

THE
YORKSHIRE RAMBLERS'
CLUB JOURNAL
1962

Edited by HAROLD G. WATTS

VOLUME IX NUMBER 31

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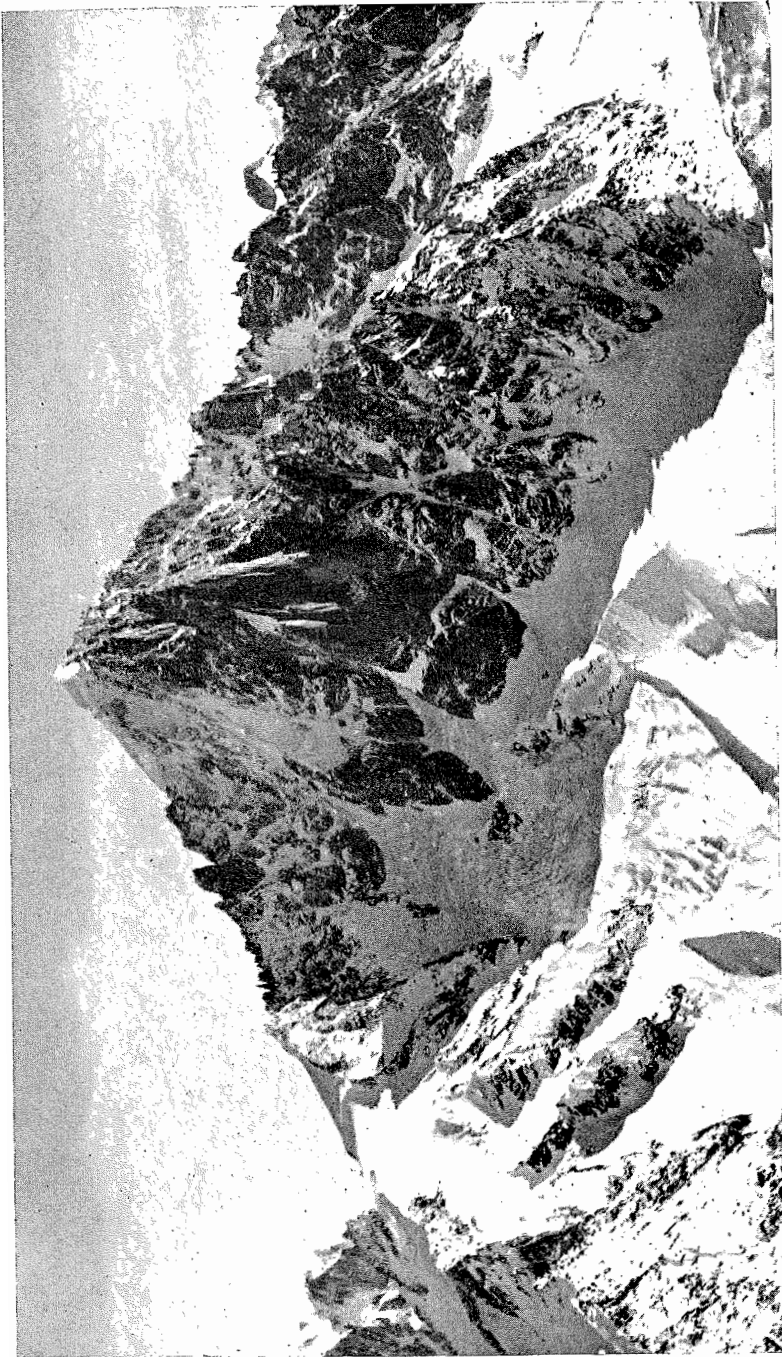
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THE YORKSHIRE RAMBLERS' CLUB JOURNAL

Vol. IX

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THE
Yorkshire Ramblers' Club Journal

VOL. IX

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THE SEVENTIETH ANNIVERSARY

by J. Geoffrey Brook

THE CLUB having reached the respectable age of three score years and ten, it was felt that some appraisal of its activities over this period should be made.

I must stress at the outset that this short history is not meant to be a comprehensive record of seventy years of Yorkshire Rambling. Much has necessarily had to be omitted. The full story can be found in the pages of the Journal, written by the men who made that story. Perhaps this brief digest—and this seems to be the age of the digest—will have justified itself if it sends members back to the source to read for themselves the absorbing chronicle of sport and adventure made by the Club and its Members, above and below ground.

The first move to form the Club was made on July 17th, 1892, when G. T. Lowe, H. H. Bellhouse, J. A. Green and H. Slater met in Leeds and as a result of their discussion another meeting was called at the Skyrack Inn, Headingley on October 6th of the same year. George T. Lowe, being the leading spirit, was elected to the chair and thus became the first President.

The choice of a suitable name for the new club was naturally an early problem to be settled. "The Leeds Pedestrian Club", "The Three Peaks Club" and others even more unlikely than these were considered, but all of them were felt to imply a limited scope for the infant's activities. We cannot doubt that the ultimate decision was the happiest that could possibly have been found and in spite of some agitation a few years ago that the name rather suggested a party of benevolent old gentlemen going for a Sunday afternoon stroll in the country and should therefore be toughened up in some way, there is little doubt

that we shall still be Yorkshire Ramblers in 1992, and proud of it.

Before the second meeting, held on October 18th, 1892, twenty members had been enrolled, and it was resolved to hold two meetings during each winter month for the reading of papers and one each summer month for arranging expeditions.

The first meet was held at Blubberhouses at Christmas 1892, and the following year the Club Library was formed, a modest start to the splendid collection of books on the shelves today.

In less than a year the Club was firmly established, thus being, after the Alpine Club, the oldest mountaineering club in England and the fourth oldest in the British Isles.

In addition to the ordinary members it was decided to elect honorary members and the first of a distinguished roll was Edward Whymper. The author of the classic *Scrambles Amongst the Alps* made one contribution to the Club Journal on the rather unromantic subject of "The New Mountain Aneroid Barometer", and this was in fact the corrected version of a letter to *The Times*. Whymper, however, always maintained a keen interest in the Club's activities and on his death left a handsome legacy. Other great names of the past to be found on the roll of honorary members are C. T. Dent, Charles Pilkington, Sir Martin Conway, W. C. Slingsby and G. Winthrop Young.

The Club, whilst respecting tradition, has never been hide-bound by it, as witness the printing of a lecture given to the Club by Pilkington, in the first number of the Journal, on "Mountaineering without Guides", a practice then regarded as rankly heretical.

It was the age of the public lecture and the Club, not to be outdone, inaugurated its own series, Lowe setting the ball rolling at the Philosophical Hall in November 1893 with a discourse on "Rock Climbing and Ice Craft". The following February Whymper lectured on his climbs in the Andes.

In July 1899 the first Journal appeared edited by Thomas Gray, its title page graced by the names of distinguished contributors. This first Club Journal set a high standard, but nevertheless a standard which has been steadily maintained by Gray's successors.

The Yorkshire Ramblers' Club was now fairly on its feet, and its members were naturally looking around for something which would test as well as amuse them. It was almost inevitable that their attention should turn to the county's unique geological feature—the largely unknown and unexplored system of caves and potholes of the Craven district.

It was in this field that the Club first achieved distinction, and it was the spectacular mouth of Gaping Gill that mainly aroused curiosity. This was of course still spelt Gaping Ghyll—Roberts had not yet arrived. After John Birkbeck's visits of 1872 the pot seems to have been left severely alone until 1895. On January 8th of that year Calvert and a friend, descending from Ingleborough in deep snow, almost made an involuntary descent of the hole. The snow had drifted and piled, reducing the normal 40 ft. opening to a mere 8 ft. Calvert and friend unwittingly walked on to this but fortunately the cornice held! Thereupon Calvert decided that a voluntary descent of the pot would provide an appropriate baptism for the young Club, and discussions were started immediately with that ceremony in view.

But alas, the Club was robbed of what could have been its first and finest hour. One fine Monday in August 1895 members opened their morning papers to read the exciting but disconcerting news that the first full descent of Gaping Gill had that week-end been made by a Frenchman, Edouard Alfred Martel who, on a cave exploring tour of England and Ireland, had reached the bottom by ladders. This was a sad blow, but far from being a discouragement it was a goad that stirred the Club to determined activity. For many years after this one pot-hole after another fell to the pioneers of the Y.R.C.

Only a month after Martel's success (which the Club acknowledged as a magnificent feat) Bellhouse, Booth, Gray, Lund, Calvert and Thompson carted their tackle from Deepdale Farm to the mouth of Gaping Gill, but the descent was temporarily given up after Calvert and Booth had reached the ledge 190 ft. from the surface, upon which John Birkbeck had first stood.

The attack was resumed in 1896 and on this occasion Calvert became the second man to stand on the floor of

Gaping Gill. Martel had used ladders for his descent, taking twenty-three minutes to go down and twenty-eight to come up. Calvert's party, however, made an innovation by using a boatswain's chair which reduced the time to two minutes down and four up. The day following this first Club descent of the pot, Calvert, Gray, Booth and Cuttriss again went down and made a survey of the Main Chamber, in addition to exploring other passages.

The following Whitsuntide more recruits were enlisted and a large party carried the probe much further, but the hope that a party would succeed in breaking through to Clapham Cave and then surprise their friends at Gaping Gill by suddenly appearing from Trow Gill was not realised.

From this time until 1900 an intensive campaign was set in motion and many first descents and explorations were recorded, amongst them Long Kin West, Sell Gill, Rowten Pot, Boggart's Roaring Hole, Cross Pot and Old Ing Cave. In 1900 the Club paid its first visit to Alum Pot and found that such plans as existed of the pot were far from correct.

But it would be a mistake to imagine that pot-holing was the sole interest of members in these early days. They were also making their mark on gritstone and in rock climbing generally. William Cecil Slingsby, for instance, before joining the Club as Honorary Member in 1893 had already made his most historic campaigns in Norway, including the traverse of the Horung Group and the first ascent of Skagastölstind in 1876. All this was an example and inspiration to the Club and the association between the Y.R.C. and Norway has been maintained ever since. Slingsby left his name not only on the British crags but also in the Alps on the Charmoz, the Réquin and the Plan.

The Club has never lacked personalities, but the appearance of Slingsby just at that time and during the period of his Presidency must have made a profound impact on the new Club. Undoubtedly the impress of his unique individuality remains to this day.

Also at this time Puttrell was finding new ways up Scafell and, with George and Ashley Abraham made the Keswick Brothers' Climb. Ramblers generally had wandered far from their native county to the Tyrol, Greece, Switzerland and

Norway. The new century brought another man into the Club who was to make rock-climbing history—Fred Botterill. In 1903 he made a new route on Slanting Gully on Lliwedd, and also the great climb which immortalised his name, Botterill's Slab on Scafell. A few years later he was on the first ascent of the North West Climb on Pillar.

The turn of the century also brought new exploits in the underworld. The Club's determination to produce a reliable plan of Alum Pot was realised in 1902. Gaping Gill was again tackled in 1903 when Booth and Parsons followed a branch of the South East Passage and after a two hours' crawl found themselves at an opening thirty feet up the boulder slope at the eastern end of the cavern. More new passages were discovered on the expeditions of 1905 and 1906, full details of which can be found in the Journals of those years. In 1904 Jockey Hole was explored and surveyed and another unnamed pot quite by chance noticed, descended and christened Rift Pot. But this was not all, the same year saw descents of Sulber Pot, Juniper Gulf, Pillar Pot and others.

Ireland has been a favourite venue of the Club ever since 1907 when the first visit was made and a party of four Ramblers left Enniskillen in a wagonette loaded with men and tackle. They were bound for Marble Arch caves, but again not for a first exploration for that ubiquitous Frenchman Edouard Martel had been before them. But the pattern had been set and the Club has returned to the Emerald Isle again and again.

It may not have seemed so at the time but probably the most momentous event of the year 1908 in the Club was the election of a new member, a certain Ernest E. Roberts, who, as it turned out, was to have an influence even more potent than that of Slingsby on the character and fortunes of the Club. Roberts initiated a long life-time of pot-holing activity by joining one of the Club's early visits to Mere Gill. This became a challenge which kept him and the Club launching attack after attack until success was won in 1912. *The Siege of Mere Gill*, Roberts' splendid account of this long tough engagement is surely a classic of pot-holing literature.

The year 1909 was made memorable by the trapping of a Club party for forty hours in a flooded Gaping Gill. Shortly

after this Flood Entrance was discovered, so named in the belief that it could provide a means of escape to a party flood-bound in the cave.

Another notable achievement in this eventful year was the discovery and exploration of Sunset Hole. In this pot the following year befell the accident to W. F. Boyd, which set in motion the first organised cave rescue, and which led to some hard thinking on the subject. The outcome of this was the formulation of those basic principles essential to safety in pot-holing. After all these years these principles might now be assumed to be commonplace but are still unfortunately neglected in some quarters.

Members were still paying regular visits to Almscliff and Ilkley Rocks and the 1911 Journal carried an illustrated guide to the latter crags. Surprisingly Almscliff had to wait until 1949 for similar treatment. But it was still the Craven pot-hole system that drew members like a magnet in these years before the Great War, and in addition to the great victory at Mere Gill others succumbed—New Year Pot, Braithwaite Wife Hole, Car Pot, Cowskull Pot and Greensett Cave.

In 1913 the Club reached its majority and judging by the Annual Dinner programme for that year, it was celebrated right royally. Then came the dark years of the Great War when the Yorkshire Ramblers' Club in common with others lost some of its finest young members, in addition to many of the old guard by natural death, F. Payne, Fred Botterill and R. J. Farrer. There had also been an inevitable lapse of seven years in the publication of the Journal, and when it reappeared it was under the virile editorship of E. E. Roberts, whose scholarship and meticulous attention to detail was to raise it to even higher standards. It was some time, however, before he opened his etymological campaigns and the word "ghyll" continued to make its appearance in the Journal until 1933 when Roberts finally decided that the poet Wordsworth had been responsible for the abomination and the offending word was banished for ever from the pages of the Journal. Henceforth it was "Gaping Gill!", and woe betide anyone who departed from this spelling.

One day in December 1919 Frankland, Somervell and Roberts were near Pool on their way to climb at Almscliff when

they were overtaken by a fair haired young man on a cycle who introduced himself as F. S. Smythe, a new member. After climbing with him at Almscliff and in the Lake District, Roberts recognised the lad's promise and in his own words reported that "a new star had risen". There is no need to detail here how that star added lustre to the constellation of the Y.R.C. and to British climbing generally. In 1931 Smythe reached the summit of Kamet, but this was not the first time that a Yorkshire Rambler had set foot on the mountain, for in 1911 Morris Slingsby had reached the height of 22,000 ft., and there is no doubt he would have returned to the attack had he survived the Great War. Smythe also took part in the Everest Expeditions of 1933, 1936 and 1938, but here again he was following in the steps of other Ramblers, Bentley Beetham and Hazard. In 1930 Smythe climbed the Jonsong Peak whilst on the international Dyrenfurth expedition to Kanchenjunga, from which he came back with some decided views on German climbing methods and mentality.

As mentioned earlier the Flood Entrance to Gaping Gill was explored in 1909, but no further efforts were made until 1920, when a strong party arrived at the pot. This group split itself into two, one section to tackle Gaping Gill itself, and the other Flood Entrance, the two to co-operate on the change-over, thus enabling both parties to complete the through route. After some roping difficulties this was successfully accomplished and the lessons learnt were duly recorded for the benefit of future visitors. The Club was still breaking new ground in old pots, but by 1932 what Roberts called the Golden Age of Pot-holing was coming to an end and the era of Mass Excursions beginning.

In 1929 the Club lost one of its finest members by the death of W. C. Slingsby. In the early days he had instilled his own boundless enthusiasm into the young Club, and at his death he must have been happy to know that he left it with already a great tradition.

The 1930's saw Ramblers climbing and pot-holing in almost every country and continent and then came again the grim repetition of 1914, with again the tragic loss of some promising young members. There was also the inevitable lapse in the publication of the Journal, which reappeared in 1947. The war

also rolled over the Club Jubilee, which fell in 1942, thus making adequate celebration impossible.

The new Journal opened with a long obituary by Roberts on one whom he described as "the greatest of all in the underground world, to all pot-holers The Master", in other words Edouard Alfred Martel, who had died in 1938. It was undoubtedly his snap descent of Gaping Gill which spurred on the Club to its great early campaigns in the underworld.

The next important landmark in the history of the Club was the desire to possess a Club Hut, and out of this the eventual opening of the cottage at Low Hall Garth in Little Langdale. Set in the quietest and loveliest part of Lakeland this delectable spot has become almost a second home to many members. Against this happy event must be recorded the death in 1950 of Thomas Gray at the great age of 95, breaking the last link with the early days of the Club.

Over all these years a large and comprehensive library had been collected. This had been housed for some time in a room at the Salem Chapel, not really a very handy place for members either to browse or to borrow books. The Committee therefore decided to loan the library to the Leeds City Reference Library for a probationary period of three years. This proved to be a wise and happy decision. The library is now situated in ideal, accessible surroundings in the Central Library and has the advantage of being in professional care.

The successful British ascent of Everest in 1953 seemed to act as a spur to climbers the world over. It was truly said "With Everest out of the way mountaineers can now settle down to enjoy the rest of the Himalayas", and a succession of expeditions from all over the world began to move towards Nepal, their glittering objective the remaining unclimbed 8,000 metre peaks. The Golden Age of Himalayan climbing had set in. But the Himalayas were not the Alps and long holidays and still longer purses were needed to get there. But as we have seen, individual Yorkshire Ramblers had in years past been to Kamet, Kanchenjunga and Everest, and so it was almost inevitable that the idea of sending a Club party should begin to germinate. Very soon the idea was developing into a practical proposition, largely due to the generous help and information provided by Charles Evans. The whole story of

how the team was picked, funds raised, the equipment assembled and the first purely Club expedition sent to the Jugal Himal can be read in the special Journal which was published in 1958. Unfortunately tragedy rather than triumph was the outcome of this inspiring effort when the leader, Crosby Fox, along with two Sherpas, was lost in an avalanche, the other member of the party, George Spenceley, having a miraculous escape. In spite of this shattering blow, and the consequent abandoning of the assault on the Great White Peak, the remaining members of the expedition carried on and did some useful mapping and surveying of the area. Despite the sad loss of Crosby Fox, great Yorkshire Rambler and fine mountaineer, no one could say that the effort was not amply justified. It pointed the way and many other small expeditions have followed.

But if anyone had thought that the mounting of this expedition, with its adverse outcome, had demoralised the Club, he would not have known his Yorkshire Ramblers. For in less than a year after the expedition's return another plan, of a very different character, was being considered. This was none other than the establishment of a Club Hut in the pot-hole country of the Craven Highlands. Remembering that this area had been the Club's spiritual home right from its birth it is rather astonishing that such a project had not been tackled years earlier. Be that as it may, the search for a suitable site was begun in earnest and eventually ended in a small copse near Clapham village. Here in the Lowstern Plantation was found a derelict old structure originally built as a golf house for the Farrer estate. With amazing optimism the Club decided to tackle this unlikely looking building. It was generously leased by Dr. Farrer at a nominal rent, week-end working parties descended on it, a miraculous transformation was effected and on November 16th, 1958, the new Lowstern Club Hut was officially opened by E. E. Roberts with a characteristic speech and an "Eighteen Carrot Gold Key". The hut is now both a splendid acquisition and a tribute to the then President and all members who strove to make it a reality.

Less than two years after this happy event every member of the Club was shocked and grieved to learn of the death of Ernest Roberts. His presence had been taken so much for

granted at Club functions and his influence had been so potent that many felt that without him the Yorkshire Ramblers' Club could never be quite the same, but Roberts himself would have been the first to scout the idea that any one individual could be indispensable to the Club.

Looking back over the achievements of these seventy years then, it can be safely affirmed that the Club has little to regret. An unrivalled record in early cave exploration and gritstone climbing, the possession of two Club Huts, a magnificent library on whose shelves rest the Club's Journals, containing as they do so much of literary and historical value.

But the Club cannot rest upon seventy years of accumulated laurels. There is still much work to be done and in the Club plenty of young members to carry on the old tradition.

The Great White Peak is still there, unclimbed, in the Jugal Himal. There are mysteries still awaiting solution in Clapham Cave, "future work must lie upstream from below Giant's Hall and in the series beyond the Far Eastern Bedding Plane"—(*Y.R.C.J.* Vol. IX, p.8.). The previous work of the Bradford Pothole Club and the Cave Diving Group needs carefully surveying, and why does the Club not dive? Lud's Church in Staffordshire presents a challenge (see *Chippings*, and *Country Life*, 19th October, 1961), and there are countless caves in France and Belgium, where the local "spéléo" clubs are delighted to welcome their British colleagues and where new and exciting discoveries are being made all the time. Even on the Moon the mountains are supposed to be 36,000 feet high and full of caves.

But above all this, and most important of all, the very reason for the Club's existence, the comradeship engendered by the gathering together of kindred spirits and the fellowship of the outdoors. William Morris said that Fellowship is Life and Lack of Fellowship is Death. Assuming the truth of this axiom we may safely presume many years of life for the Yorkshire Ramblers' Club.

SKI-ING IN NORWAY

by P. R. Harris

ALTHOUGH the art of ski-ing originated in Scandinavia, it was in the other European countries such as Switzerland and Austria that ski-ing changed from purely a method of getting from place to place during the winter to an art and a sport. It is only in relatively recent years that any attempt has been made to turn Norway into a ski-ing centre which would attract winter visitors in large numbers, and there are no resorts of the type that exist in Switzerland and Austria. Certain resorts are being built up and Geilo on the Bergen/Oslo railway line is one of the most important in Norway, whilst to the east Lillehammer is also becoming quite important.

Downhill ski-ing holidays and tours are organised in Norway by the Norwegian Tourist Association and one of these tours is in the Hallinskalyv range of mountains and is from hut to hut accompanied by a dog sleigh team. The particular tour which I joined started at Finse, which is the highest railway station on the Oslo/Bergen line and was the base at which Scott trained with his ponies before his expedition to the South Pole.

I had travelled from Newcastle to Bergen by ship and was due to stay on the ship overnight in harbour, catching the train to Finse first thing in the morning, but decided that if I travelled that evening I could use the next day as an extra to get some well needed practice. I jumped ship, made my way to the railway station and booked a seat for the next train even though the through tickets were dated for the next day. The Norwegian State Railways were extremely obliging even to the extent of ringing Finse Railway Station and asking them to inform the Finsehutte that I was going to arrive that night instead of the next day.

When I arrived at Finse Station at 1.30 in the morning, I found a guide waiting for me with a sledge to haul my gear across the frozen lake of Finsevatn to the Finsehutte. This is a very large hut and is in permanent use during both winter and summer; the accommodation is excellent, and as I was to find out later in other huts in Norway, exceptionally clean.

Next morning, breakfast was, of course, typically Norwegian with porridge followed by cold fish and meats. During breakfast I could hear dogs barking and assumed that these were from the dog sleigh team which was going to accompany the party on this tour, but on talking to the mixture of Norwegians, Swedes and Danes and the lone Swiss who were staying in the hut, I learnt that I had arrived on the last day of a course for Lavinehunden—Avalanche Dogs—the first to be held in Norway. I went down to see the dogs in action and as this last day was for tests and the first test was to find a man buried in the snow, I was asked if I would allow myself to be buried in the snow to be found by the dogs. On thinking this over I realised that this would lose me a day's ski-ing and I regretfully apologised for refusing the kind invitation. That day was spent on the slopes nearby practising turns and getting the lang-lauf rhythm, hoping that the weather, which was dull and windy and with visibility down to 100 yards, would improve by next day.

That evening the Lavinehunden and their owners departed and new faces began to appear. These were soon found to be members of the party I was joining and were all Norwegians apart from an American and his wife and an English woman who had been winter ski-ing in Norway for several years. By next morning our party was completed with the arrival of the Tour leader and the dog sleigh team with their handler. Two of the five huskies—Caesar and Mutt—had been with Sir Vivian Fuchs in the Antarctic and the other three, including the leader, were Norwegian bred and trained.

The first day was to be an easy trek of about 19 kilometres and as in the first two hours we climbed from 1214 metres to just over 1600 metres, I for one was very thankful for the short day. The weather was far from kind with a strong, bitterly cold wind blowing and the stop for sandwiches at mid-day was only for ten minutes with everyone very glad to make a start again.

The dog team caught up with us by the time we left—it had been left well behind on the first climb out of Finse—and it led us downwards to cross the frozen Geiteryggen lake to the Geiteryggen hut. This was a typical two storey Norwegian mountain hut with quite comfortable bunks and a drying



THE HALLINGSKARVET, NORWAY

room for clothes, with the lavatories outside—very stark and cold. I was interested in seeing the dogs bedded down for the night—there were no kennels and the dogs were staked out about 10 ft. from each other, where they dug holes into the snow and settled down.

The next day was glorious although the temperature was well below freezing and the sun shone as we went on a round trip southwards through a valley called Kyrkjedori, known as the Church Door, and up on to a small glacier in the Hallingskarvet area—a height of about 1700 metres. The view to the south west, right across to the Hardanger jöklen which rises to 1876 metres, was incredible and to the east the ridge of the Hallingskarvet was a very impressive sight.

On the return run, having taken the very steep wall of the glacier at a much quicker speed and in a very different position than I had intended, I tried my hand at driving the dog sleigh team. I quickly found, however, that the dogs had two speeds—fast and stop. Their normal running speed was much faster than my trekking speed and I found it extremely exhausting to run for a quarter of an hour with the team, rest until the main party caught up, run again for another quarter of an hour and rest and so on. Controlling the sledge while traversing a slope and running downhill at the same time was, to me, an impossible task and during my short spell as a team driver I received many reproachful looks from the rear dog as the front end of the sledge kept butting him in the backside.

On the third day we travelled to another hut called the Iungsdalshytte and this was quite a long run of 31 kilometres. From the point of view of scenery, this was not a very good run—we seemed to climb in and out of valleys interminably—but it did get us to the next hut from which, on the following day, we made a very fine round tour of 23 kilometres and climbed the Klevahavda before swinging round in a circle and returning to the hut over another smaller mountain, the Mjølgent.

The next day we crossed the frozen lake, Stolsvatn, and crossed over the Flyane to the small hotel of Raggsteindalen. This was the only place which sported a bath during the tour and we made the most of it by sitting in this very hot dry

room for over half an hour, then taking a very quick cold shower.

The next day we did another round trip to Raggsteinn and on to Hellevass and the Folarskardnnuten—which was 1933 metres high. The glacier we crossed was frozen into ice waves and was extremely difficult to climb. The run down across this glacier was equally difficult and I found that although I could ski across the top of the waves, as soon as I hit a frozen wave bigger than the rest my ski tips dug in and I turned a complete somersault. We returned by another route to the Raggsteindalen covering in all 39 kilometres and the next day made the short trip of 20 kilometres back to the Geiteryggenhytte.

The Norwegians, Swedes and Americans in the party were only out for seven days and the next day the leader was due to take this party back to Finse and pick up another one to bring them back to the hut. I had volunteered to go with him but when we woke the next morning, the weather, which until then had been very kind with the sun shining all day, had changed drastically and a blizzard was blowing. The leader told me that he quite appreciated the fact that I would not now be going to Finse with him, but throwing caution to the winds—and blizzards—I decided that the experience would be very well worthwhile.

The trek to Finse was extremely unpleasant. The party was in a long line each just able to see the back of the person in front and every now and again the leader stopped to let us file past him as he gave instructions to rub either cheeks or noses to ward off frost-bite. The snow was very soft and it was even necessary to walk downhill as it was too soft to run through. When we arrived at the Finsehutte we found that everyone had decided that we would never get through and the new party had resigned themselves to spending the night there. They soon got ready, however, and after a quarter of an hour's break we started back again to the Geiteryggenhytte. Fortunately, I had become quite acclimatised to mountain ski-ing by then and even though the trip down to Finse had been fairly rough, I found that I could keep up with this new fresh party going back up the steep slopes out of the village.

The weather was still very poor next day, so we did a relatively short trip of the same pattern as we had done on our second day out when the tour started. On the following day the main party went on, but the English-woman and I who were due to return to Finse to catch the train to Bergen, were very gratified when we were permitted to take ourselves back without being accompanied by a guide.

In all we covered some 252 kilometres on the tour and I would certainly recommend such a holiday to anybody wanting to do something different. The Norwegians and Swedes were most kind throughout and always made a point of speaking English whenever English or Americans were present.

Skins are never used for climbing and two or three types of climbing wax for different kinds of snow are a necessity. It is certainly advisable to use the special skis for cross country running and climbing which are longer and narrower than Piste skis and it is most important to use boots which are made from very soft and supple leather with soles that will bend—Slalom type boots are too stiff and will very soon cripple the unfortunate wearer.

Now that I am getting to the age when piste ski-ing or downhill racing are losing their attraction, I find that such a tour gives me a great deal of satisfaction and far more enjoyment than I thought possible—I shall most certainly be doing more of this in the future, no doubt feeling very sorry for the younger generation speeding down the racing slopes, who have not yet found that first ideas on the use of skis are often the best.

ASH WEDNESDAY

by F. W. Stembridge

A FORMER PRESIDENT and THE PRESENT ONE went in January 1961 on holiday to Teneriffe.

I have asked the Editor to put the titles in capitals because that makes it rather more like the "JUST-SO" stories and this isn't really a tale for proper mountaineers.

The object of the holiday was to swim and laze in the sun and all went to plan with one exception. For on Teneriffe there is a mountain—the Pico de Teide—an extinct volcano of lava and clinker which pushes its summit cone 12,150 feet into the blue and cloudless sky. And the F.P. being a man of amazing energy, and the P.O. one of weak will, they climbed it.

Never has an expedition started so strangely equipped. The F.P. wore khaki shorts and a very smart panama hat. The P.O. had on a bright blue pair of Terylene trousers with shoes to match. They lolled in comfort on the back seat of a chauffeur driven Super Snipe clutching their picnic bags as they drove in the early morning of star-studded darkness to the foot of the climb.

If you are rich and correct and not a member of the Y.R.C., you hire a guide who comes armed with pack-mules and the key to the Rifugio and you spend the night at 10,500 feet. Having none of these amenities we climbed for an hour, then sat on the cold granite slabs outside the very superior but securely locked refuge and ate a boiled egg and chicken leg for our second breakfast.

As we climbed we had a moment of unforgettable brilliance. Almost fifty miles across the sea the mountain backbone of Grand Canary was in silhouette against the red dawn sky. As we crossed a slope of brown and yellow lava the sun rose through a nick in the distant ridge. At once the hillside flamed into brilliant orange, fading after perhaps five seconds into the pale cold light of early morning.

The sun beat upon our backs but a following breeze cold enough to numb ears and finger tips encouraged us to keep moving and made the climbing pleasant and temperate.

Nothing moved: nothing lived except ourselves. Later in the day in the summit crater we saw one lizard and as we descended a vulture and two ravens circled in the cloudless sky, but as we followed the rough and narrow path through the tumbled impassable slopes of lava and clinker the world was dead. Below us was the ring of the main crater with a perimeter of twenty-five miles, above us the summit cone of six or seven hundred feet of ash streaked with lava. The mind could not grasp the awesome horror, the noise and destruction of the eruption. One could only look at blocks of clinker bigger than a house and try to realise that these were incidental scraps which had been flung out of the fire.

The first sign that the volcano was not entirely extinct was a blow-hole in the shadow of an overhanging wall of lava just below the foot of the summit cone. The sun never reached that corner and the scalding sulphurous steam condensed and froze on the surrounding rocks. The entrance reminded us of a tight pot-hole. The F.P. suggested a meet. The P.O. suggested metal ladders.

We toiled up the steep loose ash of the final cone, hearts pumping a little because we were now above 12,000 feet and less than five hours before we had been at sea level, and walked over the rim of the summit crater. Roughly circular and perhaps three hundred yards in perimeter, it sloped fairly steeply inwards to a depth of about eighty feet. Dozens of small blow holes were surrounded with brilliant yellow sulphur crystals. The F.P. bent to collect a specimen and regretted it at once as scalding hot steam erupted over hand and wrist. It was several hours later before we lost the taste of sulphur in our mouths.

We wandered round inside the crater for photography and to collect rock specimens, then sat down for a little food. The wind blew cold but the hot crusted ground provided a welcome warmth to our grateful posteriors. The underworld felt very near and we both silently hoped it would keep its distance.

We ambled gently down in the hot sun, pausing at the refuge to collect our spare food and water. At about 9,000 feet we crossed the sharply defined upper limit of scrub. On the ascent the vegetation had looked grey and arid. As we re-entered it looked unbelievably green.

We rejoined the Super Snipe to find the driver engaged in repairs in the expectation of still some hours to wait. He muttered that we had been 'rapido', quickly screwed it together again and drove us down the track with instructions to stop for beer at the first café after we got back on to the metalled road. The café proved to have only one bottle of beer left in stock so, with due deference to age, the P.O. insisted this went to the F.P., then drank two lemonades too quickly and burped gently all the way back to the hotel. It wasn't mountaineering but it was very good fun and an incredibly interesting day.

We were staying about 500 feet above the village so the P.O. suggested a walk down for an aperitif before dinner. He wanted to get the full height differential of 12,150 feet and also is very partial to his aperitif.

ROSENLAUI—AND SO TO THE TATRA

by P. A. Bell

WITH twelve weeks' holiday, some excellent equipment and a large motor cycle I left London after my exams, at the end of July 1960 in high spirits. My Norton, my duvet and the size of the planned routes more than made up for lack of money. It was with utter contentment that I climbed into my sleeping bag in a ditch half way to Chamonix, realising as I settled down that I had averaged 58 m.p.h.

After the usual training climb on the Aiguille de l'M. (or to give it its geographical name, Aiguille des Petits Charmoz), news of an accident or two and no sign of a mountain through the mist, rain and snow, we decided to search elsewhere for better conditions. Terence Goodfellow, whom I had arranged to meet and climb with in Chamonix, wanted to go to Arolla to join up with the C.U.M.C. and with his father, B. R. Goodfellow, who was there too.

The year before we had climbed the West Arête of the Aiguille de la Tsa, which involves a long grind to the foot, a detour around this, and up by a stone-swept couloir to the start of the rock climb. The climb itself is excellent where it keeps to the ridge, but the final section is avoided by traversing on to the ordinary route.

We hoped to climb from the foot to the West Arête route and once on it to keep to it as far as the summit, thus avoiding the couloir where we had been very frightened by a vast stonefall last year. On arriving at the foot we thought the north face offered a much better route and so scrambled up the left flank to reach it. Here ice and snow covering everything on the slabs made climbing difficult and without security until we reached an overhanging wall. Below this we belayed to a piton and I used another to climb the overhanging crack up a slight corner on the right of the wall. I had tried to by-pass this wall on the left but after 120 feet with no sign of any alternative on extremely delicate holds I returned. We hauled the sacks up to the stance above the wall, Terence retrieved the pitons and we climbed on up over ice and snow to the right of the great gendarme to a small saddle level with the main one. Since it was by now 4 p.m. we had to

abandon any further attempt to climb over the gendarme and quickly traversed around the south face to the start of the guide book route. This we climbed easily—though I tried and failed to climb one fine crack which could have saved time. At the point where one should traverse right across the face to the normal route we managed to go straight on up the ridge. It was rather harder than the rest of the climb, not so fine but worthwhile since one has the pleasure of the normal route in descent. At 6 p.m. we were on the summit and by 9.30 back in Arolla just after dark. The deep snow on the glacier and a sixteen hour day made us very tired and it was with relief that we sat down to a drink in the Mont Collon Hotel bar.

B. R. Goodfellow gave us excellent advice, as always, both about the weather and where to go to avoid it. Since we had little other interest in Arolla we moved off to the Engelhörner Group; limestone mountains, like small Dolomites, between Grindelwald and Meiringen. We arrived after a gripping ride over the Grimsel Pass in pouring rain and it was dark as we slid off the machine and squelched into the only big building in Rosenlauri to order a strong drink. We must have looked miserable for they took us for Germans, whom we all seem to reckon are hard men. They were vastly amused when, still dripping, we took ourselves off to a woodshed we had found.

In the morning we set off with a newly made friend who knew the area, to climb the West Buttress of the Rosenlauri-stock, easy but great fun, for the exposure and the fabulous flora of the limestone make a perfect setting. The weather here did not worry us, though over the Gross Scheidegg it must have barred most climbs in Grindelwald. We returned delighted to a hay loft, price 1 franc, with all our gloom and despondency forgotten.

Mr. Arnold Gladdhart, who runs the Swiss school of climbing at Rosenlauri, is a prudent and invaluable source of advice; he recommended the climbs we were to do. He has done his best to avoid the mountains becoming cluttered with ironmongery by placing large fixed rings at the numerous and inevitable abseil points in the range. Following his advice we traversed the Similistocks, abseiling from the Grosser. It was hardly very difficult but again great fun. Having abseiled

down the famous Macdonald's Kamine, which B. R. Goodfellow had told us about, we decided we would re-climb it.

Broken into three pitches by abseil rings, the chimney starts as a thin black crack in a corner, like Cenotaph Corner, having a slight overhang before it widens and flattens into the first stance. The second pitch is rather like "The Crevice" (also in Wales), a safe but strenuous fight, it widens into the third pitch which is also delightful to climb. Macdonald first climbed this (I believe before 1900) in hobnailed boots, had a quarrel with his guides at the summit and threw the rope to the bottom—whereupon they all climbed down it solo. This does not, however, mean it is easy.

Neither Macdonald, nor anyone else it appears, had climbed the first pitch, but we knew nothing of this and so, seeing it was going to be hard, we used the abseil rope as a top rope, the second holding the other half. It is harder than Cenotaph Corner in Wales but the normal route avoids the obvious crack by an easy climb on the right.

On returning to the col we witnessed an extraordinary spectacle, the sun shining weakly through the mist above us cast a shadow on to the mist below us. Around the head of the shadow was a circular rainbow; the whole effect was remarkably eerie due to the variable densities of mist above and below us, causing the halo to advance and recede continually.

The complete traverse of the Mittelgruppe along a wonderful knife ridge with gendarmes slender enough to tremble and with Dolomite-like exposure made an excellent day.

Each day climbing from Rosenlauri we had passed the Engelhörnerhütte which we now decided to inhabit so as to make longer routes possible. Our first climb from here was the Vorderspitz West Buttress, a fine exposed buttress of one of the Mittelgruppe peaks. The climb was tremendously exhilarating, on sun-warmed rock of severe standard. Some pitches of very severe had pitons in, most of which, being unsafe or unnecessary, we removed, leaving only those which gave security with justification. Many of these useless pegs looked home-made, were rusty and annoying.

Finally we had intended to climb the Nordwand of the Kingspitz, supposedly harder and more artificial, but the

weather hardly justified a major undertaking, so we drove off to another of those backwaters well-known and loved by the Swiss but almost unknown to the British, the Gelmerhörner. After a night in a hydroelectric workers' shed we reached the Gelmerhütte very near the Grimsel Pass, to find it occupied mainly by the Swiss Army. They were great fun and did all the cooking although they did insist on keeping the hut terribly hot. Next day they set off on a 25 mile route march across glaciers while we left in dense cloud to traverse the Gelmerspitze—all seven of them. After passing various peaks we climbed down a gully and to this day do not know whether we climbed one of the Gelmerhörner or one of the Gelmer-spitze. The cloud made distinction impossible and certainly in these conditions it was no fun.

Terence then set off for Greece and I for Czechoslovakia where I was to meet David Fagan, a friend I had made a week before leaving England, in a train returning from Harrison's Rocks. On that short journey we had decided to meet in Prague and to climb with some of his Czech friends in the High Tatra. All arrangements were remarkably successful, considering we only had a few days in which to make them, mostly by telephone, before I left.

I had arranged for my visa to be sent to Bern when it was ready. Having at last taken possession of it I motorcycled straight to Salzburg where, having failed to find a seat in the music festival concert, I had an excellent dinner and then an equally good night in a barn full of old carts. Next day I reached Prague, being directed for the last 100 miles by a peasant boy who had in fact only wanted to go five miles. However, the intense pleasure of overtaking absolutely everything was too much for him so he came all the way to Prague with me. He was not in the least worried about how he was going to get back, though he might well have been, for hitch-hiking must be virtually impossible, the only cars being for the use of V.I.P's.

I met Fagan at the Tourist Office and we had soon arranged to climb in the sandstone area near the East German border, for his friends could not come to the Tatra, where we would go by ourselves later. This turned out to be another paradise, as was Prague, but this was of an outcrop nature. We stayed

in a hut five minutes from the sandstone columns and walls, next to a workers' holiday camp. The rocks were up to 200 feet high, completely vertical, with routes as hard as at Harrison's Rocks. Again we found fixed rings for belaying—an excellent idea avoiding the use of pitons, which would soon ruin the soft rock, apart from not being safe. To make a new route here one had to climb and try to belay naturally while one drilled a deep hole to take a ringed stake, then repeat the process to the summit. Sitting in slings from the ring, the second belayed the leader who would fall free, the safest way to fall after the first, and consequently the most dangerous pitch. We climbed several of these routes, after each of which we abseiled to the bottom and raced to the workers' beer house to drink their 12 per cent. lager Pilsener at 6d. a pint. The sun being incredibly hot we climbed only in jeans and Pierre Allaine boots for the three days we stayed. We then returned to Prague and were soon on our way by train, since this was so cheap, to the Tatra in Eastern Slovakia.

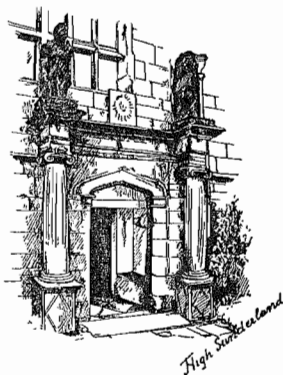
In intense heat, with equipment for a week, we toiled up to the Terrihütte, where we were welcomed by the climbers and the guardian, who already knew David Fagan from the year before. The evening was spent in contest with the climbers for, as British, we had to compete—we climbed everything that they did, but not more. Unfortunately during this contest, while trying to run up, without hands, a 20 ft. slab I turned my ankle, which was to stop me climbing next day. David climbed with the others a north west face, which I can only say looked desperate, arriving back at dusk.

Once again the weather turned bad and it snowed on all the mountains, so we did little, but on one day we went off together to climb the east face of some mountain—all names are impossible though I gathered from David that they are all much the same in character as Ben Nevis. We climbed our own route—for we certainly missed the guidebook one—which was extremely difficult in places. At one point an overhanging corner followed by a tricky traverse nearly made us retreat, but eventually it went. After this the difficulties eased and we reached the top, having had some lovely climbing. I believe David wrote this up in the log book of the hut and it seems to be a new route though, we admit, by mistake. As always

this summer our big ideas were shattered by the weather, so Hokeika, a really worthwhile looking route, will have to wait.

Certainly Czechoslovakia was well worth visiting, for the people and the way of life are so unlike anything we are led to believe by the press that climbing there was every bit as worthwhile as at any time in the Alps.

The journey home was no anticlimax. The first night I slept in the famous Vienna woods, the second in a Munich petrol station out of the rain and after a few days in Switzerland drove from Geneva to Brussels at an average speed of 64 m.p.h.



LA HAUTE ROUTE, 1960

by D. W. Stembridge

IF YOU are thinking of doing the "Haute Route" for the skiing, think again. But as a mountaineering expedition which takes you through the finest scenery of the Alps at a time of year when you have them to yourselves, it is first class. The Swiss "High Level Route" is to the ski-mountaineer what the Black Cuillin ridge is to the climber; a yardstick of stamina and ability in the form of a continuous chain of hazard and difficulty, but whereas the Cuillin ridge can be completed within 24 hours, the "Haute Route" may take up to a fortnight. The route itself follows a variety of ways from Chamonix to Saas Fée or *vice versa* according to personal preference, the West to East route being the more popular. We chose to start from Saas Fée, and were to regret this later, since we often had the disadvantage of climbing on icy eastern slopes, and skiing down westerly slopes which had been thawed by the previous afternoon's sunshine, and were now badly crusted from the night's frost.

The best time to do the "Haute Route" is the middle fortnight in April, and so our party gathered in Zermatt during the first week in April for two or three days skiing practice and acclimatisation. The party numbered seven, and contained experienced ski-mountaineers in the form of Harry Spilsbury, Dick Cook, Eric Arnison, Joe Renwick, Tom Price, and my father, Harry Stembridge, whilst I was the only real "youngster". As a safety precaution we took as guide, Nestor Crettex, making a total of eight.

Our training went well, and despite Dick Cook's chance meeting with a recent Himalayan expedition friend, Guiseppe Pirorano, now the head of the Ski-school at Breuil, and the consequent celebrations in Breuil and Zermatt, we managed to drag ourselves away from the fleshpots, and on Palm Sunday move round to Saas Fée. Happy with the prospect of settled weather we spent the day gathering provisions in readiness for a good start the next day.

It was no easy job to calculate our requirements, torn as we were between keeping weight down, and having sufficient food to see us through several days of bad weather if we were

marooned in huts. Ski-ing with a heavy pack is even more difficult than climbing with one, and apart from heavy essentials such as bully beef, honey and butter, we concentrated on Ryvita, coffee, dried milk, soups and spaghetti. As our technique improved we aspired to steaks and tinned fruit. In addition, of course, we had to carry climbing ropes, some ice axes, skins, spare tips and cables, and more spare clothing than is customary on a summer expedition.

Our aim was to move back to the Zermatt valley via the Britannia Hut and the Adler Pass, and spend the second night at either the Bétemps (Monte Rosa) Hut or Zermatt, before moving up the Zmutt glacier to the Schönbühl Hut. Monday gave us a sunny start, and Saas looked gay and colourful as we sailed out on the cable-car, a rather weak start to an expedition, but a saving of two or three hours' slog up a grimy moraine. The trek to the Britannia Hut was suitable for a first day; a long traverse, a short descent, followed by a climb up a steep little gully which warmed our jackets, and left us with a gentle traverse to the hut itself.

The guardian, a jolly fellow, made us welcome, and this was fortunate as the following day dawned cloudy with a new snow covering of nearly two feet, making it both difficult and dangerous to start before the snow had settled. However, by noon the weather had cleared giving a fine view of the Dom-Täschorn ridge with trailing snow plumes from the peaks. Everyone in the hut burst out on to the neighbouring knoll, and the afternoon was spent ski-ing on a home-made slalom course, where a dive over a corniced edge and a long drop was the penalty for an error of judgment! By evening four or five parties had gathered at the Britannia, although they were only going over the Adler Pass to Zermatt the next day, and not completing the whole route.

A rising barometer gave us high hopes, and on Wednesday we were up at 4.30 a.m. to a clear dawn, and away in just over an hour. A steep downhill traverse was a difficult start for cold bones in the semi-darkness, since at that time of the year it was still well before sunrise. We were glad to put on skins and trek briskly up the glacier towards the Adler Pass, a curious succession of mule-train columns all glad to follow the trail of the leaders in the deep snow. This proved to be

one of the few occasions when we had the opportunity to follow, and in future we had to blaze our own trail.

A three and a half hour climb took us to the top of the pass, and when the others welcomed a rest, Dick, Tom, Eric, Nestor and I climbed for another hour to the summit of the Strahlhorn, which gave us a magnificent view of our route ahead to the Chamonix "Aiguilles". We had to leave our skis for the last twenty feet of the climb, we found very few peaks on the route suitable to be climbed completely on ski, a notable difference from the peaks in the Austrian Alps. Meanwhile the others shivered in a cold wind on the col despite a strong sun, and they were glad when we *schussed* through new snow to rejoin them. The descent down the other side was a difficult mixture of traversing and side-slipping down steep sheet ice and wind-crust for several hundred feet, and it was with jelly-legs and aching hips that we rested for lunch in a warm spot looking towards Monte Rosa and the Breithorn.

The run down to Zermatt was very varied and not without incident. Early soft snow gave way to easier conditions, but not before Eric Arnison had pulled a calf muscle, and I had parted company with the heel of my boot whilst travelling at full speed. Most of us were still unaccustomed to ski-ing with a pack of 20—30 lbs. weight, and we all had more falls than usual, causing a rather tired group to flounder down the Findeln wood paths above Zermatt before coming to the end of the snow. The manageress of the Görnergrat Hotel welcomed us for the second night within a week, and we installed ourselves in the dormitory, whilst Eric and Tom preferred Herr Biner's hostelry, although we gathered it was so full that Eric nearly spent the night in the bath.

There was little good snow in Zermatt and we left on the Schwarzee lift in order to fit a ski-run in the day's exercise, rather than carry skis a long way up the valley towards the Schönbühl. The day was cloudy and close, but a pleasant run from the top of the Schwarzee down the piste to Staffelalp served to restore our confidence after the falls of the previous day. At Staffelalp, a workmen's canteen provided us with very cheap Chianti, whilst we bargained for a lift on their aerial ropeway to take us further up the valley. Indeed, one would

think the Haute Route is as much a test of ingenuity and resourcefulness as it is a test of mountaineering ability.

Eventually we clambered aboard a semi-open box and sailed off up the valley with a consignment of stone and other goods. So, late in the afternoon, we had only a walk of an hour and a half up to the Schönbühl hut, although the last steep slopes proved very hot and tiring in the close atmosphere. On arrival at the hut we were surprised to find that we had it to ourselves. We felt dwarfed under the north face of the Matterhorn, heavily plastered with snow, an overpowering sight, until as evening drew in it was swallowed up in a mass of cloud. In the last rays of the sun only the very summit stood clear, a delicate pink rock cone, seemingly miles above us.

The hut was uncomfortably cold, and with a noggin or two of 'Marc' to keep us warm, we went to bed early in readiness for the long day over to Arolla. Despite the cloud of the previous evening, Good Friday dawned fine, and we were away from the hut before 5.30 a.m. It was a bitterly cold morning, and still somewhat chilled from the cold hut, we were eager to start climbing up the difficult Zmutt glacier. A steep descent, tricky in the half-light, landed us on the glacier, and we then climbed steadily on an ever steepening slope, with the wintry north face of the Dent d'Herens on our left flank, and a mass of bad weather cloud brewing up behind us in the Zermatt valley.

After three hours hard work we branched northwards off the glacier, and carrying our skis, kicked and cut steps for five hundred feet up a very steep slope until the angle eased enough for us to skin up again, and take a breather. A biting wind encouraged us to push on, but we were now in bright sunshine, and looking back we had time to appreciate a fine view of the Weisshorn, Rothorn and Matterhorn, and their surrounding peaks, protruding like islands above a sea of cloud which by then was well below us. Spurred on by the cold we reached the Col de Valpelline after five hours' climbing, and we were able to see our route ahead, over the Col du Mont Brulé into the Arolla valley.

The run down from the Valpelline was lethal. Patches of windcrust and of blown powder snow were a poor reward for our efforts, and running from one to the other caused

numerous nasty falls. It is only too easy to break a leg in these conditions, and an accident at such a height is no joke at that time of the year. So that day, we found, as often, that ski-ing down was more tiring than the climb, requiring great concentration and skill to avoid falling.

Consequently we were relieved when the glacier smoothed out to the foot of the Col du Mont Brulé, but the short steep climb left us feeling weak and tired. A swig at Eric's gourd revived us, and we were pleased to find a convenient set of ready cut steps down the other side into the Arolla valley, a very steep little descent carrying skis.

With the hardest part of the day over we ate a leisurely lunch out of the wind below the col, basking in the spring sunshine before setting off down the long and gentle glacier to Arolla. This was one of the best runs we had, a complete contrast to our experience earlier in the day. The snow was in perfect spring powder condition, and we swung easily from side to side of the glacier for several miles, in a series of fast, wide sweeps, only slowed by the apparent caution of Nestor whose skis seemed to have been waxed with glue!

We were able to ski almost to the village, and a short walk brought us to the friendly welcome of the Hotel de la Poste, and indeed the village people in general. It was delightful to come down to some green alps and a sprinkling of spring flowers again, a refreshing change after the continual world of rock, snow and sky. The old proprietor of this country hotel seemed delighted to have us as his guests, and after a large meal and drinks on the house we were glad to sleep in a proper bed for a change. Harry Spilsbury, who had been troubled by a bad cold for some days, very unselfishly decided to leave us here, as he felt he was slowing down the party, and regretfully we left him to descend to friends in the valley.

A cloudy morning gave us an excuse to lie in on Saturday and having booked our bunks at the Cabane des Vignettes, we felt that there was no rush to get away, so we lingered over breakfast and the shopping. The hotel proprietor-cum-storekeeper gathered our provisions with the care of a man sending off an Everest expedition, and with packs laden with four days provisions including fine steaks and country cheese,

we were off just before midday, pushing aside Nestor's suggestion that we should eat at a workmen's canteen on our route. We were to regret this, and five hours later, after a dreary slog in thick cloud and falling snow, plodding hopefully from one glacier marker to another, we reached the hut feeling very tired through lack of food.

Imagine our dismay when we found the hut like Blackpool at Bank Holiday. Built to sleep a mere 45 persons, there must have been at least 100 people crowded into it. Apparently the Easter weekend had caused a big rush to the hut, and due to the bad weather no-one had been able to leave that day. We mentioned our booking, but the guardian just shrugged his shoulders and wandered away wearily to chop wood. It was almost impossible to sit down, let alone eat, but during the afternoon we managed to worm a way into the odd bunk on the promise of giving it up later. However, some senior members of the S.A.C. very kindly saw that we were not turned out again and we ate in relays before returning gratefully to our six inches of bunk space to rest, if not to sleep, in a suffocating atmosphere. It was snowing heavily that evening, and the grim prospect of another day in such conditions was most discouraging. The Cabane des Vignettes (originally the Refuge Jenkins) is notorious for its position, perched on the very brink of a thousand foot high cliff, and the thought of an international riot was alarming!

By some saving grace Easter Sunday dawned a perfect morning, but with at least a foot of new snow. Despite a general eagerness to move away from the hut, nobody was keen to blaze the trail up the Pigne d'Arolla in the heavy going and although we were up in good time it was 8.30 a.m. before Nestor stirred himself to follow another party with the same idea. The climb up the Pigne cleared the fog from our lungs and the new snow had given the surrounding peaks an extra cloak of beauty. Two and a half hours' climbing took us to the Col below the summit, where the wind was so cold that after taking off our skis we ran to the top, ran down again and fairly bolted for the comparative warmth of the plateau below in one long, fast traverse. A short rest in the midday sunshine and then the run down to the Cabane des Dix, which proved difficult in the deep snow. Although we had several

exhilarating *schusses*, a succession of kick turns were necessary to negotiate the final icefall before crossing the flat of the glacier to the hut itself.

We had feared that many others might move over with us to this hut from the Vignettes and it was with relief that we found the hut comparatively empty. By the time we had made some soup the weather closed in again and snow began to fall. We slept well after the poor night at the Vignettes and were surprised to wake to another fine morning. It seemed incredible that nearly every day the weather should close in about 4 p.m. only to clear overnight—a vital factor which contributed to the success of the trip.

It was half-past six before we were away from the hut and we started our second week with an unusually good run for the time of day; a steep twisting run down to the head of the Val des Dix itself. However, the ensuing traverse above the artificial lake soon lowered our spirits. A long gentle rise covering several miles, edging all the way on icy slopes under a hot sun, left us feeling dehydrated and with aching ankles, yet with little useful height gained. The heat of the day increased as we branched up a steep and airless couloir to the final slopes of the Rosablanch, and despite frequent rests we were unable to eat much due to thirst. Nevertheless, spurred on by the usual bad weather clouds boiling up behind us, we tackled the last five hundred feet of the mountain feeling extremely tired. This section was so steep that it was necessary to carry skis and kick steps, using the skis to dig in as artificial handholds. By midday we were on the summit, thoroughly exhausted and short of water, and it needed the descent in sunshine and good powder snow to revive our enthusiasm, if not our energy. Since the more recent daily snowfalls it had been noticeable how much better ski-ing conditions had been, with a welcome lack of ice and windcrust.

A fairly short climb to the Col de la Chaux brought us in sight of the Cabane de Mont Fort only half an hour away. Once again the descent was a good one, although the snow had by then become a little sticky, and we were all speeding home when Joe Renwick had the misfortune to fall heavily on an ankle. However, it did not appear to be broken, and with some difficulty he was shepherded to the hut. There was no

guardian and we had the hut to ourselves until a pair of Italians joined us.

Next morning, Joe's foot was swollen and painful and we were relieved that he was able to limp the mile or two along the ridge high above Verbier. After kicking steps down a short gully we strapped him to a makeshift ski-stretcher and launched him on to the icy pistes, into the midst of crowds of hurtling skiers, the most dangerous hazard we had yet encountered! Carefully steering Joe by numerous tugs we arrived at the top of the Ruinette chairlift in time for a welcome lunch of steak and chips before the depleted party descended to Verbier by means of a notorious wood-route, a steep and narrow "schwarz-weg" if ever there was one!

At one stage we had contemplated the inclusion of the Grand Combin in our "Haute Route", although it is really an offshoot of the main route. However, lack of time now forced us to abandon this idea, and after Joe had seen a doctor we decided to move over to Champex that night, and have an overdue rest the following day. A hired jeep took the seven of us and all our kit down the hairpin-studded road to the valley, where we had an all too short glimpse of the cherry blossom and green fields before taking the equally alarming road up to Champex on the other side. Perhaps I ought to mention to those who may think that we had abandoned our skis in preference for four wheels that there was little or no snow over this part of our route!

Wednesday, April 20th, was a welcome rest day, and Joe and Dick left us to return to England. Joe had been advised to have treatment for his ankle, and Dick, who was suffering from 'flu, felt that it would be better if he went with him. So the party was now reduced to five for the last lap; Eric, Tom, my father, Nestor and myself.

Champex looked cold and bleak in the spring sunshine, with the massive Grand Combin reflected starkly in the icy lake against a border of black pines. Nevertheless with the first signs of spring chaffinches and blackbirds were singing, and the first crocuses were bursting out. A very busy resort in summer, the village was now almost deserted, only the "Club Alpin" and one pension being open to greet us.

Nestor was obviously relieved to be back on his own ground, being a Champex guide, and the following day we were up early to find the chair-lift already in motion specially for our benefit, to take us the first two thousand feet up to the Col de la Breyaz. So sleepy was the attendant at the top of the lift that my father nearly got swept round the wheel at the top for another circuit, but fortunately managed to bale out in time. In summer the easy track to the Cabane d'Orny takes a mere hour and a quarter, but that day it took us a weary five hours. The warmth of the day plus a fair amount of new snow made it impossible to follow the normal climbers' track due to avalanche danger, and we climbed steeply up the Breyaz ridge only to descend the far side kicking steps down a very steep gully into the Val d'Arpette. No sooner down than we ziz-zagged up to the ridge again only to slither over slippery grass and icy rocks down to the summer path, now carrying our accursed skis! Once on the track our troubles were not over, and we waded knee deep through wet snow before finally collapsing in a perspiring heap for lunch, too tired even to speak. A summer walk of half an hour had been transformed into a spring torture of three and a half hours.

Food and rest revived us, and with improving conditions we were able to reach the Cabane d'Orny, after a further hour and a half of hard labour. By that time it was hot and sunny, and while we rested our saturated clothes dried in the sun. So with the heat of the day over we left the tiny hut as late as 3.30 p.m. and enjoyed a pleasant climb up the glacier towards the Cabane du Trient. Now we were rewarded with magnificent evening views of the Aiguilles Dorées ridge, and the Aiguille du Chardonnet before we eventually reached the unguarded hut just after 5 p.m. We were the only visitors and crowded into the tiny guides' room glad to have only a small space to warm. The steaks we had carried were cooked to a turn, and we ate hungrily before turning in early, ready for our final day.

Friday, 22nd April, was a rosepetal dawn. I stood hopefully on the hut terrace waiting for a red dawn but it never came and the mountains only blushed as we headed across the plateau de Trient for the Aiguille du Tour. Here at 11,000 feet the previous summer we had seen a mouse scurrying from one

crevasse to another, but now we had the wide snowfield to ourselves and after two and a half hours we were on the South summit having scrambled on rocks over the last few hundred feet. The morning was crisp and clear with a magic glitter about the snow as we looked back over our route from Saas Fée and saw in retrospect the whole ninety miles of it, with its 32,000 feet of climbing and we felt a certain amount of satisfaction with our efforts. Determined to enjoy our last run we sped down the Glacier des Grands towards La Forclaz Pass, where we intended to finish before returning to Martigny.

To our dismay the first thousand feet were difficult in powder snow and crusty conditions, but at length conditions improved to give us a fast and exhilarating steep, swinging finish into the woods at the head of the Trient valley. Happy, we ambled pleasantly along the wood path to La Forclaz glad to return to the world of flowers and greenery after twelve days of snow and ice. After a celebration meal of the usual soup and bread we fell asleep amongst a mass of crocuses and spring flowers to await the bus that never came before hiring a taxi and descending to Martigny in state, scruffy but victorious, to be welcomed by Harry Spilsbury, now fully recovered and ready to hear the rest of our tale.

Martigny was beautiful; all the blossom and flowers had opened out since our arrival, and the air was thick with the scent of lilac and wisteria, apple and pear blossom, a wonderful contrast to the black and white chill of the mountains and one of the most impressive features of the Haute Route at this time of the year.

In retrospect may I say that for those skiers who have never done the "Haute Route" it is a necessity. After it, the "piste" skier may return gladly to his icy ruts, but he will always remember the vast, open snowfields, the grandeur of it all, and the feeling of being a mouse among the mighty peaks. Above all he will appreciate his artificial climbing aids so much the more. To do the "Haute Route" one need not be a particularly good skier, but it is essential to be able to do the basic stem-turns and stem-christianias well on all kinds of snow, and above all to be fully fit, prepared for every day to be a hard day.

KNOYDART RECONNAISSANCE

by H. Stirling

KNOYDART is that wild remote territory bounded on the North by Loch Hourn, on the South by Loch Nevis and on the West by the Sound of Sleat. So much water should therefore recommend a boat. It did to some.

On 4th May, 1921, Matt Botterill and "Molly" entered Loch Hourn in a double reefer, hail and rice pudding careering on the floor. The rice was saved, served and presumably eaten (*Y.R.C.J.* Vol V, No. 15, page 31). The next day was outstandingly fine and Botterill notes, "Laoar Bheinn as a suitable hill on which to climb". And after the fine weather in the Loch of Hell (Loch Hourn) he and his crew received a drenching baptism in the Loch of Heaven (Loch Nevis).

Reaching further back into the wet mists, there was the S.M.C. Yachting Meet of Easter 1897, with the President and 28 members on board the steam yacht "Erne". Loch Hourn rained and sleeted again. Apart from mountaineering activities, they also tested the resources of Macmillan's Hotel of Skiary. These appear to have been limited to whisky at three-pence a glass or three and six a bottle and none of the weakness they are putting in it today. There was also porridge.

In 1960 Carr and Stirling went by van in the month of November. Lightning whipped the two-man team out of Yorkshire and on to Edinburgh, where the party's howff for the night was the S.M.C. Clubroom. Stirling, then S.M.C. only, not yet Y.R.C., had a key. In the cold a.m. these two furtive figures ferried bundles up the stairs from the van parked in Parliament Square. Could any burgher be misjudged for thinking Burke and Hare, the body-snatchers, had returned? Before leaving Edinburgh next day a bottle was purchased. Stirling selected "Dalmore": the price was 59/6. Carr winced. Stirling pointed out that, since each was paying half the cost, it was an opportunity to buy a better whisky. Carr yielded; Scottish logic triumphed over Yorkshire frugality.

By Saturday night the team had reached Glen Nevis where they camped. Sunday saw their first entry into Knoydart, the land where "the King's writ did not run and the sword was mightier than the pen".

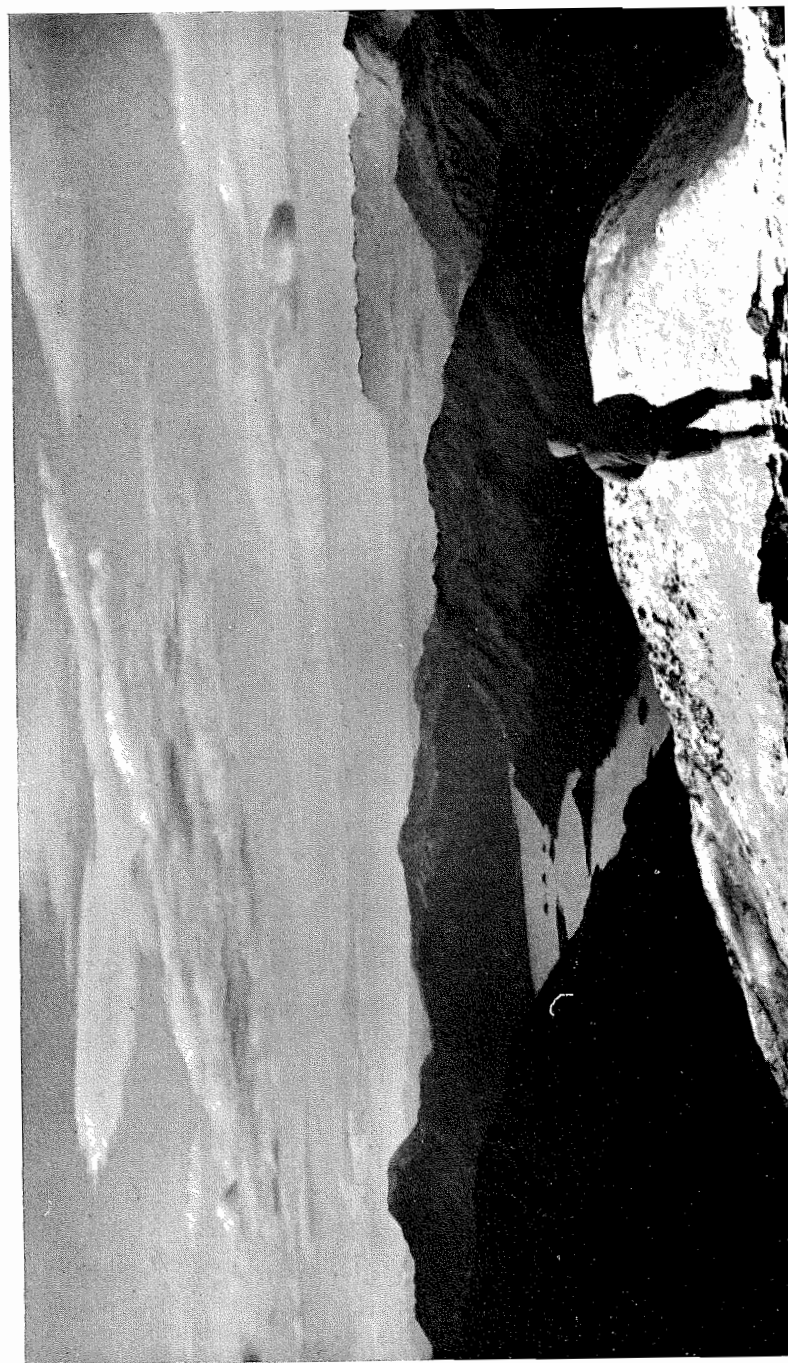
The road by Loch Arkaig to Glen Dessary lay through the lands of Locheil and "No" notices prompted the party to seek a representative of that great chief. When found he was genial; it was only the hind shooting season and there were no hinds in Glen Dessary. The day's rain was the first for weeks; October had been a summer month this year and he vowed it would clear up for a fine week.

The day continued dull and after passing Loch Arkaig the road degenerated. It was rough in Glen Dessary; Carr and Stirling bounced as far as the Upper Glen. No more road and no camp site, so back to Glen Dessary House. The large economy sized tent fitted the flat patch of ground behind the house.

Monday, and it looked as if Locheil's man was right. Magnificent warm sunshine, magnificent blue sky and magnificent autumn colours of gold, copper, red and yellow. A real peak reached up at the top of the glen, Sgurr na Ciche herself, the Queen of the district, a Munro to be gathered in. It is easy to see which way to go, although somehow it doesn't look the same on the map. Never mind, it won't be the first time the S.M.C. have disagreed with the Ordnance Survey and been correct.

The hillside is very rough and rocky, with easy angled slabs and mica blinking everywhere like heliographs. The view from the final ridge is distinctly strange. Whatever the S.M.C. might say the Survey would never leave out a loch. Of course the party have climbed the wrong hill! Stirling was furious and it was all his own work. He had not added a new Munro to his list for years and now this! Carr laughed, he was on holiday, not on an expedition. Two miles away was Sgurr na Ciche and now out of reach. The wrong hill was Sgurr na H-Aide, the Sgurr being the chopped end of a narrowish ridge giving the appearance of something more exciting, but it must be admitted it was not a bad hill.

The heads of Loch Morar on the one side and of Loch Nevis on the other, lay below; a descent to the latter was made. Here there are two cottages, Finiskaig and Sourlies. Finiskaig lacks only windows and has a fine dung floor; Sourlies is in use as a holiday cottage. A marvellously remote



H. Stirling

LOCH HOURN

place with steep hillsides all around where only the deer wander. The sea loch is the one way to reach it.

Behind the cottages the remains of a path beat back and forth up the hill. It was a very well made path at one time, with stone walls buttressing the corners. Each right-turning corner overhangs a gorge made completely picturesque with waterfalls umbrellaed by golden-leaved birches.

Soon colour fades and dark walls push in; the path and the gorge run together. Darker still and boulders have jaws to seize ankles. An impressive bealach: it is the Mam na Cloich 'Airde and the way back to Glen Dessary. Moonlight shines on water and the party relocates itself at the Lochan na Mhaim. Downwards at last into Glen Dessary, the tent and the roar of primus stoves. After the second last ritual of the day, a measure of Dalmore, the error of Stirling's pathfinding seems much diminished.

Suddenly the two were awake to a flapping flysheet and a gale. Trousers almost decent and boots unlaced, Carr and Stirling flapped as much as the canvas to rearrange the guy ropes; there were one or two repeat performances before morning. The gale continued all day and it was impossible to leave the tent. The wind drove the rain under the flysheet and it soon got into the tent. A retreat to Lagangarbh in Glencoe was decided on, in spite of the offer of the deer larder. The long journey to Glencoe was made in darkness.

The next day looked like improving and the van was reloaded, but not before a cow had chewed half a leg off Carr's waterproof trousers hanging over the side of the van. She appeared to have a great liking for things rubbery, she was the same animal encountered at Lagangarbh on the 1960 Easter Meet. This last hilarity marked the end of Stage I in the reconnaissance and Stage II began with steady progress north and west in steady rain. Due to the weather nothing was noted scenically on the road up Glen Garry and past Loch Quoich although hydro schemes were obtrusive. But the descent to Kinlochourn, in spite of limited vision, was felt to be sensational; it was a very steep gradient. Visibility improved just in time for the pilot to pull the van out of its dive and the vehicle taxied out on to the flat alluvial plain extending across the narrow width of the head of the loch.

The flat plain is shared between a sheep farm, devoted to the white-faced Leicester breed, and Kinlochourn House, a shooting lodge whose original owner had a notion to emulate Osgood Mackenzie of Inverewe and had surrounded the house with ornamental and sub-tropical trees. He was also responsible for the white-faced Leicesters as it was considered that, due to the flatness of the county of their origin, they would not wander on the hills and interfere with his deer-stalking. The sheep, needless to say, learned the ways of the country and were soon tripping through the heather like any native black-face. The shooting gentleman had then to resort to an expensive ten-strand wire fence as much to keep the sheep in as the deer out. In further conversation with the people of the farm, the weather was also mentioned. A rain gauge is kept here and the average rainfall is 120 inches per year. In October they had had only 2 inches. Notwithstanding this exceptional low, it must be one of the wettest places in the Kingdom.

The tent was erected in a field and with darkness came another gale. The wind roared up the funnel of the fjord-like loch and the party stoically prepared for another rough night. The day dawned bright and cold but it was a long time before the direct rays of the sun enlivened this recessed corner; in mid-winter it must be worse than Kinlochleven. Almost overhanging this small isolated community is Sgurr a Mhaoraich and last night's storm had brought to it a shining crown of snow. Today it would be climbed. It is a Munro.

The road up out of Kinlochourn was taken and what had been missed on the way in was greatly admired. Like the path up from Loch Nevis, this too had a gorge beside it, decorated with blue-green pines and golden-leaved birches. The road was left and the steady slog uphill persevered with until the snow-line was reached, to be shortly followed by the summit ridge. It was a day for views. Last night's storm had cleared all before it and all the hills were visible. Nearest was the long range of the South Cluanie Ridge and the Saddle, forming one wall of Glen Shiel and then of course the Five Sisters of Kintail. Away beyond all those was the easily recognised pyramid of Spidean a' Choire Leith, the main top of Liathach. To the west the Black Cuillin rose up with all the peaks neatly aligned and almost levelled off and then, coming in close and

slightly south of west, Ladhar Bheinn. If Sgurr na Ciche was the Queen of Knoydart, here was the Monarch himself. Botterill defines the pronunciation of Ladhar Bheinn as a compromise between 'Lurven' and 'Larven'. One wonders if E. E. Roberts, in the light of his notes on Gaelic pronunciation in the 1960 Journal, agreed with Botterill; certainly the people of Kinlochourn do.

There was a long lingering to absorb into the mind this fabulous panorama and to prolong the delights a subsidiary ridge was chosen for the descent into Coire Sgoir-adail where the stags were not expecting visitors. From here a stalkers' path led into the grounds of Kinlochourn House and so to the tent.

The next day was to be the last among the hills and Ladhar Bheinn was to be the finale. From Kinlochourn this excursion provides a twelve hour day. Carr and Stirling set out at 8 a.m. expecting much of the return journey to be in darkness—it was. The weather gave hopes of yesterday's clarity but after a short while showers could be seen coming in from the west. The cottage of Skiary, already mentioned for its whisky fame in earlier times, was passed. A mile or so beyond Skiary is Runival, an excellently sited house with its own small bay and cluster of pines. It is empty and locked but obviously entry is made through an open window. A good bothy and very attractive to the wanderer in these parts; it is hoped that it does not become a roofless ruin, like so many, through abuse.

The path was never particularly good, when it was not rough it was wet and good black bog but this merely added savour to the day's glory. Eventually Barrisdale was reached and a pause made for lunch. At Barrisdale the hills sit further back from the loch and the aspect is more open, also the loch at this point suddenly widens and turns sharply north-west. Barrisdale has no road to it and all practical communication is by the loch; there is a footpath over the Mam Barrisdale to Inverie on Loch Nevis.

From Barrisdale the way led up the hillside by a magnificently graded path which zig-zagged resolutely upwards. Suddenly and most startlingly one is at the entrance to Coire Dhorrcail. This is a corridor formed by the Druim a Choire Odhair on the one side and Creag Bheith on the other, sweeping out from the main ridge to form the inner sanctum of

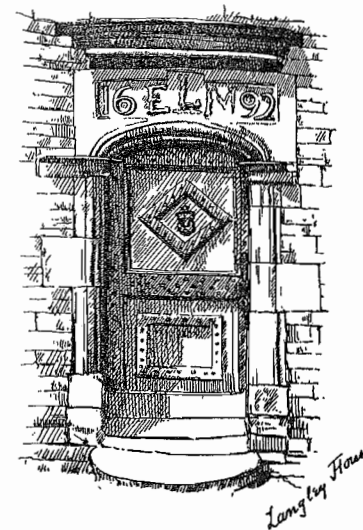
Coire Dhorrcail. To see the corrie in its entirety must be very fine but that day shredded mists continually passed, giving impressions of a high ridge and great shining wet black cliffs. Never hidden however was the delightful-looking sugar loaf of Stob a Coire Dhorrcail sticking out like a thumb from the mountain. After this sensational entrance the bed of the corrie destroyed the idyllic expectancy of green turf by being a sodden sponge of sphagnum which continued halfway up the hillside. The large bowl of the corrie with only a narrow outlet, combined with the very heavy rainfall, all have a hand in creating this.

Carr and Stirling chose to follow a branch of the burn, but this was a sickening splodge and they nipped up Stob a Coire Dhorrcail. The recommended route is to follow the main burn high into the corrie and then ascend the slopes at their lowest point on the south eastern end of the Ladhar Bheinn ridge, marked Bealach on the O.S. 1-inch map. It is the easiest and quickest way. Mist prevented sightseeing, nothing was seen of the great cliffs, and therefore no evaluation of their climbability could be made. In the mist the summit seemed long in being reached. This filled Stirling with grave doubts; he was still wary after not having climbed Sgurr na Ciche. At last the slope levelled off to a short narrow ridge and a mossy cairn loomed up—it was done.

The descent to Druim a Choire Odhair included what might be called scrambling and with Super Ektachrome in the cameras some exposures were made, half in and half out of the mists; they were reasonably successful. The path was picked up again in the corrie and followed back to Barrisdale; in a mile from there it was dark. Five miles of slopping and slithering lay ahead and the tent was reached at 8 p.m., twelve hours exactly. There was still some Dalmore left.

Saturday saw a return to Edinburgh. On the way, near the dam at Loch Quoich, a buzzard sat on a telegraph pole; a change to see this bird so close and not being a doubtful eagle. Further on, still beside the loch, the party stopped to watch a hind and her yearling by the roadside. The hind took the travellers by surprise and approached. She accepted, one by one, all of a packet of biscuits. Obviously she had been a foundling and reared by a stalker.

This early week in November had been varied from a day of warm sunshine through days of mild dampness, wet and stormy, to days of bright cold with snow. Like Scotland any time, all the seasons in a week. It was a quick look at Knoydart, a remote land of great interest which has much to reveal to those willing to wander it with pack on back. The desire to return is strong, and to go by sea stronger, for the best centre for all parts is the sea.



ECOLE NATIONALE DE SKI ET D'ALPINISME CHAMONIX

by P. A. Bell

FOR THE summer of 1961 I had planned to climb in the Alps with Gunn Clark, but with little money and no particular enthusiasm for any large resort we had more or less abandoned these plans in favour of a holiday in the Calanques, where we would climb over the sea, swim in the sun, and visit all the places of architectural interest.

Asleep at home after a week end's climbing and sailing at Swanage I was woken by the telephone; it was Gunn to tell me that our Fairy Godmother had appeared. He had been invited to represent the Alpine Club on the international course run by the "Ecole de Ski et d'Alpinisme" at Chamonix. The choice of partner was left to him.

E.N.S.A. is a government sponsored training school in mountaineering. It is directed by Jean Franco, the famous expedition leader; included on the staff are such well-known guides as Armand Charlet, André Contamine and Pierre Julien. Throughout the year it trains porters and guides both in skiing and climbing and the gendarmerie and others in mountain rescue, which is based there. Apart from this, special courses are arranged for such enterprises as the Olympic Ski Team, mountaineering expeditions and, in our case, an international meet.

The course consisted of two people from each of about fifteen countries, ranging from Mexico to Poland, under the general supervision of Pierre Julien. As guests we were completely free to climb when and what we chose in the Massif of Mont Blanc. If we planned to spend time away at huts, food, tickets and hut expenses were all provided. At the School itself we were extremely well fed and films made by French expeditions could be seen for the asking.

In the first few days the weather was bad so we went with Charlet and Julien on to the ice seracs of the Mer de Glace and Bossons Glaciers to be instructed by them. Charlet, whose axes and crampons many of us were using, is perfect on ice, although sixty-five years old. We followed him, at first gingerly, and finally with growing confidence, up very nearly vertical

ice without any step cutting. For advice on equipment, routes and conditions we could rely on Julien, a young, vital and amusing man who climbed the Eigerwand with no fuss at all in 1952.

Always we were made to feel that we represented our country and were not just pupils. They asked as much as they taught and we were referred to by nationality, not name. Language difficulties were quite considerable, the Spaniards and the Germans needed interpreters to help them with their French; even so we discussed equipment, routes and mutual friends with great interest and enthusiasm. Some of the equipment produced had to be seen to be believed; the Spaniards had little blade pitons the size of the Y.R.C. badge, with small rings through them; the Italians, fine little expansion bolts; the Americans, karabiners lighter and neater than the latest Allain ones, supposedly withstanding 3,000 lbs. load—to mention only some of the extreme examples.

After a few days the weather brightened and so the more ambitious of us were able to move up to the huts. Gunn and I went to the Torino whence we planned to climb the Grand Capucin by the East Face; Bonatti and Ghigo first climbed it in 1951, taking four days. It was a brilliant piece of route finding, an impressive and almost continuously artificial route of 1,500 ft. With all the pegs in place it has been done in a day, but most people have to bivouac. Due to its steepness and lack of ledges the face is little affected by conditions and, as the guide book says, it is one of the few great routes that will go in a really bad season. In spite of this and the fact that one can abseil down it comparatively easily, it remains a serious expedition, remarkable for continuity of difficulty and exposure. It is graded as "extrêmement difficile", but as is pointed out the difficulty is nowhere extreme and all the iron and wood they suggest you carry is unnecessary.

At dawn we were well up the couloir leading to the terraces giving on to the face itself. These easy ledges, being very iced up, presented us with more difficulty than any of the rock, for we were the first to try the route after two weeks of bad weather. Once on the main line of the route the rock was warm and we climbed in sunshine, thrilled by the fine position and character of the climb. By five o'clock we reached

the Couzy bivouac where there is actually room for two people to lie down. Being the best bivouac site on the face we were glad to stop. Above us towered the 40 metre wall, leading to the second Bonatti bivouac, a large but steeply sloping snow-covered ledge. This wall was supposed to be the crux of the climb and we preferred not to risk being benighted on it. In fact it went like all the face climbing, more easily than the chimneys, especially when they were ice-filled, in spite of the guide book grading. The night was cold and clear with cloud occasionally drifting up from Italy and over the Vallée Blanche below us. Down in the Plain of Lombardy we could see the haze and flickering summer lightning and just hoped it would stay there.

We waited for the sun since there was no hurry to reach a sun-bathed slushy glacier in the afternoon, and we climbed on in perfect conditions. The climbing continued at exactly the same standard with the same variety of pitches; diedres with awkward overhanging exits; cracks always avoiding apparently inevitable overhangs; short traverses avoiding blank walls; all these on excellent granite with sound pegs and wedges, though the latter naturally were threaded with little better than pyjama cords.

We passed the third Bonatti bivouac site which makes a good stance if nothing else and then heard the first peal of thunder away to the west on Mont Blanc; for seconds it rumbled round the walls of the enclosed Vallée Blanche. By now we were in the cloud which had formed below us and it was hailing slightly. We saw the next flash of lightning and the thunder came from much nearer; then suddenly the rock started to hiss and hum. Before we could possibly have descended any effective distance the next flash came but if anything slightly to the east of us. Like two flies on a wall we were helpless; knowing that a Swiss had been killed by lightning on this route two weeks before was in fact rather consoling, for by the simple laws of chance it was unlikely to happen twice in so short a time. Almost at once the storm had passed us and was grumbling away over the Géant.

We passed the summit at 6 o'clock and the only incident on the way down was on the first 120 foot abseil from an obvious piton. In the thick cloud I went down and found

myself at the end of the rope on a completely blank and extremely steep wall, the north face. By a desperate 'pendule' from which I swung back twice I eventually reached a groove and found a peg, though no holds of any sort. I managed to fix myself to the peg and Gunn organised his descent so that the rope passed me in my new position. From the col, which we suddenly saw when the cloud parted for an instant we descended quickly and easily to the glacier below by a series of abseils. We reached the glacier at nightfall, loitered over a meal and made our weary way back to the summit of the Aiguille du Midi on the refrozen glacier. Then we slept on the tables of the téléphérique station, going down first thing in the morning.

The next route we did was the Nant Blanc direct on the Aiguille Verte; a classic route made in 1936 by Platonov and Armand Charlet. The Poles had done this while we were on the Capucin and everyone seemed to admire it as a great ice route. We set off with one of the Belgians, Jean Bourgeois, at 8 p.m. from Mortenvers and walked slowly up to the Rognon du Dru, where we found two Spaniards encamped preparatory to trying the Pilier Bonatti on the Dru.

At 2 a.m. we crossed the large bergschrund with difficulty and climbed on up the steep ice face above. By dawn we reached the heavily glazed rocks in the centre of the face. We should have bypassed most of these on the right, and wasted time fighting our way through them. By midday we were on the ridge, at the top of which we found hard ice and by four o'clock we reached the summit, not having made good time. The descent by the Whymper couloir could not have been better even if long and uninteresting. Reaching the Couvercle, which was seething with people, we chatted with friends before setting out for Montenvers rather too late. As a result of this stupidity we had to sit out the night on a large boulder in the middle of the Mer de Glace, reaching the breakfast table next morning instead of our beds the night before.

Meanwhile two of the Austrians had started the West Face of the Dru, which they finished in spite of bad weather. After this lapse we set off again for the Rognon du Dru, this time to climb the Pilier Bonatti. We reached the bivouac with food for five days so that if necessary we could wait for the weather.

At the site we found the two Poles and two English friends, Richard Lee and Stuart Crampin, already encamped. They planned to climb the Pilier next day; Lee and one of the Poles had already been up to the base of the couloir and placed a fixed rope over the 50 foot wall so that they could leave at midnight and climb the couloir before dawn.

At midnight, although it was dark, we could not mistake the dark cloud over the Aiguilles Rouges so we waited. After an hour the Poles set off and after two and a half we went too, determined to make a final decision at the top of the couloir before we were committed. By dawn we had very nearly caught up with the Poles and had been joined by two Swiss who had bivouacked further down. The couloir was comparatively free of falling stones though there was no mistaking how they could fall. We were moving quickly together to get out of this infamous place.

Suddenly there was a shout from the Swiss, whom we had left behind putting on their crampons. I looked down to see Crampin and Lee cartwheeling down the icy couloir 1,000 feet into the couloir below. They had fallen from beside the Swiss while passing them in our tracks.

It took time for the four of us to abseil down this 45° to 50° couloir; the Poles round a corner could not see the accident and it was impossible to make them understand due to echo. As we descended we saw a movement and when we reached them we found Crampin alive, though unconscious. Lee had been killed by the fall. One of the Swiss ran down to Montenvers to fetch the rescue party whilst we kept Crampin warm and waited. After six hours from the time of the accident he was taken to hospital by helicopter. The rest of us, including the rescuers, walked down.

Back in Chamonix the weather once again deteriorated and we decided to come home, after an extremely instructive holiday. We made a lot of very good friends, all of different nationalities, whom I look forward to hearing from and to meeting again.

FIRST IMPRESSIONS OF NEWFOUNDLAND

by P. Lockwood

HAVING for some time been of a mind to emigrate, owing to professional circumstances in the United Kingdom, my wife and I had a hankering after British Columbia until, after a chance meeting with a colleague, we decided on St. John's, Newfoundland. Place and date once settled, there was the usual chaos of packing and getting away. During this time I made some researches into our new place of abode. I discovered that both the City of Leeds and the University Libraries were completely lacking in information about the island, indeed all the literature to be found was on the Grenfell expeditions to Labrador which, though politically part of the Province of Newfoundland, is one thousand miles north. Northern Labrador looks like the Lofotens and very interesting, but could not really be a good guide at that distance. So, full of curiosity, we embarked on R.M.S. Newfoundland at Liverpool on 13th June, 1958, and sailed on the 14th.

After an uneventful voyage, I awakened at five a.m. six days later and went on deck with a camera. The approach to St. John's is very impressive indeed. The Narrows, as the harbour entrance is called, is almost invisible until the ship is upon it; one is faced by a wall of red sandstone cliffs, five or six hundred feet high, until suddenly the ship enters the Narrows flanked by the old guns of Fort Amherst on the port bow and the cliffs of Signal Hill on the starboard. Once inside the harbour opens out to reveal the oldest city in North America—St. John's.

We were met by my colleague and were quickly introduced into a marathon social round which did not subside for at least a month, by which time I was established in practice and the family settled in a new home. Having arrived at the time when summer begins, the weather could only be described as delightful, especially after the North of England. Temperatures of sixty to eighty degrees, a constant cool breeze, hot sun in clear pure air; by the time July arrives most people are already getting a sun tan. During the first few weeks we did little by way of physical activity but made many excursions by car on the appalling dirt roads. Indeed there were only 110

miles of tarmac in the island and 100 of them in St. John's and district. However, things have much improved lately and one can now cross the island by car, a feat which was still impossible when we arrived.

The countryside somewhat resembles both Sutherland and Southern Norway. This similarity is enhanced by the fact that St. John's is a wooden city except for the business quarter, whilst outside the town wood is universal. The hills around the city are six to seven hundred feet high and quite steep, with small crags on many of them. The rock is a very loose coarse conglomerate with rounded holds. Access, however, is the big difficulty, most hills, if not afforested with conifers, are covered with brush six to eight feet high in which one can get completely lost and entangled when only fifty yards from the road. One therefore must use a trail.

Time was the big difficulty with any expedition and I had to be content with a few hours on Saturday afternoons with an older 'native' colleague who is a first class photographer and enjoys the open air. On these occasions we usually went into Conception Bay where some good walking is to be had on some of the Barrens. These are high and rocky tundra areas, the site of an ancient forest fire. All soil having been burnt and eroded, brush cannot grow. The highest hill in the district is about 1,000 feet and looks somewhat like Pen-y-Ghent, though the view from the summit is not as good as that from some slightly lower hills further round the bay. The place names are quaint and nautical, signifying origin, ancestry or part of a ship. One finds Holyrood, Kelligrews, Harbour Main, Topsail, Portugal Cove, Brigus (Brighthouse?), Cupids (Coopers), to name only a few.

The 'natives' retain to a great extent a West Country dialect in Conception Bay, though in St. John's it is Irish; in fact on first arrival one wonders if Water Street, St. John's is not indeed O'Connell Street, Dublin. I am told there is a community on the West Coast accessible only by sea where a pure Yorkshire dialect is spoken! Most of the out-ports, as these small coastal communities are called, were, until Confederation with Canada in 1949, accessible only by sea, roads being non-existent; the terrain is in fact most difficult for road building. The com-

munities have retained many of their ancestral dialects, customs and family names; fishing and lumbering are their main occupations.

By about mid-September the weather started cooling off and in October the fall (autumn) arrived, with the first frosts. The fall in Canada, and certainly in Newfoundland is the most colourful time of the year; it is then that the brush assumes the most magnificent reds, browns and yellows from both leaves and berries. This is a good time of year to be out of doors and I spent some time on short expeditions, taking photographs. The fall is also the start of the hunting season when the Newfoundlander stalks the moose for winter meat, though caribou, bear, fox, hare and humans often fall victim to the rifle. The last-named game is however a story in itself and is as long as the trout that got away!

At this time of year my practice was getting busy in a final rush before winter, so I was tied down to some extent until in November the first snow fell and business dropped. The snow caused great excitement, but it was wet and lasted only a few days. It was time however to get my skis unpacked and others bought for the rest of the family before the snow melted away again. By early December temperatures were averaging 20°F or so at night and 30°F in the daytime. About 14th December it snowed, the real stuff, twelve inches of dry, powder snow! That week-end I tried my skis for the first time in Newfoundland and then began the most continuously enjoyable winter I had ever spent. Fortunately I had a willing and able accomplice in the form of another immigrant colleague who had spent his youth as a guide in the Tatra. Jerry and I spent every week-end on skis until the middle of April.

At Christmas there were four days' holiday so we managed to get in one full day in the hills to the north of the city. The ski-ing was delightful; in the glorious sunlight, ten to twenty degrees of frost, following wood trails which eventually led back to our own doorstep. In all we covered about 20 miles and felt very pleased with ourselves over the successful day. The hills north of St. John's are all covered with conifers and crossed by many of these wood trails, among which one can get temporarily lost as they are unmarked on maps. We simply set off and followed our noses on many days. The families

also enjoyed the snow as there was a convenient field near the house which was used as a nursery and tobogganing slope.

Unfortunately, however, the winter is not all week-ends and many interesting situations were encountered in motor cars, particularly on roads a foot deep in solid ice with snow banks six feet on the sides. One soon learnt how to drive in snow and also how not to let it disorganise transport. The City Council has some first class rotary blower ploughs which could be useful in England. In early March a hurricane hit the city with 130 m.p.h winds. This was too much for the authorities and for days we reached our offices and hospitals on skis, many streets being blocked by 20-foot drifts.

Eventually our first winter came to an end, in the middle of April the weather became milder and the Newfoundland spring started. This is like a North of England winter, cold, rain, mist and wet. At this time also the Arctic ice is driven inshore and once again the harbour is blocked with ice; earlier, in January, it had been frozen solid, along with the inshore two or three miles of sea. The arctic ice keeps the weather cold until favourable winds blow it out again; this was a time for indoor activity. Following the arctic ice in May the icebergs arrived; I counted as many as twenty-seven off St. John's harbour one morning from the top of Signal Hill. They also keep the temperature down although by then the skies are clear.

The first long holiday week-end of the year is 24th May (Trouters' Day), start of the fishing season. By this time we had been in Newfoundland for almost one full year, a year which had been a most pleasant introduction to our new home. There is still much to explore, the West Coast of the island appears to have more of interest to the mountaineer with the hills reaching 2,500 ft., and I am looking forward to my first visit there when time becomes available.

A TRAVERSE OF THE LENZSPITZE

by F. Wilkinson

WE WERE a party of six, sitting on the veranda of the Hotel Glacier in Saas Fee having our last meal before leaving for the Mischabel Hut. We had already had a good week in the mountains east of Saas and had made a first ascent of the season from our first hut; also we had five 4,000 metre peaks behind us. Looking up we could see our next objectives and our ambition; first the Lenzspitze and Nadelhorn and then the Dom-Täsch traverse.

Heavily loaded with food for four days, we checked at the Post Office for last minute letters from home, posted our cards and followed the narrow path between the chalets on to the hill. The path was steep, high above us we could see the snow line where we knew the hut to be. These treks to the huts showed us how fit we had become; going up to our first hut we had stopped to rest frequently and thrown down our heavy packs at the slightest excuse. Now, although the packs were still there, they were part of us and we were accustomed to a steady plod which we could keep up for hours. This particular day it was hotter than ever and the sun was strong on our backs until late afternoon. After climbing for two hours we were surprised to see behind us a horse and rider who, when they came closer turned out to be a guide and his lady client who were taking turns to ride the horse, leaving the owner of the animal to run behind. We felt sorry for the horse on that steep and narrow path but at the same time any one of us would have changed places with the rider.

It took us five hours to reach the hut and our relief on getting there was soon damped when we found it almost full and the warden a very disagreeable old man. At supper plans for the next day were discussed; nearly everybody was going down to Saas, but the guide and his client were preparing to traverse the Lenzspitze/Nadelhorn ridge and return to the hut. This was to be our route as far as the Nadelhorn, but then we were hoping to descend on the far side and reach the Dom Hut. Before going to our bunks the photographers rushed outside to catch the sunset. Dark red clouds were billowing over the valley, but we could only see how pictur-

esque they were. We now know that they were an ill omen.

The morning was clear and cold. There was the usual blundering about in the dark, stamping around in the hut clogs preparing breakfast, packing the rucksacks and fastening boots and snow gaiters with numb fingers. We were away by 4 a.m. The sun would be another hour before it began to tint the snows of the Dom and drive away the bitter chill. The Mischabel Hut is built on the toe of the ridge running down from the Lenzspitze so there would be no trouble with route finding, there above us, surely only a few hours away, was the peak standing out against the starry sky.

Going was easy at first, but our limbs were reluctant and the packs nearly as heavy as the day before. Soon the ridge began to narrow and we left the snow behind to take to the rock; holds were plentiful if loose and up ahead we could see the guide almost an hour in front. The climbing was continuous, not difficult, but exposure was increasing minute by minute. Soon we joined a ridge coming from our left and then we could see the Dom. Pinnacle followed pinnacle, with now a narrow snow ridge and then another gendarme. Four hours non-stop and the summit looked no nearer; we were now travelling as three separate ropes, all moving together except on the many difficult stretches where we had to belay. Nowhere was the ridge a yard wide, to our right the snow plunged down to the Hohbalen Glacier and on our left we could see the stones avalanching down from the Dom as the sun released them. Our packs were forgotten, no longer could we think of being tired, there was only the rock and the rope. We did not trouble to look back towards Saas Fee. If we had we would have seen the clouds blowing up the ridge obscuring the Fletschhorn and Weissmies across the valley; even so we would not have been perturbed.

After a vertical wall of 250 feet and a steep snow climb now going soft we reached the summit just after noon. Time was running out but we were unaware of it. This mountain was not like the others, its difficulties were continuous. We should have realised the importance of moving as fast as possible in the Alps, perhaps taking risks which one would not take at home; we were probably at fault in not having practised moving together over difficult ridges when roped.



MONT BLANC DE SEILON

We signed the summit book and started off for the Nadelhorn. Cloud was touching the ridge and the Saas valley had disappeared. The snow was soft and this part of the ridge was nearly all snow and very narrow. At 3 p.m. we reached the Nadeljoch and it began to snow. A hasty council of war, and a descent on to the glacier was chosen; this was perhaps the worst choice. We now know that we could have continued over the Nadelhorn and from there returned to the Mischabel Hut or taken the easy slopes towards the Dom Hut. Either of these routes would have been quicker but we had read that the Nadeljoch was possible and the desire to descend out of the snow was too strong. We should in fact have taken the ridge from the Lenzspitze towards the Dom and found the easy way down to the Dom glacier, but who gives up in fairly good weather, at noon?

The Nadeljoch is very steep and is composed of loose rock. That afternoon it was covered with soft new snow and we were soon forced to fit our crampons; within the first fifty feet we knew that we would have to abseil. Fortunately we had plenty of slings and metal rings or karabiners. There were six of us, we had three full length ropes and there were about 1,000 feet to rope down. Time was short, light was failing fast and it was still snowing. We soon developed a technique in which one rope was anchored around a rock and used singly whilst the other two ropes were used for a normal abseil. The last man down released the single rope before descending the double rope. By eight-thirty in the evening we reached the glacier and could think again. It was almost dark and we had been on the mountain sixteen hours but we had faith in finding the hut now, surely not far away.

Roped in threes we moved off on to the glacier. The going was good and the snow hard beneath the thin new layer. We were descending rapidly but our tired bodies found it comforting and did not warn us of danger. When trouble came we were lucky; the slope suddenly became very steep and icy and the leader lost his footing. The others on the rope could not dig into the hard snow and were pulled off their feet, but by now the leader was in control of the situation and the rope came to rest uncomfortably near a wide crevasse.

On again into the wilderness of white. We thought we could see a horizon but it moved about surprisingly, in fact there was nothing to see but white; however, before long the rock ridge we were aiming for loomed up. Torches were pulled out and the ascent of a narrow snow corridor began. In the dark it was comforting to come upon a wooden cross obviously marking the route, but the black void into which we must descend was depressing. We were soaked through and cold, our hope of reaching the hut was dwindling and it was midnight. Should we go on or not?

The rope was thrown over into the void and a volunteer on a lifeline began to descend. Abseiling was no worse than before and in three rope lengths we reached the Dom glacier. Spirits began to rise and there down the glacier were three lights; we were not to know that they were on the other side of the Zermatt valley. There was almost a foot of new snow on the Dom glacier and it was soft. We saw later how many crevasses there were but that night we saw very few, it was almost as if we were being guided along the best route.

On and on we went, but we began to doubt whether we would find the hut in the dark; it was now 2 a.m. Eventually we reached a large icefield and no obvious way through the crevasses, we had no choice, we would have to wait for daylight, now only two hours away. Climbing up the broken rock above the glacier we found a rock corner and huddled together to keep as warm as possible. Food was hauled out of rucksacks but we were too cold and dispirited to eat much. Some were able to sleep but others found the cold unbearable and were obliged to get up and walk about before dawn to revive the circulation in cold limbs.

When dawn came we staggered down the glacier and there was the hut, almost in sight of our bivouac and not more than a mile away.

With a view of the Matterhorn looking more like winter than summer we crawled into the hut to end 24 hours out on the mountains. All over the Alps others had been caught in a similar predicament, not all came out of it as well as we did. So must the mountaineer pit his strength and judgment against the elements; he may not always win.

MOUNTAINS, BEACHES AND SUNSHINE IN CORSICA

by A. Tallon

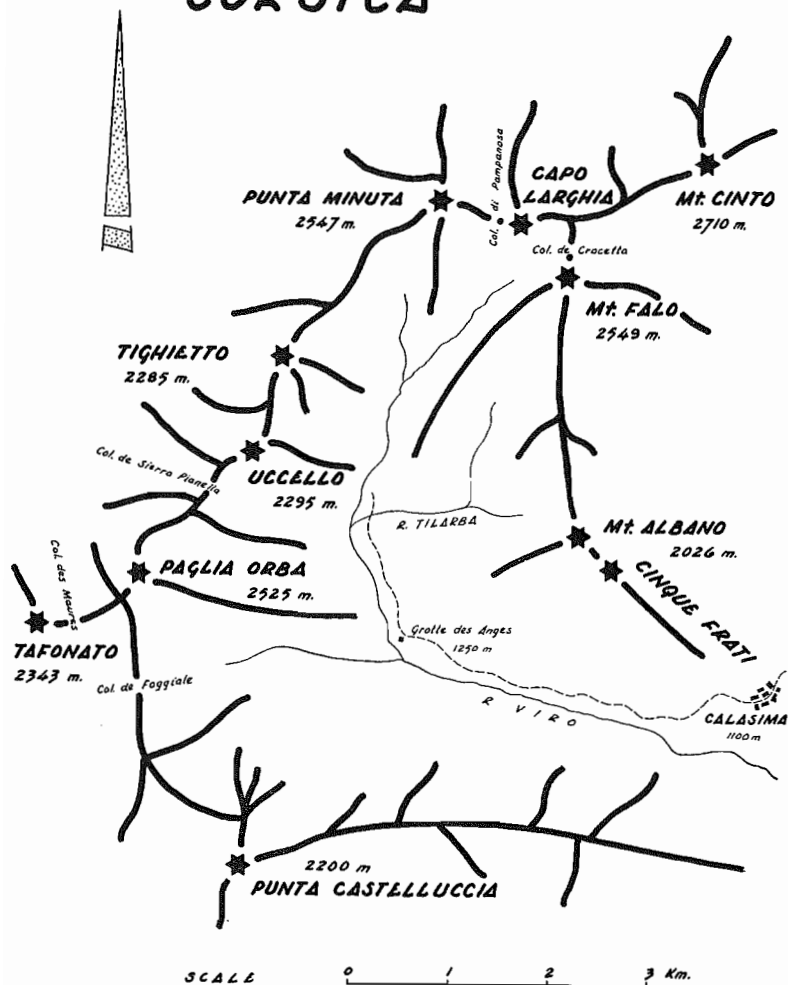
WE HAD decided earlier in the year that this time we would go somewhere different. This was certainly different; I was spending my first night in Corsica. Having teamed up with three French students, we had eaten well and were now lying on the beach at Calvi in our sleeping bags. We had bathed in the Mediterranean and were relaxing on the warm sand under a clear starlit sky with the music of the Calvi night spots just audible across the bay. The other two members of my party were due to arrive by air at Ajaccio next morning; I was due to meet them at Porto in the evening. Having had one encounter with the Corsican bus service I had serious doubts about this meeting ever taking place.

On the bus next morning—there was one after all—I looked at the rivers marked on the map and then at the dried up ravines they were in reality and wondered how we would fare in the mountains. It was hot and dry and the countryside a barren waste of rock and maquis. This maquis, a dense undergrowth of scrub, seemed to cover the whole island and varied in height from six inches to ten feet. Some that we encountered in the Val de Viro was several feet higher than ourselves. I could just see the mountains in the heat haze of the interior; they looked very impressive and a long way away.

At Porto I asked three different people when the bus was due in from Ajaccio; they all thought there would be a bus and gave times ranging from 6.30 to 8.00 p.m. I went up to the bridge at the top of the village—the bus could not pass through the village without crossing the bridge—and spent a very pleasant hour and a half watching people collecting water from the fountain. The evening was warm and most of the water carriers were female and young; the ninety minutes passed quickly and the bus appeared carrying, along with several score other people, Albert Chapman and Timothy Smith. They looked very white and English among all the other sunburnt holiday makers.

We soon had the tent up next to the beach, had a meal and made plans. We were now a complete party and we marvelled

VAL DE VIRO Mt. CINTO GROUP CORSICA



at the wonders of modern travel and how Corsican buses and trains (we found out about the trains later) could exist in the same world as guided missiles and turbo-jet airliners. The next day we spent lying on the beach at Porto and swimming; Porto has a lovely but stony beach in a really striking situation. On the Monday afternoon we caught the bus for Calacuccia. We all admitted a slight reluctance to leave the beach with its bronzed bikini-clad beauties, but most of these lovely creatures were escorted by big brown Frenchmen carrying harpoon guns.

Calacuccia, reached after a very sporting three-hour bus ride over mountain passes, through fantastic gorges and pine and chestnut forests, was disappointing. Was this the famous centre of Corsican climbing? It looked a dirty, uninteresting town with poor camp sites and little running water. We moved on.

Our next stop was Calasima, four miles on the road to the Grotte des Anges, where we intended to make our base. At this point I must make a confession. We did not walk to Calasima—we took a taxi. There is a good new road as far as the village and the object of this very unmountaineering-like act was to gain time, as we wanted to push as far up the valley as possible that night. The camp site was a good one, about 1½ miles past Calasima on the track to the Grotte des Anges. It was, after all, good to be away from the crowded beaches; here we had pine forests, a clear stream with trout and pools for swimming, and above everything the peak of Paglia Orba, the most impressive mountain in the area.

Next morning, after a chat with a friendly shepherd, we were soon on our way again. It was hot and with 50 lb. rucksacks and sunburnt backs the dusty track seemed long. After one hour's walking, and another hour's resting we came upon the Grotte des Anges, a huge overhanging boulder forming a cave which, with its man-made walls around the exposed sides, made a very acceptable shelter from the sun and rain. Twenty yards away was the stream and the edge of the forest and after inspection of the surrounding area for better sites, and French generals in hiding after the Algerian revolt, we decided to make this our base. Here we had a flat place for the tent, a cave in which to rest and eat out of the sun and a

river for water, swimming and perhaps even trout. We were near the mountains. Camping at its best.

In the afternoon we decided to walk up the valley and have a look around. We set off at one o'clock through the forest on a good forester's track. Fir cones and Corsican pine seedlings littered the path; it was hot but not unpleasantly so in the shade of the trees; we quickly gained height and swung round to the right into a side valley leading up to Monte Falò. We were soon on the edge of the tree line and just above us was the ridge running south-west from Monte Falò. How deceptive is distance when one is anxious to see new country and climb new peaks. From the ridge the top of Monte Falò seemed but a short scramble away. Two and a half hours later we were still staggering upwards in the full glare of the sun and the short scramble had become an age of hot, dusty scree. We turned back about 200 ft. from the summit and were happy to get back to camp about 7.30 in the evening. We would somehow have to adapt our climbing to suit the conditions if we were to climb anything at all during the holiday; climbing in the middle of the day had proved to be almost impossible and extremely unpleasant. To climb Paglia Orba, which we intended to do next day, we would set off in the late afternoon with food and sleeping bags, travel in the comparative cool of the evening, sleep as high as possible and climb the peak in the early morning. So after preparing our plan and our evening meal we ate and felt more content.

The camping at the Grotte was ideal. We swam in the mornings when we were in camp, cooked our meals in the shade of the rock, and slept or went fishing when it was too hot to do anything else. There were small trout in the stream, we managed to catch three one afternoon but had no success otherwise. Midges and flying insects did not seem to bother us; there were ants in their thousands all over Corsica but they did not seem to bite; the Grotte was alive with lizards but they seemed harmless and quite friendly. Down by the stream the moths and butterflies were lovely.

Next evening at 5.30 we were off with food and sleeping bags for the Col de Foggiale (1963 metres), south of Paglia Orba. There was quite a good track up the valley and even after passing the bergerie (a collection of rough sheep folds

and a shepherd's hut with cows, goats and pigs wandering about) the track was fairly well cairned. We camped half an hour below the col when darkness overtook us about 8.30, at the base of some steep rock. It was a good bivouac site: the night was clear, the stars shone and the maquis we slept on was of the non-prickly variety. Although we were quite high (1,900 m.) we only just needed to put on sweaters before turning in. Our sleeping bags were rather too warm for sleeping in the valley.

We started next morning at 5.15 just after it became light and we were soon over the col and round towards the back of Paglia Orba. We went up a route given in the Club Alpin Français guide book as 'one of the easiest and most interesting'. We were not a serious rock climbing party, perhaps not a serious party in any sense, and did not want to be involved in any hard climbing in hot weather in unknown country. The guide book gave an accurate description of the climb and the route was easy to follow; at only two places did we really need the rope. We climbed to the summit, which we reached at 8 a.m., in shade all the way. Tafonato is next door to Paglia Orba, joined to it by the Col de Maurès and we had superb views of the Trou de Tafonato, a great hole through the mountain fairly low down which made Tafonato look like a huge bridge. We stayed for three-quarters of an hour on the summit (2,525 m.) and the sun was now strong. To the north east was the spiky ridge leading to Punta Minuta and Capo Larghia, with Monte Cinto far to the north, and Monte Falò, the scene of our setback on the first day, to the south of it. Away to the south was Monte d'Oro with patches of snow struggling vainly for survival in the blazing sun. On the way down we climbed a small peak to the south of the Col de Foggiale and we were not back in camp until 3.30 p.m. We were delayed partly by a swim in some pools which were almost perfect ellipses in shape but we were even more delayed by the heat of the early afternoon.

After another swim and a meal Chapman and I went down to Calasima for supplies, reaching the village after one hour's walk down the valley. We were hot and tired so we walked into the first bar we saw and asked for a drink of orange. There, in the corner of this small bar in the highest village in

Corsica, stood an Electrolux fridge and out of it came our orange drinks. After our drink we asked about buying supplies. One of the village children took us to the *épicerie*, it looked like a stable from the outside, and we bought our supplies, they even sold Gillette razor blades; the fruit van was in the village that evening and we bought melons, pears, oranges, grapes, greengages and potatoes, there was no bread until the next morning but the woman from the bar sold us one of her own loaves. We also bought two litres of wine from a woman we met at the *épicerie* for something like two shillings a litre. We had a good meal that evening. We liked Calasima and the people who lived there. On another visit the woman in charge of the *épicerie* was away but we were given what we wanted and told to pay later; a man invited us into his house for a glass (or two) of Cedratine, the Corsican liqueur: but what we liked most of all was the distinction the villagers made between 'tourists' and 'alpinists'. When we got back to our camp site after our first visit Smith had a huge camp fire burning at the Grotte and was full of stories of scores of brigands, some riding mules but all carrying rifles who had marched past our camp shouting. He had been on his own long enough!

Next night we bivouacked in the Val de Viro and from there climbed Punta Minuta and Capo Rosso. This was a very special bivouac: it actually rained that night. There were about six drops just as we were about to get into our sleeping bags; we fled up the mountainside to the shelter of a small cave, but there was no need, the shower was over. Next morning we had a prolonged shower of about fifteen minutes and the day was fairly cloudy. We enjoyed climbing our two peaks and were back in camp by one o'clock to find that we had visitors. Two Oxford University men whom we had met in Porto had come up to see us and intended to spend the night at the Grotte. That evening we made another trip to Calasima and on the way back met a very strange creature on the track. It was lizard-like, about eight inches long, black and brilliant yellow in colour with a leopard-like head and slow deliberate movements. We had not had much Cedratine, only two glasses each, and we eventually established that this animal was in fact a Fire Salamander.

The next bivouac was again up in the Val de Viro, but this time much higher (2,100 m.) half an hour below the Col de Crocetta (2,300 m.). It was rather cold that night with heavy dew. We spent some time arguing about the position of the North Star and whether a certain star was a planet or somebody camping on the ridge of Monte Falò. We slept well, were up at 4.30 and away by 4.55; it was cold that morning but we were glad of it because the first half-hour up on the col was hard work on steep scree. From the col a fairly well cairned track led us to the summit of Monte Cinto at 6.45. A large party of French lads with huge hats and a local guide reached the summit from the Calacuccia side soon after us, the first party we had met at close quarters in the Corsican mountains. Monte Cinto at 2,700 m. is the highest mountain in Corsica and we were happy to have climbed it on this, our last day in the mountains. On the way back we avenged our set-back on the first day by climbing Monte Falò from the north. And that was the end of our climbing holiday: we had climbed four big mountains and two smaller ones, we had visited country new to us and we had been alone in the hills.

Next day we walked through Calasima to Calacuccia and camped there for the night. We met one of a party of Durham University students who were spending ten weeks in the area doing various sorts of research work. He told us something of the history and social life of the district. He also explained the mystery of several very striking blondes we had seen at Calasima along with the more usual Latin types. Nordic families had apparently settled in the area many years ago and in the isolated valleys these Nordic types are still produced. We had thought they were visiting film stars. But there was one thing which baffled both the students and ourselves; nobody in the interior of the island ever seemed to do any work; that is, no one except the postman, the taxi driver and the numerous bar keepers. Could they have some unknown source of income?

One other incident is worth relating: our encounter with the Corsican railway. We travelled from Corte to Calvi. The railways in Corsica have only a single track except at a few stations where trains can pass. We were delayed for about an hour at Corte because the train due in from the other direction

had not arrived (perhaps the driver had stopped to visit relatives or been delayed by a stubborn cow on the line, or possibly even by a forest fire). Our train had two carriages and was full, even by Corsican standards. About an hour out from the station we were waved down and there on the track ahead was another train. This sort of situation can be awkward on a single track, but in this case all was under control. We were asked to change trains. The passengers soon changed over but the baggage took longer. Eventually we were off again but at the next station the three of us had to change to another train for Calvi. This change was not on the timetable, neither had the other been, but we were assured that it was all right and off we went again; this time it seemed that the driver was determined to make up for lost time. We were sitting in the front of the train, a mistake, and we watched the driver put the engine in top gear, light a cigarette and go to sleep. We had an uninterrupted view of the lines disappearing round bends ahead of us. We slowed down sometimes to avoid a cow or a pig on the line and stopped at the odd derelict station to pick up passengers, sometimes we just stopped at the side of a road to let someone off and once we just stopped and a man got out and walked off into the maquis. It was dark when we reached Calvi; a case of travelling hopefully and arriving thankfully.

As a climbing holiday our visit to Corsica was well worthwhile. Perhaps another time it would be better to go in May or June when the beaches are less crowded and the temperature lower. We found the sun temperature to be over 125°F on several days, and the shade temperature over 90°F; it was 100°F in the tent before 8 a.m. on some days. The food at the hotels is fairly expensive and mostly very poor. One can camp almost anywhere but near the towns there are recognised camp sites, mostly without sanitation and some without water. Calasima is one of the least spoilt villages I have ever visited and here we met genuine friendship and help. The mountains are rock and the rock is good, the easy routes are interesting and the hard routes looked very hard.

THE CASCADE MOUNTAINS, OREGON

by G. A. Salmon

RECENTLY I returned from spending two pleasant years in the State of Oregon, U.S.A. The average Englishman will either confess complete ignorance of Oregon, or will mumble vaguely about the Oregon Trail, or the pines, but the informed mountaineer will associate Oregon with the Cascade Mountains and will be able to supply suitable statistics. He will tell you that this is a range of volcanos that separates from the Canadian mountain mass, runs south for over 600 miles through Washington and Oregon at a distance of about 140 miles from the Pacific Ocean, and finally loses its identity again by merging into the Californian Sierras and Coast Range. He might also tell you of its 14,000 foot peaks Mount Rainier and Mount Shasta, or of the great 12,000 foot peak, Mount Mazama, which blew off its top 5,000 feet to leave a huge crater 6 miles in diameter containing a lake of almost incredible clarity and blueness.

The Cascades have many spectacular features, but to those accustomed to British mountains or the Alps perhaps the most noticeable are the forests. As you look out westward from the summit of one of the high peaks, often taking in a hundred miles or more at one glance, the forest stretches out below you, an all-enveloping green blanket that fills the valleys, rolls over the foothills, and climbs up to the very foot of the peaks. To the east a very different view meets the eye; the trees straggle only a few short miles from the mountains, out on to the glaring sandy plain.

These forests with their great Douglas Firs, often more than 200 ft. tall, owe their existence to a combination of an annual rainfall which is high even by British standards, and to a large number of hours of sunshine. The rainfall takes place almost entirely during the winter and early spring, and between May and October the sun can be relied upon to shine out of a cloudless sky, except perhaps during brief interruptions from an occasional thunderstorm. This winter rain and summer sunshine, besides being conducive to tree growth, provides ample opportunity for the favourite mountain pastimes. Skiing, either downhill or cross-country, can be continued to the

end of May, and by then conditions become suitable for attempts on the higher mountains.

Living in Eugene, about 80 miles from the crest of the Cascades, I was within sight of a group of snow-capped peaks; on clear days in the winter I could see from my office window, visible above the lower intervening ridges, the sparkling summits of the North and Middle Sisters (10,094 ft. and 10,053 ft.). These peaks form part of a group, the Three Sisters, which lies to the south of the McKenzie pass; to the north of the pass is Mount Washington, a peak that in spite of its inferior height (7,808 ft), does its best to imitate the Matterhorn.

Between Mount Washington and the North Sister, a distance of about 12 miles, is a number of low craters, Belknap Crater, Yapoah Crater, and Black Crater, which barely a thousand years ago spewed out vast lava flows to leave the whole area of the pass a contorted sea of black rock, forty or more square miles in area. Walking amongst the lava flows gives one an impression of confusion which must be something akin to that experienced in the midst of some vast Himalayan ice fall; pinnacles, giant blocks of obsidian, ridges and depressions make up a most unearthly scene.

The pass is in fact misnamed since the source of the McKenzie river is not in the area surrounding the pass; it rises in a number of small lakes some distance to the west of the crest of the range and flows south, parallel to the mountains, for fifteen to twenty miles before turning west down the deeply cut valley which carries it towards Eugene and its confluence with the Willamette River. The road to the pass leaves the main valley near the elbow bend in the river and follows the White Branch, a stream that has its source in the largest glacier on the Sisters. This glacier was undoubtedly responsible in some bygone age for the deeply cut trough down which the stream now flows. The road follows the valley bottom and so climbs only slowly until it reaches the head wall; there it goes up steeply in a series of tight Z-bends and finally levels out amidst the wilderness of lava that surrounds the pass.

This road is no super-highway; its narrowness and the tightness of its bends prevent the use of snowploughs for road clearing in winter, and thus it is usually closed to traffic for

six months of the year, from mid-December to early June. The date of the opening of the pass is very important to anyone wishing to get into the high country surrounding it. Without the road the area becomes almost inaccessible and any trip into it during the winter months must be very carefully considered and planned. In 1961 the pass was opened during the last few days of May, actually in mid-week. Four of my friends and I immediately made plans for a trip at the weekend that would take us as far as possible into the mountains. We knew that at the level of the pass we would still encounter a great deal of snow, so we decided to take either skis or snowshoes, depending on individual preference.

The drive from Eugene towards the pass was along the road which follows the McKenzie River. The river is fast flowing and has many rapids along its course, so during much of the drive one is within sight of what the locals call "white water". The first few miles are through cultivation along the valley bottom, but soon the trees close in and the road passes through great avenues of firs which virtually close off the sky from view. In the valley spring was already advancing into summer, but as we climbed towards its head we came upon patches of snow and within a short distance we were running between walls of snow.

The most popular point for leaving the road when going into the country lying to the northwest of the Sisters is Frog Camp. This is a small roadside camp site constructed by the U.S. Forest Service; in summer I always found it occupied by at least two or three camping holiday makers, but on this occasion the tent sites, the picnic tables, and the campfire hearths were still deep in snow. A well maintained trail leaves Frog Camp and climbs up through the forests for about five miles to Sunshine Shelter. This is a small open fronted log cabin at the lower end of a small hanging valley directly below the col between the North and Middle Sisters; it provides a suitable overnight camp for climbers tackling these peaks.

The trail from Frog Camp to Sunshine Shelter is easy enough to follow under summer conditions; a dusty track winds its way through the trees and undergrowth, and one has little need to search the tree trunks for the trail-marking

blazes. But in the snow we found the situation very different since there was no way of distinguishing the line of the trail except by keeping a close look out for the blazes, and this in itself was made more difficult by the great depth of snow which brought the marks down below knee level instead of ten feet in the air as they appear in summer.

Three miles from Frog Camp a tongue of lava about a mile wide comes down through the forest from the main flows near the pass. This is the first real landmark along the trail and, as we were tiring of the long upward trudge beneath the trees, we were particularly anxious to reach this point. However, our progress was very slow and more than two hours passed before we saw the ridge of lava looming through the trees, perhaps fifty feet above our heads. We climbed up on to it and from here, uninterrupted by foliage, we had a magnificent view over the Sisters and across the valley to Mount Washington with its final tower of black rock sitting at the head of a fine symmetrical snow ridge. Although we had been on deep snow since leaving Frog Camp, very little of it could be seen from our vantage point, except on the lava flows and the peaks; the blanket of the forest was so complete that it completely hid the snow and our distant views to the north and west were essentially of forests in their delicate spring greenery.

Out on the lava flow we found all the inequalities nicely covered with snow and the surface in an ideal state for skiing. Tempted by this, our determination to go higher on the Middle Sister weakened and we surrendered ourselves to the pleasures of skiing in such pleasant surroundings.

Meanwhile the sky darkened imperceptibly, until a peal of distant thunder warned us of the approach of a storm. To the northwest great thunderheads had already developed and lightning flashes were soon playing around the ridge of Mount Washington. We raced downhill through the forests towards Frog Camp, our progress being made easier by following our uphill tracks. At every moment we expected the sky to open and subject us to a torrential downpour, but luck was with us and the storm held off while we made our rapid retreat towards the car. No sooner had we reached Frog Camp than the rain and hailstones struck us to the accompaniment of peals of thunder that reverberated around the peaks. The

storm was so impressive that, before starting on our 80 mile drive back to Eugene, we drove to the summit of the pass so that we could have a grandstand view of the lightning dancing among the peaks.

Our view over the Sisters had confirmed our opinion that at least the Middle Sister would soon be in a suitable condition for a climb, so a fortnight later three friends and I set out for an attempt on the mountain. One of my companions, Peter, was a Dutchman whose only experience of climbing was on Table Mountain, South Africa. The other two were Americans; one, a New Englander, had done a lot of climbing in the White Mountains and the Appalachians, the other had lived most of his life within sight of the Cascades.

It was late on Saturday afternoon before we got away from Eugene, and already six o'clock when we arrived at Frog Camp. Much of the snow had gone from the lower part of the trail and we made good progress. However, the Sisters are almost on the forty-fourth parallel, and since Oregonians have not yet accepted the advantages of advancing clocks in summer, the sun was already setting as we climbed up on to the lava flow. Just at the moment when we got a clear view, the peaks were flushed in a pink glow as the sun sank behind the horizon.

But we had no time to admire the view, there was still nearly two miles of hard uphill to Sunshine Shelter, and darkness was coming on. After crossing the lava flow we had to descend into a shallow depression down which the White Branch flows. The stream was covered completely with snow and we had a few anxious moments expecting at any step to break through into the icy water. Fortunately the snow was already becoming firm under the influence of a keen frost, so we crossed the hollow without a discomfiting soaking.

By now it was dark and we were in the forest again. The slope steepened and we groped our way uphill keeping our feet only with difficulty as the surface of the snow had by now become hardened almost into a sheet of ice. It was with relief that we emerged from the trees right into the entrance of the small alpine valley where the shelter is situated. There was a great deal of snow and the shelter was nearly buried; the open front was almost completely closed and we could

only get in by dropping down into a dark hole between the snow and the eaves. The first one of us to do this landed with a splash; there was mud and water on the floor. However, at the far end of the shelter was a low platform raised from the floor about three or four inches and covered in fir branches to make a soft mattress for our sleeping bags.

After a quick meal which involved melting snow for the water supply, we climbed out of the shelter to have a look round before retiring for the night. The sky was crystal clear and the stars were shining as they can do only in the mountains. The moon was just climbing above the ridge that flanked the valley, and the peaks towered above us bathed in moonlight.

We slept comfortably on our mattress of fir branches in spite of the low temperature outside and it was with the usual reluctance that we dragged ourselves out of our sleeping-bags around 5.30 a.m. A quick glance out confirmed our confidence in the weather as there wasn't a cloud in the sky. But the sun had not yet climbed above the Sisters and there was still a chill in the air that made the preparation of breakfast a most uncomfortable affair.

Before setting out from the shelter, we hoisted our rucksacks containing our remaining food on to the rafters, out of reach, so we hoped, of any bear that might pass by and be tempted by the smell of food to rifle them. We had been slow preparing breakfast and it was almost 6.45 a.m. before we got away. However, the valley was still in shadow and we were able to make good progress on the hard snow, along the valley floor and then up the steep slope into an area of rocky moraines, which were now deep in snow. As we emerged from the valley we came out of the shade into glaring sunlight and in next to no time we were shedding clothes trying to keep cool.

The normal route up the Middle Sister goes up the group of moraines that separates the Collier and Renfrew Glaciers, joins the north ridge of the Middle Sister a little way above the col that joins the Middle and North Sisters, and then follows the fairly easy ridge to the summit. We decided that we could make the climb more interesting by taking a route up the middle of the Renfrew Glacier which would strike the

ridge of the Sister a little nearer the summit. From where we stood on the snow covered moraines we could see two great steps in the glacier that appeared as uninterrupted walls of ice perhaps 150 feet high; these we were sure would provide us with ample sport.

When we arrived at the foot of the first wall we were not disappointed; from a small terrace the ice rose in a concave curve, the steepest section being just below the crest. We formed two ropes of two and I set about the task of cutting steps. The surface was quite hard, although not black ice and each step required quite a number of cuts because of the steep angle. In several places the wall was cut by narrow fissures, but there were no signs of instability and it appeared that it would be some time before it collapsed into séracs. Almost a rope's length out, and perhaps thirty feet from the crest, I found one of the small fissures packed with snow into which I could drive my axe up to its head. I made my belay here and called on my second to come up. He came up quickly and led through towards the crest. As he tackled the steepest part of the wall, just a few feet above me, he was silhouetted against the sky, ice chips sparkling in the sunlight as he hacked away. Then he pulled over the crest on to the relatively level glacier. I followed and the other two then came rapidly up the bucket-like steps that we had cut.

We had now been going over three hours without a stop and the step cutting up the wall had certainly taken its toll, so we made this an opportunity for a well earned rest. We were now well above the lower ridges and could see a very great distance; to the north we could pick out Mount St. Helens up in Washington State, to the south the gracefully shaped Diamond Peak at least eighty miles away, while the glacier fell away on the west towards the forest which rolled into the distance. Away on the horizon we thought we could see the top of the conically shaped Spencers Butte that stands just outside Eugene.

Continuing up the glacier we soon came to the second ice wall, which turned out to be a less formidable obstacle than the first. It was just as steep in the middle, but towards the edges it eased off. We chose the easier route up the edge of the glacier and soon found ourselves on the ridge looking

across the col to the gendarme-crested ridge of the North Sister.

In a few places the snow had melted from the ridge exposing the fine volcanic ash into which we sank ankle deep. After climbing steadily up the ridge we came to a point, perhaps 300 feet below the summit, where it rose in a steep step. The rocks were covered in snow and to the left overhung the great eastern face of the mountain which falls away to the Hayden Glacier. We turned the step to the right, traversing on to the western face of the mountain where the slope was very steep, but the snow was just right for kicking steps.

This was our first high trip of the year and we had come up 10,000 feet from Eugene in less than twenty-four hours. Consequently we all found this final slope very tiring and I stopped about half way up for a rest, with the excuse of taking photographs. At last the slope eased off and there sticking out of the snow were the rocks which formed the summit. It had taken us four and a half hours from Sunshine Shelter and we were ready to relax and enjoy the view. We felt in a jubilant mood: surely ours must be the first ascent of the year. But on examining the summit register, which we discovered in a stout metal chest among the rocks, we found to our surprise that we'd been beaten by three days; another party had made the climb in mid-week.

Using the rocks to shield us from the cool wind, we lay back and ate our remaining food. By early June the atmosphere around the Oregon Cascades becomes very dry and this together with the powerful sun leaves one feeling constantly thirsty during outings in the mountains. We had each come prepared with about a quart of diluted lemon juice, but our thirst was insatiable and we resorted to filling our canteens with snow, which melted to provide a further supply of ice-cold liquid.

After spending more than an hour on the summit, enjoying the view and taking photographs, we set off on a course directly down the steep snow slopes of the western face which would cause us to strike Renfrew Glacier below any difficulties. Down much of this face we were able to glissade but at several points the angle was such as to make us stop and take a safer and more leisurely course. A considerable bergschrund

had formed between the snow and the glacier, but we got across without much difficulty and once on the glacier were able to tear off again, glissading much of the way. Within two hours we were back at the shelter, 4000 feet below the summit.

The walk back to Frog Camp passed without incident except for our coming across a porcupine which was leisurely eating a meal of bark thirty feet up in the branches of a pine; he was a big fellow about two feet long. We didn't have an opportunity to admire his defensive quills because, feeling secure in his lofty perch, he took little notice of us and carried on with his meal. On the last two miles of the trail the mosquitoes turned out in force to subject us to their usual treatment.

We arrived back at Frog Camp feeling very hot and tired, but fortunately we had taken the precaution the day before to leave a bottle of beer apiece in a nearby stream to keep cool ready for our return, an ideal ending to a perfect day.

This particular trip was neither the most exciting nor the most difficult that I undertook while in Oregon, but I think it typifies the kind of outing that can be made in an area where distances are great, huts are unknown, and shelters such as Sunshine are considered to be a great luxury.

REMINISCENCES

Part II. The Y.R.C.

by E. E. Roberts

THE CLUB had a very jolly Meet at Coniston at Easter 1909. This was the time E. T. W. Addyman led the first ascent of the Giant's Crawl. Moore was there, he had succeeded the Rev. L. S. Calvert as President, also Green, Constantine, Horn and J. H. Buckley, all men it was a privilege to know and to whom the Club owes so much for creating its spirit of friendliness and independence.

The Y.R.C. was formed by thirteen enthusiastic walkers in October 1892 and somehow at once gained the interest of the great Whymper and of Dent as Honorary Members. Lowe was President for a year then Slingsby reigned for ten years till 1903, bringing in three more great Alpine Club men. The Club took at once to mountaineering and in his restricted Alpine career Lowe was led by the Hopkinsons and Slingsby on a brilliant new traverse of the Nesthorn.

It was the era when classical climbs were being created, examples were the Eagle's Nest Arête and Moss Gill in 1892. Haskett-Smith's book was published in '94 and Owen Glynne Jones' in 1897.

John Birkbeck had led an outburst of pot-holing about 1848, and in 1872 had been lowered to the ledge in Gaping Gill. Alum Pot, which he did in 1848 and in 1870, was the only big gulf completely explored, though Rowten Pot had been attacked and of course Eldon Hole in Derbyshire descended. But make no mistake, pot-holing is something more serious than mere caving; the obvious passages like Long Churn, Douk and Katnot were well known to certain people in 1775. Birkbeck had no successor, and except for 1870 and the Alum Pot gathering, he gave up pot-holing and became an Alpine pioneer.

A curious forerunner of modern work was the attack by the brothers Geoffrey and Cuthbert Hastings and Eckroyd on the long passage up from Gavel Pot, on Leck Fell, 1885. It was not until after Cuthbert Hastings wrote in *Y.R.C. JOURNAL*, Volume VI, page 60, the story of how the iron ladder got

there, that he became aware of how nearly the party had reached the Short Drop exit of the present day.

Martel came over to Ireland and Derbyshire and he made his famous ladder descent of Gaping Gill, with a knot in his lifeline, on 1st August, 1895. The Y.R.C. had been considering an attack and in September lowered Calvert and Booth to the ledge. By this time the Y.R.C. had discovered that information as to the underground was not to be relied upon and started the brilliant four years' campaign of 1896 to 1899. In 1896 Gaping Gill was descended by winch and rope through the side passage, twice, two days each, Edward Calvert, Gray, T. S. Booth, Cuttriss and Green being the first down. The old East Passage was done to the end.

Troller's Hole and Clapham Cave (with raft) were done, and Long Kin West (90 ft.) by Calvert and Ellet. Next year Long Kin was completed, though only Calvert reached the bottom, but the season was filled by attacks on Rowten Pot. That the weather fights for the big caves is only too true, still T. S. Booth, Swithinbank, Cuttriss and Parsons were successful, and Calvert, Slingsby, Gray, Lund and Ellet mastered Sell Gill Hole and Pillar Pot I, while Calvert collected Jingling Pot (Kingsdale). Calvert had been elected to the Alpine Club as long ago as 1897 and in that season he and Gray had made, with guides, that very fine new climb, Gros Ruchen West Ridge.

The year 1897 was a great time for Parsons and Swithinbank; they did the old part of Marble Steps and Death's Head Hole and, supported by Booth and Cuttriss, Bull Pot (Kingsdale) and Lost John's Cave, old pitch. Swithinbank, Cuttriss and Buckley made Hastings' ladder journey from Short Drop to Gavel Pot; Calvert, Ellet and Green collected Hunt Pot and Cross Pot. In 1899 Slingsby, Gray and Lund accounted for Boggart's Roaring Hole; Cuttriss, Parsons, Swithinbank and others for Rumbling Hole (160 ft.), Bull Pot of the Witches and Cow Pot. Gray and Parsons, with Booth, Green, Moore and Riley joined in a second descent of Sell Gill Hole. This was the summer that Parsons led Riley up the top pitch of Walker's Gully, putting himself in the super class of cragsmen.

Wholesale migration and the success of these brilliant campaigns slowed down the pace. No longer could it be said that

information about the pot-holes was quite unreliable. Balder-son had written his *Ingleton, Past and Present*, somewhere about 1888, but though very useful for names and places, his measurements are not to be relied upon and the book was before its time.

In the years 1900—1902 nothing bigger than Alum Pot was done, but fresh climbers were coming in and Gray had launched the JOURNAL in 1899; Slingsby was tremendously pleased with it. In 1903, the fourth descent of Gaping Gill was made, still by cable from the first camp on the spot. Nineteen went down and the South Passage was found by Booth and Parsons.

In 1904 Booth and Parsons did the deep shaft of Jockey Hole and followed it with the more formidable Rift Pot accompanied by Green and Cuthbert Hastings, who had returned from abroad. Botterill and Payne about the same time organised the winchless visit to Gaping Gill, the fifth descent. Hill and Brodrick appear too in 1904 with the meritorious wade and rediscovery of Cliff Cavern, Castleton; the Yorkshire Speleological Association also appears, the original Club of Howarth, Simpson and Charlie and Davis Burrow who both joined the Y.R.C. in 1919.

The heroic age of ladder descents of Gaping Gill now began. Booth and Parsons had the powerful support of Horn, Botterill, Hastings and other skilled performers. The sixth descent 1905 was followed by the seventh and eighth in 1906 and the ninth in 1907 when they descended the Internal Pot and explored and surveyed the three main branches. In 1906 the Y.S.A. made the first journey right along Long Kin East and traversed round Rift Pot to the 'bridge', later they repeated Rowten Pot. At Gaping Gill they made the tenth, twelfth and thirteenth descents in 1907 and 1908. In Ireland Dr. Baker had been active with Hill, and the latter with Rule, Brodrick and Praeger made a complete survey of Mitchelstown and did much work at Marble Arch, Enniskillen.

So much for history, but 1909 was the year of the memorable Gaping Gill flood. The attraction of G.G. was so great that Payne could only muster a very small party for Mere Gill at Whitsun; Eric Addyman and Hazard were permanently mesmerised. At Clapdale we secured a sledge, set up our own

camp and fell into the work. The water was very heavy but it was just possible to use the side passage and its great jib; the climb off the end and on to a ladder and a bo'sun's chair was most sensational.

On Sunday afternoon I was allowed to follow seven men down and take charge at the bottom. There was a survey party in the East Passage, so Hazard and I decided to stay the night and join them. After a dinner out of tins, entirely without utensils, we began a minute search of every corner of the East Passage and it was a long time before we overtook the surveyors near Mud Pot. Here, in spite of my protests, I was left behind for several hours in the dark and was quite converted to Payne's dislike of what is called the life-line party or relay system. I swore a mighty oath that I would never leave an unwilling volunteer behind if I could help it. When Horn led back the surveyors, Rule, Chappell, Barstow and Hazard, the leader up the traverse fixed the rope ladder and I had my first climb on one.

In the early hours of Monday we stood on the East Slope and looked at Gaping Gill in flood, a sight simply of spray. Horn led us to 'Telephone Corner' and everyone collected there; we tried telephoning and then went into the South Passage. We were booked for 24 hours at least but had every confidence in the men above. No one has written of what they did and suffered, other than Rule's admirable account of the whole affair (Y.R.C.J., Vol. III, No. 9, page 67), but it was nothing trifling. Desperate attempts were made to keep the flood out of the Lateral Passage and some time in the morning before the worst, Tom Booth boldly climbed on to the chair and went through the waterfall which hits you on that route, to reassure us and bring a supply of food.

My hearing used to be very acute and as we lay under a cold damp tarpaulin miserably trying to sleep I became conscious of a faint repeated whistling and was sufficiently certain of it to get up and find a furious Booth in the Main Chamber. There was some daylight but without a candle he could not find his way into the South Passage and of course we had made a clean sweep of every loose article at Telephone Corner. We spent a pretty miserable time, unable to sleep, but I found that if one sat on one of the Cornish miners' bowler

hats and leaned against the wall, one was sufficiently comfortable to doze off for a few minutes at a time. By and by a poke in the ribs awakened me and Booth said 'Sing'. 'What shall I sing?' 'Anything!' I tried desperately to think of a song but my mind was a blank. 'Sing the first thing that comes into your head' ordered Booth and I sang:—

Oh where, Oh where is my little dog pup,

Oh where, Oh where is he,

With his tail cut short and his hair cut long,

Oh where, Oh where can he be?

We seemed a little better after a sing-song and the draught which had been dreadful, must have eased off and the awful roar slightly diminished. Booth and Hazard, rigged in oilskins, began making excursions round and through the waterfall with the aid of a very strong acetylene lamp; about 7 p.m., relieved by others, someone brought in a cigar box. Sitting an hour or so later more comfortably I thought of all the brilliant brains up above and that cigar box; clearly the message was on the box; it was: "4 p.m., Fine, water going down. Out to-night".

When three gun-shots were heard the chair was evidently down, Booth and Hazard soon got busy rushing through the water, I was no good at this game, wearing spectacles and I crouched holding candles in shelter below the scramble to the South Passage. Out of the whirling spray came Booth 'Hazard's gone up'. They had found the chair, what a relief! For by this time it was evident that some men were insufficiently clad.

The ascent on the swinging chair was a thrilling business, armed with a long pole to fend oneself off the walls. Out in the glorious open air there was every sign of a deluge. None of us had suffered in any way from the damp and draught—too well fed, notably on tomato soup. Anyhow the first four up changed and cheerfully manned the old winch, direct drive on a hemp cable, which brought up the last man, Tom Booth, by midnight, Monday.

After a good day's work dismantling, Eric Addyman and I moved off for a swallet hole close to but north of Mere Gill Hole which had been spotted the year before as never having been entered. The small entrance at once expanded to a com-

fortable width and a reasonable height and the stream passage ran 650 yards with three small climbing pitches till it opened into a pot-hole on the left. Oddly enough the beck had not cut directly into it but ran along a gallery on the right till it cut a slit into the pot. Next day we set up ropes and a block above the slit and went down 30 odd feet with a clear swing, the only snag being that the three ropes, as so many abseilers in the Alps have found, twisted together, requiring hard pulling on both body line and life line for the first few feet. In a recess off the floor we found a cow's skull and obviously a scree slope from the Braithwaite's Wife Sink which we came out of and looked at between the two descents. It was sunset when we came out and that coincidence is the reason of the name 'Sunset Hole'.

On Sunday I took the train to Carnforth and had a marvellously beautiful walk to Arnside followed next day by another from Foxfield up the Duddon to Ulpha and over to Wasdale Head where I joined Fred Botterill in his caravan. There was another happy soul there, one Gibson, this was his second day and he was training hard to do the stiffest climbs.

What a happy week, leading up the climbs as far as I could and the great Botterill polishing off those too much for me. The first was Walker's Gully; from the bottom, no mistake it was hard. Gibson's ambition was to do the famous top pitch. Twice he fell off and twice we held him through a loop. The first time I remember saying "Will you come in as you are, Gibson, or get the right way up first?" It was a miracle of grace, skill and immense strength to see Fred Botterill go up with complete certainty. Another very hard climb he led was Shamrock Chimney. I am glad to say the gallant Gibson, after more hard training, mastered the top pitch of Walker's Gully later on.

The Ramblers' Dinner was, in those days, held in February. It was my second dinner, and I believe it was the first time we sang "On Ilkla Moor baht 'at". Only a few privileged societies knew the song in those days, but for years and years Clarkson and then the Buckleys carried it on.

The very next was another jolly weekend. The Rucksackers were doing the highest point in every county and it was Dur-

ham's turn, Burnhope Seat, a mile north of Teesdale Pass into Cumberland, which is about another mile north of the three shire point with Westmorland on the Tees. That joyous character Minor, with Scott picked me up at Darlington, Brierley and Wilson further on the way to Stanhope, Corbett turning up at 7 a.m. Train to Wearhead, bad storm eased off into decent day, across Burnhope Seat, down the Tees to Caldron Snout and on to Langdon Beck. I had been at school with Corbett in the days when we walked three miles to it, and I knew of his reputation. When the others left us on Sunday morning to do an undisguised race over the top of Mickle Fell, I was pleased to find that I could hold my own and even outpace him on the moors, but it was another story on the road to Middleton from the now defunct Grains o' Beck Inn, rather like riding a push-bike alongside a motor cycle.

At Easter Erik Addyman, Ralph Stobart and I camped at Achintee, low down in Glen Nevis and spent Good Friday evening in what became the traditional way, climbing the big beeches which have grown around the ancient graveyard up the Glen towards its first big head.

Saturday we did the glorious snowy round of Sgùrr a' Mhaim and Stob Bàn, a magnificent ridge for our first ascent, but what astonished us was the enormous size of the cornices, dangerously so, for on almost the last one we found we had been right on it. Castle Ridge and Ben Nevis top on a superb day, eight hours up but 80 minutes down, hurrah for glissading, in spite of much vile snow. It is quite true the long train of the North Cliffs of the Ben is one of the grand sights in Britain. Next came the Tower Ridge on a magnificent day of hard snow. Leaving at 7.30 a.m. we were at 10.30 already on the slopes behind the Douglas boulder. Cutting and kicking straight up the first piece of rock turned out stiffish, then some wonderful pieces of snow ridge with bits of rock which caused ice steps between. At 1.50 we lunched by the Tower, one mass of ice film. The East traverse looked nasty so Addyman made a great attack on the Recess Route and was nearly up at 4 o'clock, cutting steps in the ice covering, steps which the sun now coming on the Tower began to spoil. We had no intention of spending a night out so up went a piece of chip, it was rammed into a snow patch and Erik roped down. We

had seen the possible line of descent coming up the cornice and got clean away on a continuous snow slope covering the Tower Gap Chimney in spite of a fusillade of ice lumps; as I stepped over the neat little bergschrund at the foot at 6 p.m. one of them made my head sing but we were clean away, and got to the tent at 8 p.m.

I stayed after the others on the Saturday, crossed the stream below Carn Mòr Dearg in two hours and had a varied and enjoyable journey along the ridge in thick mist and some snow till it was very late. I found the ridge leading to Aonach which I had hoped for but had to go on along a narrow ridge on such a day until I seemed well past Carn Mòr, but where? Finally I cut 100 steps down in ideal snow but could see no sign of the corrie. So up and over the top of Ben Nevis, 6 hours and another 2½ hours down to Fort William, rather tired, to the hospitality of the Waverley Hotel. They charged you only 30/- a week in those days, the other hotels were mostly closed or charged fantastic prices all the year round.

The next holiday, Whitsun, was meant to be a second serious attack on Mere Gill Hole, but high water forbade it and we turned to Sunset Hole. Never were we so strong, the two Swiss had dropped out but Addyman and Hazard had been fascinated and R. F. Stobart and W. M. Roberts came for their first big cave. The story of Boyd's smash has been told at length in Volume III, Y.R.C.J., and I do not repeat it all.

It was quite certain that the passage ran to Braithwaite Wife sink hole, for the September before the sole explorers had been up and down a fourth time, and had taken aneroid readings in and out, hearing water too, and lowering the debris against the cliff several feet. We did not use ladders then and the descent dry direct into the pot was made by a thick untarred rope over a pulley, so simple that when the hand line became a nuisance it was discarded.

At the bottom of Sunset Pot the water disappears into the base of scree from outside and for two hours or so men worked in vain to burrow through. Boyd was the last man up and fell about 30 feet when the thick rope broke after 3 p.m. I left at once for the surface with Miss Stevenson, sent to the Hill Inn and Tom Kilburn cycled for Dr. Mackenzie. He came

up after Boyd had been got to a ledge with a broken thigh and serious bruises; three men were just going in with the leaf of a table, blankets and food and at 6.30 the doctor most gallantly waded in and by 8.30 had bound Boyd to the plank, but gave us little hope of success. Boyd never lost consciousness all night; from 9 o'clock till 8 a.m., skilfully commanded by Payne, we fought to get him out whilst the three ladies and the doctor spent a dreadful night of suspense. Thank heaven it was one of the finest mornings of the year. The last low tunnel was a desperate bit, Hazard and Stobart were still going strong, though the other four were played out. Mrs. Payne had been in 300 yards with a can of soup. Tuesday morning Erik and I had to go inside and do our eight hours' trip to recover all the equipment, otherwise I don't think I should ever have wanted to do another cave, but the work made it just like any other cave.

With the problem before us of getting the whole party down the second pitch inside Mere Gill this smash led to a complete revision of our, so far, primitive methods. Rope ladders *had* to be used, first of all the amateurish 12 inch ladders, home made by Barstow and Addyman, were scrapped and the complete use adopted of the 8-inch ladder, the Botterill ladder, the making of which by Arthur Botterill was pointed out to us by that great source of pot-holing history and information, artist and Gaping Gill cook and caterer, Percy Robinson.

Then too, the theory of double support—it gives me the horrors to see a ladder slung on a single rope instead of a double one, much easier to tie—and Payne's introduction and persistent use of a pulley for the last man's life line. It is astonishing to find there is no trace in Casteret's books of its use in France. Though consistently in use by the Y.R.C. from 1911, other parties have been very shy of it and many people have condemned it as a dangerous method, preferring to leave wretched people at the top with the life line. Whilst it is safe enough for experts to climb ladders a long way, we jolly soon made a self-denying ordinance never to climb one more than 30 feet unroped.

Boyd was nursed through his injuries at the Hill Inn and at length recovered but though he climbed in the Alps he never went pot-holing again. He was a very great loss.

The Y.R.C. Dinner was for the first time in November in 1910, about 75 men. Five of us had another jolly pot-holing weekend with Williamson and Mrs. Williamson in April. New Year Pot on Fountains Fell was reached in an hour. A 40 foot ladder was just enough and beyond that was new. Very difficult to find a solid tie for the second pitch. Beyond was a rift, just nice width, with a big chockstone pitch, not deep. Held by Stobart I was just swinging off on to the wall when the whole floor went from under us and we both luckily swung into chimney position. Two very shaken people crawled down a boulder slope and bit by bit down its continuation in a wide passage to a boulder jam. We recovered nerve enough to get through the jam after two attempts, into a high, narrow and interesting passage to a dead end in 30 yards.

New Year 1911 I went with Minor and some Rucksack men to Pen-y-Pass. Winthrop Young and his party of characters were there, and Grenfell, who afterwards commanded a 'Q' ship, and Barlow of Skye. The evenings were very lively and the weather not bad. With the Grenfells, Barlow and I climbed the interesting Slanting Buttress.

I spent two remarkable weekends with Raymond Bicknell, one in March in really bitter weather to and fro over the Sty, and I have never worn so many clothes, and the other in May on the Roman Wall walking one day miles along it from Greenhead Station and making for Hexham. We also did a lot of climbing on the queer rocks above Crag Lough, then almost untouched, they must be altered now. We found very steep pillars or edges jointed across, with rounded tops. These tops lifted off and left excellent flat holds. Not one rounded top will be in place now.

Ben Nevis at Easter had pleased us so much that a party of eleven went in 1911, six men and five ladies. I need not repeat the story of the ascent of the Gardyloo Gully, told in Y.R.C.J., No. 27. The holiday was spoilt by seven and a half days' rain, Sunday to Sunday. Mr. and Mrs. Bicknell had already done the South Castle Gully but the only other climb attempted resulted in Bicknell and Hazard being avalanched in Corrie Leas.

In spite of the rain five traversed Aonach South to North from above Glen Nevis Gorge, crossing three flooded rivers

on the way home, one really formidable. The next day Addyman, Hazard and the Bicknells trained to Corrou and somehow managed the long way into and through the Glen—soaked. The last expedition in the very worst rain recalls the enormous changes in manners and customs two wars have caused; only climbers had ever seen women in breeches then. Crossing from the Kinlochleven bus at Calhert over the hills to the Fort William track, I collected a skirt for my sister and brought it out a mile or so to save the feelings of the populace at Fort William.

The second serious attempt on Mere Gill Hole was the fourth camp, Whitsun 1911. Long discussions had settled that only rope ladders and the last man held over a pulley could do it. We were reduced to five of the Sunset Hole party and had lost Boyd and the two Swiss of 1908, though it was amazing in 1948 to find that Hoessly had thought so much about the smash that he imagined himself at times to have been there. The trench as far as the two shake holes over the wall from the Gill was the key to success, and when we found the water delivered either above the first pitch or below the second it was carried further to get away into the Sunset Hole system. Sunday was an 11-hour day below; we got the ladders on the third pitch and Addyman reached within a few feet of the floor. Payne and Stobart had to be off late on Monday; we were all very tired but four pulled themselves together for another try. Hazard luckily found a splendid belay on a block submerged in the final Canyon Pool instead of the doubtful beam, so Stobart and I went down the big third whilst he and Addyman surveyed. However, in 40 yards we found a small pitch above a pool and bad to turn. By 7 p.m. we had the ladder up the second pitch and three tired men had the job of getting them out on Tuesday. But for the restriction of the Whitsun holiday we should have succeeded easily, for in the Coronation holidays without Stobart the four of us put in all the ladders and returned to the camp in 70 minutes, to be crushed by 36 hours of rain which flooded everything even a week later. The whole story is told in 'The Siege of Mere Gill', *Y.R.C.J.*, Vol. IV, No. 12.

ON THE HILLS

1960

Harry and David Stembridge, Harry Spilsbury, with three others and Nestor Crettex of Champex as guide, did the Haute Route from Saas Fee to Forclaz. They found it hard work but vastly rewarding, in spite of overcrowding in the Cabane des Vignettes.

F. D. Smith and Varney were in the Engadine, where in good weather they climbed four peaks including Piz Palü and Piz Roseg. Attempts on the Eiger and the Guggi Route on the Mönch the following week had to be given up owing to weather conditions.

Bell, frustrated by weather at Chamonix, did what may be a new route up the Aiguille de la Tsa from Arolla, had some enjoyable climbing at Rosenlauri and finished by joining a friend for a week's climbing with Czechs in the Tatra.

Watts, with a base in Gstaad, felt he ought to know the local peaks, so climbed the Wildhorn by the Wildgrat and, with the Jaman Section of the S.A.C., the Rublihorn and the Gummfluh, the latter without ropes but not without some trepidation.

Stirling and Carr explored Knoydart, one of the least known areas of the Highlands, and one of the most impressive.

Richard Gowing attended the Oxford University Mountaineering Club Meet in the Bernina. He climbed the Schneekuppe of Piz Roseg by the Eselgrat, traversed Piz Palü in a strong wind, and had one of the most enjoyable of Alpine days going up the Piz Bernina by a well iced final ridge, returning by the Spallagrat to Fuorcla Crast' Agüzza. He liked the Bernina, "Fine mountains, lovely scenery and rich flora".

1961

Tregoning, Cullingworth, Bates, H. Haslam, Leese, Marsden and Nicholson spent Whit week camping in somewhat Arctic conditions near the head of Loch Hope. They traversed the ridges of Ben Hope, Ben Loyal and Foinaven, they also visited the summits of Ben Klibreck and Ben Hee. At Druim Chuibhe near Bettyhill they admired the remarkable alpine flora to be found there at sea level.

Later in the summer Tregoning, Turner and Marsden climbed the Silvretthorn in brilliant weather by an unorthodox and sporting snow route, also several other peaks in the Silvretta and in the Stubai Alps.

F. D. Smith, Allen, F. Wilkinson and two others made from Saas Fee the first ascent of the season of the Fletschhorn, they traversed the Laquinhorn and climbed the Weissmies. Later, with D. Stembridge, they climbed the Allalinhorn, were the first of the season to traverse the Rimpfischhorn and, having climbed the Lenzspitze from the Mischabel Hut, got benighted on the glacier on the way to the Dom Hut.

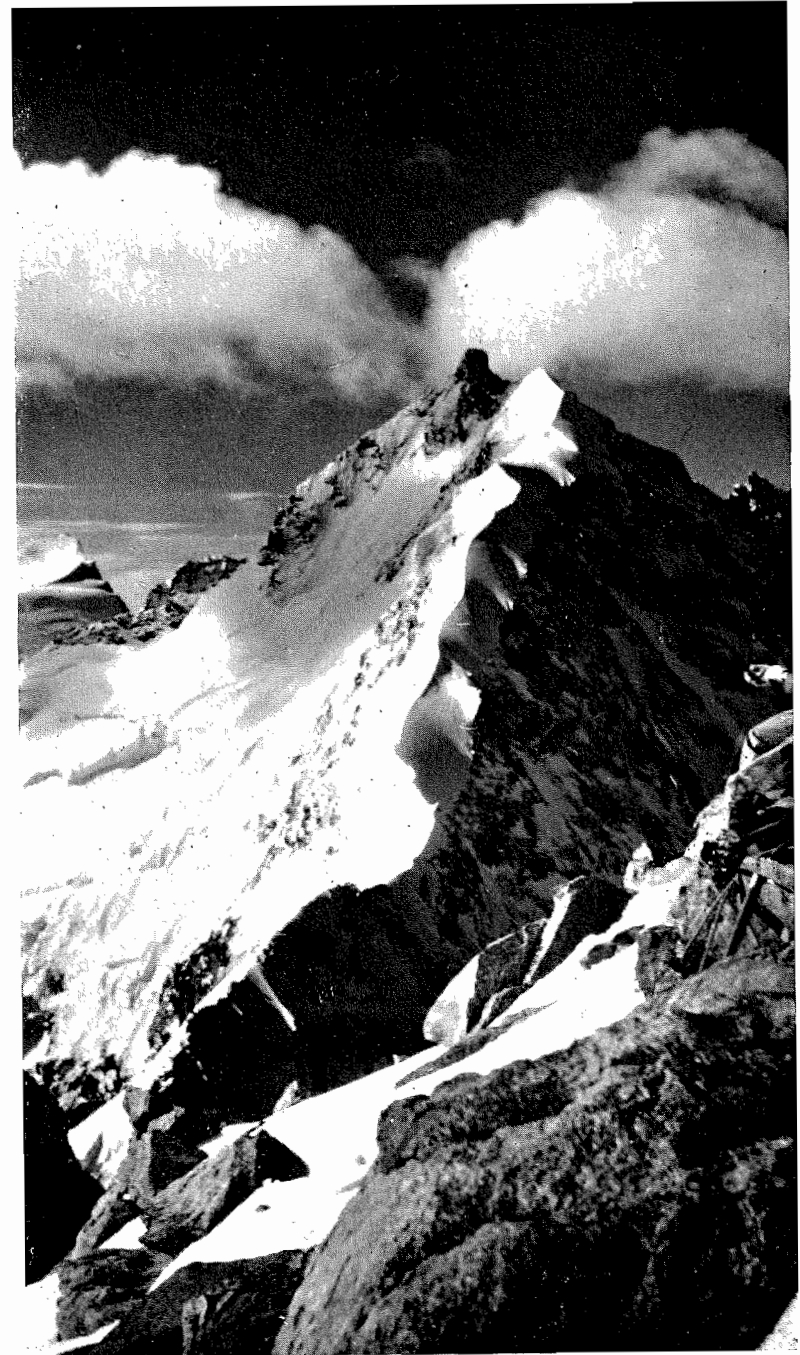
Bell, as a guest of the French Government, attended a climbing course in August at the Ecole Nationale de Ski et d'Alpinism at Chamonix. After some preliminary instruction on almost vertical ice he climbed the Grand Capucin and the Nant Blanc face of the Aiguille Verte, getting benighted on the Mer de Glace on the way back. When half way up the Pilier Bonatti on the Dru he had to come down to help after the accident to Lee and Crampin.

Richard Gowing was at the Alpine Meet in the Lötschental of the O.U.M.C. Bad weather turned him back when half way up the Lauterbrunnen Breithorn; on two fine days from the Hollandia Hut he climbed the Mittaghorn and traversed the Aletschhorn via the Hasler Rib to the Oberaletsch Hut.

Sale was at Sils in the Engadine. In the 1930's he was known as a rapid runner down scree; at Sils he had to persuade his son John against a direct frontal attack on Piz Lagrev and steer him on to a recognisable track which led them towards a rocky ridge called Crutscharöls. After struggling up loose rocks to the ridge John, who evidently did not share his father's views about scree, announced that this was going to be his first rock climb, so up they went, Sale wishing he had brought a rope. On reaching the highest point father and son were unanimous about glissading down a snow slope in time for dinner.

Tallon, Chapman and T. Smith went to Corsica, camped in a cave near the village of Calasima, climbed several mountains and made many good friends among the villagers.

The President, early in the year, walked from Huby 250 miles to see his daughter at St. Andrew's in Fife. He followed



BIANCOGRAT, PIZ BERNINA

R. Gowing

the Pennine backbone, crossed the western fringe of the Cheviots, went over the Moorfoot Hills and made a magnificent approach to Edinburgh along the Pentland Ridge. He was accompanied as far as Edinburgh by a Former President, and as far as Appleby by R. E. Chadwick, where the walk was interrupted to attend the Club Meet in Skye. They surprised several hotels by being the first guests to arrive via the shrubbery.

Even earlier in the year the Former President and the Present One made a somewhat sulphurous ascent of the Pico de Teide, a reputedly extinct volcano in Teneriffe.



CHIPPINGS

LUD'S CHURCH, STAFFORDSHIRE. Mr. Michael Paffard, of the University of Keele, writing in *Country Life*, 19th October, 1961, under the title "The Lollards' Valley of Legend", mentions Lud's Church in the Blackbrook Valley. On a small scale this resembles the gorges and collapsed caverns of the limestone districts, but in millstone grit it is probably a unique geological curiosity.

At either end of the chasm there are narrow caves. The one at the north end appears to go down into the rock almost vertically for a considerable distance and Mr. Paffard at the time of writing could find no record of its ever having been explored, he says it would need an experienced potholer to attempt the descent. The cave at the south end was partly explored during the 19th century, one explorer claiming to have found a high chamber with "Druidical Remains", while another penetrated to a great depth and could hear the sound of running water.

These caves present an undoubted challenge to any potholing club; Mr. Paffard tells me that since he wrote the article some of his students at Keele who are keen potholers have tried to explore both caves. The one at the north end was found to have been carefully bricked up at some time, which lends substance to the local legend that a passage leads from there to Swythamley Hall. The south cave was blocked by an apparently recent rock fall about ten yards from the entrance; the party is hoping to be able to clear this.

H.G.W.

RINGING OF BATS. The ruined 12th century Cistercian Abbey of Villers-la-Ville, near Brussels, is a refuge for bats, of which 11 species have been identified here. The Institut Royal des Sciences Naturelles has been carrying out a programme on ringing since 1945 in order to study behaviour, hibernation, migration (direction, distance, time), length of life and proportion of sexes. The rings are marked "Musée Royal d'Histoire Naturelle (Bruxelles) Belgique" and each carries a number; they are of aluminium and are placed on the forearm. Speleologists are specially asked, if they find a bat so ringed, to

note the exact location and whether found in cave, loft, cellar and so on, the date of capture and the number on the ring, and to send this information on a postcard to the Institut Royal des Sciences Naturelles, 31 Rue Vauthier, Brussels. On no account must the bat be killed; it should at once be released, leaving the ring on. It has already been established that one species of bat, *Mysotis Dasynceme*, migrates during the summer season from this district to the north west of Holland and distances as great as 400 kilometres have been recorded. It is thus not impossible that bats ringed in Belgium might be found in England. There are several interesting articles on this subject in the *Bulletin d'Information de l'Equipe Spéléo de Bruxelles*. (Y.R.C. Library).

H.G.W.

SALT MINES. The Hon. Editor asked E. H. Sale, who is in charge of I.C.I.'s salt mining and brine pumping operations in Cheshire, whether in his profession he ever came across anything of interest to potholers. His reply was that modern salt mines are too hygienic and air conditioned to attract potholers, they bear the same sort of relation to a real mine that White Scar does to Lost John's. He makes an exception, however, of some old mines which he inspected in 1953 at Carrickfergus in Northern Ireland. Descent in a bucket, a good deal of brine on the floor which was also well littered with pieces down from the roof; a safety hat was comforting. Eventually, there being no hidden passages, one of the mines was hired out to a firm of mushroom growers.

H.G.W.

ANCIENT ANIMALS OF THE UPLAND. Dr. Beverly Tarlo, of the Department of Geology and Mineralogy, University of Oxford, writing in the *New Scientist* of 5th July, 1962, describes how the fossils of small lizards and mammals living in Triassic times, about 200 million years ago, can be found in the caves and fissures of the limestone hills.

The fauna of the limestone uplands of those times were not so easily preserved after death as were those living in the swampy lowlands and the river estuaries where mud and silt covered their bodies rapidly and so preserved them from decomposition or from being scavenged. Sometimes, however,

small animals would fall into limestone fissures, or their bodies would be washed in by rain before they disintegrated, and would be quickly buried in mud or sediment.

Such fossils are found in the Mendips, in South Wales, the Peak District of Derbyshire and in southern Poland. Examination of deposits from fissures in limestone in various districts is revealing that the land was not entirely dominated by the large herbivorous dinosaurs, but that many small forms, including mammals, played an important part in the life of the time. Knowledge about them is still incomplete, but gaps in the evolutionary picture are beginning to be filled.

H.G.W.



CAVE EXPLORATION

NEW GROUND IN REYFAD, Co. Fermanagh

by T. W. Salmon

REYFAD POT was discovered and named by E. E. Roberts in 1939, but no descent was made in that year.

"On the first Friday I drove up to Noon's Hole, walked to Pollanaffrin, and outside the intake above the upper farm found a definite possibility, a stream cave close under the surface. Then I climbed on to the main platform to the south and viewed a shallow basin where a swallet was marked on the map. There was no stream into it, but rocks and bushes spoke at once of a pot-hole. As I was rejoicing over my discovery one of the men busy all round cutting peat came to look at a stranger. He had no name for it, so being just inside Reyfad townland, Reyfad Pot it must be." E. E. Roberts, Y.R.C.J., Vol. VII, No. 24, p. 151.

The Y.R.C. Irish meet at Whitsuntide 1948 made Reyfad their first objective; an attack in 1947 had been repelled by heavy surface water (Y.R.C.J., Vol. VII, No. 25, pp. 236 and 266). In 1948 Godley, Marsden and J. A. Holmes descended the main shaft to a boulder floor 230 ft. below moor level; they left unexplored a rat-hole in this floor which descended for 6 ft. and where there were indications of a possible further 50 ft. Reyfad was thus established as the second really deep pot-hole found in Ireland.

At the Club's Whitsuntide meet in 1959 a party went down Noon's Hole to a depth of 322 ft., and as the tackle was being withdrawn and laid out to dry, hints were dropped about another pot quite near, having an equally large shaft which had only been bottomed once. But it was too late to find Reyfad then, let alone bottom it.

1960. Whitsuntide saw a small party festooned with tackle toiling upwards towards what their guide, a young Irishman from the nearby farm, described as a very large sumera. On arrival one of the party immediately recognised the hole as Reyfad. There were two possible entrances, but it was doubtful as to which was the safer one to use. A cursory examination of the northern entrance was made but it was found to be

terribly loose and quite unsafe. One man went into the southern entrance (marked 'A' on the section) and decided that, although it was not ideal, gardening would produce a reasonable stance for a lifeline party.

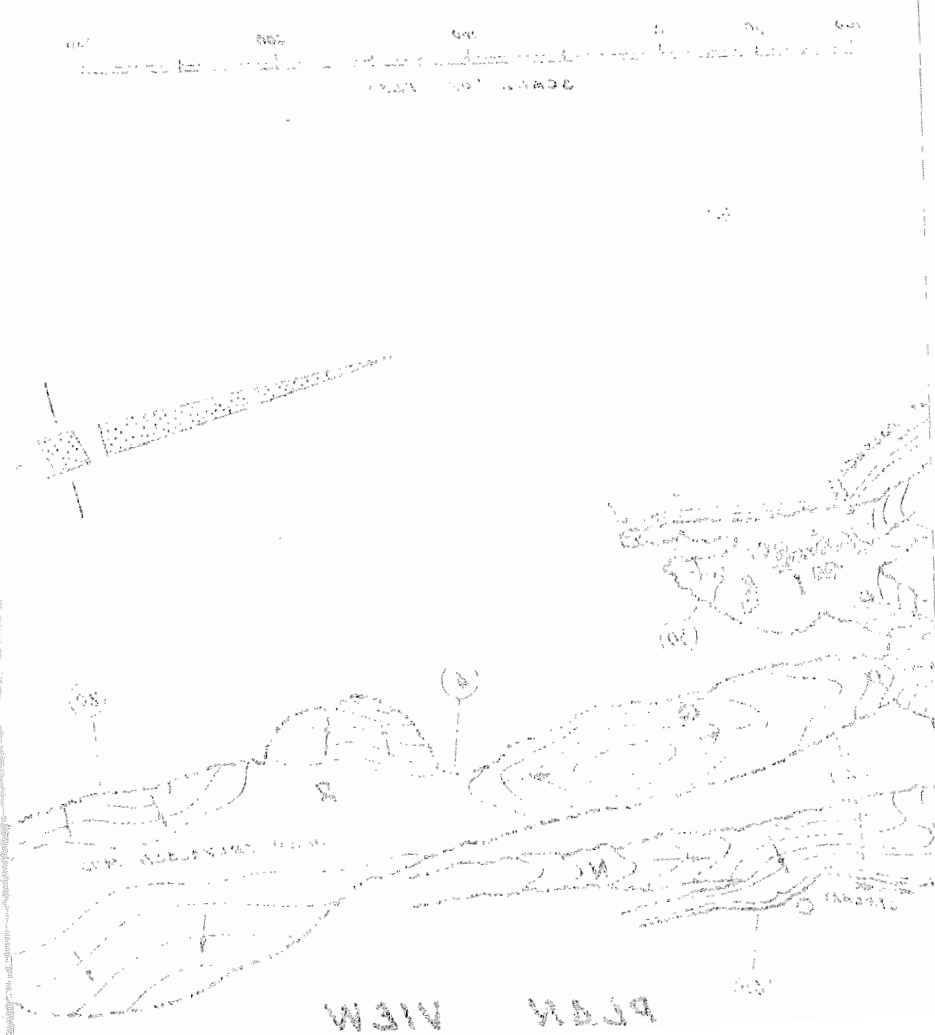
Work now began in earnest with men joining ladders, hammering in stakes and preparing lifelines. When everything was ready two men went down to a large ledge, 'B', to handle the lifelines. A third man, on reaching the ledge, tied on to the main lifeline and started down; at 100 ft. he found all the ladders piled on to a ledge, 'C', but after that there were no more hold-ups until the bottom, 'D'. The first 30 ft. below the ledge 'B' was rather trying due to large pieces of rough sharp rock protruding from the limestone walls; these snagged clothes and were generally unpleasant. At the 100 ft. ledge 'C' the shaft begins to narrow and for about 20 ft. the ladder can be climbed with one's back against the wall. The last 70 ft. is without ledges and the shaft opens out again to between 12 and 15 ft.

Stones loosened by the second man down were seen to disappear through the boulder-jammed floor and were heard coming to rest at a lower level. Huge boulders on the floor were moved and piled into a convenient recess and after about 20 minutes of hard work a triangular shaped slot 18 inches long and 12 inches wide at one end was opened up at 'D'. Was this the key to a new system?

Although nothing could be seen below, there was quite a draught. A man was lowered head first and his groping hands dislodged a rock which fell over a lower ledge and went banging and booming down a shaft, 'E'. He was hauled back and a message sent to the surface that more ladders and lifeline were needed.

A third man came down with the tackle which was attached to the end of the main ladder. To get through the slot meant twisting one's legs to an angle of 90° to the right. The first man through found himself sitting on the lip of an almost circular shaft. An easy 30 ft. finished at a ledge, 'E', from which it was possible to look out into a huge cavern; it was difficult to estimate its size as the headlamp was far too small for its light to penetrate far into the gloom.

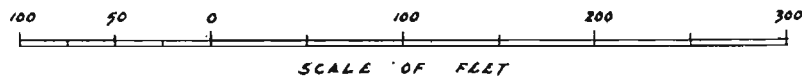
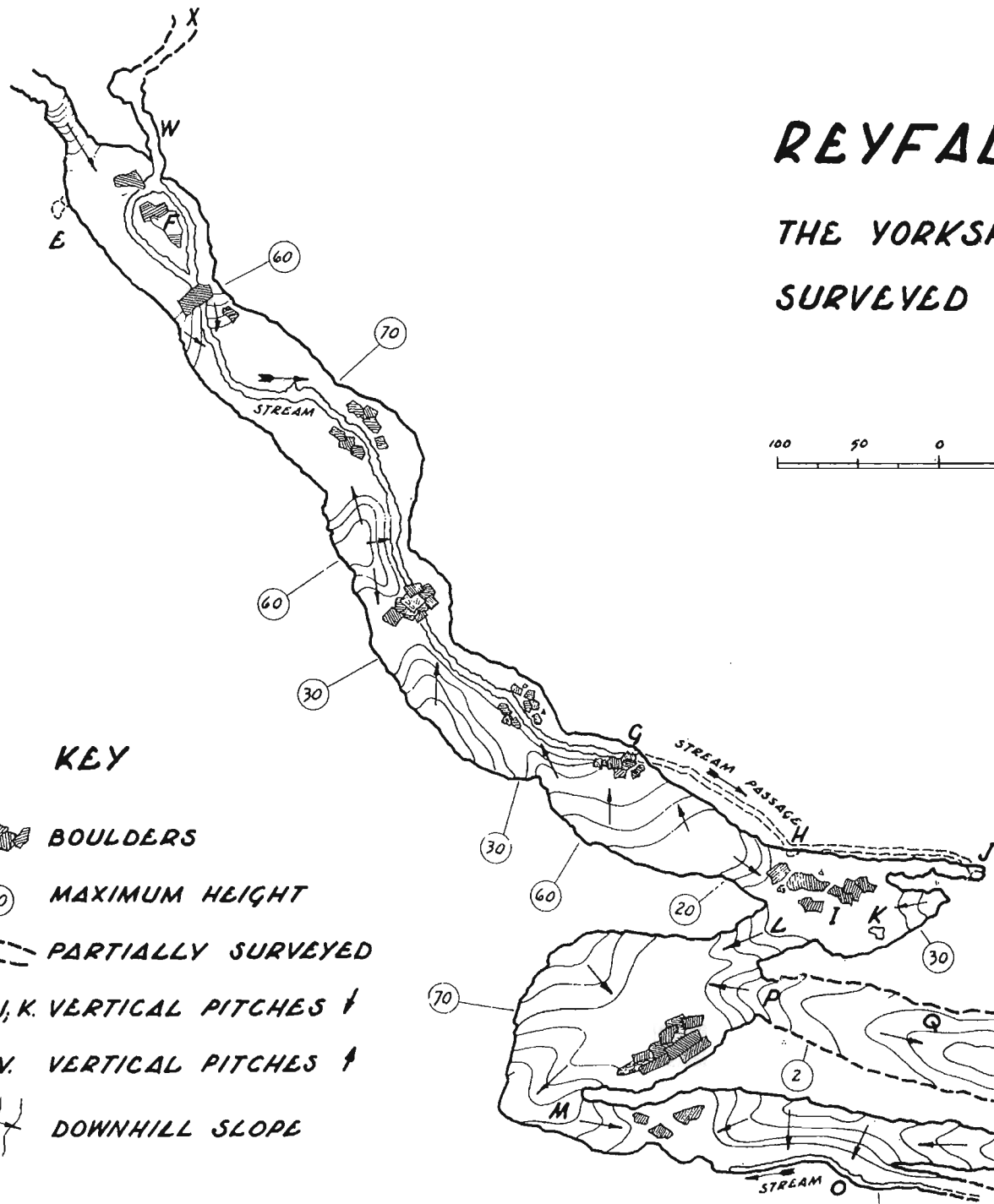
REVERED POT - LERM
THE YORKSHIRE RAMBLERS CLUB
SURVEYED JUNE 1952









REYFAD POT - FERMANAGH

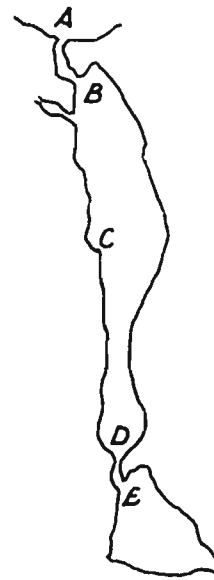
THE YORKSHIRE RAMBLERS' CLUB

SURVEYED JUNE 1962

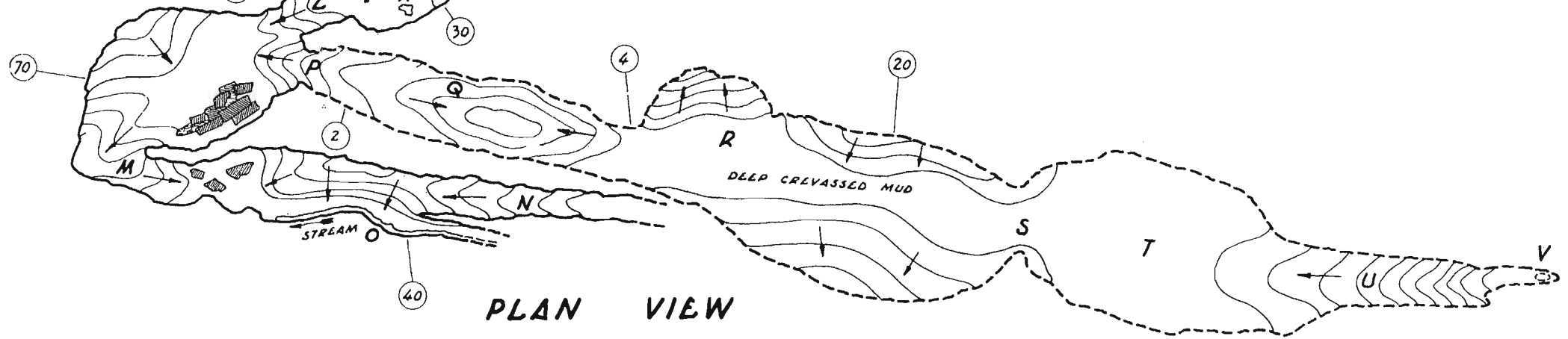
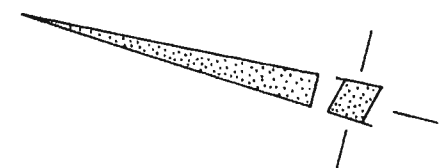


KEY

-  BOULDERS
-  MAXIMUM HEIGHT
-  PARTIALLY SURVEYED
-  H, J, K. VERTICAL PITCHES ↓
-  E, V. VERTICAL PITCHES ↑
-  DOWNHILL SLOPE



VERTICAL SECTION



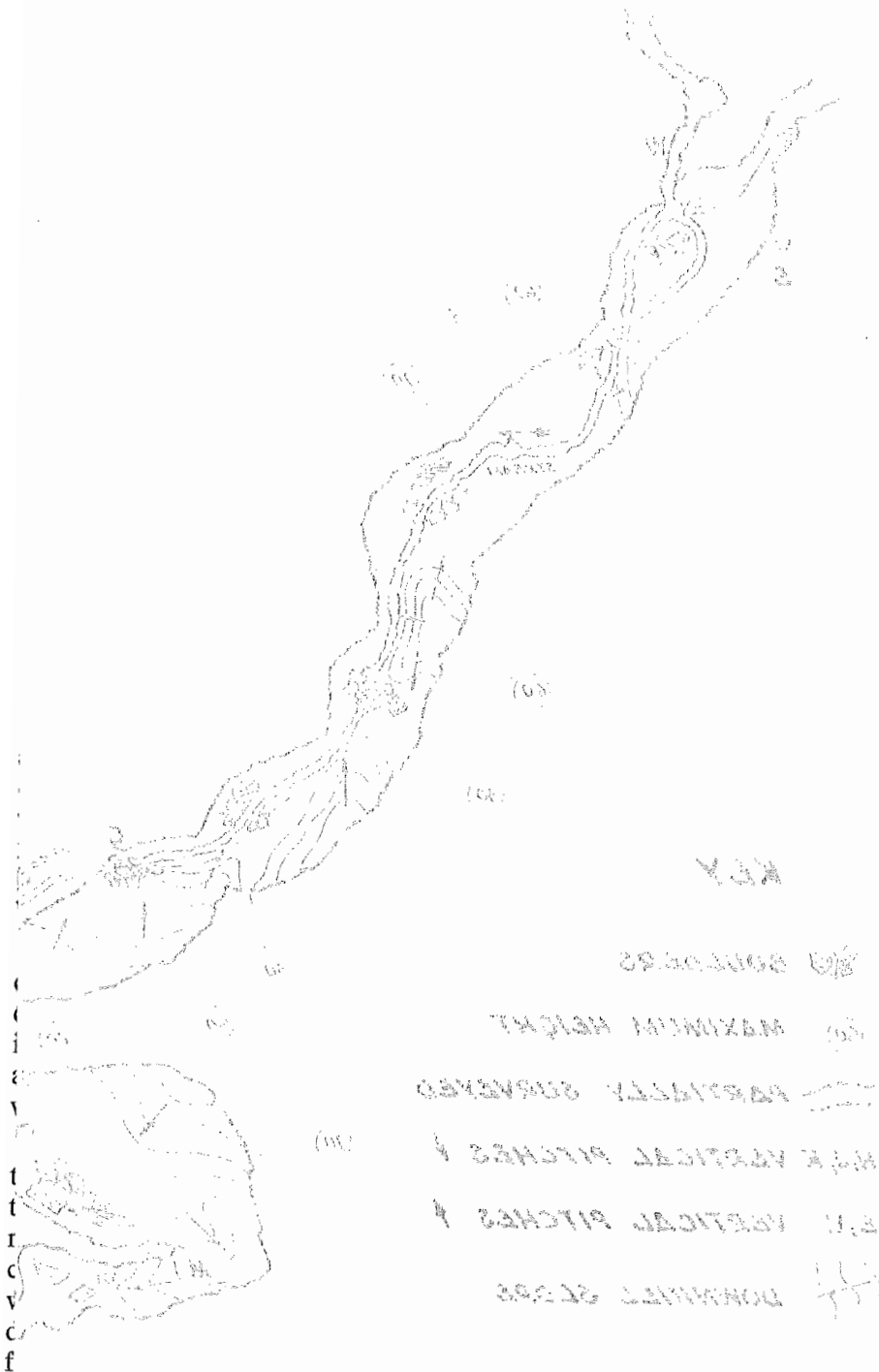
PLAN VIEW

One man, Lovett, reached the floor, 80 ft. below the slot at 'D', and untied for 10 minutes to reconnoitre. After what seemed an eternity to those waiting at 'D', two whistle blasts sounded, the lifeline was taken in and a face appeared at the slot with a grin which obviously spoke of an unexplored system to be tackled and the need for more men. It was an excited party that drove back to Killesher and spent the evening making plans for an early start the next day. It was decided to put two men into the new cavern, two on the 200 ft. ledge at 'D', another two at the 20 ft. ledge, 'B', while the remaining two stayed on the surface. The party was scarcely large enough.

In spite of an early start it was 11 o'clock before the descent could be started. The first man took the telephone down to the 200 ft. ledge and was soon joined by three others. Two remained at the ledge while the other two went down into the new cavern. To the north the cavern was blocked by a series of gigantic cascades; to the south absolute darkness hid the route to be followed.

The time below was very limited, the party of two started out heading southwards from the point 'F' on the plan. The route ran along the cavern between huge boulders and over high banks of crevassed mud, climbing high into the roof in places, then down again following a little stream which meandered along the cavern floor. At one point was a high bank of age-old mud which in drying had cracked into deep crevasses, some of which were as much as 6 inches wide. Looking back from the top of this bank a marker candle could be seen burning in the far distance.

From this point a high bowl of sand was entered at the point marked 'G' on the plan. The stream passage went out from this bowl and it was decided to leave the main cavern and follow this. The reason for this was that it was known that the party had come down through 300 ft. of limestone and that there could still be 300 ft. more of it below. If it were possible to get into the system of lower passages which might exist, it would be necessary to follow the water down and the stream offered a likely outlet. Unfortunately, after following the stream passage for about 120 yards, it was blocked by an



impenetrable boulder jam. This was the limit of the 1960 exploration of Reyfad.

It was obvious that this pot had to be visited again. Reyfad lies in a deep band of limestone and it is quite possible that Reyfad, Pollanaffrin and Noon's Hole could all lie in the same fault and together join into a huge system whose water debouches at Arch Cave. The engulfment of Reyfad is on the 1,000 ft. contour, Noon's Hole on the 700 ft. contour and Arch Cave on the 400 ft. contour, the total difference in level being 600 ft. What a superb system it would be if these three could be linked up.

1962. On Whit Sunday a party of eighteen arrived at the camp site on Mr. Barbour's land by the River Cladagh, ready for a forceful assault on Reyfad. Tackle was taken up to the pot that evening and all ladders joined. The plan was for 4 men to go down into the main cavern, two more would stay at the 200 ft. ledge while the remainder stayed on the surface, ready to go to the 20 ft. ledge 'B' to help with the lifelines.

Although the weather was not too good, everybody was away to an early start on the Monday. At the pot all went smoothly and a man was lowered to the 200 ft. ledge running out the telephone wire as he went. On getting there he found that the next pitch, the slot at 'D', was once again blocked. The telephone makes pot-holing much more simple; soon a second man was down to help in excavation and two more followed, still leaving two at the 200 ft. ledge.

The exploration party went straight on past 'G', the furthest point reached in the main cavern in 1960, climbed to a high point between 'G' and 'H' and went on towards point 'J'. On the way, at 'I', they noticed the passage on their right which was later named the "North West". Here they split into two parties, two men exploring the holes in the floor at 'I' while the other two went along the North West as far as point 'M'. On reaching 'M' they returned to the others and it was decided that they would explore a stream passage 'W', found that morning whilst waiting for the full complement to descend the main pitch.

The stream passage was quite narrow for the first few yards, then it opened out to 10 ft. wide and a considerable height. After about 100 yards came a boulder choke, quite easy to

pass, but then the passage became narrow and the water deepened to 3 ft. Some distance on came another boulder jam; at this point two men waited while the other two went on. Through the boulder jam was a large chamber full of fallen rocks, beyond this, still following the stream, the passage became quite low for a time and then widened into another large chamber. Once again this was not examined but the stream was followed through a mass of fallen boulders until it ran into a passage very similar to the main stream passage in Oxford Pot, Easegill. It was then time to go back, the last man arrived on the moor at 10 p.m.

On the Wednesday six men went down to the main cavern where they split into two parties of three, one to survey, the other to try and push through downstream from point 'J' and get past the boulder choke. The method of survey was to run out a 100 ft. chain, take a compass reading and sketch the section of the passage, then on another 100 ft. and repeat. The two parties joined up for lunch at 'H' and the survey party then worked along the North West passage and into new ground. The terrain varied between mud banks and long sand slopes. At point 'M' the passage was quite high and wide but by point 'O' it had changed into a sloping rift some 2 ft. wide and at an angle of about 30° to the horizontal. If anything was sent rolling down it could be heard splashing into deep water. At point 'N' the survey ended and the party went back to join the others who had been laddering deep holes all over the area marked 'K', but without a break through. A hole at 'J' was laddered but only went down into the stream passage explored in 1960.

Meanwhile two men went to have another look along the North West passage. At point 'L' they noticed footprints, left by the surveyors, going up a steep sandbank. The footprints stopped at the top but the two men went on, now on mud with the roof getting rapidly lower. After crawling quite a long way they reached the chamber 'R' and there turned back for support. It was getting late so it was decided that two men should start back towards the surface and if possible be up the first pitch by the time the others returned. The rest, now getting the feel of the place, took only a few minutes to get from point 'I' to point 'Q', whence they again crawled over

the smooth black mud to the chamber 'R', after which it was possible to walk upright.

It was difficult to assess the width and length of the chamber but it may have been 100 ft. or more; it had quite a low roof, perhaps 10 to 15 ft. above the floor of hard mud. There was a channel through the mud, leading to point 'S' where the walls closed in and the floor dropped away rather steeply; after this it levelled off and the walls opened again to form another wide chamber, 'T'. The passage beyond 'T' once again started to narrow and climb upwards. By point 'U' the mud had changed to a grey colour and had become very glutinous. Finally the passage narrowed right down until it was only about 3 ft. wide at 'V' where it ended in a shaft going upwards. This was climbed for about 20 ft. but the route then became rather difficult. The survey of this section of Reyfad shows quite large chambers; the lengths of these were measured by counting strides, the direction by compass bearing; the widths, however, were simple estimates and are thus not very reliable.

From here the story is of orderly withdrawal with everything going smoothly. The telephones were of tremendous value throughout the exploration and a great morale booster. Four telephones were in the circuit and four-way conversations were often in progress. It was good to know on starting to climb the 200 ft. pitch that water for tea would be boiling and that the sky had cleared for a pleasant evening.

Reyfad has by no means revealed all, but has only opened up new avenues for speculation and exploration. The main cavern does not in fact run towards Noon's Hole which is due north of Reyfad, but in the opposite direction. If it is possible to by-pass the huge boulder jam and cascade which blocks the northern end of the cavern a route to Noon's Hole may yet be found. Roberts was convinced that the area around Reyfad and Noon's Hole was one where large systems would be found and in Reyfad the exploration has seen only a small part of a large system. The way to Noon's Hole may well be up the stream passage marked 'W' on the plan, but the possibilities are endless and must remain speculative until the next visit which, if the enthusiasm shown bears fruit, will not be far into the future.

LA SPELEOLOGIE EN FRANCE EN 1961

by Robert de Joly

[*Monsieur Robert de Joly, Founder President of the Société Spéléologique de France and an Honorary Member of the Y.R.C. has sent the Editor the following résumé of cave exploration in France in 1961*]

In our country more than 500 pot-holers are devoting themselves to research underground. Some of them show remarkable persistence in carrying out, under difficult conditions, delicate exploration requiring removal of obstructions or dangerous diving. Some holes are thus found to be much more important than had been thought and complex hydrological systems are being discovered.

Ardèche. A Franco-Belgian group continued its exploration of the Goule de Fossoubie, where Martel did some work years ago and where in 1934 I got as far as a lake making a tangent with the roof and where a draught allowed one to presume a continuation. After several years of pushing forward, a system 11 Km. long has been opened up. Erosion is very active; the water issues upstream from the Pont d'Arc.

At Vallon, in this Department, a school of speleology has been set up by the Commissariat des Sports with the object of training leaders qualified to take charge of parties and so to protect people from the dangers normally met with on underground excursions. A large number of pupils attend each year.

Isère. The opening up by Pierre Chevalier of the huge Trou du Glaz system is a recent memory.⁽¹⁾ Martel had also been into it. We ourselves in 1933 made some progress in this great cavity and found, by using fluorescein, the point at which the water came out of Guyers Mort. The Lyon Speleo Club have just discovered new passages intersected by pot-holes. The sub-glacial effluent water, probably in the 'Wurmian', has perforated these secondary limestones at all depths and in all directions.

(1) *Subterranean Climbers*, by P. Chevalier, translated by E. M. Hatt, Faber and Faber Ltd., 1951.

Alpes Maritimes. On Mont Marguareis, near the Italian frontier, a new ice cave has been discovered, again the result of sub-glacial erosion. The water flows towards the Italian valleys 600 to 700 metres lower down.

Pyrenées. Norbert Casteret has been directing groups of young people towards the hydrological openings which he prospected some time ago, with the object of rounding off these explorations.

An attempt was made at Gouffre Pierre to join up the resurgence of the Goueil di Her, which we prospected together in 1931. As yet no connection has ever been made between the upper feed system and the resurgence, despite a descent of 550 metres.

In the Massif du Marbore there has been a noticeable diminution in the quantity of ice in the caves, in spite of the altitude. We are in a period of glacial regression which affects the whole of Europe. I found the same thing in the Eisriesenwelt, Tennengebirge, Austria, in 1955.⁽¹⁾

A Franco-Spanish team has made a new incursion into Pierre St. Martin and after a laddered descent of 110 metres has found descending passages, one of which was active. Electricité de France have driven an access tunnel in this cave to capture water, this avoids an almost vertical descent of 340 metres.

Basses Pyrenées. The Speleo Club of Périgueux has continued its study of Quèbe de Cotche, near Eaux Bonnes. Having put in dye at 2,100 metres they were surprised to find that two risings were coloured, one at 1,200 metres and the other at 1,550 metres, thus 900 m. and 550 m. difference in level. This shows once again that it is impossible to guess where water seen in a cave is going to come out. Some incredible percolations exist; a proof of this is a recent colouring of the Gard near Pompignan, which reappeared in the Lez (the water supply for the town of Montpellier) more than 25 Km. away as the crow flies. The geology of the district indicated such a course to be virtually impossible.

⁽¹⁾ cf. Y.R.C.J., Vol. VI, No. 20, 'The Eisriesenwelt' by J. W. Puttrell.

Meurthe et Moselle. The Speleological Association of Haute Marne, after squeezing through a fissure in a quarry, found a succession of passages crossing and recrossing in all directions, of total length 1,200 metres, and with 30 metres difference between the highest and lowest points. This was the Grotte de Chaos, it must be an old swallow hole in the right bank of the Moselle. According to certain writers there may be a connection between these swallow holes and the capture of the Moselle by the Meurthe.

Sport and Science. Some think that speleology is just a sport; that is a mistake. The Sport is subservient to the Science, it is but a means, not an end.

Scientific Research, thanks to the initiative of Professor Jeannel, has provided searchers in all branches of the science with the means of working under excellent conditions by installing an underground laboratory at Moulis, directed by Professor Vandiel of the University of Toulouse. It is actually an Institute of Karstology, with facilities for the study of fauna, meteorology and seismology. The assistant director is Monsieur V. Caumartin of the University of Lille who, with an electron microscope, discovered the bacteria, *Perabacterium Spelei*, which live in clays and concretions and which assimilate ferric salts transforming them into ferrous compounds, thereby giving the red colour to 'dead' concretions, that is, those which receive no water.

In brief, hundreds of explorations were made last year, speleology is by no means dead! If the pioneers, Boegan and Martel were to come back now, they would be proud to see how the Science has expanded.

(Translated from the French by the Editor.)

CAVE ABSTRACTS

by The Editor

GREAT BRITAIN

Cave Study Centre in Devon. The Pengelly Cave Research Centre, named after William Pengelly, the excavator of Kent's Cavern, is to be set up at Higher Kiln Quarry, Buckfastleigh. Two stone barns at the quarry are to be converted into a museum, lecture theatre and sleeping quarters; new buildings are to house research laboratories, kitchen and dining room. This is an amateur venture, thus differing from similar laboratories on the Continent, and an appeal for funds and amateur labour has been launched. The Centre will be actively concerned with conservation and education, aiming to check the rate of wanton destruction by thoughtless pot-holers, with the teaching of the principles of good caving to the younger generation, as well as with research on the flora and fauna, past and present, to be found in caves.

BELGIUM

Grottes de Han, Ardennes. Underground Laboratory, 1961. At the beginning of 1960 the Federation Spéléologique de Belgique installed an underground laboratory in the Galerie de la Grande Fontaine of the Grotte de Han-sur-Lesse, in the Ardennes, for the study of all phenomena, biological and geological, occurring in caves. The results of two years' work have been published in well produced and well illustrated *Annales*, Tome I, 1960 and Tome II, Part I, 1961. The papers deal with fungi, spiders, concretions on slime, snails, the speed of growth of straw stalactites, modern methods used in prehistoric archaeology, and a detailed account of the survey of the Grotte de Hotton. Copies of *Annales* are in the Y.R.C. library.

Grotte Wuinant, Liège Province, 1961. A stone dropped at a venture through a fissure at the bottom of this 10 metre deep cave was heard to ricochet again and again and finally to splash. Investigation revealed a system descending a further 35 metres to a stream and containing some fine concretions and layers of coloured calcite.

Grotte Bebronne, Andrimont, 1959. New sections, about 1,000 metres in extent were surveyed and mapped by the Institut Vervietoise de Spéléologie.

Trous des Nutons—Bois de Villers, 1959. Several hundred metres of new passages discovered by Les Fourmis of Verviers and the Spéléo Club d'Andenne. Originally thought to be uninteresting, wet and muddy, removal of a clay plug opened up more than 300 metres of new passages with stalactite formations and a magnificent organ. A very high chamber was climbed and at 145 ft. above floor level a passage was found too narrow to be followed.

Grottes de Han, 1960. The Brussels Diving Group, after penetrating a second siphon, discovered 1,000 metres of new passages to the south, but were not able to determine the actual underground course of the Lesse.

FRANCE

Grotte de St. Marcel, Ardèche, 1960/61. This cave was originally discovered in 1838 by a hunter looking for a lost ferret. It was first explored in 1892 by E. A. Martel (Hon. Member Y.R.C. 1905—1938) who found 4,000 metres of passages, and again in 1933 by R. de Joly who added another 1,000 metres and found further progress blocked by a large concretion. In 1947 de Joly, with the help of French Sappers, blew up the concretion and penetrated to a total distance of about 7,500 metres. L'Equipe Spéléo de Bruxelles visited the cave for a fortnight in 1960; they found a new small chamber at 4,000 metres from the entrance, they noted many cracks where air currents indicated possible new systems and they surveyed some 1,000 metres of passages at the bottom of the cave. In July 1961 the E.S.B. sent in assault groups equipped with a boring machine to enlarge a crack where they had carried out soundings. With the help of this machine and a quantity of dynamite they made a tunnel five metres long at a downward angle of 45° and discovered three pot-holes about 15 metres deep. They intend to go back in 1962 and try to break the secret of an unknown but suspected lower system.

REVIEWS

THE ASCENT OF DHAULAGIRI: by Max Eiselin, translated by E. Noel Bowman. Oxford University Press. 159 pp. 25/-.

This is the story of the climbing of the 26,795 ft. Dhaulagiri, the last accessible 8,000 metre mountain unclimbed. The other is Gosantheim in forbidden Tibet and out of reach for Western climbers. The mountain had defeated seven previous expeditions and taken a toll of three lives. As a snap of the fingers in the face of superstition this, the thirteenth eight-thousander to succumb, was climbed on Friday the thirteenth of May, 1960. A second party was put on the summit ten days later.

The joint Swiss/Austrian/Polish expedition was led by Max Eiselin, a Swiss sports writer who conceived the idea of using a light aircraft to transport men and materials high on the mountain, a daring but risky plan with obvious dangers, some of which were realised and nearly brought the whole project to disaster. The first and most obvious objection was that the climbers, being swept suddenly from the hot plains to the cold rarefied heights, would have no chance to acclimatise. The second was that if the aircraft crashed the whole expedition would be hamstrung.

The climbers were flown from Pokhara up to a so-called acclimatisation camp on the 17,000 ft. saddle of the Daka-Pol and several of them had to be flown straight down again, whilst others had the greatest difficulty in acclimatising. Eventually the aircraft, inaptly christened "Yeti", for it was quite out of its element amongst Himalayan snowfields, landed Diemberger, Forrer, Schelbert and four Sherpas on the mountain's north-east col where a base camp was established at 18,865 ft. Yeti then crash landed at Pokhara, leaving this party isolated and cut off from the rest of the expedition for three weeks. Fortunately they had plenty of supplies but only one emergency bottle of oxygen. Nothing daunted and in fact put on their mettle, Diemberger and his companions set to work and established three more camps, the highest at 24,500 ft. On May 4th an attempt was made on the summit which was only defeated by a change in the weather.

Meanwhile Yeti, having had to wait for a new engine to be flown from Europe, brought up Eiselin, who had been supervising repairs at Pokhara, but this was its last effort, for it crashed finally on take-off next day. But the human element, doubtless happy to be relieved of this unreliable ally, pressed on, and a bivouac camp was set up only 1,300 ft. from the summit. On May 13th Diemberger, Forrer, Schelbert, Diener and two Sherpas stood on the summit and ten days later Vaucher and Weber repeated the ascent from Camp 5. Both of these magnificent successes were achieved without oxygen and were mainly the result of Diemberger's fine mountain-craft and determination.

The book is well produced and splendidly illustrated in black and white and in colour. There is one breath-taking study in blues and white of Dhaulagiri at dawn.

J.G.B.

CLIMBERS' GUIDE TO THE CAIRNGORMS AREA: (Scottish Mountaineering Club Guide) Volume I. Northern District. 10/6.

Whilst the old S.M.C. guide-books were, and still are, an essential part of a mountaineer's library, they were never very handy for taking on a holiday and made a considerable addition to the weight and bulk of a climber's gear.

The new Climbers' Guides being smaller and more compact are admirable for rucksack or pocket. They are not meant to replace the old guides, but are complementary; for instance, since the last large guide to the Cairngorms was published in 1950, two hundred new rock routes have been discovered and in fact there are now more than 400 major rock courses recorded.

This rather disposes of the accepted notion (in England at any rate) of the Cairngorms as essentially walking country in summer and skiing ground in winter. It also clears away the unsound rock illusion by pointing out that, apart from some of the gullies, the rock on buttresses, walls and ridges is of sound honest granite. Furthermore the rock climber can still find in the Cairngorms some measure of isolation and will not have to queue up to start a climb as in some other rock-climbing areas.

Snow and ice climbing is also covered but the Editor, Malcolm Smith, wisely recognises that snow and ice climbs, unlike rock, cannot be accurately graded owing to changing conditions. Tricounis are recommended in preference to crampons.

Volume I covers the Northern Area, the Cairngorms proper; the Southern Volume will cover Lochnagar, Broad Cairn and Glen Clova. Descriptions and illustrations are adequate without going into petty detail: the guide will surely tempt English climbers to visit the Cairngorms for reasons other than walking or skiing.

J.G.B.

THE CLIMBERS' CLUB JOURNAL, 1961.

Here Bonington writes of the successful ascent of Annapurna II when he and Grant reached the summit. One is apt to think of this mountain as a minor subsidiary of Annapurna whereas, as Bonington points out, it is in fact situated 12 miles from Annapurna and is a fine 26,000 ft. mountain in its own right.

Mortlock was with Wilfred Noyce on the expedition which climbed Trivor and he gives an account of the adventure, an account rather too liberally sprinkled with Christian names, the reader being assumed to be familiar with their owners' surnames. There are some fascinating "Recollections of Early Climbing in Wales" by H. H. Hughes, in which

the author draws upon his memories of Archer Thomson and Haskett Smith.

Accounts are included of the Saltoro Expedition of 1960, of how Stevenson almost climbed Paget in South Georgia with a party of Marines, and of the wanderings of Naish in the Ruwenzoris. There are notes of new climbs in Snowdonia, Cornwall, Ireland—and Greenland.

J.G.B.

THE JOURNAL OF THE FELL AND ROCK CLIMBING CLUB, 1961.

Sir John Hunt leads off with extracts from his diary of the Expedition to the Staunings Alps. The party included not only climbers but scientists, youth leaders and a group of selected boys of 17 to 20 years old, in all it numbered thirty eight. Among the peaks climbed was the highest, Danske Tinde.

G. Oliver writes of his ascent of the West Face of the Petit Dru with Rayson; Paul Ross comes nearer home with some climbing on the Castle Rock of Triermain. McKenzie and Rowe visited the Taurus Mountains of South Anatolia and their account will surely tempt others to this fascinating part of Asia Minor. Dick Cook went to the Pyrenees with the Murrays and Harry Stembridge; apart from the climbing it seems that good food, fishing and photography were also enjoyed.

The Journal records many new rock climbs in the Lake District and the usual high Fell and Rock standard of photography is maintained.

J.G.B.

THE RUCKSACK CLUB JOURNAL, 1961.

An air of reminiscence pervades this issue. P. R. J. Jackson tells of a rock climbing apprenticeship served in Wales and Derbyshire; Frank Kiernan goes back to his initiation into Rucksackism in 1926 and writes entertainingly about the Club and its personalities of those days; Sydney Cross draws from his deep well of Lakeland memories affectionate sketches of heroes of his youth—Basterfield, Kelly, Linnel—all of it delightful stuff to read.

As for the present day, Colledge of the M.A.M. deputises for Denis Davies in recording their ascent of the Red Sentinel route on the Brenva face of Mont Blanc, and J. W. Rostron takes us on a fortnight's varied walking and climbing in Scotland. There is a deeply interesting obituary of that astonishing and seemingly ageless old man of the mountains who was Eustace Thomas, written by A. S. Pigott.

In conclusion one cannot fail to admire the fine drawings by H. Taylor and A. Stainsbury which decorate this Journal so delightfully—a welcome change from the camera.

J.G.B.

THE ALPINE JOURNAL, MAY 1961.

Wolfgang Stein writes of the Austrian Karakoram Expedition of 1960 to climb Distaghil Sar, and Wilfred Noyce records the successful ascent of Trivor. Tilman again set sail in "Mischief", this time for the Iles Crozet, barren, uninhabited islands some 1,800 miles S.W. of Cape Town, and it is enough to say that the whole account is characteristic Tilman.

There are two full length essays on two great mountaineers: Dangar on Jakob Anderegg, and a reprint of Sir Arnold Lunn's paper on Geoffrey Winthrop Young, which appeared originally in *The Mountain World*.

Probably the most interesting, and certainly the most controversial article in this Journal is the account of the alleged ascent of Everest by the North Route on 25th May, 1960 by the Chinese party. This is written by Shin Chan-Chun, whose style provides amusement even if it does not exactly carry conviction. There is a long analysis of the account by the Editor of the *Alpine Journal* and a penetrating note on the photographs by T. S. Blakeney, who concludes that the Chinese claim, though not impossible, must be considered non-proven on the evidence of the photographs. The party said to have reached the summit reverently placed there a plaster bust of Mao Tze-Tung, the Party Chairman. The finding of this effigy by the next party to arrive on top would provide decisive evidence. Until then we must reserve the right to doubt.

J.G.B.

SCOTTISH MOUNTAINEERING CLUB JOURNAL, 1961.

We can always reckon on finding sound information as well as entertainment in the *S.M.C. Journal* and this issue is no exception. It is a powerful blast against folly and ignorance on the hills. James R. Marshall takes a wide ranging view at "Modern Scottish Winter Climbing", and directs his remarks primarily to the young climber who has done some rock work but is apt to be caught napping and be badly shaken by the very different conditions prevailing in winter climbing on the Scottish hills. Another article, "Survival", by G. J. Ritchie, is packed with sound advice on food, clothing and shelter, all of paramount importance because the Scottish winter is more Arctic than Alpine, an observation too often overlooked.

The practical Scots mind continues to manifest itself in Humble's article on "Glissades, Vibrams and Ice Axes". To the Sassenach in holiday mood the glissade is often regarded as a jolly sort of frolic, but your stern Scot frowns on such levity and bids us remember that glissading is an art and should be studied as such; he urges us to re-read our Raeburn Bell. Of course Humble is right and the gay glissade has been known to end in disaster.

As a rather welcome relief from this barrage of advice and exhortation there is a well written and illustrated account of climbing the Hjørnespids, the second highest, and until this ascent the highest un-

climbed, peak in the Staunings. The writer is Slessor who climbed the mountain with McNaught Davis.

For those who think there is nothing new under the British climbing sun there are a dozen pages of new climbs in Scotland, but also a depressingly long list of accidents, too many of them befalling ill-equipped, careless walkers and climbers. In fact there is every justification for the weighty counsel contained in this Journal.

J.G.B.

THE CAIRNGORM CLUB JOURNAL, 1961.

The infrequent publication of the *Cairngorm Club Journal* (the last one was five years ago) makes its eventual appearance all the more refreshing. Whether this is editorial policy or just the usual Club difficulty of getting members to put pen to paper does not really matter when we see such a lively and well produced Journal as this one.

Margaret Munro gives her impressions of the 1958 McArthur-Solari expedition to the Himalayas. This, like the previous one of 1955, made for the Lahul district of the Punjab to climb mountains at the head of the Thiroi Nala. Unfortunately Hamish McArthur was taken ill and died when the party was tackling an unclimbed 20,000 ft. peak and this tragedy put an end to further efforts.

The Cairngorms naturally have pride of place: W. D. Brooker in "The Link" tells of a fine new climb on Lochnagar, and Alex Tewnton in his article "The Snow Bunting in the Cairngorms" reveals what fascination he found observing the habits of this delightful little bird.

In the pages of a Scottish Climbing Club Journal it is not unusual to find some practical advice or exhortation. P. D. Baird contends that many of the deaths from exposure that have occurred in recent years through walkers being caught by bad weather could have been prevented had the victims had some elementary knowledge about making snow shelters; his article, "Shelters", gives useful information on this subject.

The Notes at the end of the Journal contain an interesting item which might be earmarked for the next Y.R.C. meet in this area: E. F. Johnston details his traverse of the six highest Cairngorm tops, Ben Avon, Beinn a' Bhuird, Cairngorm, Ben MacDhui, Braeriach and Cairntoul. Johnston's time was 11 hours 10 minutes.

J.G.B.

THE BRITISH SKI YEARBOOK

No. 41, 1960.

P. N. Garrard, with two companions and Hans Rubi as guide, did the Haute Route in early April 1960, starting from Zermatt. They made one long day's run from the Schönbühl Hut to the Cabane des Vignettes, thus cutting out the long walk out of the valley from Arolla. At both the Vignettes and the Cabane des Dix they encountered the Swiss Army in force, but the advantages of their presence, boiling the water and doing all the washing up, far outweighed the nuisance

of being surrounded by a large number of bodies. Garrard had the bad luck to sprain his ankle on the Col du Mont Rouge and was removed by helicopter from the Chanrion Hut. The other three gave up at Champex owing to bad weather.

C. M. Stocken describes Easter ski touring from the Britannia Hut. He and his wife climbed the Strahlhorn by the Allalin Glacier and the Adler Pass; on an off day they explored the Hohlaub Glacier, finding it quite untracked. After climbing the Allalinhorn, crampons for the last 200 metres, they had a glorious run down the Fee Glacier to the Egginerjoch.

Lord Glentworth, as usual, found pastures new and unfrequented. Concordia Hut to the Grünhornlücke and a fine run down to the Rotloch at the foot of the Finsteraar Rothorn, watching the mountain panorama flow past at 15 m.p.h. Oberaarjoch, Scheuchzerjoch, 3,000 ft of powder snow to the Tierberggletscher, the Unteraargletscher and the snug remoteness of the Lauteraar Hut. An early morning tramp on crampons up the Vorderer Trift Gletscher, a bit of difficulty at the top, a run of 2,300 ft. down the upper Hühnertäli (no place for chickens) to the Gauligletscher, and final run to the Gauri Hut over wet sugar.

While studying prehistoric finds in the Winter Palace at Leningrad, now part of the Hermitage Museum, Douglas Busk noticed some granite boulders upon which were primitive carvings of skiers. The boulders had been cut from the living rock and brought from their primeval site at Salavrug on the White Sea. Russian experts have dated the carvings between the 2nd and 3rd millennia B.C., surely the oldest depictions of ski-ing so far discovered.

No. 42, 1961. James Riddell, who in the last five years has visited every ski centre in the Alps, reminds us that the much publicised and over-stylised form of downhill running known as "Wedeln", was, in the early 1930's, developed at Mürren by Bill Bracken and Barry Caulfield under the name of "Tail Wagging". Now it is tending to convert ski-ing into a gigantic outdoor parlour trick. The swift multiplication of ski lifts in recent years has led to a veritable spider's web of interlinking cables all over the Alps, making most marvellously easy the infinite possibilities for exploration, experiment and understanding of all true natural conditions. And what took place? Endless further expenditure constantly to create and maintain the signposted highroads of "pistes" in order to shepherd each carload of uninspired humanity down from the heights like a lot of ball bearings in a groove — 'Wedeling' as best they can.

Sonia Kirwan describes another "Haute Route" from the Wildstrubel to the Diablerets by the Lämmernjoch, Plaine Morte, Wildstrubel Hut, Plan des Roses, Kirchli to the Wildhorn Hut. Then the Wildhorn, Glacier de Brotset, Grand Gouilles, Col del'Arpille, crossing the Sanetsch track at 2,100 metres, Lapis de Zanfleuron and the Diablerets Hut, the last day a schuss down the Zanfleuron Glacier.

Sir Arnold Lunn in "Yesterday, Many Years Ago" recalls the leisurely days when he and Fritz Amacher did the great Grindelwald runs without mechanical aids—Scheidegg, Lauberhorn, Schwarzhorn, Wildgerst and Faulhorn. "Only those (skiers) who desert the overcrowded trails and explore the still undesecrated shrines of untracked snow-fields can hope for a reward comparable to that which was ours in that distant past when skiing and mountain skiing were synonymous". Fritz died before Sir Arnold finished the article and the last part is a charming obituary to him.

Donald Lockhart describes the Haute Route in April 1961, during which the party, leaving the Schönbühl Hut at 3.30 a.m., reached the Chanrion in 12 hours, having climbed a total of 1,750 metres, descended 1,980 metres and covered 26½ kilometres. An attempt to include the summit of Mont Blanc in the tour was foiled by the Cabane des Grands Mulets being locked and the warden, who lived in Chamonix, refusing either to hand over the key or to accompany the party, a serious breach of Alpine convention.

H.G.W.

BULLETIN D'INFORMATION DE LA FEDERATION SPELEOLOGIQUE DE BELGIQUE.

The issue for November 1960 contains an account by Y. Rouget of the exploration of a cave of volcanic origin, named La Cueva Verde, in the island of Lanzarote, the most northerly of the Eastern Canaries. The cave extends for five miles, finishing in the crater of a volcano; it contains a lake in which were found three examples of a crustacean "Munidopsis polymorpha" peculiar to this cave. No. III of this journal, for the year 1961, gives a fascinating account of recent speleological discoveries in Roumania. The Grotte d'Adam, in the Dobrudja, has been found to be one of the richest sources in Europe of animal fossils from the quaternary era, 65 species of mammals were identified. During exploration of the system Ponorici-Cioclovina cu Apa, one of the finest underground valleys in the country, were found ornaments in an alloy resembling bronze, and in amber and glass dating back 3,000 years. Bio-speleological research in many of the caves has revealed the existence in the tertiary period of fauna related to those of Java and Sumatra. A booklet issued by the F.S.B. and entitled *Notes sur la Topographie Souterraine* gives a simple and valuable description of how to carry out underground survey work. A copy of this is in the Y.R.C. library.

H.G.W.

CLIMBS ON THE NORTH YORK MOORS: edited by M. F. Wilson (Cleveland Mountaineering Club Guide). Revised and enlarged, 1961.

The first edition of this guide, published in 1956, under the title *Climbs in Cleveland*, was reviewed in Vol. 8, No. 28, of the Journal (1957). In his original preface Maurice Wilson remarked that "the

difficulty lay not . . . in logging the climbs which were already well established so much as including the newer routes which lay around us asking to be done". There has been no abatement of the difficulty. In the intervening five years more than 200 new climbs have been added to make a revised edition of the guide a necessity. Crags previously described have been more extensively exploited, and, as could be expected, the standard of many of the new climbs is higher. In addition new climbing grounds have been developed on other outcrops, some of which lie outside Cleveland, notably in Eskdale, Rosedale, Hawnby and around Sutton Bank, although there is a warning that the rock in the last named area is friable and suspect. This extension of area accounts for the change in title of the guide. Members of the Y.R.C. have contributed to the exploration of these delightful sandstone outcrops from the pioneering visits of E. E. Roberts in 1906 and of C. E. and D. Burrow a few years later, to the present time and the connection has been maintained not least by the editor of this guide.

A.B.C.

KINDRED CLUB JOURNALS

The Librarian gratefully acknowledges also the receipt of the 1961 Journals of the following Clubs, and regrets that limitations of space will not allow him to include reviews of them:—

Appalachia; Bulletin de Comité National de Spéléologie; Birmingham University Mountaineering Club; Grotte et Gouffres: Mountain Club of South Africa; Manchester University Mountaineering Club; Pinnacle Club; Swiss Alpine Club; Spelunca Bulletin (Paris); Speleolog (Zagreb); South Wales Caving Club; Bristol University Speleo Society; Lancashire Caving and Climbing Club; Midland Association of Mountaineers; Yorkshire Mountaineering Club; Craven Pothole Club.

IN MEMORIAM

ROBERT A. CHADWICK

Robert Chadwick, who died on 18th November, 1961, joined the Club in 1905. He was a York man, educated at Uttoxeter Grammar School, from which he won an open scholarship in mathematics at St. John's College, Cambridge. He had a brilliant university career, he took a First Class in Law Tripos, was 25th Wrangler in the Mathematical Tripos, a MacMahon law student and Whewell Scholar in Public Law. He gained Honours in the Final Examination of the Law Society and was a distinguished company and commercial lawyer. From 1937 to 1950 he was Clerk to the Magistrates of the Skyrack Division of the West Riding.

Chadwick took part in meets at Gaping Gill in 1905 and 1906 and was on one of the early Skye meets at Scavaig in 1907 where he played a notable part in an uncomfortable crossing of the flooded Sligachan. Although subsequently his professional interests took up an increasingly large part of his time he never lost interest in the Club. He was a man of the most kindly and helpful nature and was generous in advice and help both to the Officers of the Club in moments of legal difficulty and to other members. J.H.

HAROLD ARMSTRONG

Harold Armstrong joined the Club in 1929 and immediately made his mark, especially in connection with pot-holing and more particularly with Gaping Gill. The original (Fish and Chip) engine used for the Main Shaft was on its last legs and Armstrong re-arranged the winch and engine bed to take the Lister engine which served the Club so well at many Whitsuntide meets. Many of those who joined the Club in the early 1930's will remember his helping hand and word of encouragement to those getting off the gantry on to the bo'sun's chair for the first time.

Harold had a delightful dry humour and could always see some unusual and funny side in any situation. His most remarkable and unexpected characteristic, however, was the way in which he quietly took charge in any emergency; whether the emergency was small or large, Harold became the leader and had the unquestioned support of the rest of the party.

For many years he served on the Committee and was President from 1946 to 1948; it was during his presidency that the idea was originally conceived of having a Club Hut, an idea which came to fruition in 1950 with the opening of Low Hall Garth.

He had many interests apart from his great love of the Club. He gave much of his time to mission work in Leeds and to the Scout Movement, introducing many Rover Scouts to the safe ways of hill walking, climbing and caving. He was on the local Council, where his suggestions always received consideration.

Harold Armstrong will always be remembered by his contemporaries for his kindly outlook which earned him the affection and respect of everyone. D.B.

CLUB MEETS

1959/60 Fourteen official Club Meets were held during the year; the average attendance, not including the After-Dinner Meet, was 21. At Whitsuntide there were two unofficial, as well as two official Meets.

The 46th Annual Dinner was held at the Majestic Hotel, Harrogate, and for the first time since the war the Club reverted to wearing dinner jackets for this event. Next morning some 85 Members and Guests invaded Ramsgill, some to walk on the fells, others to watch birds on the reservoir, whilst a dozen went down Mungo Gill Hole, a pot opened up with much toil by the Craven Pothole Club and containing some of the finest formations in the country. After tea at the Yorke Arms, Alf Gregory, the Principal Guest, projected a colour film of his latest expedition to the region of Everest and followed it with a charming one of Sherpa life.

The December Meet, again at the White Lion Hotel, Cray, was spent by the President, 26 Members and 2 Guests, mainly in working up an appetite for, and subsequently consuming, Christmas fare so proverbially Pickwickian in splendour that a group sleeping at a nearby farmhouse comfortably settled down and were about to go to sleep around 1 a.m. in what they then realised was the wrong farmhouse.

A sudden violent change in the weather restricted the numbers at the Hill Inn Meet to 45, and 'flu prevented the President from attending. A heavy snowfall on Friday night did not deter one party from Lowstern and another from the Hill Inn from setting off at an early hour for the Three Peaks; the first party, having reached the summit cairn of Ingleborough, beat a hasty retreat to the comforts of the Hill, while the second, after ploughing up the steep slope of Whernside before breakfast up to their knees in snow, worked off surplus energy chopping firewood for Mr. Kilburn.

Only one Landrover penetrated the snowbound Tilberthwaite tracks to reach L.H.G. for the February Meet. During Friday night and Saturday eighteen Members and Guests battled through, leaving the lanes of Little Langdale filled with abandoned cars, only to find a threat of imminent starvation at L.H.G. Saturday was spent foraging but, with a bright, clear and alpine Sunday, walking the snow-blown cols of Wetherlam constituted a major expedition. The President and 24 Members attended the March Meet at Low Row in Swaledale and after wandering about in peat hags in thick mist and snow flurries claimed to have found the summit of Rogan's Seat. On Sunday plans were made at the Tan Hill Inn for a 3 a.m. breakfast to be eaten by the Long Walkers in July.

By the courtesy of the Scottish Mountaineering Club the Easter Meet was held at their Lagangarbh Hut at the foot of Buchaille Etive Mor. The President and thirteen Members attended, and the pouring rain and overflowing lochs which greeted them on the approach to

Glencoe boded ill for the weekend, which in fact turned out to be one of the finest meets for many years. On Good Friday two parties traversed Aonach Eagach, one from either end, exchanging car keys midway. Bidean nam Bian on Saturday provided exhilarating step-cutting and views of Rhum, Cuillin and Ben Nevis to the parties who traversed it, again from either end. Another party climbed in perfect summer conditions on the Buchaille. A fine Sunday saw more climbing on the Buchaille and on Stob Coire nam Beith; the President's party traversed Beinn a' Bheithir prior to wining and dining at Clachaig.

The May Meet was a joint event with the Fell and Rock Climbing Club, the first time for many years that the two Clubs have got together. Forty-three sat down to dinner on the Saturday at the New Inn, Clapham, and short but happy speeches were made by the two Presidents, John Godley for the Y.R.C. and the Club's old friend, Harry Spilsbury, for the Fell and Rock. It was noticeable with what undisguised glee certain members of the Y.R.C. luridly described to their climbing friends the delights of the Canal in Gingle Hole, but this was fully matched by the enthusiasm with which the Fell and Rock, nothing daunted, followed them down next day. Alum Pot was laddered in lovely weather on the Sunday and fifteen men went down.

Although only two official Whitsuntide Meets were on the programme, Loch Duich and Florencecourt, there was also a climbing party at L.H.G. and four Members in Skye at a Meet organised for a party of Soviet climbers jointly with the S.M.C. and the Climbers' Club. The Loch Duich party camped by the river at the foot of Glen Licht and until the Wednesday enjoyed what seems to have become traditionally fine weather for the Scottish Meet. Sixteen Members and Guests between them traversed the Five Sisters of Kintail, walked on Ben Attow, visited Glenelg and Armisdale and, as a reward for a soaking on the moors, saw the Falls of Glomach in full spate. They also entertained four of the Russian climbers from Skye to dinner at Kintail Lodge, a Y.R.C. badge being exchanged for that of Mountaineer (First Class) of the U.S.S.R. Only seven men and a Landrover went to Ireland; they carried out a thorough and fruitful search of the Reyfad area and again explored Marble Arch and Pollnagollum, where exposure suits were necessary owing to the depth of water. The four men who joined the Skye Meet indulged in various activities with the Russians, including the traverse of the Dubhs, Sgurr nan Eag, the ascent of the Chasm and of the Bhasteir Tooth, fishing, walking and several social functions, all of which proved that both active co-operation and peaceful co-existence could be successfully combined.

Twenty-one men attempted the Long Walk from Tan Hill to Clapham at the beginning of July, six others acting as support parties. Some enthusiasts scorned the pre-arranged 3.30 a.m. breakfast and set off at midnight, but the main party started out at 4 a.m. Some used the road where convenient, others the rougher route by East Sterndale and Kisdon but all reported at the two scheduled feeding

points, Hardraw and Old Ings, and all but two completed the route, taking Simon Fell and Ingleborough Summit in their stride. Eight Members arrived at widely differing times for the August Bank Holiday week end at Low Hall Garth. On Saturday two of them climbed Russet Groove, Heather Groove and White Gill Chimney; another saw the superb colouring of evening sunlight from the top of Wetherlam. On Sunday five climbed on Dow Crags and two walked over Stony Cove Pike and Ill Bell. On Monday a party of four traversed the Pikes; it was noted with interest that there were only two parties climbing on White Gill on an August Bank Holiday Monday.

At the end of August the President and twenty Members assembled at Helyg; they were somewhat embarrassed to find the hut festooned with a froth of female garments. A mixed camping party had taken refuge from a downpour in order to dry their clothes: they were courteously but firmly escorted elsewhere and the Meet settled down to serious climbing. One large party, led by the President, explored the ridge south of Nantlle, including Myndd Drws-y-Coed, Trum-y-Ddysgl and Tal-y-Mignedd. Eighteen Members took part in the annual Joint Meet at the Robertson Lamb Hut with the Rucksack and Wayfarers' Clubs. Once again serious overcrowding necessitated an overflow to L.H.G. and provoked the suggestion that in future years the Club's field telephone, which does yeoman service at Gaping Gill and in Ireland, should be installed between the two huts. There was climbing on Dow Crags, Gimmer, Gable, various activities in Coombe Gill and on Wetherlam and Harry Spilsbury's communal catering was famed throughout the Langdales.

A pot-holing Meet in October was based on Lowstern, it included the President and eighteen men. An attempt was made to link up Bar Pot and Disappointment Pot by putting a party down each one. One member bottomed Disappointment Pot, but a formidable two hours' crawl from the junction with Hensler's Passage did not turn out to be the link with Bar Pot; it was, however, felt that the through route would be achieved in the very near future.

1960/61. Sixteen Club Meets were held and average attendance was 22, not including the After-Dinner Meet.

The 47th Annual Dinner was again at the Hotel Majestic at Harrogate and on the following day a representative number of Members and Guests went to Malham, most of them doing the round of Cove, Tarn and Goredale in thick mist. The first Meet of the Club year was at Lowstern in December, jointly with the Rucksack Club. Torrential rain limited numbers to 9 Y.R.C. and 3 Rucksack, but five men braved the wet and went down Bar Pot to admire, from the floor of the Main Chamber, the fantastically impressive waterfall down Gaping Gill and to explore the new connection between Mud Hall and Hensler's Passage. The following week 22 Members assembled at the Black Bull in Sedbergh for walking in the Howgills. Views were marred by frequent snow showers, but the Meet was a great

success, with good walking, good company and good food (in a 'rather posh' hotel amid evening dress and party frocks). Only 7 Members met at Lowstern in January; high winds, mist, snow, rain—the lot; but Pen-y-Ghent and Ingleborough were climbed and golf was played with ice-axes and lumps of ice.

At the Hill Inn Meet at the end of January the Kilburn tradition of hospitality to the Y.R.C. was carried on by John Kilburn's son, Tom, who had just taken over the responsibilities of mine host. Although the weather was not conducive to outdoor activities, fifty-five members assembled for dinner on the Saturday night. Four enthusiasts made an igloo on the summit of Whernside, of such sound construction that the possibility of spending a night in it was considered. After the dinner and at the end of an evening spent doing those things which are usually done on such an occasion, the President firmly led this quartet from the bar to the door, pointed in the direction of Whernside, bade them goodnight and wished them luck. They disappeared into a dark, starless night singing "Yorkshire" and, more by good fortune than by faultless navigation, found their igloo and next day reported a comfortable night.

Very remarkably, nothing unusual happened at the February Meet at Low Hall Garth, 14 Members and a Guest experienced no flood, no snow, no freeze-up, and had a superabundance of food. There was climbing on Dow Crag and Raven Crag and walking on the Band, round the Three Tarns, over Bow Fell, round the head of Langdale to the Pikes and finally a pause at the Old Dungeon Gill 'to pick up the cars'. At Easter the President and eight Members went to Arran, some camped in Glen Sannox, others stayed at the Corrie Hotel. Easter Sunday was a day of blue skies, snow-sprinkled tops and views of the Hebrides and Ireland. One party explored the Beinn Bharrain group, another climbed North Goat Fell and traversed Cir Mhor, A'Chir, Beinn Tarsuinn and Beinn Nuis. A very successful Meet took place at the end of April at Lowstern, attended by the President and 28 men. Bad weather during the previous fortnight forbade the planned descent of Juniper Gulf, but on Saturday the two shafts of the Pillar Pots were laddered and the whole party of 9 reached the bottom. The ladders were then used to rig the 320 ft. pitch of Long Kin West and four men got all the way down. On Sunday a party of 9 went into Marble Steps and 7 reached the bottom of the 90 ft. shaft. Two men completed the Three Peaks in 11 hours and the rest rambled.

Not a moment was wasted at the Whitsun Meet in Skye, where the Ridge was thrice assaulted by parties drawn from the President, 17 Members and 5 Guests. It became difficult to know exactly what was going on because one party seemed always to be slinking into its sleeping bags just as another party was hopefully starting out. Party No. 1 on Whit Monday left early but only reached the President's food dump on Banachdich Bealach at noon; to avoid being benighted they had to turn home with only Sgurr a'Bhasteir and Sgurr nan

Gillean still to go. Party No. 2 started six strong before Party No. 1 got home, shed three of its members in rain at midday and completed the ridge in 18½ hours. They even trotted over Glac Glas and Blaven next day. This fired Party No. 1 to make another attempt, they spent Wednesday placing food dumps, spent the night on Ghars Beinn and finished the Ridge on Thursday in rather slow time due to over-eating, the result of miscalculating the food dumps. There was also climbing and walking on Drum nan Rham, Mhic Coinnich, Mhadaidh, Bidein and Bhasteir Tooth, and some fun in the sea.

The Long Walk took place in the Lake District, the President and 28 Members enjoying the comfort of the Fell and Rock hut at Brackenclose. The route, starting and finishing at the hut, included Scafell, Great End, The Gables, Pillar, Steeple, Seatallan and Illgill Head. The start was at 5.30 a.m. and dinner was served soon after the finish at 9 p.m. A damp but enjoyable Meet in mid-July at Lowstern was attended by 12 men. Nick Pot was out of the question after heavy rain but a party of 7 spent 7½ hours down Easegill, visiting Spout Hall, Poetic Justice, Stop Pot, Thackways Passage and finishing with the impressive and beautiful Easter Grotto. The August Meet was at the Rucksack Club hut at Bewdy Mawr and was attended by 10 Y.R.C. and 2 Rucksack. The Parson's Nose and the Gambit were climbed on Saturday, on Sunday there was walking on the Glyder and elsewhere and some climbing by various routes on the Three Cliffs. The Annual Joint Meet with the Wayfarers and Rucksack Club took place as usual at the Robertson Lamb Hut in Great Langdale with an overflow at Low Hall Garth, 21 Y.R.C. Members were present. The fabulous hospitality provided by Harry Spilsbury included not only first class cuisine, running hot and cold water, a south aspect and perfect weather but even suitable opportunities for occupational therapy. Gimmer, Bow Fell and Harrison Stickle were among the crags festooned with R.L.H. ropes, while the L.H.G. overflow performed some amazing antics on Gimmer, searched for gabbro on Carrock Fell, climbed on Pavey Ark and pulled 3 cars out of the ford.

The last Meet of the Club year was at the Hark to Bounty Inn at Slaidburn in the Trough of Bowland. Twenty-two men attended, the weather was mild and sunny and the country unknown to most Members, some of whom had difficulty in map reading so made for the nearest hill, then for a gritstone outcrop on the horizon and so home across the moors.

CLUB PROCEEDINGS

1960—The week-end meets were: January 29th—31st, Hill Inn, Chapel-le-Dale; February 19th—21st, Low Hall Garth; March 25th—27th, The Punch Bowl Hotel, Low Row, Swaledale; Easter, April 15th—18th, Glencoe; May 13th—15th, New Inn, Clapham and Lowstern Hut, Joint Meet with Fell and Rock; Whitsun, June 4th—11th, two official meets, Florence Court, Co. Fermanagh, and Loch Duich, also a climbing meet at L.H.G. and a meet in Skye to help the S.M.C. and Climbers' Club entertain Soviet climbers. July 1st—3rd, The Long Walk, Tan Hill to Clapham; July 29th—August 2nd, Low Hall Garth; August 26th—28th, Helyg, Climbers' Club Hut; September 23rd—25th, Robertson Lamb Hut, Joint Meet with Wayfarers and Rucksack Clubs; October 21st—23rd, Lowstern Hut; December 2nd—4th, Lowstern Hut, jointly with Rucksack Club; December 9th—11th, The Bull Hotel, Sedbergh. The average attendance at meets was 21 and the Club Membership was 174.

The 68th Annual General Meeting was held at the Hotel Majestic, Harrogate on the 19th of November, 1960. The following officers of the Club were elected for 1960/61: President: F. W. STEMBRIDGE; Vice-Presidents: J. LOVETT and W. P. B. STONEHOUSE; Hon. Treasurer: S. MARSDEN; Hon. Secretary: E. C. DOWNHAM; Hon. Asst. Secretary: J. HEMINGWAY; Hon. Librarian: J. G. BROOK; Hon. Editor: H. G. WATTS; Hon. Asst. Editor: A. B. CRAVEN; Hon. Hut Secretaries: Low Hall Garth, F. D. SMITH, Lowstern Hut, P. R. HARRIS; Hon. Hut Wardens: Low Hall Garth, J. D. DRISCOLL, Lowstern, J. LOVETT; Committee: R. J. ALDRIDGE, B. E. NICHOLSON, A. J. REYNOLDS, T. W. SALMON, G. B. SPENCELEY, A. R. CHAPMAN.

The 47th Annual Dinner, which followed, was at the Hotel Majestic. J. H. Emlyn Jones was the principal guest, with the retiring President, John Godley, in the Chair. Kindred Clubs were represented by B. R. Goodfellow, Alpine Club; A. J. Taylor, Wayfarers; E. G. Rees, Rucksack Club; B. Sheard, Gritstone Club; R. Haigh, Midland Association of Mountaineers; H. Sanderson, Craven Pothole Club; and J. C. Ackroyd, Bradford Pothole Club. The attendance at the Dinner was 157. The Meet next day was at Malham.

1961—The week-end Meets were: January 20th—22nd, Hill Inn; February 10th—12th, Low Hall Garth; March 3rd—5th, Blue Bell Inn, Cleveland; Easter, March 31st—April 4th, The Isle of Arran; April 28th—30th, The Lowstern Hut; Whitsun, May 20th—27th, The Isle of Skye; June 23rd—25th, Brackenclouse Hut, Wasdale, Fell and Rock Climbing Club Hut; July 14th—16th, The Lowstern Hut; August 5th—8th, Low Hall Garth; August 25th—27th, Bewdy Mawr, Nant Peris, Rucksack Club Hut; September 22nd—24th, Robertson Lamb Hut, Joint Meet with Wayfarers and Rucksack Clubs; October 20th—22nd, Hark to Bounty Inn, Slaidburn; December 8th—10th, The

Mortal Man Inn, Troutbeck. The average attendance at meets was 22 and the Club Membership 171. The deaths were recorded during 1961 of H. Armstrong, R. A. Chadwick and R. Green.

The 69th Annual General Meeting was held at the Hotel Majestic, Harrogate on 18th November, 1961. The following Officers were elected for the year 1961/62: President: F. W. STEMBRIDGE; Vice-Presidents: W. P. B. STONEHOUSE and F. WILSON; Hon. Treasurer: S. MARSDEN; Hon. Secretary: E. C. DOWNHAM; Hon. Asst. Secretary: J. HEMINGWAY; Hon. Librarian: J. G. BROOK; Hon. Editor: H. G. WATTS; Hon. Asst. Editor: A. B. CRAVEN; Hon. Hut Secretaries: Low Hall Garth, F. D. SMITH, Lowstern, P. R. HARRIS; Hon. Hut Wardens: Low Hall Garth, J. D. DRISCOLL, Lowstern, J. LOVETT; Committee: B. E. NICHOLSON, T. W. SALMON, G. B. SPENCELEY, A. R. CHAPMAN, E. M. TREGONING, F. WILKINSON.

For the 48th Annual Dinner which followed at the Hotel Majestic, George Lowe was the Principal Guest, with the President, F. W. Stembridge, in the Chair; other Club Guests were Chris Bonington and Don Whillans. Kindred Clubs were represented by E. A. Wrangham, Alpine Club; A. Gordon Waldie, Scottish Mountaineering Club; E. C. Bradbury, Rucksack Club; J. Goldsworthy, Wayfarers' Club; D. Thomas, Climbers' Club; C. E. Arnison, President, Fell and Rock Climbing Club; R. Beard, Gritstone Club; R. L. Crunden, President, Craven Pothole Club; C. Hobday, Oread Mountaineering Club. The attendance at the Dinner was 145. The After-Dinner Meet was held at Burnsall.

Two well-attended lectures were held during the year; on 6th May, 1961, in conjunction with the Alpine Club, when Gunther Starker, of Vienna, gave an account of the ascent of Distaghil Sar by the Austrian Expedition of 1960; and on 18th November, 1961, before the Annual General Meeting, by Chris Bonington on the first ascent of the Central Pillar of Fréney on Mont Blanc.

NEW MEMBERS SINCE JOURNAL No. 30

1960

Hincks, Trevor B. "Stonewall", Portinscale, Keswick,
Cumberland.
Penfold, Douglas P. 10 Avenue Gardens, Alwoodley, Leeds, 17.
Stirling, Hugh 28 Witch Road, Kilmarnock, Ayrshire,
Scotland.

1961

Lee, George A. 389 Wakefield Road, Dalton, Huddersfield.
Ellis, John R. Winder House, Skelmanthorpe,
Huddersfield.
Wrigglesworth, Anthony 79 Farnley Ring Road, Leeds, 12.
Woodman, David M. "Bankfield", Allithwaite, Grange-over-Sands,
Lancashire.

1962

Middleton, John R. 20 Sparken Hill, Worksop, Notts.
Hooper, Jeffrey H. 1 Kendal Road, Harrogate.

RESIGNATIONS

1960

W. Price Smith.

1961

P. D. Clarke, W. J. De'Cort, J. G. Knight, C. E. Hartley.

DEATHS

1961

R. A. Chadwick. H. Armstrong. R. Green.

Air Beds, Anoraks, Anklets, Axes
Boots, climbing; Bags, sleeping; Beds, camp
Camp furniture, Capes, Caving equipment
Descendeurs, Dixies, Duffle coats
Ear muffs, Egg boxes, Eyelets
Flysheets, Food containers, Footwear
Groundsheets, Gazstoves, Gauntlets
Hammers, abseil, piton and geological
Ice axes, Insect repellents
Jumping shoes, Jackets, Jeans
Karabiners, Kettles, Knives
Lamps, Lanterns, Line
Mountain gear, Mocassins, Meta fuel
Nylon ropes, Nailed boots
Overtrousers, Oversocks, Overmitts
Pedometers, Pegs, Pitons, Poles
Quilted jackets
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