crack separating two pinnacles may be climbed.

36.—Indian's Turban—West. V.D.

Start halfway along the face. Go up to ledge then move right, up to a mantelshelf near the top.

Numerous other scrambles may be designed in this area. Just South of Brimham House, near the car parking point, are the —
37.—Turtle Rocks. 30 ft. D. or V.D.

Begin on the left in the deep chimney cleft and gain the ledge beneath the top block. Here is a magnificent natural thread belay. Move right and ascend the top block.

BAT BUTTRESS

Marked on the 25" plan and the 1" O.S. Map is Maud's Farm, about three-quarters of a mile south of Brimham House. Just east of this is a high buttress. There are two climbs.

38.—Bat Buttress. 70 ft. Difficult.

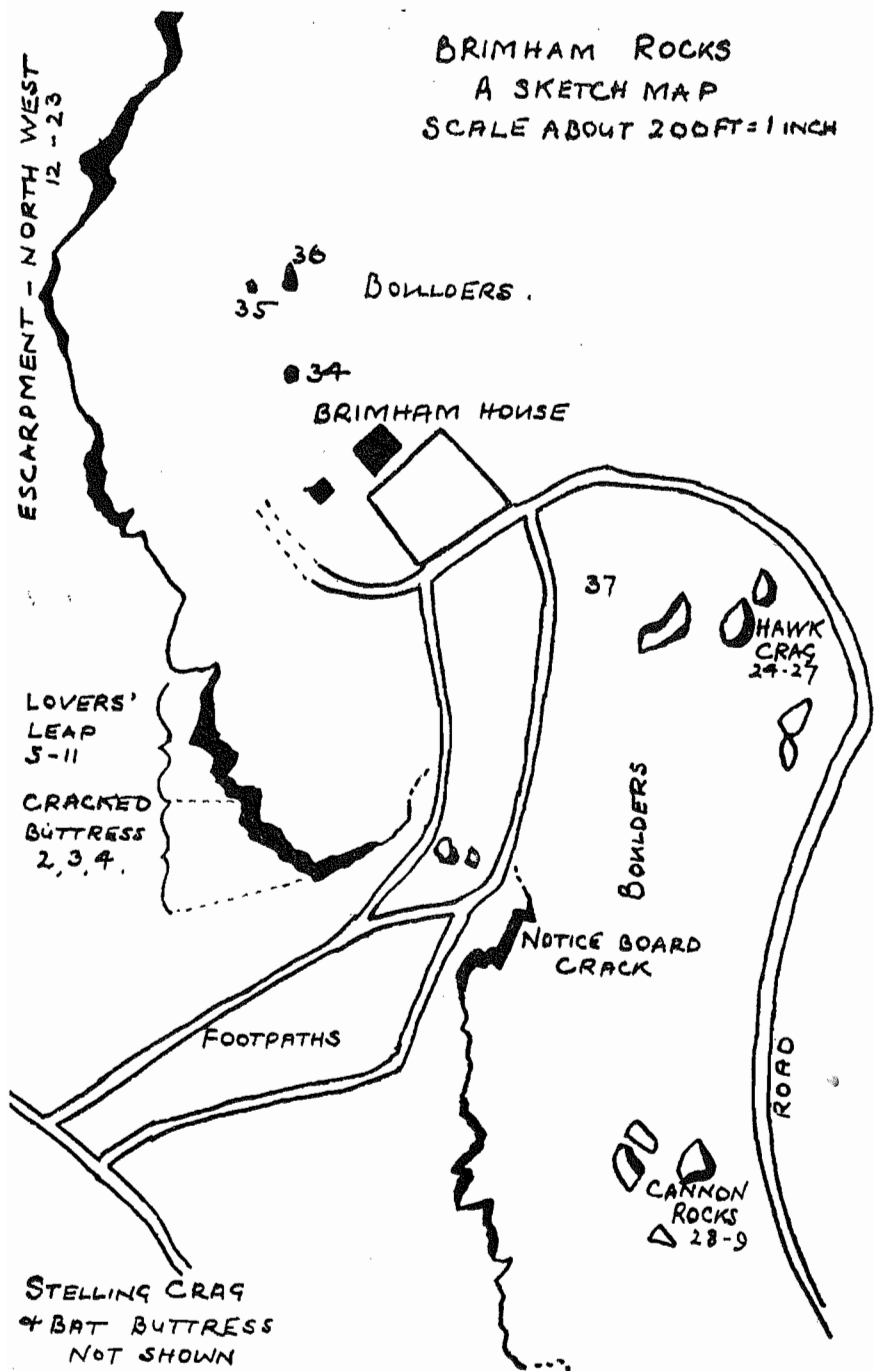
The easiest route up the main buttress. Begin at a slab on the left corner, then go up the corner until stopped by the overhanging nose. Traverse right. Climb a crack followed by slabs to the top.

On a wall to the left of the main buttress is the second climb. The name is scratched on the rock.

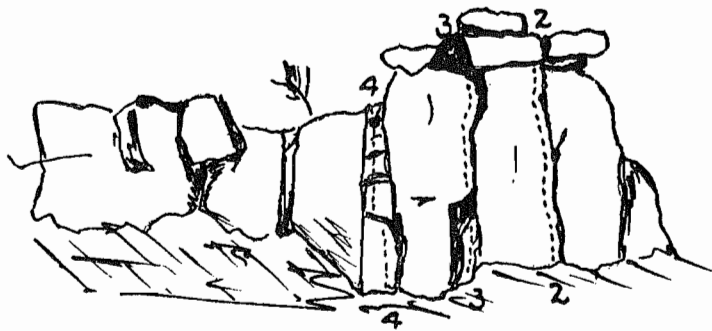
39.—Yo-Yo. Very Difficult.

Start at the left hand corner. A traverse to the right is followed by a mantelshelf.

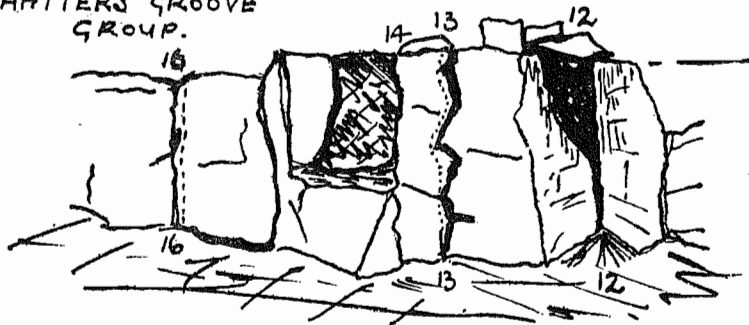
BRIMHAM ROCKS
A SKETCH MAP
SCALE ABOUT 200FT=1 INCH



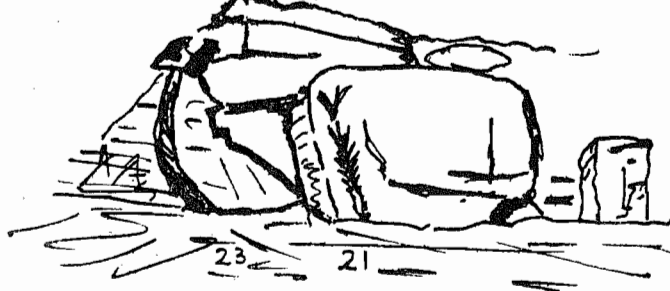
CRACKED BUTTRESS.



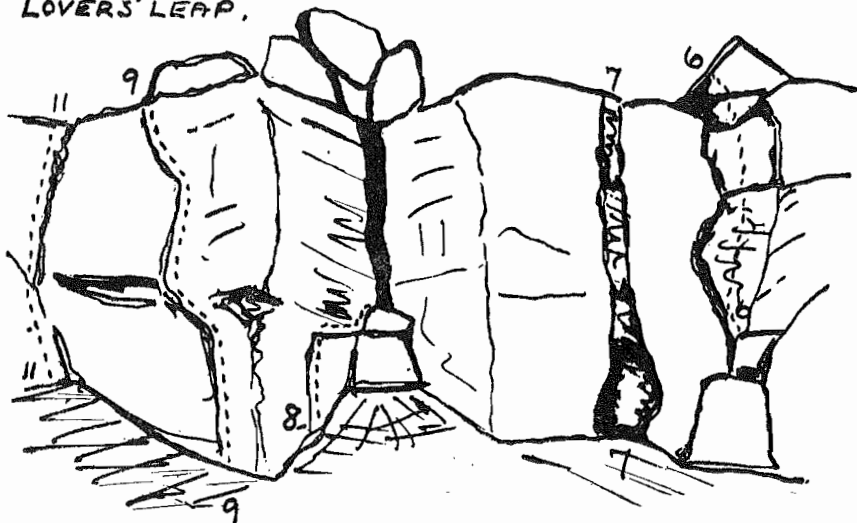
HATTERS GROOVE GROUP.



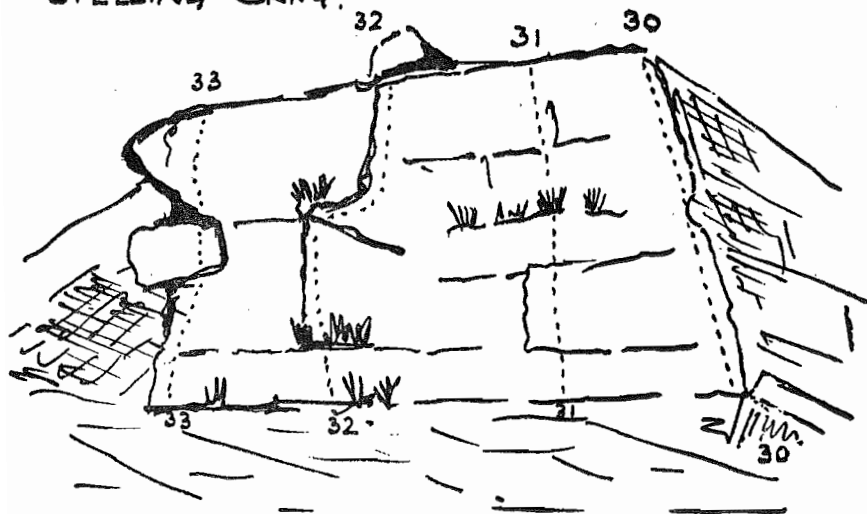
FAG SLAB. 23, 21



LOVERS' LEAP.



STELLING CRAIG.



THE BRENVA ROUTE

by C. I. W. Fox

WITH the opening up of the climbs on the Brenva face by our late member F. S. Smythe, Professor Graham Brown and others, a certain tendency has arisen to regard the 'Old' Brenva route as very small beer. In my own opinion, after climbing Mont Blanc by this route on 9th September, 1954, with David Oxtoby, this is quite wrong. The route accomplished by Moore and the Walkers so long ago will always merit the label 'great.' Composed as it is largely of snow and ice, constantly changing under the influence of sun and frost, the conditions are never the same in successive seasons. In beauty of scene alone it is almost incomparable in the Alps.

We spent the eve of our climb in the little Refuge on the Col de la Fourche on the Frontier Ridge. Our stay was solitary and, before turning in, we went outside where the moon lit up the immense mountain-side before us. Mont Blanc soared heavenwards—a sight quite beyond description. Far below the lights of Courmayeur twinkled as in another world. We felt privileged to be in such a place.

Early next morning, we 'brewed-up,' ate some food and strapped our crampons on. We were not to remove them until safe in the refuge on the other side of Mont Blanc. The glacier was cold and cheerless in the starlight, for the moon had gone, but we could see as far as we needed. A brief reconnaissance the previous evening had shown us the best way down the steep Brenva side of the Col and we were soon on the glacier.

The route across the glacier was very simple, and any crevasses easily avoided. After an hour's easy walking, we were clambering up the good snow on the East side of Col Moore. The sky was beginning to lighten and the summits of the huge mountains around were flushing in the rays of the sun. From this position, Mont Blanc looked foreshortened, and the Brenva ridge lay back, the foreground occupied by a shoulder of warm reddish-brown rock.

Our route now lay up a scoop of mixed snow and rock leading towards the left, and this proved awkward in crampons, but knowing that we should need them above, we did not waste

time by removing them. Above this, unexpected and delightful little ridges, all trending upwards, led up to a large pillar of rock.

The scene was now absolutely magnificent. To our left the amazing East face of the Aiguille Blanche de Péteret shone with golden light, and the swarthy Aiguille Noire loomed yet further away. The Noire seemed quite low from this position, and it was only when one looked down through the gulf to the valley below that one realised the immense sweep of its southern ridges. To the East the sunlit ridges receded rank upon rank into the cloud filled depths of Switzerland.

But our day's work lay before us, we were now at the start of the famous 'ice-ridge.' As seems usual these days, it was composed of snow, but it was sufficiently narrow to make us adopt Agag-like procession. Most of the time we moved together, and in 25 minutes, we had crossed the draw-bridge of our castle and the real work of the climb was ahead.

The route now lay up slopes of ice relieved by occasional patches of hard snow. The slopes seemed infinite, but at the edge of the infinity the gleaming white fingers of the seracs projected into the cloudless deep blue sky. Twisting fingers of blown powder snow were streaming from the summit dome beyond foretelling of a great wind above, but in our present position the sun shone warmly on our backs.

So up we clambered, mostly without cutting at first, but as the slope got steeper our nerve weakened and we felt obliged to carve a staircase. It's all very well to prance about on a glacier serac in crampons, but quite a different matter two and a half miles high on an ice slope on Mont Blanc.

Before leaving Chamonix we had talked to someone about the route, and had been advised that the exit through the seracs lay to the right (looking up). Mesmerized by this advice, we trended rightwards, and eventually found ourselves near a huge fin of rock sticking out of the ice. Here we stopped for a bite to eat and gazed up the great slope before us. From our position it indeed looked as though we were on the right track, and, after our rest, we continued on our way.

Soon we were amongst the most fantastic scenery it has been my good fortune to see. The whole world seemed made of ice. Around us stood seracs as big as churches, gleaming blue, green and gold. We wound through icy corridors, over bosses of

shining ice, past caverns of palest turquoise. An enchanted ice-world. But our route ended in a cul-de-sac. I think that we could have forced it, but it would have taken too long.

This was no place for indecision. After reviewing the situation, we turned in our tracks and made our way out of the ice pinnacles. It was obvious that we should have to try again further West along the slope.

This involved traversing down and around some huge ice-bosses projecting from the slope (one of these cliffs is shown in a beautiful photograph by Smythe). The slope was sufficiently steep to make hand-holds necessary, and the ice-climbing, poised thousands of feet above the Italian valleys, was delicate. Little security was possible, but we knew that we could trust each other not to make a false move. In such a situation balance is at a premium and living intense.

At length we were round the steep section and could again climb upwards. It was cut-cut-cut, dig in the pick of the axe, clamber up on the points, then cut-cut-cut again. The altitude made us gasp with the exertion. We kept looking up for the escape we knew must exist, but the silent seracs seemed to come no nearer. At long last I peered ahead and saw a lowering of part of the palisade ahead. The ice eased off to good snow, and while Dave belayed, I ran out the rope towards the gap. To my eager gaze was revealed a broad corridor opening up towards the right. Such moments make all the toil worthwhile in mountaineering. I looked downwards to Dave, hunched over his axe and then beyond through the sunlit depths of space—thousands of feet of emptiness.

My shout of joy roused him to further progress and soon we were both squatting in the snow, stuffing chocolate and raisins into our mouths. Hitherto we had been working too hard to notice the conditions, but we now saw that we were in for a chilly time on the top. The wind was blowing great sheets of snow off the summit dome, and the powder snow was falling on the lee of the mountain.

It was obvious that conditions were ideal for the formation of wind-slab, and, sure enough, after progressing a bit further we found that slopes under the ridge above us were deep with powder snow. However, the presence of a large snow-filled bergschrund enabled us to walk along its recesses in safety. To try out our

theory, one of us walked along the top of the slabby snow (well belayed) and, sure enough, the slope avalanched with a ripping sound, disappearing into the depths below.

The top lip of the bergschrund (which up to now had overhung us) as last relented and we were able to clamber over onto the slope beyond.

Here we were met and enveloped in an icy blast which took our breath away. The great North wind seemed to have the chill of outer space and we were almost paralysed with cold. Not only this, but the wind had caused the snow to crust and this most demoralizing of surfaces was to continue for the rest of our climb.

Ahead of us the great dome rose into the clear blue sky, often hidden by the sheets of powder snow which howled across in tremendous gusts. We took it in turn to lead, bashing our way through the snow, almost doubled up in the teeth of the wind. It was most exhausting work. We traversed the summit slightly below the ultimate point, and our hungry eyes picked out the gleaming aluminium of the Vallot hut. The descent to this over the Bosses only took a few minutes, and soon we were forcing our way up the trap-door entrance of this, the most squalid, but most delightful hut in the Alps ! What a relief to get out of that terrible wind.

While we prepared some food, the weather rapidly deteriorated, and we decided to spend the night there. After attempting vainly to seal the hut from numerous draughts, we piled all the blankets available on the beds and settled down to a fairly comfortable night. Occasionally we awoke to hear the blizzard beating snow on our shelter and turned over, thankful that we were not out in it.

It was the following mid-day before the weather had improved enough to let us see our way down (we had neither of us been on the normal route before), but a brief clearing allowed us to take a quick bearing and we were soon down in the shelter of the Grand Plateau out of the tearing gale.

That evening the weather broke completely, and safe in the shelter of Chamonix we congratulated ourselves on having snatched such a magnificent climb at the eleventh hour in a poor season.

“SOME LETTERS FROM THE PAST”

by J. Geoffrey Brook

“The poison of mountain club journals is their tendency to become geographical and scientific.”

Sir Martin Conway.

THE above quotation taken from a letter written by Sir Martin Conway, later Lord Conway, to Thomas Gray in 1899, will serve very well as a text and a justification for this article, which will contain nothing scientific, very little geographical, and will be only mildly historical in its meanderings through the meadows of the past. Our club is fortunate in possessing a magnificent library, and one of the most fascinating items in the library is a unique collection of letters written by famous mountaineers, past and present, ranging from Edward Whymper to Charles Evans.

Most of the older letters were written to Thomas Gray, the first Editor of this Journal, and we must praise his foresight in preserving them for our entertainment and edification.

I have though it prudent, however, for the purpose of this introductory article to confine my quotations to letters by climbers no longer with us, although the temptation to quote freely has been strong. There is, for example, a large number of characteristic letters written by our respected Nestor, Mr. E. E. Roberts, packed with interest and information, as well as correspondence from Sir John Hunt, Spencer Chapman and Charles Evans.

By far the larger part of this correspondence, however, comes from the pens of two men, W. C. Slingsby and W. A. B. Coolidge. It is only fitting and proper that the former should be given pride of place.

William Cecil Slingsby should need no introduction to Yorkshire Ramblers. He was one of the founders of our Club, was its President in 1899 when the first Journal was published, and one of its most honoured figures.

The impression one gains from these letters is that of an exuberant personality, bubbling over with boyish vitality and enthusiasm. His letters appear to have been dashed off in a white heat of energy, the bold flamboyant writing galloping all over the pages, and almost off them.

A favourite patriotic quirk of his was to prelude his message with a bold "God Save the Queen" in capitals at the top of the first page.

The editorship of the Journal could have been no sinecure in his day, for he always kept a piercing eye cocked for any fault or trace of vulgarity likely to besmirch the fair name of the Yorkshire Ramblers Club.

Cheapness of any sort, especially that of self advertisement, was anathema to Slingsby. One wonders, however, if this dislike cannot be carried too far. If the great mountaineers of the past had been too assiduous in hiding their light under a bushel we should have had no "Scrambles Amongst the Alps," no "Playground of Europe," and many other classics of mountain literature.

Slingsby, like all original characters, may have been mistaken in some things but he was never tedious or dull.

In a letter of 1898 to Gray he comments on Coolidge's derogation of Mummery's "My Climbs in the Alps and Caucasus":—

"Coolidge's letters are very amusing. He is quite right about snow scenery, but as he never was in any sense a rock-climber, he cannot quite see the rock climber's side. "Mummery's dreadful book"; Ah, Coolidge, you little know what a fine character Mummery was, and what a loss the world sustained by his death."

Exhorting Gray that "members of the Y.R.C. must be whipped up once, twice, thrice for Dr. Anderson's lecture ("he has a world wide reputation as an avalanche authority"). "fill the hall," he exclaims, "if that cannot be done we must get a comic singer. But I think we can do without." Then as an afterthought, "At the same time, a smoking concert might do some good."

J. W. Robinson, whose name will be remembered as long as there is rock-climbing in the Lake District, wrote an article on "The West Wall of Deep Ghyll," for the first Journal, but before it appeared Slingsby wrote to the editor:—

"Robinson's name really must appear, and not a nom-de-plume. His name is really greater than he is aware of, and we are very lucky to get him. Come! We have really stolen a march on the A.C. and the Climbers Club, at least so I think—and the next thing is to get an illustration to

accompany Robinson's paper either of Scafell Crag as a whole or the identical crag."

In a postscript, he adds:

"I prefer Scafell to Scawfell and Wasdale to Wastdale
Ask J.W.R."

After the appearance of the first volume of the Journal Slingsby wrote to Gray:—

"My dear boy, you are a brick and a peerless editor, and if you heard what the editor of the S.M.C. Journal said to me last Saturday you would blush like a peony."

In a letter of 1900 is heard an echo of the famous quarrel between Whymper and Coolidge over Almer's jump, described and depicted by Whymper in his "Scrambles amongst the Alps." The story is too well known to need re-telling here, and Slingsby says:—

"Coolidge and Whymper are in the middle of a squabble. My sympathies are entirely with the latter, who, this time, is entirely in the right. Coolidge has left the A.C. and also the editing of Ball."

Arising out of our President's recent comment that the Club is tending to neglect caving, the sport on which its reputation was largely founded, it is interesting to find Slingsby touching on the same subject in 1900.

"Of course, No. 2 (of the Journal) is going well. No. 1 created a reputation (always a dangerous possession) and No. 2 has well sustained it. You are on the right lines. Keep to it. The Y.R.C. has a speciality, Cave Hunting; so far, admirably described, and possibly better illustrated. Your diagrams are excellent. For the next number a paper dealing with the pots of Penyghent (or some of them) should be prepared, and views taken. And of Sell Gill, a glorious place. If a Conan Doyle could be induced to make a descent and write a paper for us. By Jingo! Well, bear it in mind. We must keep to caves, i.e. must have one or part of one good paper in every number."

And in a later letter:

"For No. 4 I advise a good cave paper with views and diagrams as a *bonne bouche*, but not a single view of any finicking, two penny-ha'penny rocks in Derbyshire or anywhere else. Caves first, Caves Second and Caves Third.

A diagrammatic fell view, something Alpine and snowy, English and beautiful, say a bridge, a waterfall, a cottage -or-or-or- ! but nothing like the view on page 218 if you please. I call it horrible, and only worthy of the C.C. Journal" !

For the benefit of readers who do not have back numbers of the Journal handy, it may be explained that the photo that aroused Slingsby's wrath was one of Owen Glynne Jones climbing the Right Hand Crack, Cratcliff Tor, and carried the title "A Derbyshire Memory of Owen Glynne Jones."

Another letter takes up a point of terminology,

"Who coined the word "cracklet" ? I wish you would discourage the use of the Frenchified word "arête" when we have such a choice of good English. We have, I well know, no exact equivalent of "col" in English, but "gap," "pass," or "nick" will often, though not always, serve our purpose."

Most of these letters were written, unfortunately, after Slingsby's great climbing days in Norway, and the only reference to them arises in regard to the writing and publication of his book "Norway, The Northern Playground."

He mentions climbing on Norwegian aiguilles when over 60 years of age. and at the age of 53 writes of :—

"an extremely pleasant little Alpine campaign, made in 1900, viz. the eastern ridge of the Finsteraarhorn. We failed to cross Mont Blanc, though we reached the Vallot Hut, over 14,000 feet, wind, a gale. We crossed the Cols du Chardonnet and Fenêtre de Saleinaz, climbed Mont Velan, a glorious view, crossed the Grand Combin, a magnificent expedition, crossed Hohberg Pass from Binn to Fora Falls and walked down Formazza-thal, most beautiful, and at the same time the wildest I have ever seen, and wound up by crossing the New Weiss-Thor from Macucagna to Zermatt. Not an heroic campaign by any means, and yet a most charming one."

And with this romp over the Alps we close this quite inadequate selection from Slingsby's letters.

It will have revealed something of his infectious enthusiasm his modesty, humour, and above all his paternal anxiety for the good name of the Club and its Journal.

The Rev. W. A. B. Coolidge was the stormy petrel of Alpine literature. With an encyclopaedic knowledge of Alpine history and travel, he regarded these subjects as his own special preserve, and any intruder was apt to be regarded with suspicion, if not downright hostility. He was an indefatigable correspondent, and this substantial bundle of letters and cards can only be a small part of the amount he penned to mountaineers and writers all over the world. The bulk of his letters are now housed in the Zentral Bibliothek, Zürich.

Coolidge had an inexhaustible curiosity for all matters relating to the Alps, going through every book on the subject with a small tooth comb, and woe betide any writer who made a mistake.

He had a positive genius for picking a quarrel, and must at one time or another have engaged almost every prominent mountaineer of his time, or at least, those rash enough to commit themselves in print. But in those days men were as doughty in controversy as in climbing. They asked for no quarter and gave none. Nevertheless, Coolidge was a giant in Alpine literature, and by no means a minor figure in its climbing. Slingsby said he was "an extraordinary combination of grit and—well—say sand,"

Coolidge's first letter to Yorkshire was written to Slingsby from Oxford begging a copy of the 11th (1865) edition of Murray's Switzerland, which he had noticed was in the Club Library.

The remainder of his letters, to Gray, were written from his Chalet Montana, Grindelwald.

Writing on the occasion of Gray's first visit to the Alps, he says

"I quite agree with you that under the circumstances the choice of the Maderanertal was a good one, but I cannot help regretting that you began at once with rock climbs. These can be had in the Lakes, but it is the snow scenery of the Alps that can be had nowhere else. I know that only rock-climbing is now fashionable, but to an old fashioned person like myself that is a deadly heresy, and I should deny the title of mountaineers to many "clamberers" of the present day, and all this scrambling in the British Isles does not commend itself to me as a form of mountaineering."

Also

"I deny further that the qualities required for cave hunting in any way resemble those required in mountaineering, otherwise miners would be the best mountaineers.

I can understand that cave-hunting is very fascinating, but it does annoy me to see it treated (as in the *Encycl. of Sport*) as a form of mountaineering. Martel, for instance, the apostle of cave-hunting, has done very little in the Alps."

Leaving this dangerous ground, or should one say underground, for something of local interest, we read :—

"I used to know Mr. Kitson well in the early seventies when he climbed and it may interest you to know that my ice-axe for 20 years odd, that which made all my great ascents, was a present from him, and was made at the Airedale Foundry."

Several quite harmless individuals must have been hit and injured in a fusillade fired off on January 22nd, 1898.

"I was amused by Conways' article but disagree with much of it, while its statements are often inaccurate. But who can A.C.C. be? His bibliography is laughable, many omissions and many mistakes, while Mummery's dreadful book is mentioned twice over. But it is harmless compared to his glossary, hardly a statement in which is right, the definitions being terrible. It is worse than that in the *Badminton vol.*, and more one can hardly say. Gribble's book is very bad, and largely a shameless crib from my writings, of which practically no acknowledgement is made. But it is not so bad as Mathew's *Mont Blanc* book, one of the poorest in the whole range of Alpine literature. Mosso's work, too, irritated me by its pretentiousness."

After this massacre, Coolidge's naive confession,

"But I fear I am a hard critic"

seems just a little unnecessary. The shade of that arch-heretic, Owen Glynne Jones, must have winced when the following unsympathetic comment on the fatal Dent Blanche accident reached it,

"I hope someone will have the courage to speak up about the O. G. Jones folly and madness. It was proverbial amongst the guides, and the end was foreseen long ago."

Coolidge touches on his quarrel with Whymper and the Alpine Club in a letter of December, 1900.

"I am in very bad odour with the English A.C., for last year I ventured, in my "*Life of Almer*," to state that he (Almer) had told me in 1871 that he never made a leap of the kind shown in Whymper's picture. Mistranslations and

many false testimonies have been hurled at me, so a year ago I withdrew from the English A.C. altogether, and also from my share in the Ball revision."

He cannot resist the opportunity for a little more denunciation of the heretics :—

"The St. Nicholas Gabelhorn was only scaled by "unfair" methods, ropes and ladders; it is a very small point. I entirely agree with you in your opinion as to the disgrace brought on Alpine climbing by the antics of a small band of men who are simply trying hard to see how near they can come to breaking their necks by doing foolish small pinnacles of no interest save as greased poles."

One seems to hear a faint echo of Ruskin's thunder in this last sentence.

Certainly the largest of the bees buzzing in Coolidge's bonnet, after the rock climbers, was the feebleness of other Alpine scribes, and it zooms around time after time in almost every letter. For example

"Mason's novel "*Running Water*" has many Alpine mistakes. F. Harrison's book, from the High Alps point of view, is utter trash, Larden's *Guide* is incredibly badly edited, though it has good stuff in it." and so on.

Edward Whymper, whose name will be for ever associated with the Matterhorn, was our first Honorary Member, elected in 1893, and the first of a distinguished roll. His letter of acceptance is now hanging in the Club library, and we have in addition three letters, comprising part of some correspondence he had with Thomas Gray regarding the reviewing of A. W. Moore's classic "*The Alps in 1864*."

It occurred to Gray that it would be appropriate for one of Moore's surviving companions to review the book for the *Journal*. He wrote first to Whymper, who declined, explaining that he had just returned from Canada, and had much work awaiting him.

He suggested, however, that Horace Walker, who had spent more time than anyone else with Moore on the tour of 1864, would be the right man. Walker, unfortunately, declined without giving any other reason except that it was quite impossible for him to consider such a thing.

Walker was a man of quiet, retiring disposition. When, for instance, he lectured to the Club, he did not, like others, demand twenty-five copies of the lecture for his own use, but wrote to Gray,

"I now with reluctance, enclose you the manuscript of my lecture. It had to be slightly altered, as it could hardly be printed as I delivered it.

I am not without hope that when you come to read it over in cold blood you will pronounce it unfit for your Journal. I am not in any way accustomed to writing, and this is a mere compilation with nothing original in it, so that you will not in the least hurt my feelings if you reject it with thanks.

Such modesty is refreshingly rare, but still it is a great pity that Walker had not the gift or inclination for writing. A book as memorable as Moore's or Whympers could have been compiled from the combined adventures of the Walker family, Francis the father, Horace the son, and Lucy the daughter, the first lady to stand on the summit of the Matterhorn.

Later, after Walker's death in 1908, Gray again wrote to Whympers requesting him to write an obituary for the Journal. Whympers replied:—

"I would willingly give you something of the nature of an obituary notice of Horace Walker if I could. But the fact is that I only was with him once in the Alps (in 1864) and I have already said whatever there is to be said. After that we met only occasionally, and I have scarcely any information about him. Pilkington, from his article in the last A.J. evidently knows much more about him. A great part of what he says is news to me! Nevertheless I reckoned Horace Walker amongst my friends, for if I had felt in need of assistance I could have relied on him. He was always the same, in storm and in sunshine, and this equability of demeanour from first to last, combined with his other estimable qualities made him a man to be esteemed."

Then, in another letter a few months later, Whympers wrote,

"I am sorry that you are unable to find a biographer for Horace Walker. A. W. Moore, if he were alive would no doubt be able to tell you much more about him, as they frequently travelled together; but, as Moore has departed to join the

angelic host, I am unable to suggest how you can address him.

In this fix I mention that Miss Lucy Walker of Liverpool is the most likely living person to be able to put you upon a competent biographer."

There are several letters over such names as C. E. Mathews, Harold Raeburn, Haskett-Smith, Winthrop Young and J. M. Robinson, but not containing any material of great interest.

There is, however, a rather striking note from the hand of that prince of rock climbers, C. D. Frankland. This is incomplete, written in pencil, apparently from somewhere in France during the First World War. It is for his daughter on her fifteenth birthday. He writes:

"I am glad that you enjoy the rain. I have no use for softies. You are fortunate in having strong limbs, plenty of pluck, a very willing temperament. These advantages you have inherited from your Mother will stand you in good stead both in games and in the gymnasium. You know I have a failing for physical exercise. I have perhaps spent too much time, money and energy, for instance, upon rock-climbing, but I cannot even now make myself regret it. I love the fresh air, the vigorous trudge up a lofty slope, the exhilarating plunge down again, and more still do I enjoy the extremely selfish pleasure of a struggle up a lofty crag by a difficult and exposed course. All these failings make me rejoice as I read your lively descriptions of the country-side."

I shall conclude this short survey by coming a little nearer to our own time and looking at a few letters from a mountaineer whose name is one of the most illustrious in the membership of the Yorkshire Ramblers Club, Frank Smythe. His tragically early death at the age of 49 robbed both our Club and British mountaineering of one of their most distinguished exponents.

The letters, written to E. E. Roberts, are typical of the man, vivid and packed with fresh observation. They are, however, too long to quote in full and brief excerpts will have to suffice.

The first was sent from Italy during his service there in 1944 with the C.M.F. After mentioning a visit to the Castellano caves, and, sometime after, the shaking he received from the bursting

of a German 105 mm. shell five yards away from his jeep, he goes on,

"Up to last summer I was C.O. of a Commando School of Mountain Warfare, as you may remember. We moved from Braemar to Wales and did courses in rock-climbing. I was glad to find that at 44 years of age I was able to lead severes and go alone quite happily up places like the Terrace Wall Variant. Then I went to Canada and U.S.A. as member of a Military Mission though still in the R.A.F. as a result of which I got the job of Commandant of a Mountain Warfare Training Team . . . I suppose I travelled some 40,000 miles in N. America. My H.Q. was at Jasper, Alberta, and there we trained—a magnificent country as you know. We lived largely in tents, snowholes, bush bivouacs, and igloos through the Canadian winter. But 40° F. dry cold is far preferable to the horrible damp cold of Scotland in winter. We had perfect powder snow and ski-ing like Davos and the Arlberg rolled into one, with peaks up to 12,000 ft. climbed . . . The Americans claim to have discovered a peak higher than Everest in the Amne Machin range on the borders of China and Tibet, so Bill House of the American A.C. and I have fixed a joint show as soon as possible after the war . . . It would really be rather humorous if Everest is not No. 1, but we shall use aircraft for a recce."

Then from a letter of 9th November, 1946

"It has been a magnificent year. First I spent two months in Switzerland. The weather was shocking for five weeks, I've never seen so much snow, 8-10 feet deep in the upper Rhone Valley at the end of March, but the last three weeks were superb. Belaieff (a new A.C.) and I did the Pennine traverse on ski. Zermatt, Cima di Jazzi, Bétémpst. Schwarzthor, Breithorn, Theodule, Staffélalp, Schönbühl, Col de Valpelline, Mont Brulé, to Arolla (descended from Col de Mont Brulé to Arolla in half an hour !), Cabane Val des Dix, La Lurette, Rosa Blanche, Verbier."

Writing to Roberts in January, 1948, Smythe apologises for a lapse in correspondence and continues,

"Two days after landing in England from Canada I set off on a lecture tour which lasted until Christmas, and I am still

engaged in answering the six months Matterhorn of correspondence which accumulated whilst we were in Canada. With luck I shall be down to the Hörnli next week with a Holland-Speaker rate of descent."

"Last year's show when we flew into the Lloyd George range in N.E. British Columbia was most entertaining even though the mountains weren't very difficult, as I've never before been in the midst of 25,000 sq. miles of completely unexplored, unmapped country with not even local natives present. Apart from that I had some good climbing in the Rockies including several first ascents, among them a rock peak near Jasper which turned out to be one of the finest rock climbs in the Rockies. Noel and I and a young American got up after two previous shows had failed . . ."

The impression that remains with one after a reading of these letters is that the early climbers were, I will not say more enthusiastic about their pastime, but much more vocal and eloquent about it than we are today.

They gave much more expression to their likes and dislikes of both persons and places. This, naturally, often led to trouble, but did fend off stagnation. Further, these men were conscious of being a small and rather exclusive group in society at large, and were therefore always concerned to maintain the standards of that group.

Personalities often appear in these letters, but always on points of what one might call mountaineering ethics. Neither fools nor humbugs were suffered gladly, but a love of the mountains and the wild places of nature, with a sense of humility in their presence, was a sure passport to fellowship.

Good letter writing is certainly a dying art. We have neither the time nor the patience to rhapsodise in detail about our adventures. A postcard carrying the briefest of messages is deemed sufficient.

This is a great pity, for it is in a holiday letter to a friend, often written with a glow of fresh air still on the writer's cheek, that one catches the true spirit.

In conclusion, much has necessarily had to be omitted from this brief selection, but this article will not have been written in vain if interest has been aroused, and members are impelled to call at the Club Library and read the whole collection for themselves.

As Mr. Squeers said in another connection, "Here's richness" !

ON THE HILLS

1954

Fox and Medley were in the Dauphiné but were frustrated by bad weather. They were stopped by deep snow near the final tower of Les Bans, but traversed Les Ecrins, going up by the south face and down by the north. After some difficulty in finding the route on the south face they thought they found a new one which involved the ascent of a 120 foot ice couloir with only 120 feet of rope.

Later with Oxtoby, Fox traversed the Chardonnet, going up by the Forbes Arête and down to the Argentère refuge. Bad weather prevented them from doing the north face of the Courtes, but they were able to do the Brenva route over Mont Blanc from the Col de la Fourche in very cold conditions.

Kelsey did the Aiguille du Tour climbs in the Graians and finally retreated from the Brenva face in deep snow. Watts, based on Arolla, after some early peaks, was confined to cols with snow and rain, but visited Prarayé where he found that Roberts and Davidson had signed the book in 1908.

H. Stembridge climbed on ski in April, in the Oetztal Alps, he did Similaun, Windacher Daunkogl, Wildspitz, Hoch Vernagtspitz and Brunnekogl.

Devenish, a one-time Yorkshire Rambler now living in Canada, climbed Mount Arrowsmith in Vancouver Island.

In the British Isles, Holmes did a long walking tour in the Hebrides in constant rain and Kelsey took a hasty trip along the Coolin Ridge.

Anderson, choosing a week-end in September with a full moon, did the Lakeland, 3,000 footers from the Little Langdale cottage in 19 hours; 50 miles and 12,000 feet of ascent. It has been alleged that in training for the event he climbed Pendle Hill 50 times before breakfast, but not all on one day.

Maude had a day of warm rock and sun-drenched climbing on Gimmer—in November.

1955

Fox and Oxtoby camped near Entrevès, Courmayeur. They did Mont Dolent from the Italian side, then tried the Aiguille de Leschaux but were driven down from the south ridge by a storm.



ZINAL ROTHORN

D. Smith

From then on it rained solidly for eight days, so they packed up and came home.

Anderson, Large, Smith, Tallon and B. Hartley trained by doing the Pigne d'Arolla, and enjoyed excellent climbing along the Skye-like rock ridge of the Petite Dent de Veisivi. After sufferings at the hands of the chronically smoky stove in the Cabane Bertol they crossed the Col d'Hérens to Zermatt. They traversed the Trifhorn to the Val d'Anniviers, climbed the Wellenkuppe and finished with a climb on Le Besso, which reminded them of the Cornish Cliffs at Bosigran. The big peaks were dangerous from new snow.

Fielding, with another party, camped at Arolla, climbed the Pigne and l'Evêque in perfect weather and did the circuit of Mont Blanc de Seilon from the Cabane de Dix in bad visibility. Nobody told him about Rifugio Aosta at the head of the Valpelline, wrecked by an avalanche in 1951, and, being in Italy, not rebuilt. Reaching the hut at dusk after crossing the Col de Tsa de Tsa the party spent the night brewing hourly cups of tea and burning what was left of the hut in what was left of the stove. After a smoky night in the Cabane Bertol they looked down 6,000 feet on to their tents from the summit of the Aiguille de la Tsa. They climbed the north Col of the Aiguilles Rouges, and did the traverse as far as Slingsby's Col. Although they were camping, Fielding's account of the party's daily doings often ends with the satisfied sentence, "down in time for dinner at the hotel."

Slingsby visited Mount Etna, in mild eruption to the north-east of the main crater, and went on to Stromboli where he found delightful sub-tropical conditions, on one side, with the mountain blowing steam gently into the sea on the other.

Fred Booth was in Pontresina, Wilson in the Bernina, Allen and Warsop in the Oetzal and Stubaital, all are reticent about their activities and it has been rumoured that they found the absence of mountain railways discouraging.

George Spenceley, as photographer and climber, took part in the Survey Expedition to South Georgia. He found the country like the top 9,000 feet of the Alps in winter. After a trip in an Argentine sealer in rough weather, he spent several weeks on the Kohl-Larsen Plateau and made two first ascents of major peaks well up to Alpine standards.

H. Stembridge climbed in the Lofotens, and Watts skied at Mürren early in the year.

Patchett was with the Anglo-French caving expedition to Labouiche in the Pyrenees.

Nearer home Anderson, in spite of holding decidedly adverse views about the so-called sport of "peak-bagging" spent a day in the Howgill Fells traversing all the tops over 1,750 feet with a high east wind blowing. He covered 22 miles with a total ascent of 6,300 feet.

1956

Wharldall, Anderson, Hartley, Tallon and Jones at Saas Fée again found snow conditions poor. They climbed the Alphübel, Portingrat, and the Egginer-Mittaghorn traverse. They crossed the Monte Moro Pass into Italy, three of them returning by the Theodule Pass and climbing the Breithorn before returning to Saas Fée by the Adler Pass.

The three Smiths, Decort, Haslam, Nicholson and Pat Stonehouse camped at Zermatt and got in some good climbing in spite of poor weather. Wilson and Fielding were in the Oberland and got six peaks. Michael Middleton was climbing in Norway.

F. and H. Stembridge and Godley skied at Verbier in January. Watts was at Gstaad in January and again in June; there was more snow on the Wasserngrat in June than there was when he arrived at Christmas.

Pot-holing meets in July, 1955, and again in July, 1956, were held at Clapham and on both occasions several parties explored the Lancaster Hole—Ease Gill System. This is undoubtedly one of the finest in the United Kingdom and on the Continental pattern. The meet report for July, 1956, gives the equipment needed for the route from Lancaster Pot to Ease Gill.

Main Entrance Lancaster Pot

- 3-35 foot ladders
- Ladder belay rope
- Belay rope for block.
- 1—200 foot life line
- Pulley block.

Ease Gill end of Route

- 1st Pitch 1—35 foot ladder
- 1—50 foot life line
- 1—belay rope.

- 2nd Pitch 1—35 foot ladder
- 1—50 foot life line
- 1—belay rope.

An additional 40 foot ladder would be needed for Stop Pot if the existing electron ladder should be removed or become unsafe. These details do not take into account the fixed iron ladders or fixed hand ropes.

R. M. Middleton has the following notes of a climb between two buttresses in the Twelve pins of Connemara at the Whitsun meet of the Irish Mountaineering Club.

"The first 400 feet were up to difficult standard and provided some delightful climbing with a wide choice of routes at quite a steep angle. Then came a wide ledge where we were joined by the other party whose route had petered out. The exit from the ledge involved a delicate step up to reach two good finger holds and a quick pull up to a small ledge; after that, on to a very exposed move over a little bulge which led to an excellent 30 foot wall with small but clear holds, and so after some 50 feet of scrambling to the top. Altogether a most enjoyable climb of 650-700 feet, up to very difficult standard; pitons were essential as belays."



CHIPPINGS

CLIMBING IN CLEVELAND.—That portion of the North Yorkshire Moors known as the Cleveland Hills had never, up to the last war, received much attention from the rock climber. There were of course the odd exceptions like E. E. Roberts, Barker and Evans, who in their solitary wanderings planned and executed routes on the virgin rocks they found ; but on the whole this paradise was spared the molestations of the multitude. This state of affairs remained until about 1950 when members of the post-war climbing generation, swept along by the general surge to the hills, sought an outlet for their pent-up energy nearer home than the Napes Ridges. They found it on their doorstep.

The obvious place to go was Wainstones because, except for a three quarter hour's walk, it is easy of access from public transport. These rocks lie on the west end of Hasty Bank which is just beyond Great Broughton, near Stokesley. Given Grid Reference 558034, O.S. Sheet 92 a Yorkshire Rambler will locate them no matter what the weather. The rock is of sandstone and there are about 30 climbs of all standards from which to choose. The average length of climbing is 35 feet, the rock is clean and offers holds and routes very akin in character to those of Lakeland climbs. They are friendly rocks and there is no better place to be on a summer's eve.

Little more than five minutes' walk from the Wainstones along Hasty Bank is the escarpment known as Ravenscar. This crag has been developed only recently, such development being in no small measure due to the herculean efforts of "bulldozer" Wharldall, who personally removed many tons of earth and loose rock from its ledges. These rocks, facing north lying at a high angle and offering climbs up to 85 feet, are a tough proposition. Yet their very aspect is a challenge to the bold which cannot be ignored and, although only 14 routes are recorded to date, there is no doubt that many more remain to be done. The view across the Vale of Cleveland is superb and, on one memorable occasion, the writer found himself above the clouds on Ravenscar.

The more aristocratic possessed of private transport naturally sought pastures more remote. Their destination lay through the village of Swainby along sleepy Scugdale until, opposite Scugdale Hall, on Scot Crag, Barker's Crag and Stony Wicks, they found solitude. They also found 150 climbs facing into the sun. The

rocks here, although of the same composition as those aforementioned, are entirely different in character. The holds are small and many of the climbs are strenuous, the average height of 25 feet is often thankfully regarded as enough.

These are the main outcrops, but others which cannot escape mention are Park Nab above Kildale, Eston Nab (Eston) and High Cliff near Guisborough. Such is the interest now shown in all these groups that it only remains to be said that certain members of the Cleveland Mountaineering Club have been sufficiently inspired to compile a guide to the climbs in Cleveland now published and reviewed in the later pages of this Journal.

Maurice Wilson.

HIMALAYAN TRAVELLER BURIED IN THE LAKE DISTRICT.—The acquisition by the Club Library of Kenneth Mason's "Abode of Snow," published by Rupert Hart-Davis, 1955 at 25s., a book which will undoubtedly become a standard work of reference, is doubly interesting to students of Himalayan history and of the Lake District.

A book of the same name ('Abode of Snow' but with the definite article prefixed) was written by Andrew Wilson in 1875 and published by Blackwood and Sons ; a second edition quickly followed. *Alpine Journal* VII contains a lengthy review of this at pages 338 to 342. by internal evidence written by D. W. Freshfield, who was the Editor of the *A.J.* at that time (1876). It is a great pity that Mason makes no reference to this book or to its author.

Wilson was not a climber and in fact latterly was a semi-invalid. He was the son of John Wilson (1804-1875) who, with his wife, was a noted missionary in India and was the founder of education for women in India. Both father and son figure at considerable length in the *Dictionary of National Biography*.

The son was a well-known journalist in India and also in China and travelled and wrote a great deal ; much of his work appeared in *Blackwood*. He spent the last years of his life at Howtown, Ullswater, and his grave, bearing the mention of his "The Abode of Snow," is on the south side of the Old Church of St. Martin in Martindale. He was born in 1831 and died in 1881.

W. Allsup.

WETHERLAM. LARGE SCALE O.S. SHEET PLACE-NAME "HEN TOR."—This is properly HEN TAE in dialect, i.e. "a HEN'S TOE" from the shape of the forked gill below. In this instance the gill is actually named HEN FOOT BECK (O.S. 125,000 Sheet 35/20.).

This has been carefully checked by old Coniston residents of whom two generations were miners and quarrymen, and they are quite definite on this point. Also confirmed by J. Coulton, a pre-1914 Barrow/Coniston climber who farmed Cockely Beck in the nineteen twenties.

For a similar place-name see Y.R.C. Journal, Vol. II page 344 where, in a review of L. J. Oppenheimer's "The Heart of Lakeland," T. Gray, the then Editor, criticised the new name of "Bowfell Buttress," stating that an old local name similar to the Wetherlam instance already existed.

There are no "TORS" in the actual Lake District; a Torpenhow and a Cleator exist on the fringes as place names for villages. See English Place-Name Society "Cumberland" Volume Nos. XXI and XXII.

W. Allsup.

TWO RAMBLERS ON THE SAME PAGE OF THE TIMES.—Oliver Stonehouse sent us a cutting from a page of The Times of Tuesday, 13th March, 1956, and asked if this was a record.

At the head of the page is a photograph of five men with beards standing by a station wagon talking to two men without beards. Under the photograph is the caption —

"Bearded students from Oxford and Cambridge who left London last September by car on a journey to Singapore and back being greeted on their arrival in Singapore. From the left they are T. P. Slessor, W. H. M. Nott, J. A. Cowell, P. J. Murphy (partly hidden by a well-wisher), and N. Newbery."

The double column immediately below this picture carries the headline —

SETTLING IN ON SOUTH GEORGIA

Survey Expedition's Preparations for
Plateau Journey

and near the bottom of the first column is the passage:—

"This meant that Bomford (first surveyor) and Spenceley (photographer) would be able to make an acclimatisation trip

with Captain Hauge of the sealer Albatross next time she was in, and that we could all count on being put ashore at the head of Fortuna Bay early in October for the start of the Kohl-Larsen plateau journey."

H.G.W.

GOUFFRE BERGER, DEEPEST POT-HOLE.—France has produced a cavern to beat the Dent de Crolles of Chevalier and Pierre St. Martin of Loubens. It is not far from Grenoble, its waters running to Sassenage, four miles off and is near the wild gorges of Engins, on the plateau of Sornin-en-Vercors.

It is called after its discoverer and first assailant, M. Jo Berger. The Grenoble men have delivered assaults of a type which make ours into child's play. In July, 1955, nine nights were spent underground. The first was at 500 m. (1,640 feet), reached in six to eight hours over prepared ground, and tackle ran out at 900 m. (2,953 feet) on the 8th day.

In August, 1956, even more nights were endured and the water was pursued to an impasse by MM. Potie, Schneider, Gorby and Aldo at 1,135 m. (3,724 feet). Incredible! A rather vague account with superb pictures appears in the Paris-Match of 22nd September 1956.

A furious dispute has arisen between Grenoble and Lyons, the Maire d' Engins having forbidden access to the latter.

Revision of Depths.

La Preta was re-explored by the Mabans in 1954 and 26 m. added, but the total depth was knocked down from 637 m. to 594 m. (1,949 feet.).

The difference in level of the *Dent de Crolles Cavern* is from 1,333 m. (1953 survey) at Guiers Mort to 1,936 m. at the top as surveyed, net 602 m. (1,978 feet) some 50 m. less than estimated. *C.N.S. Bulletin, 4th yr. No. 4.*

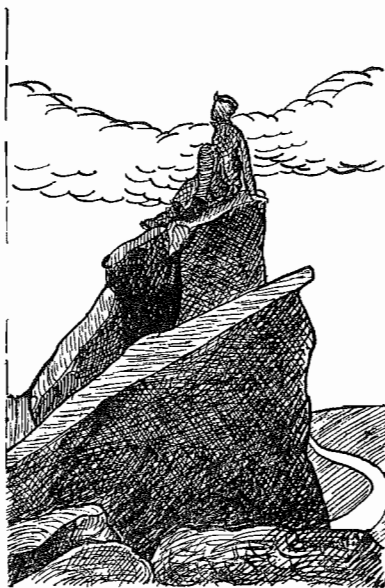
One must expect that the Gouffre Berger will suffer later reduction but such cannot affect the massive figure seriously.

E.E.R.

LARGE PARTIES.—Safe as the mountains can be in the best of weather, the enthusiasts who tempt novices in bands on high mountains always run the risk of losing one or two. The sad results of 28 instead of 29 at tea in Glen Nevis, and of a School excursion to Scaffell are fresh in memory.

The Christmas 1954 disaster on Ben Nevis emphasises how truly Alpine the great Mountain can be. Such conditions insist that the parties be small, independent, and each with a leader going his own way. The great East slope of the Ben is easily found if the N.E. Buttress is given a wide berth, but while the main slope will go well, the slopes leading from it down to the left into Corrie Lias must be expected to be hard and require cutting, though they may look ideal for glissading.

E.E.R.



CAVE EXPLORATION

THE supply of classical type pot-holes in Britain has quite run out, but the number of caverns has vastly increased, and the amount of clearing, digging, and using explosives is extraordinary and sometimes remarkably successful.

I. NEW DISCOVERIES

Clare, Fisherstreet, Doolin Cave. (Starts from Fisherstreet Pot next to the road) Robertson, Ballister, Watkins, Toms, Bristol University, 1953-55. A great discovery of easy access. 220 yards down to sea level, upstream long passages, 2,700 yards, 500 yards, 700 yards. Plan in Bristol University Spel. Proc. VII 3. The pot is where a dead cow defeated Gowing and Roberts in 1936.

Clare, Lisdoonvarna, Pollcollaun System. (Four miles north of Lisdoonvarna, south end of Pollacapple Hill). Articles and map by Acke & Jenkins, Bristol University Spel. Proc. VII 1, 2, 3. Four roughly parallel passages along the master joints, 196° two of great length, $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles, say, with six entrances. Danger of flooding.

Clare, Coolagh River Cave (Polldonough). 1952 Bendall, Pitts and others Bristol University S.S. Two miles surveyed. Evidently they passed Bartlett and Balcombe's point. Bristol University Spel. Proc. VI 3 with plan.

Clare, Grogan West Cave. (East of Pollacapple Ridge, four miles from Lisdoonvarna). 1955 Preston and others Bristol University S.S. Passage of 1,500 yards. Close under surface. Two entrances, 15 foot pitch. Few drops. Follows master joints. 196° .

Ballygonau Cave. (By the road three miles East of Lisdoonvarna). Active swallet, 160 yards passage to muddy chamber 60 feet high and deep canal. Threequarters of a mile East is Pollballyshanny. Twenty-seven foot pot and short passages.

Leitrim, Manor Hamilton, Teampol.—Holgate, C.P.C. and others have found a 200 yard crawl at the foot of the main pitch.

Fermanagh, Killesher, Pollnagollum (of the Boats). East 1954—Holgate C.P.C. found a small passage of 30 yards (not a crawl) past the big rock fall in the 1939 end chamber, and entered the main stream again for 70 yards as far as a deep pool with low roof. There was foam six feet up the walls, so the 80 yards crawl climbed to in 1949 is well above but now covered.

Killesher, Cat's Hole. A pound of fluorescein was put into the beck above and the Marble Arch Great Gallery was distinctly green 24 hours later. The rising below Hanging Rock is likely to be from Legalough.

Killesher, Polla Crindle is 140 yards from Polldownlog bearing 205°.

Nidderdale, Lofthouse, New Goyden Passage.—1956. Excavated by Craven Pot Hole Men in the Nidd valley between Thorpe House and High Thorpe. Small hole in the bed leads into the main passages below Goyden Pot, half mile estimated, 40 foot ladder required. Also discretion with gamekeeper and tenants.

Wharfedale, Kettlewell, Douk Cave and Providence Pot.—1953-55. September, 1953. Fluorescein in a Dowker Gill swallet came out in Douk Cave. Traced to obscure point 350 yards in, and followed 155 yards to a siphon. Craven Pot Hole men worked forward during the winter in a very difficult passage half mile dead straight towards Dowker Gill. May, 1954, N. and D. Brindle and R. Powell dived through, changed, and in 16 hours carried a survey beyond Bridge Cavern. Entry was forced after much digging in Dowker Gill into a system named *Providence Pot*. May, 1955, the Brindles, the Powells, Clarkson and Hardy C.P.C. blew open a tight crawl from the Terminal Chamber and completed 450 yards, total join with the Bridge Chamber.

This huge master joint cave of a mile or so is a geological event. Brodrick's 50 year old idea that a line of weakness along a master joint may run for miles continually is justified. Tunnel Cave, South Wales supports it.

Dowker Gill Passage. A scaling pole has been used inside and in the Providence area and short chambers with fine formations found.

Wharfedale, Grassington Moor, Lunar Pot. (Black Edge, altitude 1,450 feet.) 80 feet.

Somerset, Priddy, Swildon's Hole III.—1954. F. G. Balcombe and R. E. Davies, Cave Diving Group, with Four supporters went through the sump into Swildon's II, and leaving them for hours dived through Sump II into the once visited Little Bell and Great Bell. Entering a new Bell, St. John's, they finished Swildon's III, 15 feet under water down a 30° slope in complete darkness jammed between mud and roof, 35 yards direct from Sump II.

Breconshire, Glyn Tawe, Ogof Ffynnon Ddu. More passages in this great network have been found and another exit in flood time made possible.

Breconshire, Glyn Tawe, Tunnel Cave (near Dan-yr-Ogof, water supply to the farm). 27th December, 1953. Boulder choke at 50 yards beyond the dam in a small chamber forced. Huge passage 30 feet by 30 feet ran 150 yards North, then 100 yards North West. Said to go a mile and rise 380 feet.

Glyn Tawe, Pant Mawr Pot. Extensions to 1,000 yards and to a total depth of 200 feet have been found at the bottom.

Derbyshire, Castleton, Giants Hole. The North Midland Group B.S.A. have done an enormous amount of work with promising results.

II OTHER EXPEDITIONS

Kirby Lonsdale, Lancaster Pot. July, 1954. Many members visited the labyrinth and a party of five made the journey through to Easegill County Pot climbing two pitches.

Clare Lisdoonvarna. Several clubs have visited the region and many trips have been made into Faunarooksa, Coolagh River, Polldubh. E.E.R.

III CORRESPONDENCE

G.B. Cave, Charterhouse. Shortly after the publication of Journal No. 27 the following letter was received from the Secretary of the University of Bristol Spelaeological Society.

"Dear Sir,

The attention of the Committee has been drawn to an article which appeared in Volume VIII, Number 27 (1954) of your "Journal" in which a number of statements were made relating to G.B. Cave, Charterhouse, which the committee feel are inaccurate and misleading. I have been asked to point out the following facts —

I. The Society was well aware of the increased danger to cave formations which was inherent in the post-war wave of popularity of caving. Every effort was made to preserve the cave from vandals, but the locks over the entrance were continually broken, often with explosive, until the owners of the cave made the present regulations, and erected the concrete pill-box which at present guards the entrance, to preserve the formations.

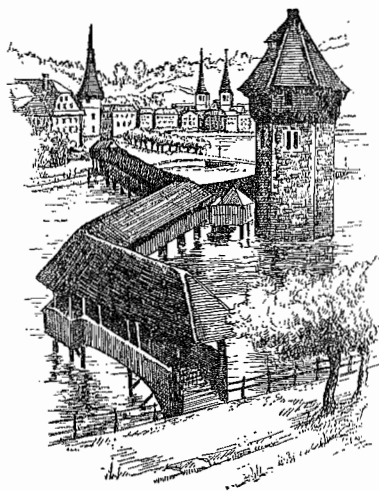
II. The conditions of entry which are at present in force have been laid down by the owners, the Axbridge Rural District Council, as the only alternative they were prepared to offer to sealing the cave altogether so that no further damage could occur. This Society has co-operated with the owners in accepting these conditions, as we felt that it was better that the cave should be open to a limited number of cavers rather than closed completely.

III. The list of clubs which are allowed limited access to the cave by the owners includes the C.R.G., to which most caving societies are affiliated.

I trust that this letter will help reduce the confusion that apparently exists about the whole question of access to G.B.

Yours faithfully,

D. A. S. Robertson,
(Hon. Sec.) ”



REVIEWS

BRISTOL UNIVERSITY SPELAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY PROCEEDINGS, VII, Nr. 3 July, 1956.

Of its 70 pages, 48 are given to a most valuable account and discussion of the caves near Lisdoonvarna (Clare) by Messrs. Ollier and Tratman, accompanied by a map, 925 yards to the inch, showing the numerous surveys of the last few years, for all of which no praise is too high.

The district includes many passages of great length as well as Baker's Pollnagollum. The authors' experience of these is evidently considerable, and they are refreshingly free from dependence on American ideas of caves formed under different conditions, and from the mesmeric word *Phreatic*. Master joints and water tables take their right places, and we are glad to see they note the importance of seepage down walls.

Nos. 1 and 2 record more antiquity, but Irish work, and digs in August Hole, Great Tynings, and Rhino Rift, etc.

E.E.R.

CLIMBS IN CLEVELAND.

It is indeed a pleasure to find such an excellent guide to the Sandstone Climbs in the Cleveland country. The lay-out, binding, print and size all have their appeal to a climber.

The Historical notes are of considerable interest to one of the party which spent much time on these crags in 1912 and 13 when Canon Newton E. Creighton and C. E. and D. Burrow spent many happy weekends there.

Almost all the names given to routes are new; The Sheep walk was Grass Gap, The Tower has now become The Steeple. The Needle being so obviously the Needle the name could never be changed.

I like the choice of names, they intrigue the imagination and are delightfully descriptive and I'm left wondering which route it was that was known as Dale View, on the Wainstones.

If I remember rightly there were many more routes on the face of Raven's Scar, but time and weather soon alter such soft rock.

Mr. Maurice F. Wilson deserves the thanks and praise of all climbers who visit that unique area.

D.B.

KANCHENJUNGA—THE UNTRODDEN PEAK. Hodder & Stoughton, 25s. 182 pp. 37 plates. Charles Evans.

This account by our Honorary Member Charles Evans is fully worthy of the magnificent achievement it records. The details of the climb are easy to follow and the crisp clear writing gives a vivid impression with a remarkable economy of words. The pace of the account leads on the reader to finish the book at a sitting leaving only a regret that there is not more of it. The appendices contain much information useful for further expeditions and the Publishers have been more than usually generous with the allowance of plates.

R.E.C.

IN MEMORIAM

Since the publication of the last Journal the following members have died: F. H. Barstow, T. R. Burnett, C. E. Burrow, G. A. Fisher, A. E. Horn, F. Leach, L. Moore, J. C. Walker and W. D. Wills.

FRANK HAWKSWORTH BARSTOW

Frank Barstow died in October, 1955. Elected in 1907, he shared in many expeditions before the First War. Thus he came into the heroic age of Gaping Gill ladder descents—and reascents, was one of the flood bound party of 1909, and was in the Skye camp.

A most skilful pot-holer, he reached the far end of Mere Gill Hole on the second descent in 1914.

It was characteristic of Barstow that he was quite content to fight till he was wounded and to serve as a private. He did not return to climbing but took the greatest interest in hunting on foot. Under his Secretaryship and with his charm of manner, the Bilton Beagles flourished, also he was Honorary Member of the Otterhounds.

A. E. HORN

Arthur Ernest Horn was elected to the Club in 1901 and to the Committee a few years later. He was Honorary Treasurer for 16 years and President 1931-32.

He was never known to talk about his exploits so few members realise how many seasons Arthur spent in Switzerland and the amount of training he undertook to acquire real fitness before he left for his beloved Alps, to quote his own words "So that he would not hold back his pet Guides at Chamonix or Zermatt."

He was keenly interested in Potholing devoting his zeal for accuracy largely to surveying.

The early plans of the huge ramifications of Gaping Gill were due to his working so closely with Dr. Rule.

His innate common sense and thought for others was shown in a high degree when he was one of the party trapped for 40 hours in Gaping Gill by the great flood in 1909.

Horn had a most delightful and unique sense of humour, always kindly, and often against himself and he will long be remembered as the prime instigator of the joyous and intricate "rags" at the Hill Inn meets in the early 30's.

Many members still talk of the warm welcome and the great encouragement he gave them when they were first elected to the Club.

C. E. BURROW

Charles Edward Burrow joined the Club in 1919 and in the same year was elected on to the Committee. His sterling qualities were instantly recognised and his value to the Club is shown by the fact that during

the 35 years of his membership there were only two or three years when he was not an office holder, as a Committee man, Secretary, Vice President and President in succession.

His love of the hills and crags began at a very early age and when only 19 he was a founder member of the Yorkshire Speleological Association and long before he joined the Y.R.C. he had made a name for himself as a keen Potholer and a safe rock climber. Several first explorations and not a few early variations on Lake District Rocks were carried out under his leadership.

Leading the first ascent of the Store Shagastölstind very early in the season of 1923 was an exploit that gave him enormous joy and so was the discovery and exploration of the flood entrance into Gaping Gill in 1908.

His delightful friendliness, charm, wit and understanding were outstanding qualities which endeared him to all his fellow members.

FRED LEACH

Fred Leach, elected in 1892 (the club's first year) took a leading part in club affairs in the early days. He was secretary 1893-94, served on committee 1894-96, 1906-08 and 1913-19. He was Vice-President 1908-10 and President 1925-27. As a young man Leach was a keen rock climber and was leading parties up Moss Gill and the North Climb on Pillar not very long after the first ascents had been made, and when these climbs were still regarded with a certain amount of awe by the average cragsman of the period. He took part in the early pothole explorations, was a strong walker and an enthusiastic photographer.

In the passing of Fred Leach the club has lost a link with its earliest years and one of the small band who laid the solid foundations on which the club has since prospered.

LEONARD MOORE

Leonard Moore joined the club together with his brother Lewis and, although his name does not appear as having occupied any of the club's offices, he gave his brother considerable assistance in the latter's duties as Treasurer.

He retained his interest in the hills to the end, spending a long succession of family holidays in Dentdale where he was a well-known and respected figure. He was a very active man until he reached the age of 80 when he had the first warning of advancing age. In spite of this he spent as much time as possible in the country and fully enjoyed his later holidays at Lastingham and Rosedale.

He died peacefully on 3rd March, 1956, in his 84th year after a short illness and so passed away the last of our remaining founder members.

"News of the death of C. I. W. Fox with two Sherpas in the Himalaya has reached the Editor too late for inclusion in this Journal. A full notice will appear in No. 29."

CLUB MEETS

1954.—There were thirteen Club meets, three being at Low Hall Garth. The year saw the creation of a drying room and the end of the florence cooker. A policy encouraging the use of the hut by specified non-members was put into operation, with great benefit to the hut finances, and perhaps showing the way to effecting improvements with little cost to the Club funds.

The cottage warden gave keen attention to its welfare and development, and encouraged other members to do so.

The first meet of the year at Harden, Austwick, was dedicated to the President's first visit to Bar Pot and the assistant Secretary's to Gaping Gill. Other members used the time in less praiseworthy fashion practising for the Monte Carlo rally.

The January meet at the Hill Inn had about 30 members attending, splendid meals as usual, and blustery weather with snow showers. Walks were done to Great Coum and to Penygent and elsewhere.

There was the usual outdoor after-dinner tour on the Saturday which was given a novel air by the early removal of an essential clue in the chain. This spread the hunting packs far and wide, and was much enjoyed by those who weren't involved.

Nine members attended the February meet at Low Hall Garth and enjoyed one good day in snow in the Great End gullies.

The High Force meet in March was well attended by about 20 members and guests and walks done to Mickle Gell and Caldron Snout. Roberts led an expedition to investigate the sinks at White Force.

At various times during the Easter week-end about 20 members were in Glencoe, the greater part in camp; and in the main they enjoyed fine weather and good views with numerous expeditions, but little snow.

The next meet was intended as a hardening process for younger members, being a seven peaks walk between Buckden and Dent. The hardening process was started by the Landlord at the Inn, and the main party was glad to be away by 6.30 a.m. Twelve completed the walk with four others doing slightly shortened versions. Morbid sightseers were attracted to Dent and there were finally 24 present. The best time was about 15 hours. Thanks are due to those who surprised the walkers with their catering at the intermediate feeding points. A memorable meet.

The Committee congratulates itself on the Skye week at Whitsuntide, having chosen the best place in Britain for weather. Twelve camped at Coruisk and suffered from heat, midges, a little rain and some wind. Most parts of the Coolin Ridge were visited at one time or another during the week, whilst some sampled the delights of idling on the shore. Camp life was agreeably primitive, there was a bulk supply of kippers and a fishy atmosphere.

The June meet was at Low Hall Garth.

In July there was a turn up of 19 at Braida Garth to do Rowton Pot. There was a big stream running, but Fox and Wharldall, undismayed, performed

many aquatic evolutions below whilst the remainder gossiped on the Bridge. Ultimately there was a retreat to Notts Pot in a thick fog, but this also proved very wet indeed and no attempt was made on it.

The August Bank Holiday joint meet at Beudy Mawr was thinly attended.

Later in August there was a small meet at Low Hall Garth.

The joint meet at Robertson Lamb Hut in September had 17 Ramblers to try the new luxuries at the hut, but atrocious weather. The small amount of climbing done was more akin to pot-holing; nevertheless, it was a satisfying meet and comfortably organised.

The year's last meet was at Harden with weather typical of the year, and about 15 members attending. They entered Bar Pot but found the passage flooded at T Junction and no possibility of entering the Main Chamber.

The hut Warden held his annual feast at the re-named Three Shires Hotel followed by a conducted tour of the local night life.

About 46 attended the after dinner meet at Ramsgill on a day of low cloud. A large party took a slow stroll to Goyden and How Stean. Another party disappeared boldly into the mist and were next heard of disturbing the Presidential tea with demands for transport from up the valley. Flushed by this success they also claimed to have bagged their peak.

1955.—Fourteen Club meets were held with the usual active attendance. Two of these were at Low Hall Garth, where the standard of comfort continued to rise. One member paid the Warden's efforts the compliments of remaining for fifteen successive nights.

During the year G. B. Spencely had to relinquish the Wardenship temporarily. A. Tallon earned the gratitude of the Club for carrying on the duties keenly and capably.

The first meet of the year, in December, was at Levisham. Saturday was warm and sunny, one party walking to Goathland and back. Sunday showed wet snow and rain. Some people visited the Bridestones and afterwards all party members arrived at the Saltersgate Inn and sat in very close conference.

The January meet was at the Hill Inn with thirty-five attending, two parties doing the Three Peaks. The Saturday after dinner period was taken more restfully than usual with a photographic competition and sing-song. An award for the best climbing photograph was made to G. B. Spenceley, and for a pot-holing subject to A. Humphreys. No award given for singing.

A party of eighteen arrived at Low Hall Garth in February attracted by the prospect of Driscoll's catering, or a heavy fall of snow. Saturday was magnificent and a large party trudged through thick snow via Rossett Gill to Great End, where further progress in the soft snow of the gullies was inefficient. Driscoll's dinner was planned for 7 p.m. and the people returning at midnight were very well received in the circumstances.

There was a climbing practice at Almscliffe in March, the total attendance being about five.

The main March meet was at Low Row with fourteen attending. The weather was brilliant, with considerable hard snow on the tops. On the Saturday a line was taken on the North side of the valley to Keld, and on Sunday along the South side.

The Easter meet was in Glen Lyon, nine in the hotel and a solitary camper. The party searched desparately for ski-ing snow but were unlucky and reduced to walking. Generally the weather gave clear mornings, but very thick afternoons. On the Saturday the party climbed Schiehallion, and on Sunday having received careful instructions from Roberts, made a clean miss on Ben Lawers. Amends were made the next day however, when two parties traversed Ben Lawers and the head of the Finn Glen in thick weather and in opposite directions, making an accurate rendezvous on the top of Ben Lawers.

In May, under promise of a longish day over the Pennine 2,500's, a party of 21 stayed in Dufton and were fortunate in a beautiful day for the traverse Southward from Cross Fell to Mickle Fell with an evening return on the lip of High Cup Nick.

Since it had recently become news that G. B. Spenceley was joining the expedition to South Georgia, the evening was largely taken up with members drawing generously on their inexperience to advise him on his forthcoming tribulations.

At Whitsuntide, there was a camp on the shore at Coruisk for the second year in succession, the weather being even better than last year and hardships non-existent, except those due to excessive heat. Nevertheless, Fox, Spenceley and a guest did the main ridge to Sligachan, returning the following day over Blaven. Generally there was considerable activity in all directions up to and along the ridge.

In camp the party of 20 divided itself into those who toiled and those who only spun yarns. In the evening the bottle circulated freely and by the end of the week it was noted that the party was short of sleep—the result of Alpine starts, late returns and the President's addiction to night poaching.

One Sunday in June, 12 members took to the jungle at Guiscliffe. All known climbs were done and one new one—Spiral.

The July meet at Lancaster Hole attracted sixteen, and the weather made it pleasant to stay outside. Most of the party entered the pot on Saturday, but enthusiasm waned in the Sunday heat and a large body of opinion voted for idling in Ease Gill. In contrast to this, five members made a rapid passage through to Ease Gill despite some doubts about the route. A very fine performance in the circumstances.

Bank Holiday at Low Hall Garth was dedicated to the Lakeland 3,000's. In the event, only F. D. Smith completed the round, 18 hours 50 minutes, start to finish. Other members did a large part of the round and were grateful for the successful catering arrangements.

Reports of the Brothers Water meet in September say that generally it was rather idle. A few younger members climbed but their elders are said to have spent too much time on Striding Edge admiring feminine rather than scenic

beauty. In the evening local dart players were happy to earn their drinks at the Ramblers' expense.

Nine members attended the joint meet at Robertson Lamb Hut in September. The weather was mixed, but climbing was obtained on both days on Gimmer, Pavay Ark and White Gill.

North East Yorkshire had the usual meet when 17 arrived at Egton Bridge. On Saturday a perfect day, the main party went round the head of Glaisdale and returned through Arnecliffe woods. On Sunday there was a visit to Mallyan Spout where the President took the opportunity given by the stream to give a brief demonstration of the back crawl.

The hut Warden held his annual banquet at Elterwater on New Year's Day.

In October, an expedition, half volunteers and half conscripts, led by Wharldall, discovered the Cheviots. A very pleasant traverse of the Cheviot was carried out in splendid weather, some members climbing on Hen Hole.

1956.—Fourteen Club Meets were held, and showed a rising trend of attendances.

The after-dinner meet at Kilnsey was enormous and expeditions derived from the 85 members present covered Penygent, Malham, Great Whernside and several local caves. Later C. R. Evans gave a fascinating commentary on his colour films of the Kangchenjunga expedition. Finally the large, democratic, non-technical Projection Committee fused the lights.

The January meet at the Hill Inn unearthed a number of annual attenders to provide a total attendance of 40. A colour film competition was won by H. Haslam, who also developed a fine colour during subsequent revels in the barn.

The Cottage was overflowing and exceedingly cheerful for the February meet: no complaint could be made of either the weather or Driscoll's excellent catering. Saturday saw an amazingly early start, and member frolicked in sunshine on Esk Hause and in the gullies of Great End and Crinkle Crag. Sunday was again warm but distinguished mainly by a pleasant idleness.

The day meet at Brimham (11th March) drew only eight, but included a remarkable effort by the President.

The Easter Meet in Glen Nevis was blessed by four days of almost unbroken sunshine and splendid views. The meet was widespread, the Himalayan Team luxuriating on the summit, others suffering hard frost in the Glen, and the President and some friends living a cycle ride away in the town. A spartan routine prevailed, and great activity was observed in the gullies and on the ridges particularly by the Himalayans.

A one-day potholing training meet was held on 15th April at Newby Moss. and drew a mixed crew of greybeards and novices to burrow around in Pillar Pot and Fluted Hole. A fortnight later there was a meet proper at Marble Steps. A crowd of members ultimately became wedged in the lower passages, but were coaxed out by the imminence of closing time.

The Scottish Meet at Whitsun began in Inverness, whence a party of 24 travelled by 'bus to Dundonnell. All awoke early next day and made a concerted attack on An Teallach, the traverse of the ridge being much enlivened by mist and snow. On the next day the meet decamped to Inchnadamff, with a few pleasant hours on Stac Polly en route. From the new camp parties traversed Suilven and Canisp (from Little Assynt), Quinag (in a gale), and Ben More Assynt and Conival. Some members were perplexed by the limestone of Traligill. On the whole, a very enjoyable meet despite indifferent weather.

A total of 25 walkers turned out for the Cleveland Lyke Wake Walk, together with 10 supporting members distributed as victuallers along the route. Despite low cloud and occasional rain all but two completed the course of 40 miles; the first man arrived in just under 12 hours, and three others in under 13. All enjoyed excellent hospitality at the Raven Hall Hotel.

The weekend of July 13th-15th saw extensive activity in the Lancaster Pot—Ease Gill system, including the traverse of the through route by three parties. A great number of flash bulbs were expended.

The Bank Holiday meet at the Cottage took place in doubtful weather, but a considerable number of routes were climbed, including some in Deepdale.

The Club's first climbing meet in Cleveland took place on September 2nd, and drew 11 members to climb on the gritstone outcrops of Scugdale.

Many members enjoyed the hospitality of Harry Spilsbury and the Wayfarer's Club at R.L.H. in late September, despite high wind, rain and flying trees.

On October 11th Mrs. Monica Jackson gave an extremely enjoyable lecture on "The Scottish Ladies' Himalayan Expedition."

A meet originally convened at the "Bull Hotel," Sedbergh was modified to suit the underground enthusiasts, and in addition to much energetic moor-walking, a determined effort was made on Lost John's system. However, the pot was exceptionally wet and it proved impossible to proceed beyond the bottom of the 'Battleaxe' pitch, except perhaps in an irreversible fashion.

On November 30th members were entertained by an inspiring and well illustrated lecture by G. B. Spenceley on "The South Georgia Survey Expedition," from which he had recently returned.

The December meet at Cray drew 14 members to walk in poor weather.

The year as a whole was marred only by an accident to D. Holmes in Lancaster Pot. Holmes is now making a slow but steady recovery. We have once more to thank A. Tallon and his henchmen for continued improvement of the Cottage, extending now even to a kind of Club C.W.S. of tinned provisions.

CLUB PROCEEDINGS

1954.—The weekend meets were: January 10th-17th, Hill Inn, Chapel-le-Dale; February 19th-21st, Low Hall Garth; March 19th-21st, High Force; Easter, Glencoe; May 14th-16th, Buckden and Dent; Whitsun, Skye (Coruisk); June 25th-27th, Low Hall Garth; July 16th-18th, Rowton Pot; July 31st-August 3rd, Nant Peris (Rucksack Club Hut); August 27th-29th, Low Hall Garth; September 25th-26th, Langdale, R.L.H.; October 22nd-24th, Gaping Gill; December 10th-12th, Hawaby.

The club membership in 1954 amounted to 162 members.

We regret to record the deaths of C. A. Fisher and W. D. Wills.

The Annual General Meeting was held at the Hotel Metropole, Leeds, on 20th November, when the officers for 1954-55 were elected: President, H. L. STEMBRIDGE; Vice-Presidents: F. W. STEMBRIDGE and R. E. CHADWICK; Hon. Treasurer, S. MARSDEN; Hon. Secretaries, J. E. CULLINGWORTH and E. C. DOWNHAM; Hon. Librarian, H. L. STEMBRIDGE; Hon. Editor, H. G. WATTS; Hon. Assistant Editor, R. E. CHADWICK; Hon. Cottage Warden, G. B. SPENCELEY; Committee, J. M. BARR, F. S. BOOTH, W. R. LOFTHOUSE, J. LOVETT, D. MCKELVIE, O. STONEHOUSE.

At the 41st Annual Dinner which followed, the President, H. L. Stembridge was in the Chair and the principal guest was Mr. C. R. Cooke. Kindred clubs were represented by: F. C. Mayo, Alpine Club; C. Dodgson, Scottish Mountaineering Club; H. R. C. Carr, Midland Association of Mountaineers; J. E. Seel, Wayfarers' Club; H. Brown, Bradford Pothole Club; J. D. Grayson, Derbyshire Pennine Club; R. McGregor, Leeds University Climbing Club; A. Earnshaw, Gritstone Club.

1955.—The weekend meets were: January 21st-23rd, Hill Inn, Chapel-le-Dale; February 18th-20th, Low Hall Garth; March 6th, Almscliffe; March 18th-20th, Low Row; Easter, Glen Lyon; May 6th-8th, Dufton; Whitsun, Skye (Coruisk); June 26th, Guisecliffe; July 8th-10th, Lancaster Pot; July 29th-August 2nd, Low Hall Garth; September 2nd-4th, Brothers Water; September 23rd-24th, Langdale, R.L.H.; October 28th-30th, Egton Bridge; December 9th-11th, Upper Wharfedale.

The membership of the club in 1955 was 163.

We record with deep regret the deaths of: C. E. Burrow, F. H. Barstow, A. E. Horn, F. Leach, J. C. Walker.

The Annual General Meeting was held at the Hotel Metropole, Leeds, on November 19th. The following officers for 1955-56 were elected: President, H. L. STEMBRIDGE; Vice-Presidents, R. E. CHADWICK and G. B. SPENCELEY; Hon. Treasurer, S. MARSDEN; Hon. Secretaries, J. E. CULLINGWORTH and E. C. DOWNHAM; Hon. Librarian, H. L. STEMBRIDGE; Hon. Editor, H. G. WATTS; Hon. Assistant Editor, R. E. CHADWICK; Hon. Cottage Secretary, G. B. SPENCELEY; Hon. Cottage Warden, A. TALLON; Committee, C. R. ALLEN, F. S. BOOTH, W. R. LOFTHOUSE, J. LOVETT, D. MCKELVIE, R. B. WHARLDALL.

At the 42nd Annual Dinner which followed, the President, H. L. Stembridge, was in the Chair and the principal guest was Dr. R. C. Evans, who was elected an honorary member of the Club by acclamation. Kindred Clubs were represented by: H. R. C. Carr, Alpine Club and Climbers' Club; T. Nicholson, Scottish Mountaineering Club; J. F. Caldwell, Rucksack Club; K. Tarbuck, Wayfarers' Club; W. E. Kendrick, Fell and Rock Climbing Club; K. Andrews, Griststone Club; A. Gemmell, Northern Pennine Club.

1956.—The weekend meets were: January 27th-29th, Hill Inn, Chapel-le-Dale; February 24th-26th, Low Hall Garth; March 11th, Brimham; Easter, Glen Nevis; April 15th, Newby Moss; April 27th-29th, Marble Steps; Whitsun, Dundonnell and Inchnadamff; June 15th-17th, Cleveland Lyke Wake Walk; July 13th-15th, Lancaster Pot and Ease Gill; August 3rd-7th, Low Hall Garth; September 2nd, Scugdale; September 28th-30th, Langdale (R.L.H.); October 19th-21st, Sedbergh and Lost John's Pot; December 7th-9th, Cray.

The membership of the Club in 1956 was 170.

We regret to record the deaths of T. R. Burnett and L. Moore.

The Annual General Meeting was held at the Hotel Metropole, Leeds, on 17th November. The following officers for 1956-57 were elected: President, S. MARSDEN; Vice-Presidents, G. B. SPENCELEY and C. W. JORGENSEN; Hon. Treasurer, S. MARSDEN; Hon. Secretaries, C. R. ALLEN and E. C. DOWNHAM; Hon. Librarian, H. L. STEMBRIDGE; Hon. Editor, H. G. WATTS; Hon. Assistant Editor, R. E. CHADWICK; Hon. Cottage Secretary, G. B. SPENCELEY; Hon. Cottage Wardens; A. TALLON and J. D. DRISCOLL. Committee: W. J. ANDERSON, F. S. BOOTH, J. A. DOSSOR, B. E. NICHOLSON, W. P. B. STONEHOUSE, R. B. WHARLDALL. H. P. SPILSBURY was then elected an honorary member of the Club by acclamation.

At the 43rd Annual Dinner which followed, the retiring President, H. L. STEMBRIDGE, was in the Chair, and the principal guest was Sir John Hunt. Kindred Clubs were represented by: Sir John Hunt, Alpine Club; J. H. Hirst, Rucksack Club; A. G. Ravenscroft, Wayfarers' Club; E. Smith, Craven Pothole Club; J. Bloor, Griststone Club; J. B. W. Wiseman, Midland Association of Mountaineers; H. J. C. Caswell, Bradford Pothole Club; I. A. B. Harris, Leeds University Climbing Club.

NEW MEMBERS SINCE JOURNAL No. 27

*Junior Member when elected

1954

Hollis, Geoffrey Arthur	23, Foxglove Avenue, Roundhay, Leeds, 8.
Dossor, John Arthur	Annesley House, Eastgate, Hornsea, E. Yorks.
Robinson, John Robert	193, Devonshire Road, Forest Hill, London, SE.23.
Hasell, John A. E.	Percy Lodge, Christchurch Road, East Sheen, London, SW.14.
Jackson, Richard Anthony	61, Carr Manor Drive, Leeds, 17.
Fielding, Clifford	31, Chester Street, Linthorpe, Middlesbrough.
Nicholson, Brian Edward	Scotton Bank Hospital, Knaresborough, Yorks.
Smythe, Anthony George	86, Ridgeway, Weston Favell, Northampton.
*Middleton, Robert Michael	4, The Terrace, Boston Spa, Yorks.
Medley, John Albert	13, Regent Park Avenue, Hyde Park, Leeds, 6.

1955

Honorary Member:	
C. R. Evans	Gwylfa, Derwen, Corwen, N. Wales.
Hartley, Brian	The Shieling, Grassington Road, Skipton.
Haslam, Harry	"West View," Great Broughton, Middlesbrough.
Haslam, David Christopher	"West View," Great Broughton, Middlesbrough.
Smith, Francis David	"Dinsdale," 59, Reynolds Street, Burnley, Lancs.
Decort, Walter Johan	"Windrush," New Road, Holmfirth, Yorks.
*Chapman, Albert Ronald	44, Church Street, Oakworth, Nr. Keighley.
Armstrong, John Dennis	17, Pullan Avenue, Bradford, 2.
Brown, Alan Crawshaw	6, Park Row, Hornsea, E. Yorks.
Waterfall, Sidney	"Lyndhurst," Skipton Road, Emsay, Nr. Skipton.
Warsop, Peter Alfred	Department of Chemistry, Queen's College, Dundee.
*Tetlow, David Max	2, Brunswick Drive, Harrogate.
Smithson, Derek Alan	60, Borough Road, Redcar, Yorks.

1956

Honorary Member :

H. P. Spilsbury	647, Liverpool Road, Ainsdale, Southport
Craven, Arthur Braithwaite	38, Gledhow Wood Grove, Leeds, 8.
Holmes, David	7, Cedar Street, Springbank, Keighley.
Reynolds, Anthony John	90, Stafford Road, Wolverhampton, Staffs.
Smith, Timothy Hattersley	Shoebridge House, Eastburn, Nr. Keighley.
*Stembridge, David William	Middle Barrows, Huby, Nr. Leeds.
Umpleby, Jack	14, Prince Street, Todmorden, Lancs.
*Clarke, Peter David	58, Harlow Moor Drive, Harrogate.
*Humphreys, Howard	"Braida Garth," Kinders, Cranfield, Nr. Oldham.
Sykes, Philip	761, Manchester Road, Milnsbridge Huddersfield.
*Goulden, Stephen Arthur	41, Kedleston Road, Leeds, 8.
Gowing, Richard	58, Junction Road, Norton, Stockton- on-Tees.

RESIGNATIONS

The following have resigned :

1954

E. D. Hollis, F. H. Lawson, T. W. Sallet, P. Sherman.

1955

F. B. Hume, J. B. B. Sherwood, A. E. J. Simons, M. Swann.

1956

C. C. Bristol, G. W. B. Parker, J. Smythe, A. Storry.

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