

THE
CLIMBERS' CLUB
JOURNAL

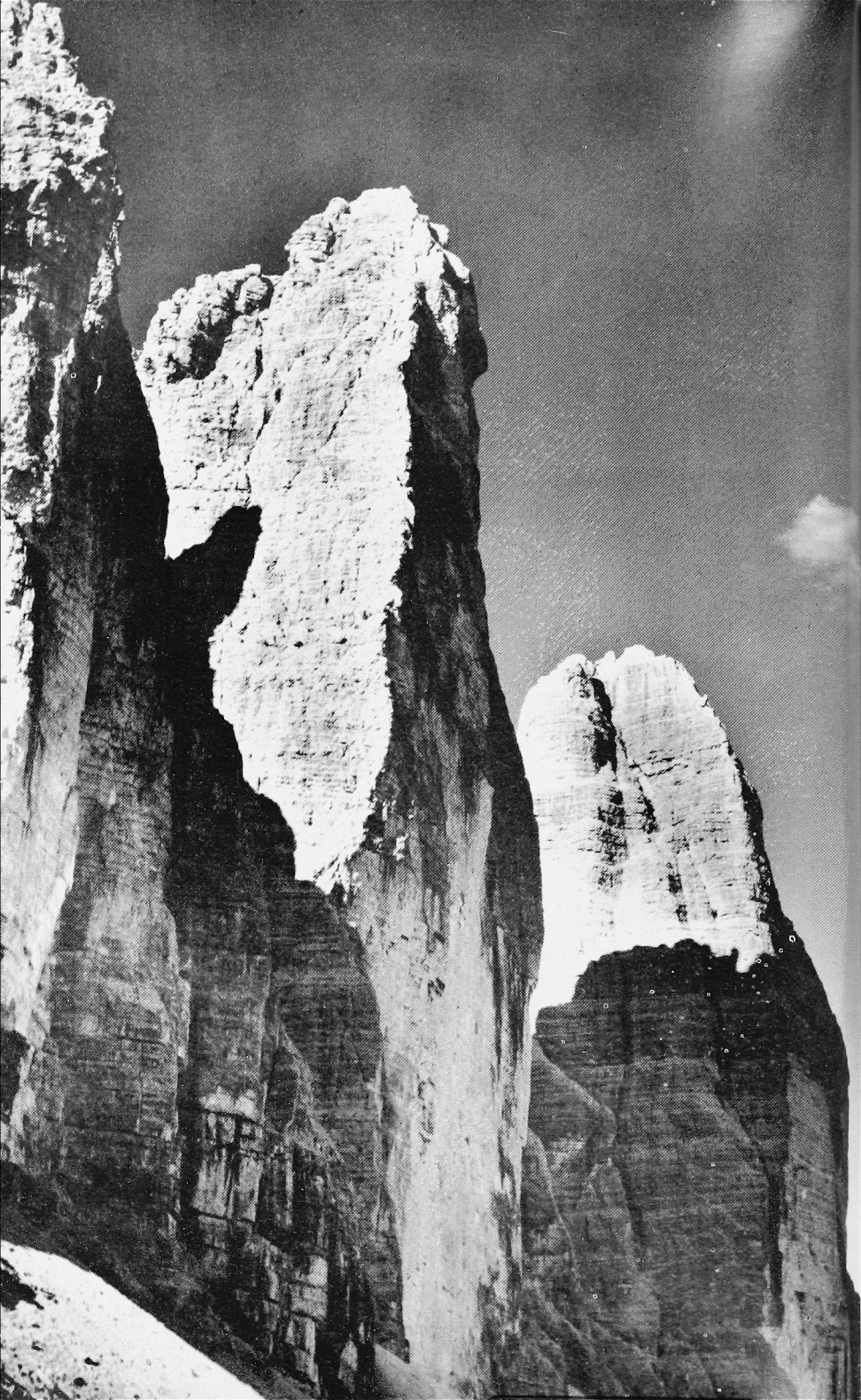
1957

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EDITED BY
A. K. RAWLINSON

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TRE CIME DI LAVAREDO, NORTH FACES

The Dibona route runs up the sunlit arête, bordering the shadowed north face of the Cima Grande in the centre

THE SKIN OF OUR TEETH

P. S. NELSON

THERE are three routes on the east face of the Zinal Rothorn but only one of them goes to the summit. This route was first climbed by André Roch in 1945 and is "the only elegant solution to this difficult problem." But it was not the guidebook that first attracted me to the climb: it was the face itself. I had seen it three times—from the north ridge, from the road to Randa and from the Riffelalp—and each time I had been more impressed. I could think of no better choice for our next expedition and I put the idea to Mike Keen.

The guidebook admitted that the crux required six pitons but we knew that we need not allow this to put us off. We were less certain about the threat of falling stones. However, it was just the morning for brave resolutions, and he soon agreed to come. We slunk into a shop to buy pegs and a hammer—neither of us had ever gone armed before. Our days of chastity were over.

On 10th August, 1956, we cooked a large breakfast and left the Rothorn hut at three. It was a promising morning and a light in the Monte Rosa hut cheered our trudge across the glacier. We shuffled along like refugees from the Big Brotherly Matterhorn. It is an easy glacier even in twilight but every so often we pulled up short. Was that a crevasse? We flashed the torch about us warily. Soon we reached the Aeschijoch and turned up the ridge which ultimately becomes the Kanzelgrat. We followed it to the top of the Aeschihorn and then descended to the Hohlicht glacier. Not even good King Wenceslas had nicer snow. The cwm had an air of polar desolation and the Weisshorn was distractingly beautiful. Much as we wished, we could not keep our eyes on the Rothorn. But we did find time to pick out the two main features of the east face: the couloir first climbed by Geoffrey Winthrop Young, and the *grande muraille à pic*.

The couloir runs diagonally to the foot of the face from below the Sphinx on the north ridge, and the *grande muraille* is a precipitous, pointed wall which dominates the upper half of the face. Altogether we had some 2,500 feet to climb—the wall itself is well over a thousand feet high. On one side it is bounded by the Kanzelgrat and on the other by a steep buttress which overlooks the couloir. Our route started up the couloir and then branched off left over steep but broken ground to the foot of the buttress. The crux of the climb was to mount the corner of the *grande muraille* and so reach the buttress which ran to the summit.

We crossed the bergschrund at five. The ice was hard and littered with rubble from the couloir. From dawn all three routes on the face are exposed to falling stones. This had been our greatest midnight dread and the state of the bergschrund only confirmed it. Snatching a period of quiet, we dashed up the couloir and withdrew unscathed. Then for the next two hours the climbing got gradually harder. At first we could move together easily but some hundreds of feet above the bergschrund the rock was trickier and much steeper than it looked. We began to take stances, and to move singly. There was an easier, more exposed passage farther left, but we preferred difficulty to danger and made more or less directly for the foot of the wall. Even this way the rock was deceptively loose, and every now and again rained little stones. But it was nothing to complain of—mere whiffs of grapeshot compared with the bombardment already enlivening the couloir.

By this time the sun was well up over the Mischabel and we shed our anoraks. Stupidly, I made a temporary home for the guidebook inside my shirt and then—for this is the stage in an expedition when one is least patient of delay—set off again without securing it. Within a matter of minutes the book had burst through the flimsy buttons and fluttered down the mountainside. It fluttered a long way, and I was ridiculously upset. What little the guidebook had to tell us (as if those who were going to attack this face had no need of advice!) we had read so often that the loss was of no real consequence. I think it was the carelessness that rankled. There was a blot on the expedition and, worse, an implication that if I could drop a

guidebook, I could drop a hammer too, or a sack, or even a second. How absurdly dispiriting the incident was.

We had our second breakfast at the foot of the *grande muraille* and enjoyed, so far as restless men can, biscuits and oranges and the warmth of the sun. But we could not give ourselves up to mere contentment. All the time we were puzzling where the "key passage" could be—the difficult bit that "exacted" half a dozen pegs. The crack running up on our left did not look like "a vertical wall of 30 metres." It wasn't a wall; it wasn't vertical; and it was more than 30 metres. Besides, it was obviously much too easy to be the right route. So we cast about, skinning our eyes for abandoned pitons. I suppose we wasted a good hour trying to find something really hard, yet not impossible, to climb. It was lunacy of course, but we could not be sure where our easy crack led, and were we to try what André Roch had rejected? There were also our silly scruples about not cheating. I began to despair. Time was getting on and all the alternatives had defeated us. We looked wretchedly at the way down and came to a desperate decision. "To Hell with our silly scruples" we said, and prepared for a doddle up the easy crack.

We had been profoundly mistaken. It was no doddle. Only twice before in the Alps have I been so frightened—once when I lost my way on the Aiguille Croux and once in an electric storm on Mt. Brulé. It wasn't because I was climbing beyond my technical limit (though I wasn't far off); nor was it because the crack was much more nearly vertical than ever it looked from below. It was the rottenness of the holds. There is nothing like rotten rock for destroying confidence and nerve. One move I made involved placing both hands on a good round bollard and pulling up. I tested it fully from below and went ahead. Half way it pulled out—not more than an inch or two I suppose—but it sent a jitter right through me. I had to paw with my feet until all my weight came on top of the hold and none outwards. That was the narrowest squeak of several.

Determined to protract the agony no longer, I made straight for the top of the crack. Whereas I had carefully broken the first half into three 40 foot pitches, the second half went in one, with the rope full stretch. The absence of belays was only partly the cause; it was more my state of mind. Danger, like

other spices, makes a horrid diet. Give me more than so much and thought dries up. I don't even think about falling off. My mind is lost in the emergency. I simply climb. And when it is over it is like the end of an exam. The result may be published on the summit but the glorious moment is now.

The crux, with all the sack-hauling and other infuriations, took us about two hours. We used pitons twice to belay, but none for climbing. This was due partly to excitement and partly to inexperience. Banging in pegs, like putting on runners, is a habit which takes some learning. Long before the iron has entered your soul there is a stage when it does not even enter your mind. Such is the purity of our English climbing, and such was the urgency of this ascent.

After the crux the climbing continued hard, though not so harrowing, for about an hour. We had to choose our route carefully and we reckoned that taking into account the steepness and general insecurity of the rock the standard was about V. By half past twelve we had established ourselves on the buttress and began to climb with pleasure again. The next three hours were as delightful as the previous three had been grisly. The rock was still steep but solid too ; the standard was sustained about IV and the situation was superb : on one hand we had the giddy *grande muraille* with occasional glimpses of Blanchet's traverse ; and on the other, Young's noisy couloir, all sliding snow and tumbling boulders.

One o'clock, two o'clock, three o'clock, rock. It was magnificent stuff. But for all the gymnastic joy we longed for the top, and I remember simply fretting over our altitude, and measuring it, now by the Schalihorn, now by the Sphinx, until at last we drew level with the Alphubel. Twice we were checked by stretches of frozen snow requiring steps throughout. Cutting them so late in the day was tiring and by the time we came to the final pitches we had lost our verve. On an unexpectedly treacherous *dièdre* a little above the crest of the *grande muraille* Mike fell—10 feet perhaps—enough, at any rate, to put us back on our mettle. We hid from one another in an icy chimney. And finally, by means of a hole, we gained the summit. It was like escaping from a submarine. Gasping with relief we surfaced at half past three.

The weather had now changed ; it was cold and we did not stay long. By five we were off the ordinary ridge and by six we were back in the hut. The last hour was a weary wallow—through mushy snow and in gathering storm. There was thunder on the Dent Blanche, thunder on the Dent d'Hérens and thunder on the Breithorn. But until we had reached the hut, nothing—not even a drop of rain—struck the Rothorn. It was, we thought, a pretty piece of symbolism, for a wetting was not the only thing we had narrowly escaped that day.





ROCK AND ROLLERS

P. H. BIVEN

“**A** LAND of milk and honey—or at any rate cream teas,” was the pretty fair description of Cornwall given to me by a friend. Over the past two years I have been able to appreciate another less saleable commodity, namely its rock, and in particular that bit called Bosigran.

Its history has been in some respects unique : recognised as a climbing ground at the end of the last century, it produced about one climb every ten years until quite recently. This was not, as one might think, owing to a lack of good climbers ; the names of Andrews, Mallory, Edwards, Kirkus and a host of others are proof enough. No, the answer lies in the very strange character of the cliff itself. There are no damp, dripping ghylls to delight the Abrahams, no Bowling Greens, no Menlovia shrubbery—indeed a tree in Cornwall is an unheard of luxury—just smooth slabs. The face, seen from Porthmoina Island looks vast, vertical, and most forbidding, making the island psychologically not the best view-point ; but on closer acquaintance the angle eases off, and the main lines of weakness become apparent. Even the ascent of these, such as Doorway and Nameless, requires a technique which is entirely foreign to the Welsh-trained climbers. I can recall fighting up Doorway for the first time with a friend, and later finding, much to our chagrin, that it was just V. Diff. ! Indignantly we cursed the guide book, before realising that our technique was at fault and not the grading.

Technique is a difficult thing on which to generalise, but broadly speaking Bosigran favours the face climber with strong fingers rather than the man who can muscle up by brute force. As a rule the holds tend to be incuts on the faces (although some are mere ripples), and finger jams in the numerous shallow cracks—I say shallow with emphasis, as Bosigran has not been weathered so much as, for instance, Chair Ladder, where the

fury of the Atlantic has worked the granite into fantastic flutings and weird gargoyle-like shapes.

In passing one might mention the strange and by no means well-known fact that no bird other than the raven has ever nested on Bosigran. Evil omen they may be, but climbers have no cause to regret them, as they serve to keep the cliff clean, which in my opinion is most desirable, as I for one have never found the guano lubrication on Chair Ladder pleasant or indeed helpful.

It is perhaps inevitable that the subject of pitons should crop up, and on this one is ever likely to tread on someone's toes. Ethics of the question aside, the fact remains that pitons *are* used very extensively on Bosigran. In my opinion they are justified, as there are very few natural belays, and runners are almost non-existent. The conventional vertical type of piton is practically useless, as most of the vertical cracks are in corners ; of course they *can* be used, but it is much more satisfying to use the right peg for the right crack. Our own experience is that short channels about three inches long, with a selection of leaf pitons, will usually provide most of the answers. An increasing number of artificial routes has been done in recent months—a fact disturbing to some I suppose, but of course they needn't do them. The initiators of this phase of development were the Royal Marine Commandos, Goodier and Deacon, whose excellent Raven Wall is now the criterion of artificial routes on the cliff. Both members of the club, they have made a great contribution to Cornish climbing, not only on Bosigran, but on many other Cornish cliffs.

In fact the development of Bosigran as a first class crag has been truly remarkable when one considers that two years ago there were about half a dozen routes of character. Compare this with today, when there are at least twenty distinct routes. However, I doubt whether this would have been possible had the weather been as consistently bad as it has been elsewhere. Oft heard, and quite true, is the saying that Cornwall makes its own weather, and it is usually quite a lenient concoction for England. I can remember quite recently a glorious day spent on Bosigran, the last of our holiday, and returning that evening through a Camborne almost inundated by a thunderstorm.

During the wonderful summer of 1955 we had many unforgettable days on the crag. Perhaps the most exciting of all was when my brother Barrie, Trevor Peck and I climbed the central belt of slabs to produce our Suicide Wall. That day was quite tropical, and clothing consisted mainly of pitons and 200 feet of rope.

This sort of climate makes for almost tropical vegetation in sheltered spots. There is one patch of wild honeysuckle I know on Bosigran, which never fails to thrill me each time a gentle breeze betrays its hiding place, and the gorse on the summit can be quite intoxicating in season, as well as being very beautiful, although always rather anti-social.

Where else in England can one abandon a climb for the delights of the briny, only a few hundred feet from the crag? And where else can one be so easily caught by the tide? Finally where else can one enjoy oneself quite so much? It's a long long way, but Tir-Nan-Og is only a little further.

EMINENT VICTORIANS IN THE OBERLAND

ARNOLD LUNN

MATTHEW ARNOLD

IT was a September morning in 1849 and as the carriage turned a corner near Berne the morning lights on the Eiger, Mönch and Jungfrau picked out the patterns of rock and ice which the young poet loved not only for their intrinsic beauty but also because this beloved trinity of peaks had been the background to romance in 1848. He remembered the rose of evening fading from the Jungfrau and the quiet lake and the splash of oars . . . and Marguerite, the Marguerite who was waiting for him at Thun.

It was a tradition in the Arnold family that Marguerite was a figment of the poet's imagination, and my brother, the late Hugh Kingsmill, was roundly abused by critics for insisting that the Marguerite cycle of poems were autobiographical. The years passed, and then a letter was published from Arnold to Clough in which he remarked that he was going to Thun "for the sake of the blue eyes of one of its inmates . . . we know beforehand all they (women) can teach us, yet we are obliged to learn it directly from them." More recently Arnold's romance has been chosen as the theme of a novel *The Buried Self* by Isobel Macdonald (Peter Davies). Few novels in recent years have given me so much pleasure. Here is her description of Arnold's entry into Thun:

"The towers of church and castle again came into view among the trees; the diligence drove through the gates of the little walled town, through the Rathausplatz with its deep-shadowed arcades, up the narrow Hauptgasse, and across the bridge to the Freienhof. He was conscious of deep pleasure and excitement as he saw again the tall houses with their overhanging roofs that nearly met over

the narrow street, and heard the rattle of the wheels on the cobbles. Even apart from Marguerite, Thun was an enchanting town. The river still flowed swiftly under its wide bridge towards the weir; the streets rose steeply towards the church on the hill. There was a market going on near the Freienhof, the stalls were piled high with apples, pears, and bloomy grapes, with cheeses and embroidered peasant waistcoats and bright striped aprons."

Thun is still lovely, but you have only to study the old coloured prints of Lory and other masters of this delicate art to realise how much lovelier Thun must have been before the vandals of the nineteenth century had worked their will on that legacy of beauty, which they had inherited from more gracious centuries. The Hotel Bellevue in which Arnold met his Marguerite, though modernised, is in all essentials the same. "The presence of Marguerite," as Miss Macdonald says, "and her voice buoyant as the morning and as the morning clear, still seem to haunt the stairs and passages."

It is difficult to understand how anybody could have failed to be impressed by the clear evidence of personal experience in the Marguerite cycle of poems. There is so much of the authentic Arnold in those poems, the moral earnestness, sometimes sinking to mere priggishness, which was part of that Arnold tradition created by his father, the great Dr. Arnold of Rugby, the tragedy of renunciation dictated by the mental climate of his home and of his age.

In the void air, towards thee,
My stretched arms are cast;
But a sea rolls between us—
Our different past!

To the lips, ah! of others
Those lips have been presst,
And others, ere I was,
Were strain'd to that breast.

Some of the loveliest lines that Arnold ever wrote are to be found in this cycle of love poems, and four of the silliest. After the opening stanzas of the first poems in this cycle, stanzas

which are moving in their simplicity, Arnold sinks to the bathos of

Again I spring to make my choice;
 Again in tones of ire
 I hear a God's tremendous voice:
 Be counsell'd and retire.

"A lover," remarked Kingsmill, "who advances with one eye on his line of retreat is likely to have the retreat he contemplates imposed on him before he feels quite ready for it. This was Arnold's experience." Or may have been, for we are in the region of conjecture, not of ascertained fact; but the final poem of the cycle "The Terrace at Berne" compels the conclusion that the severance was complete.

Two years after parting from Marguerite Arnold wrote *Obermann*. De Senancour, the author of *Obermann*, writes with a certain charm about mountain scenery, but as a philosopher he is only a dehydrated Rousseau, and it is not easy to understand Arnold's enthusiasm for him except on the hypothesis that he found in De Senancour's collection of letters written from Switzerland under the title *Obermann* some echo of his now ineffective passion for Marguerite. The sudden crescendo of emotional feeling in the exquisite stanzas beginning

How often where the slopes are green
 may be due, as Kingsmill suggests, to the memory of Marguerite penetrating "the vision of the incomparable lake along whose shores Arnold had first passed to meet her." And surely it was of Marguerite and not of Obermann that Arnold was thinking in the lines

I go, fate drives me; but I leave
 Half of my life with thee.

JOHN RUSKIN

Ruskin described Chamonix and Venice as his "two bournes on earth," but he was a fairly frequent visitor to the Oberland. The first volume of his *Diaries* has just been published, and has been edited with skill and scholarship by Dr. Joan Evans and John Howard Whitehouse. Nobody loses prestige in scholarly circles by mistakes about the Alps, and one is therefore not surprised after the Editors' announcement that "foreign names have been given in a normal form" to find Ruskin's spelling of "Lauterbrunn" retained; but it *is* surprising that Ruskin,

who was a classical scholar, should have twice written of "Interlakken," for he could scarcely have failed to be aware of the Latin derivation. Ruskin's interest in geology was lively but ill-informed. He cites the Jungfrau as an example of "the beautiful forms the Alpine limestone assumes," though the crest of the Jungfrau is igneous rock, and argues that the summit of the Wetterhorn is granite, though in point of fact it is limestone. It is only the crest of the highest peak of the Wetterhörner, the Mittelhorn, which is granite. In justice to Ruskin it must be added that he was only sixteen at the time, but of his great promise as a word-painter of scenery there is already abundant evidence in these diaries, for instance, the vignette of what an earlier traveller, John Hogg (whose spelling of place names was more accurate than Ruskin's) described as "that *bijou*—the small, but most enchanting of lakes—the Lake of Lungern." Ruskin writes with no less enthusiasm of "the small lake of Lungren, blue or green, or of a very beautiful between colour shadowed by the steep hills which hang over it, but with a verdant shallow, an emerald reflection, set like a transparent jewel among raised work of mountains chased with forest."

Ruskin was no mountaineer, but there are mountain passages in his works, notably in *Praeterita*, which I read and re-read during the long years of the war exile. There has in recent years been a great revival of interest in Ruskin, mainly appreciative but partly hostile. His failure to consummate his marriage shocks critics enlightened enough to be tolerant of every variety of sexual vagary, but who feel that impotence is the sin crying to Bloomsbury for vengeance.

TENNYSON

Tennyson, like Ruskin, is emerging from the trough to which the Edwardian iconoclasts consigned the eminent Victorians, particularly those who like Tennyson were articulate champions of marital fidelity. Among the most active of the denigrators were the critics who were loudest in proclaiming the great doctrine of the dissociation of art and morals, and this was inconsistent for, if our aesthetic judgments should be uninfluenced by the loose morals of an artist, they should surely be equally unaffected by the depressing fact that the artist's morals are

unimpeachable. Naturally if one belongs to what may be called the "Hunt the Sleeper" school of literary criticism, it is disappointing to discover that a poet was so unenterprising as only to sleep with his own wife, but those of us who are not wholly persuaded that poetry is necessarily monotonous because the poet was monogamous, and equally unconvinced that the road to Parnassus is paved with bad intentions, will recognise in Tennyson a superb artist. Admittedly he was also capable of supreme bathos, but even in the days when I was reacting violently against Victorianism I loved the wonderful lines in *The Lotus-eaters*, which were inspired by the valley of Lauterbrunnen, and was prepared to argue that Tennyson had written the most perfect description in all literature of a mountain sunrise:

How faintly flushed, how phantom fair
Was Monte Rosa, hanging there,
A thousand shadowy-pencill'd valleys
And snowy dells in a golden air.

Tennyson visited Mürren in 1869, in company with Frederick Locker-Lampson, who writes:—

"Mürren—We were looking towards the higher Alps, and Tennyson said that perhaps this earth and all that is on it—storms, mountains, cataracts, the sun and the skies—are the Almighty; in fact, such is our petty nature, we cannot see Him, but we see His shadow, as it were a distorted shadow."

"At Wengern Alps," writes Locker-Lampson, "we came across a man who blew a loud blast through a cow's horn, which produced a varied and prodigious blast. Tennyson said: 'You'll have to pay half a franc for that noise. The man subsists on the ghost of a sound'." At Grindelwald Tennyson bought two large carved bears, for which he paid a hundred francs. "The glacier nearest the hotel is much discoloured by the debris from the mountain. Tennyson's farewell words were: 'That glacier is a filthy thing; it looks as if a thousand London seasons had passed over it'."

SOME OTHER VICTORIANS

Frederic Harrison claimed to have discovered Mürren:—

"We claimed to have founded Mürren as a station. The double col from Kandersteg to Lauterbrunnen is a long

day; and in 1853-4 at Mürren there was neither inn, nor hut, nor so much as a glass of milk to be got in the two or three poor chalets there. At Lauterbrunnen, Interlaken, and Thun we filled the hotel registers with vehement praise of the views and air or Mürren and rebukes to the indolence of tourists who neglected so magnificent a station. The next year if I remember, I found a small Gasthaus installed in the noble plateau."

Harrison was a well known writer in his day, but probably the only book of his which is still read is *My Alpine Jubilee*. He was a disciple of Comte, who hoped that Catholic ritual could be retained for the worship of humanity. But Comtism never took on, and a cynic who was taken to a Comtist service glanced round the scanty congregation and murmured "three persons and no God."

Few mountain resorts attracted more eminent Victorians than Mürren. "I would not," wrote John Addington Symonds, the distinguished historian of the Renaissance, "take Rome, Florence or Naples in exchange for the chalets of Mürren." It was at Mürren that Symonds met his future wife, Catherine North. They became engaged at Pontresina and exchanged engagement rings on the Piz Languard.

Edward Benson, whose first novel *Dodo* made him famous, visited Mürren with his father, the Archbishop of Canterbury. They climbed the Schilthorn.

"We passed through Mürren on the way down and there saw English people playing lawn-tennis on one of the hotel courts and never shall I forget my father's upraised eyebrows and mouth of scorn as he said, 'Fancy playing lawn-tennis in sight of the Jungfrau'."

I have confined myself to the eminent Victorians who were not mountaineers, for though Matthew Arnold joined the Alpine Club, his qualification was only the Théodule, which remained his one glacier expedition. Of all the eminent Victorians none loved the Oberland more or wrote about the Oberland peaks with greater feeling than Leslie Stephen, the first editor of the *Dictionary of National Biography*, and he not only loved the Oberland but made the first ascent of many of the Oberland peaks.

STAKHANOVITES

R. M. VINEY*

“**H**OW many hours is it from the road to the hut?” asked Hans. A very proper question to ask, but when the hut to which we were proceeding was Helyg it showed that the speaker was indeed being introduced to Welsh climbing for the first time. Hans, however, adjusted quickly and did not seem surprised when told that it was 30 seconds and downhill at that. Arriving at the hut by a little moonlight his remarkable eye or memory was shown by his recognising it as “the one in the Everest book.” I was more than a little frightened by Hans’ reputation and had imported Hamish into the party to protect me from too intimate contact with one whom I suspected of being a pure-bred tiger. My worst fears were confirmed when on waking at 8 a.m. we found that Hans had already climbed the boulder four times and also the face of Gallt Yr Ogof by some unspecified route. The rocks apparently had been cold owing to the ice.

The day was perfect, and there seemed to be quite a lot of snow about, so we decided to go for the Trinity Gullies on Snowdon. We collected Denise from Glen Dena, and dropped the car at Pen-y-Pass and walked up the Miners’ Track. Hamish, who is the only one of my friends who is a pure-bred tiger without any extraneous rabbit strains in him, clearly sensed a blood brother, and I heard him sounding out possibilities for the summer in Chamonix.

“What are your plans, Hans?”

“Oh, I have very ambitious ones this year—I do not like to talk of them—it is like boasting.”

“Have you thought of the Walker?”

“Yes, but that is not one of the more serious expeditions I hope for.”

* This article is printed by kind permission of Colonel Viney from a rough pencil manuscript found among Dick Viney’s papers. It refers to a week-end in 1955. The people named are Hans Gsellmann, Hamish Nicol, Derek Bull and Miss Denise Morin.—*Editor*

After the clash of climbers the discussion turned to the beauties of the day and the hills, over which Hans' enthusiasm and love were most touching.

At the end of the Miners' Track we went straight up the miscellaneous slope above. Hans went straight and beautifully up every bit of steep rock he could find. Denise had the sense to follow him and they were soon at the top. By an easier route I joined them. Hamish had to cut steps for some time and Derek managed to get himself into a precarious position where he could neither go up nor down nor smoke a cigarette : after a quick rope from above we topped the hill and saw that there were three or four other parties arriving already at the foot of Central Trinity Gully. However, before any decisions were called for we heard a whistle from Glaslyn. An individual climber had fallen off the slope below and lay at the foot with a broken ankle and a bloody face. We all went down except for a party already at the foot of the gully. Since the spot was on snow and in the shade I gallantly volunteered to run down for the necessary. A fitter man than I came as well and got down at least five minutes before I did. The rest of the day was spent in the usual business of stretcher carrying, enlivened on this occasion by seeing Hamish in action as a doctor for the first time. Since there were ample stretcher bearers Hans and Denise departed after the first carry and came back over Crib Goch so that Hans could get some idea of what Wales looked like.

That evening we listened fascinated to his enthusiastic descriptions of Austrian climbing, being particularly impressed with his highly logical reasons for doing the Peuteret ridge solo and his description of a solo descent of the Face Nord of the Cima Grande. It was clear from what we had seen that Hans was a superb rock man, so on Sunday we departed in hot sun for the Three Cliffs.

I was manoeuvred out of attacking a VD and detailed to climb Slape with Hamish and Denise, while Hans and Derek did Brant. While we were changing footwear and doing all the other things required of Welsh climbers, Hans, spying a piton 20 feet up, tied on a rope and leapt at the cliff somewhere between Brant and its direct start.

"No, not there" shouted Hamish "10 feet to your right."

“ What does it matter ? There are hundreds of routes here.”

So up he went without any parochial nonsense about routes. He made full use of the piton, found it hard, but up he went. Hamish mounted the first pitch of Brant. As expected after four months without a climb I completely failed to follow. To my relief Derek, muttering darkly about blood donations and rescue parties, failed to leave the ground in Hans' tracks. So Hans, Hamish and Denise wandered up a combination of Brant and Sape while Derek and I failed on a series of climbs of steadily decreasing difficulty.

We took time off to watch Hans and Hamish on Spectre. Hans went up the second (or is it the third ?) pitch in about four minutes of climbing as beautifully graceful as I have ever seen. Vigorous shouting brought him to a halt before he went any farther. Hamish followed ; the rope was not pulled in ; from the sunlit slab above came cries of joy, snatches of song and wild Austrian yodels.

“ Pull the rope in.”

“ Yodehay, yodehay, yodehay oh !”

Hamish got up all right, and they also climbed Phantom Rib. Hans (who had also not climbed for four months) got tired towards the end. He realised that Hamish was a full-time mountaineer.

“ Hamish ” he opined “ you are a Stakhanovite climber.”

A LOOK AT LAKELAND

A. J. J. MOULAM

THE jubilee year of the Fell and Rock Climbing Club is a good time to look at rock-climbing development in the Lake District. Although members of our club tend to be too insular (or should one say, peninsular?), probably more of us make forays into the territory of our friends than vice versa. It may be only because Welsh huts make but poor provision for women climbers, whereas Lakeland gives them equal rights; but a more valid reason is the greater accessibility from London of Wales. However, Langdale will almost certainly be the choice if a visit is to be made. From the South it is more easily reached than any of the other centres, apart from the attractions of the Dungeon Ghyll Old Hotel and the great variety of available routes. Indeed since the beginning of World War II the number has been more than doubled, and this in an area already popular. "Climbs Old and New" in the 1950 issue of the *Fell and Rock Climbing Club Journal* gives the clue to this. To Dolphin's initials, A.R.D., appear credited many of the climbs described, which were part of his work towards revising the Great Langdale guidebook. There is no doubt about the most important: Kipling Groove (so called because it is Rudyard), which was to become a yardstick, in the same way as did Peter Harding's Spectre in Llanberis.

Arthur Dolphin almost always looked cold, and was certainly not the type of man whom the great non-climbing public would imagine a mountaineer. Nevertheless he held his position at the very head of Lakeland climbers until he was killed in the Alps in 1953. That death was doubly tragic, as he had only recently become engaged to be married and it came in his moment of triumph, when he had at last conquered the severe altitude sickness which had spoiled his Alpine record. He was descending unroped the easy ordinary route from the Dent du Géant, after completing the first British ascent of its South Face, when he fell. Any survey of Cumbrian rock climbing

is bound to be, to some extent, a memorial to Arthur, for he was supreme on those beloved crags. By the time he was fourteen he had led most of the routes on Dow Crag, and in the 1940's was making new routes in Wasdale and Langdale, as well as on the gritstone outcrops in and near his native Yorkshire. Peter Harding and I first met him at Almscliffe Crag, near Otley, where he showed us round despite a bombardment with monster hailstones. He was unforgettable: tall, pale and quiet, but magnificently competent on the climbs here, his home ground. This ability we saw many other times when our paths crossed, and his technique and tenacity seemed always to increase. His activities ranged over most of the Lake District. Early routes, like those on Gable, owed much to his gritstone training; Demon Wall, for instance, followed a non-natural line for its own sake. But over the years the quality of his discoveries developed, to produce magnificent routes like Hell's Groove and Pegasus on Scafell East Buttress, a fine contribution to the legacy of this great climber. Anyway, let us leave Arthur to look at some more climbs. Inevitably his name will occur again and again.

The Lake District is not so conveniently split into parallel valleys, sharply defined areas, as North Wales; the valleys radiate and necessitate a more circumscribed approach on any one short visit, but the well-known traditional cliffs like Scafell, Gable, and Pillar are well served by one famous centre, Wasdale Head. There has been relatively little development here recently, apart from things mentioned above, and that surely reflects on the very high standards reached by the pioneers. Scafell Central Buttress must always be well regarded, and when it was first done it became the acme of rock climbing perfection. The bold approach to steepness foreshadowed that current and essential to the new hard routes in all areas, and the then almost immoral use of slings and stirrups was the first lapse in the long series that brought about the present acceptance of artificial aid.

Not far from here Esk Buttress rears its lovely pink face, and though its possibilities were seen long ago by A. B. Hargreaves—he even offered to pay for a block for the old Scafell guide—it was neglected and left with only two routes, fine though they both are, for many years. Dolphin and Birkett, the latter another outstanding climber active at the highest standard for

many years, soon remedied that. The central break was climbed, an obvious opening, and other routes flanked and mingled with the old ones in sufficient number to justify many consecutive visits to this crag which is, to my mind, one of the most attractive in the area under consideration.

Most Lakeland cliffs are, by Welsh standards at least, far from roads. That may explain why the few that are very easily accessible are now even more covered with routes, if that is possible, than are the Three Cliffs. Shepherd's Crag, White Gill and Langdale's Raven Crag, for instance, hold complicated networks of routes and variations to trap the unwary climber. Gimmer started this trend with its alphabetical-grammatical West Face ; there the Diphthong is the most natural of the many combinations that may be followed. There is then a tendency for every minute variation to be named and listed, indicating the difficulty of finding good new climbs on well scratched and polished rock. Climbers with more open minds have forsaken this mostly fruitless search and gone to investigate the outlying cliffs. They are not immediately attractive to the man, or woman, brought up to expect perfect rock on the clean playgrounds of yesterday, but we Welsh harpists find them surprisingly to our taste. There is an air of "home" about the vegetation, even if it does not stay so securely in place as the grass of, shall we say, Clogwyn Du'r Arddu.

Whatever one's reason these outlyers are well worth a visit. It is particularly apposite to consider Borrowdale first, as even if we do look upon its crags as outlying, it is very near the heart of Lakeland climbing. A point of difference can be noted here from the Llanberis Pass, which might be compared to this valley. In Wales the increase in the number of routes stemmed from the publication of Peter Harding's guidebook and the completion of Ynys Ettws, whereas the Salving House and the guide came after the majority of the Borrowdale climbs had been found, and so far little of importance has been added. The steps forward can be seen when we realise that the Borrowdale guide used to be issued, almost as an afterthought, with the old Great Gable guide. The rocks were left but little explored by Ernest Wood-Johnson as he was chivvied into print by his, no doubt impatient, editor. Even then there were signs that something could be made of the place, and the man to whom

the ripest fruits of exploration were to go had already appeared on the scene. As early as 1921 Bentley Beetham had made a new climb, Woden's Face, in company with C. D. Frankland. A glance at the latest guide's list of first ascents shows the great and continuous contribution that he has made to climbing in this lovely valley. Beetham's methods are unorthodox. His concept of "gardening" is a much more extensive one than that held by most climbers, and involves a lot of pruning. Trees are ruthlessly sawn down and carpets of heather stripped away to leave white and almost immodestly naked rock. Often this is justified, but in the guide descriptions no indication is offered as to the relative natural merits of the climbs thus unearthed. A good example is Raven Crag in Combe Gill. The buttress right of Raven Crag gully was once so overgrown as to be overlooked, but now separate routes may be followed over once hidden rock to a finish, attainable from them all, on the fine little summit bluff. In other places, as on Shepherd's Crag, the saw has pruned back trees large and small which will die, or have died, and be left useless for belay and dangerous for hold. Luckily the rock is here angular and alternative facilities are not hard to come by. A neater comparison could be made between the Tremadoc ranges and the cliffs in the main Borrowdale valley, as on both trees hide most of the rock, and enthusiasm from the sterner mountaineers is hard to raise, even in the worst of weather. They, and no one will blame them, prefer to battle with the elements at higher altitudes, even if easier climbs are dictated by the conditions. Nevertheless, Borrowdale fills a long felt want in providing for short days, and many of its problems are excellent ones. I would recommend Arduus and Eve to anyone wishing to sample this varied fare.

Buttermere was another area left late by the tiger. Fred Pigott had made his climb up the West Buttress of Eagle Crag in 1925, then Wilfrid Noyce and Sid Cross put up other routes on the edge ; but the real challenge of Birkness Combe was not taken up until Peascod attempted and completed Eagle Front. The first ascent here must have been a much more serious undertaking than later ones as the rock has been gradually cleaned by subsequent passages. The climb is one of the great ones, even if on a "minor" crag. The atmosphere is rather

Welsh and the stances and belays are not often really good ; indeed they leave nothing to be desired.

Birkness Combe has been well served by Peascod and his friends who made the less serious routes on the Grey Crag, attractive climbs accomplished mainly since 1940. There is contrast between these clean rock craglets, with many accommodating holds, and the sternness of Eagle Crag's northern aspect and the insecurity of its sloping ledges. Both are far more worth visiting than much of the other ground described in the " Buttermere and Newlands " guidebook. It is surprising that this area was left so long for exploration. Many of the qualities in old-fashioned demand are there ; climbs lead to summits, and beautiful views and deep wet gullies abound. One of the latter, Y gully, fell (almost literally !) to an onslaught in 1941, and thereby Bill Peascod showed that it was not only the clean steep face that lures modern mountaineers ; more important is the unknown.

Newlands, pretty well neglected by the cragsman until 1948, now has many fine short routes on little cliffs. Things here are not so conveniently arranged as in the Buttermere area ; any rock climb on Eel Crag is followed by a more or less unpleasant " mountaineering " scramble up heather and rocky ledges. This means that a more liberal approach is necessary than is within the capacity of many pure rock-gymnasts. Their enjoyment will be marred by this essential epilogue, so different from the light-hearted main theme of these minor crags.

The last area, not so concisely defined, in which we are interested is the Eastern Fells. Climbs on the wrong side of Helvellyn, about Thirlmere, and in far Easedale, must be considered, each lot in its own way remarkable. Castle Crag of Triermain has been the stage for much development. Once Zig-Zag and Overhanging Bastion were the only two routes recorded on the imposing main face, but now many more have been added, reaching high into the extremes of standard. Not content with this manifold increase of useful footage the state of the South Crag has been re-assessed and one or two gaps filled. So much attention can have left little significant undone. Indeed the Triermain Eliminate, done by Joe Brown and Don Whillans in 1953, already shares all its stances with an earlier climb. It also has the distinction of being, I think, the first

climb to flaunt the "exceptionally severe" category in the red covered journal of our northern friends.

Only just across the valley, on Raven Crag, the tigers have been playing. They have made climbs reputedly as hard as any in Lakeland; and it is not so long ago that this cliff was being pointed out as both unclimbed and unclimbable. Two of the routes so far use pitons, particularly Communist Convert by Dolphin and Hopkins.

One of the most surprising of modern Lakeland climbs was the ascent of Deer Bield Buttress. Many good climbers had attempted this "last great problem" in Far Easedale, with and without artificial aid, but none had had much success. The route was finally completed by Dolphin, who used no pitons. Since then other climbs have been forced up the buttresses flanking the great detached flake, two using aids, one even requiring the climber to lasso a previously inserted peg.

At the head of Dovedale, cutting back into the Helvellyn range, Dove Crag, only scaled by Inaccessible Gully, presented its bold challenge for J. W. Haggas' Hangover, a fine route. Dovedale Grooves was added by Brown and Whillans up another part of the face, and there are yet further possibilities here for the moderns; but on this side of Helvellyn Deepdale contains by far the most important of latter-day developments. The routes, made largely by a group of climbers not really active elsewhere, are of the middle standards within the capabilities of many, and hence they are more useful than much of the current climbing. Insularity of the main pioneers has not made the Hutapple Crag routes, for instance, any different from ones on Pillar, Scafell or Gable.

But we must be more precise. Hutapple Crag has a steep, and mainly black, lower rampart. Above this ledges tend to break it up but are separated by still steep walls. Thus difficulties are to be expected and found in the early parts of the various climbs, where the situations are often excellent. One of the routes, "A" Climb, starts off with tricky route finding up a facet of the cliff's first defences which lands one on a sloping ledge beneath an impregnable looking roof, nor is there a belay. Luckily a groove through the overhang proves much easier than it looks, and the rest can be accomplished with much less nervous tension. The walk, long by Welsh criteria,

is well worthwhile, as the many routes to choose from are of high quality and varied standard.

In the compass of a short article it is only possible briefly to mention the work of discovery which has been and is being carried out in the Lake District. A final glance round shows that there is far more not mentioned. Birkett, Drasdo, Greenwood, Ross are some of the names appearing against recent first ascents. They are now coming to the final stage, where the Lakeland crags will be so covered in routes that there will be little point in describing the endless variations diverging by very few feet from long recognised and worthy ways. As in Wales a last revision of guidebooks might well be made in the next five or ten years, and leave the rest, if any, sensibly virgin "for posterity."

SIX DAYS IN THE DOLOMITES

C. M. DIXON

DISHEARTENED by bad weather in the Alps last season, Eric Herbert and I left Chamonix, taking with us two Yorkshire Mountaineering Club members, Alan Austin and Brian Evans, and drove across Italy, camping one sultry night by Lake Garda, and motoring on to the heart of the Dolomite country next morning. After an afternoon in Bolzano, we reached the top of the Sella Pass just after sunset, with scarcely enough light to find a camp-site and pitch tents.

The next day dawned fair, but we did not wake in time to see it, and only the fierce heat of the sun on the tent drove us out, still rather weary, for our first real view of the Dolomite peaks around us. Yellowish-brown buttresses and towers stood out against the blue sky, rising from blanched scree above the deep green valleys. Above us the Cinque Dita beckoned, and we set out at 11 a.m. to traverse the peak to introduce ourselves to Dolomite climbing.

The ascent by the S.W. arête is grade 4 (about Very Difficult) and the guide-book allows $5\frac{1}{2}$ hours to the summit. We found the rock steep, but amply supplied with holds, even if most of the holds needed careful testing before use. We were surprised to find the route going up small overhangs quite easily because the holds were there, and even when a hold was missing, somebody had usually left a piton. We were more surprised when we reached the summit in only 3 hours.

The way down was only grade 3, and should take $3\frac{1}{2}$ hours, so we spent a pleasant hour or two enjoying sun and views. When we did descend, it took us over five hours, and we learnt that even easy Dolomite descents should not be taken too lightly. From the summit we had to descend via the "Forefinger" and the "Thumb" to a col and an easy track home. At the Forefinger we reached a little icy couloir, which one should normally rope down. Two climbers were coming up it, painfully slowly (we still wonder what became of them), so we chose another way

round which traversed the east and north faces of the Forefinger. The first 200 feet of the detour were easy, but the traverse across the north wall was extremely steep and exposed and loose into the bargain. Eric led a long hard pitch across the wall, and belayed close to a nasty corner. I traversed across to Eric and continued round the corner ; like some gritstone problems, it was "all right once you've done it," and had the addition of generous Dolomite exposure. We seemed to have been only a few moments on the variation, but nearly two hours had passed. Then came the glory of the sunset on the peaks around, and we raced down the rest of the route in failing light. Darkness overtook us with a few hundred feet of descent still to do, and lightning was flashing away to the west. We were thankful when we reached the col and stumbled back down the scree to our tents.

The storm that we had seen came up during the night, and heavy rain and hail made us spend most of the next day at the Sella Inn, trying to translate route-descriptions from a borrowed C.A.I. guide-book. Pooling our knowledge of French and Latin, and with much guesswork, we managed a few translations of doubtful value, and eventually fell to studying the diagrams and copying those which interested us. We were attracted, and repelled, by the description of the west face of the Third Sella Tower, one of the longest and hardest routes on the Sella Towers. The route forced its way up a steep face bristling with overhangs, skirting some by exposed traverses, taking others direct. We could catch glimpses of the face from the Inn, through rain and mist, and traced out the route on it.

Next morning we headed for the west face. The day was fine, but the face lay in chill shade when we started. Pitch followed pitch as we climbed steadily up the immense face, skirting overhangs, taking a few small ones direct, becoming more and more conscious of the distance between us and the screes below and more and more apprehensive of a huge line of overhangs that barred the way far above. The sun moved round on to the face, warming and cheering us ; the hours ticked by, and at last we came to the overhangs. They came out like a series of inverted steps, each step bigger and fiercer than the one below it. It was impossible to climb these direct. I led up a steepening slabby wall with some thin moves which by-passed the first

overhang on the right, and a line of holds then led me out leftwards across a steep wall, with an unclimbable roof above, undercut by another overhang below. Halfway across I found a niche and a belay, brought Eric up and belayed him as he continued the leftward line across the overhangs, attacked a weakness in them and led through to easier ground.

We soon reached a large terrace crossing the face at about mid-height, above which a vertical wall led to another set of overhangs, not as large as the last ones, but less broken and altogether more formidable. Two or three rusty pegs showed where the route ran. Eric tackled the pitch and found that the "vertical" wall overhung a little, making progress very tiring. He reached the roof under the overhang, clipped a sling into one of the pegs and, standing in the sling, made for the next peg. A struggle, another sling, a further peg and the overhang was done. Above rose a difficult wall which made a hard finish for Eric after the strenuous overhang, but he led on out of sight, the rope ran out, and it was my turn. Above us the face still rose steeply. As we climbed higher and higher the tension increased; we felt more and more the sense of our height and the steepness of the cliff below us, and while the climbing was always well within our powers, the strain of moving on the shattered rock was beginning to tell.

Then came an easier pitch where the cliff relented for a space before it reared itself up in a last defiant bulge below the summit. I led out on to a steep corner, climbed a shattered pinnacle where I fixed a runner, and came face to face with the overhang proper. A large overhanging flake was stuck against the wall with no visible means of support, and from its top a way led left to an undercut groove leading up to another steep but short overhang. I swarmed up the edge of the flake, and clipping into a big rusty peg which appeared in the crack behind the flake, traversed into the groove. The view down it was empty and disconcerting. When I turned to the next bit of overhang in the groove, I found that my rope would hardly run, owing to excessive friction on the rough rock and through the runners. I should have to belay where I was.

There were no handy anchors, so I tried a peg in a crack. No use. I tried another peg in the crack, another crack, another peg in the other crack. At last a small peg found a home. It

went in about two inches and stopped with a dead note. I then brought out my trumpp, a tiny "Cassin" peg, pathetically small, but in it went and stayed put, and I tied on to the two pegs. Up came Eric, who clambered over me and attacked the overhang. I was impressed by his vigour and speed as he led on over the first bulge into a niche, where I lost sight of him, then saw his boots going up the next bulge and out of sight to easier ground. I followed and we moved quickly over grey slabs to the summit of the tower.

Already the sun was sinking, and we hurried down the *voie normale*, following broken walls, terraces and a gully to reach the screes as it grew dark. A bright moon rose, and we walked quickly back to the Sella Pass. As we followed the road down to our camp the moonlight moved on to the west faces of the Sella Towers, picking out each detail of our route in delicate mysterious light.

The next day we moved on eastwards, past Cortina—more shopping and expensive meals—to the Tre Cime di Lavaredo. By evening we reached to Refugio Lavaredo, something between an hotel and a club hut, and made this our centre. Next morning we awoke to find the screes rising from the doorstep and the Tre Cime towering above us. Straight above, almost, rose the Spigolo Giallo, a tremendous vertical rib of rich yellow rock. Alan and Brian headed for that, while Eric and I, repelled a little by its steepness, sought other things. A short walk took us round to the north faces of the towers, and we gazed up at the awesome north face of the Cima Grande. The view was enough; Eric muttered something about "next year," and we turned to our intended climb, the Via Dibona, which followed the north-east arête of the Cima Grande, flanking the north face all the way. The climb must be about 1,500 feet long, grade 4, starting fairly steeply and easing towards the summit; the situation is magnificent and the rock fairly sound (or were we merely getting used to Dolomite standards of soundness?). A party were about 600 feet above us when we started, and though we gradually gained on them, they reached the easier, and looser section long before us, forcing us at one stage to dodge from overhang to overhang while stones buzzed like angry wasps around us.

As we climbed, the spire of the Cima Piccola rose magnificently behind, but clouds were coming down over our

summit and soon hid the Piccola also. At the top, all the view we had was a breathtaking glimpse down the steep black grooves of the north face. We had used the description in the duplicated C.A.F. guide *Escalades Choiesies* for the way up, but there was no mention of a route down. However, we coiled our rope and struck off down the steep but broken south face in the mist. All went well till we reached a huge terrace traversing the whole south face ; there seemed no way directly down, so Eric scouted off westwards, finding only a nasty drop into a gully. We tried going eastwards : the ledge narrowed and the rock above and below steepened. Occasionally a window cleared in the clouds to show us a distant valley, or the mist at our feet would softly swirl apart to reveal a dizzily steep black drop. There was no hope below, and soon the ledge itself petered out.

Back we turned and by chance found a cairn pointing out a most unlikely-looking way down a steep face. Down short walls and chimneys and grooves we went, the angle gradually easing, and finally a gully brought us to the screes.

At the hut we met our companions, who had enjoyed their climb on the Spigolo Giallo, finding their chief difficulties in the route-finding up the near-blank face and the friction of their runners on the many pegs in place.

Next day—our last climbing day in the Dolomites—was dull and unsettled, so we set out rather late for a short route, the Preuss Route on the Cima Piccolissima, a grade 5 route allotted two hours in the guide. We took much longer, but enjoyed the route thoroughly, as it followed a spectacular fissure cleaving a line of overhangs on a steep concave face, almost featureless save for this route. Again mist foiled our view from the summit, and we descended by a series of alternate climbing pitches and abseils down a steep face and into the misty recesses of a long steep gully to the screes above the refuge.

It was hard for us to leave the golden towers of the Tre Cime, bathed in sunlight the following morning, and to turn the car back to Cortina, and on past the Sella Towers to Bolzano, heading back over the passes of the Alps, still wreathed in storm clouds, on our long journey home. And it will be harder still for us next year to plan another Alpine trip without arousing an urge to revisit the steep climbs and sun-warmed rock of the Dolomites.





AVON GORGE

M. W. HARVEY

THE Avon Gorge has many climbs worth doing for their own sake, not simply as practice climbs. The standard is extraordinarily high, though little brute strength is involved; it is a slab-addict's paradise, and for purely delightful climbing I have found little to beat it. The limestone characteristics of small slabby holds and large smooth slabs are encountered everywhere in the outcrop, but the rock is by no means invariable in type and different parts call for differences in technique.

The Gorge lies south and west of the centre of Bristol, but can be reached in ten or fifteen minutes by bus or bike. The cliffs are between 150 and 200 feet high. Roads within fifty yards of top and bottom make the climbs easy of access but encourage spectators. The outcrop is practically continuous, but can be divided into five main regions, here considered from west to east.

1. SEA WALLS

The most westerly limestone outcrop is a huge blunt buttress, some 250 feet high, which rises sheer from the road and forms a striking feature seen from farther up the Gorge. This is the Unknown Buttress. Behind it to the left, is an imposing corner, the Unknown Gully, but this classic climb stands in a private garden where climbers are unwelcome. The wall to the left of the gully is unclimbed and probably unclimbable, for it is everywhere overhanging and crusted with flakey sandstone and shale. Elsewhere on the buttress the rock is surprisingly good, though some initial quarrying has to be done. The climber is confronted by alternate slabs and overhangs, with the occasional luxury of a hand-width crack. Unknown Gully offers these contrasting techniques, rarely found in a single climb of its length.

There is some scope for new routes of a very high standard on the right retaining wall of the gully, and farther east a broken

and hitherto almost unexplored wall might give several climbs of a fair standard.

2. TENNIS COURT WALLS

The most striking feature of the area, and its greatest challenge, is a line of nearly vertical cliffs, some 250 feet high and 200 yards long, behind the Corporation tennis courts. Two ill-defined buttresses run the full height of the cliff and end in gently impending pink walls. Much exploratory work has been done recently here. Both the buttresses have been climbed, with direct aid from pitons, and other clean routes are in the making, but the standard is very high and the steepness tiring. Route finding is very difficult indeed, and much of the time spent on a new route is taken up in exploring dead ends. It is often impossible to plan ahead, and the climb has to be sorted out move by move. The rock is all very steep but varies in character owing to an easterly dip of the strata. It is generally shattered and brittle. The odd iron spike, left by quarrymen in the distant past, boosts morale, especially near the top, where the exposure is extraordinary.

3. CLASSICAL AREA

To the right of the tennis courts the vertical cliffs give way to broken, easier rocks. First seen is Morning Slab, which falls away below to a vicious little wall peppered with overhangs. Above is a huge triangular overhang, as yet unclimbed, though a large crack indicates *coins de bois*. The most popular beginners' climb, the Arête, runs up the right edge of the slab, and from it a broad gully sweeps round to Central Buttress, which has the Piton Route up its left flank. The rock is reliable, because it is here that most climbing is done, and the area is therefore well cleaned. The rock of C.B. especially is very pleasant to climb on. Farther right again the cliff is broken by grassy ledges and climbing degenerates to problems of 40 feet or less, some very hard.

Recent developments have been almost entirely confined to Morning Wall, which has now been climbed straight up the centre (Mike's Mistake) and to the very steep cliff above and to the left, which gives Pink Wall, surely a unique climb. This has now been led clean, except for the three iron spikes.

4. BRIDGE VALLEY—SUSPENSION BRIDGE

At the western end Battleship Buttress broods over the road islands at the Bridge Valley road junction. This buttress, only recently developed, gives extraordinarily steep and exposed climbing for its standard, though two or three large ledges spoil the continuity of many routes. Again the exposure is somewhat alarming near the top, though the rock is sounder here than at the bottom.

From Battleship Buttress the Upper and Lower Amphitheatre Walls sweep round in an arc to Giant's Cave Buttress, a pleasant climb which can end in the railings of an observation tunnel in the middle of the cliff, or continue up to the Observatory in the traditional open-air way. Bridge Buttress stands alone, supporting the Metropolis end of the suspension bridge. Until recently it was unclimbed, but its left arête is now the only XS in the Gorge. With shattered rock, minute and sparse holds, and strenuous and exposed wall climbing, it fully deserves this standard.

The whole region needs extensive cleaning. The rock is massive, with plenty of holds but also with some curiously holdless scoops and walls up to 20 feet high. These are characteristic of the whole area and often insuperable obstacles.

5. THE "OTHER SIDE"

There is little scope on the south side of the Gorge, which being somewhat more difficult of access (an extra 15 minutes walk), has been poorly developed. The main feature is a huge slab, about 100 yards long, of easy angle, backed by a steep and terrifying wall, which visibly crumbles. The rock on the outer retaining wall of the slab is very good, but the climbs on it are short and of little importance.

A detailed guide to the Gorge is included in *Limestone Climbs in Southern England* by H. I. Banner and B. G. N. Page, published by the University of Bristol Mountaineering Club. This book describes about 100 climbs at Cheddar, Avon, Churchill and Ebbor, and is obtainable, price 4/3, from the Hon. Guidebook Editor, University of Bristol Mountaineering Club, Victoria Rooms, Bristol 8. The U.B.M.C. hope shortly to publish, either in a supplement or in their journal, details of several climbs made since the guide-book.

THREE CLIMBS AT AVON

C. J. S. BONINGTON

THE greatest prize in the Avon Gorge was the unclimbed face above the tennis courts. At first glance it seemed impossible, 200 feet high, vertical, broken by overhangs, and apparently loose. The first assault only touched its outer defences, crossing its right top corner, in a rising traverse. When we first visited the rocks in 1955, the main face was still virgin, and one of the greatest unclimbed walls in the country. More impressive than any of the Three Cliffs, it was almost comparable with the East Buttress of Clogwyn Du'r Arddu. After all, Corner is only 110 feet high.

The most likely line seemed in the centre, to the right of a cave. A groove, roofed by overhanging blocks, led to a rather indefinite gangway which snaked its way to within a few feet of the top of the cliff. We spent several week-ends struggling around its foot, but were unable to muster courage to commit ourselves. Those blocks looked so fearsomely loose. One Saturday in June, Geoff Francis and I gritted our teeth and forced the first pitch. The blocks sounded hollow, and a crack opened up disconcertingly as I hammered in a piton, but the pitch was not nearly as hard as I had feared and the next one was surprisingly easy. By the end of it, however, the exposure, linked with the unreliability of the rock, was terrifying. We were now over 100 feet above the start of the climb, below which was a further 100 feet or so of broken rock. Above was a smooth, steep groove, to the left a prodigious overhang; the stance was a smooth forty degree slab, and the piton belays inspired little confidence. When Geoff reached me, the change-over took nearly a quarter of an hour. We were so demoralised that we considered retreat, but decided that this would be more frightening than going on. Neither of us was prepared to trust those pitons in an abseil.

From the top of the groove a piton enabled me to step out to the right onto a smooth slab. By swinging on a piton behind a

small loose flake I was able to grasp a narrow ledge, and mantle-shelf onto it. A further pull over an overhang brought me to a stance of sorts, where I could crouch, pushed outwards by the wall above. We had another awkward change-over when Geoff reached me, and I then worked my way left along the ledge. After a long stride, grasping a poor hold above, I was able to step round the corner—and gasped with relief. The angle eased considerably, and the top was only 40 feet above. Danger was by no means over, however, for the rock was hideously loose. Towards the top it steepened into a short wall of stones embedded in mud. I had become desperate by this time, and I revelled in the insecurity of the holds. A foot cautiously placed on a loose shelf, a hand buried in the mud, and I was up. The Main Wall had been conquered. An elderly gentleman and his wife, who had parked their car near the edge of the cliff, looked alarmed at this apparition from nowhere.

In all we had taken seven hours to complete this climb, and had used nine pitons for running belays. This seems an outrageous number, but there are no natural runners (in Wales some form of running belay can usually be found every 15 or 20 feet), the rock is unreliable, and the actual piton belays often doubtful also. In September 1956 Geoff Francis made the second ascent using only five pitons, which seems quite a reasonable number.

After the ascent of Mercavity the cliff resisted all assaults until June 1956, when James Ward forced a route up the left part. This climb was a magnificent piece of route finding. From below the line looks quite holdless. Mike Thompson and I had eyed the route several times before we summoned courage to attempt it, but one Sunday we did so. The start was obvious, and then a couple of pitons showed the line to a small but comfortable stance under a large overhang. Another peg 15 feet to the left pointed the way to the next stance by a series of delicate moves, with sloping footholds and small side-holds, similar to the traverse on Diagonal Route on Dinas Mot.

So far the route had given little trouble; but we were to be disillusioned. To avoid an untrustworthy overhanging block, it was necessary to step down to the foot of a groove and then bridge up it, using for the right foot a series of loose flakes, until

it was possible to pull across to a break in the rib farther left. The only hold I could now find was a horizontal crack at chest height. I stayed there some time, wondering how on earth to get any higher. Finally I knocked in a piton to bolster failing confidence, and made an almost acrobatic move, right foot in the crack alongside my hand, retaining precarious pressure on the wall with my left; I then reached with the other hand to grasp a tree root at full stretch. The position was not much improved. Above a slight overhang was a wall, steep and holdless, clad in ivy. Only to the left was a faint line of weakness. The footholds were quite good for a traverse, but there was little for the hands and the rock was vertical. I made a difficult bridging movement, and balancing over to the left, clawed for some kind of hold amongst the ivy while a shower of earth cascaded about my head. At last I found an unconvincing little rib of rock for my right hand and a moderately firm root for the other. I had to pull up on these, for I knew I could never reverse the last few moves. A pull, a step up, and I was standing on a small grassy ledge. I knocked in a piton and brought Mike up. Meanwhile the ledge collapsed, leaving me suspended from my peg, praying that it was secure. The last pitch gave unpleasant but easy climbing through steep jungle. It had been a most enjoyable and exacting climb. Except for one or two stretches the rock is remarkably sound, and the climbing delightful.

On the previous day Mike and I had made another new route on the cliff, between Mercavity and Maltravers, up a rather indefinite groove teeming with small overhangs. We had noticed this line when examining Maltravers, and had decided that it probably provided a more reasonable route. It resisted attacks, however, for three consecutive week-ends. Our first half-hearted attempt failed after the first pitch. On the following Sunday we again gazed up at the rock above. The route was obvious as far as a line of overhangs. The problem was the ascent of the overhang and the steep, smooth wall above to a gorse bush. The rib was loose, and I had to exercise great care in its ascent. At the overhang I managed to knock in a piton, and had a tentative look at the rock above. It was indeed steep and holdless. It was now time for lunch, however, so we retired for a good hot Sunday lunch with some friends. This is one of the many advantages of climbing in a civilised place like Bristol.

After lunch, morale raised, we quickly reached the first stance, and again I went up to the overhang. After a short struggle, and a pull on the piton, I was able to gain a footing above it. The holds were small for a few feet, and it was only possible to relax after reaching the gorse bush. The foot of the groove at which we had been aiming was now to the right. It looked fearsomely loose, a mass of blocks jammed into a slight depression. They looked ready to fall about us if we set foot in the groove. Demoralised, we again fled.

By the time we caught our train, we were arguing our way up the cliff, and convincing ourselves that perhaps the route was not as dangerous as it looked. The following Saturday we went straight to the top of the cliff, and I climbed down for a 100 feet on the rope, dislodging a steady stream of stones. The blocks in the groove turned out to be safer than we had feared. After lunch we climbed up to the gorse bush. Moves to the right led to a slab with an iron spike embedded in it, presumably used for quarrying. The way into the groove, which looked extremely loose, was barred by a corner with a mass of brambles, but a prickly struggle led to our goal, where the overhang turned out to be straightforward, though incredibly loose.

The climbing on the loose rock of the groove above was somehow intoxicating. Every nerve was tensed, each hold had to be caressed before any weight could be placed on it. A final overhang, and I could belay at a tree, having run out 100 feet of rope. Only 30 feet of easy rock led to the top. The route had not been technically difficult, and we had used only two pitons. The unreliability of the rock had made it exacting. Nevertheless it was a fine and enjoyable climb. There is something very exhilarating about loose rock, so long as it is steep, clean and free from vegetation.

There are still several lines to be made on the Main Wall, including a girdle traverse. When planning a trip to Wales one November week-end, why not come to Bristol instead? The mountains are sure to be cold and wet, the Three Cliffs greasy and Cloggy quite unapproachable. But you will find the rock of the Avon Gorge clean and dry, with all the amenities of civilisation waiting round the corner.

NIGHT LIFE ON HIGH HILLS

WILFRID NOYCE

TO be benighted is not unusually considered bad form. The seasoned specialist, anxious not to disgrace himself, generally contrives to turn a benightment into a "bivvy," which is of its nature voluntary. But it is equally bad form, I would say, to write in a guide book an account of a climb that isn't there ; or rather, since all climbs are "there" nowadays, which has existence only for the devourer of VI supérieurs, not the modest man who limits himself to Vs.

The season of 1956 was variable, to put it politely. Even the télé, disgruntled with heaving loads of equally disgruntled tourists to the misty, viewless Torino, sprung a defect which might well have plunged the odd twenty of them to their doom. On 11th August, John Hunt, David Cox and I were guinea-pigs for the first ascent after its repair. Having survived that, and a hot night at the Torino, we raced down on a cloudless morning to the Requin hut, all hot and champing to avenge the insulting ill-weather to which the Innominata had just treated us.

Now by 10 o'clock, when we were ready to move on after a large breakfast, we wanted nothing that looked too long. A "voie directe," leading to a summit easy of descent. The Dent du Requin, for instance. Yes, there it was in the Vallot guide : "Face est, voie directe." And there it was in the sunshine straight ahead, a line of grooving which the Vallot termed a "Fissure" leading up to the right of the great red buttress that finishes below those crazy summit blocks. It looked all right. A "300 ft. crack," slabs, move across to the crest, final ridge. Nothing harder than IVb.

A little mist delaying us at the foot of the initial couloir should have given warning. But the "zone of terraces" above was obvious, and we had bread and cheese and sardines on them at 12.30. Overlooking us now, the guide said, there should be the "300 foot crack running directly up the side of the nose." Now all of us, Lliwedd-trained, have long since given up expecting a

crack always to be a crack ; though Chamonix " fissures " usually mean what they say. Up we went therefore, up the shallow depression ahead. Then it started to steepen wildly, at the same time looking less like a crack than ever.

" There's a piton ! "

It meant a slight deviation to the left, but was the only possible line. David belayed, I climbed up what seemed to me an overhang, slipped a sling through and came down. A IVb ? Oh dear, we must be getting very old ! Up again, finger through the piton. Three feet beyond, above the overhang, was another. Now a piton, I am ashamed to say, I sometimes find a very comforting object ; two pitons even more so. But beyond that, not a hold in sight, and I am not a man to move without at least two points of contact. All the encouragement in the world could not get me farther, nor produce holds where there were none, and the others declined a pressing invitation to take over. We reassembled, defeated.

However another look at the suspect guide revealed that we could fairly soon put ourselves on a variation of the Mayer-Dibona Route, which takes the ridge bounding our face on the right. Only 3 o'clock, and we traversed quickly towards it. Slabs first, then a gully that narrowed gradually to a chimney, under the " finger " pinnacle of the ridge.

It was somewhere around here that John was taken with severe cramp in the hands ; but the Hunt determination was not going to let a little thing like that get in the way, and after a short delay on we went, a little more slowly. When we emerged on the ridge the evening sun was gilding Grépon and Plan, while the summit of the Requin, magnificent on our left, still looked as far away as Everest from Base Camp. I concealed the accursed guide book, which announced with evident enjoyment that two of the hardest pitches of the Dibona still remained ; and the final chimneys were likely to be full of ice-hard snow. We went on

The last red glow of Alpine sunset, particularly on a summit, can remove all thought of terrestrial discomfort ; but the dark and cold bring it back soon enough. Two rappels down the Fontaine chimney of the ordinary route brought us to a ledge and the end of light. We stopped, with that laughable feeling of relaxation that sets in when one realises that there are eight more

hours to spend here, so no need to hurry any more. Brightly improvident in the blazing morning, we had brought neither spare clothes nor food, beyond the lunch snack. A few sweets and lumps of sugar were shared round, the rest were something to look forward to. We tied ourselves on.

"It's extraordinary how friendly one gets," John said after ; and indeed, in that uneasy night, we did seem to adopt most of the attitudes associated with the cuddly corners of dance halls, before dawn woke us for the last time with a shiver and the lightening peaks. But trouble was not yet over. The snow of the past week lay heavy at this height, now frozen hard. With only one axe and no crampons, it took nearly five hours from top to hut, food and ease. On the glacier, as we were taking a maddeningly easy slope face in, toes stubbing at every step, a becrampionned French party came swooping down from the Plan, led by—Armand Charlet. After some gentle ribaldry Armand said :

"Which route did you do ? "

We explained the worst.

"That ! Oh nobody's ever been able to find *that* route. I sent two of the "professeurs" to find it last year, but they couldn't. It's a joke, because personally *I don't believe it exists!*"

So there you are, with the joke, except for a postscript by Bernard Pierre, back at Chamonix.

"John, if you don't make me the next president of the Alpine Club, I'll expose the whole story of how the leader of the Everest Expedition was benighted on a little mountain of 11,000 feet."

But he has been anticipated.

OWEN GLYNNE JONES

EDWARD PYATT

OWEN GLYNNE JONES was born in Paddington, London, in November 1867. His father David Jones, a carpenter and builder, had come from Barmouth a few years before to try his fortune in London. He was educated first at the local schools, then at Finsbury Technical College (where Eustace Thomas was at one time in the same class), and finally took his degree at the Central Institution, now Imperial College, at South Kensington. Soon after, he was appointed Physics Master at the City of London School, a post which he continued to hold till his death.

During his schooldays Jones went frequently to Barmouth on family holidays and there came under the spell of the dominating Cader Idris. In 1883, when sixteen or so, he began to explore the surrounding hills and soon came to know them intimately. His only contact with the official world of mountaineering at this time can possibly have come through a reading of the Alpine classics ; Haskett Smith had begun his exploration of the crags of the Lake District the year before, Stocker and Wall made the first ascent of the face of Lliwedd in the same year, but nothing was known about either of these events outside two very small circles. Jones himself wrote that when he first went to the Lake District in 1890, he was "ignorant of the existence of any regular rock practice hereabouts." It is remarkable therefore that he should have made the first ascent of the East Arête of Cyfrwy as early as 1887 entirely on his own initiative, by applying principles, which can only have been derived from his Alpine reading, to the crags of his homeland. Because of this one climb, he can be regarded as an innovator in his personal approach to the sport, even though there were no further developments. Few climbs followed arêtes in those early days and when, three years later, Jones made his first contacts with the British climbing world, he accepted the

prevailing fashion for gully climbs. It was some years before he once again returned to the faces of the rocks.

Jones made his first visit to the Lake District at Easter 1890, in the company of W. E. Sumpner. They went for a walking tour "guided by Jenkinson and Baddeley" with no expectation of rock climbing. They went up Rossett Ghyll, bathed in Angle Tarn and finished at length on the summit of Scafell Pike. Now they consulted their guidebook nonsense on Mickledore. Of the three terrifying possibilities—Scafell Chimney, Broad Stand and Lord's Rake—they selected the latter, but in mistake embarked in fact on Broad Stand. The rocks were icy and there were no nails in their boots, so that though Jones got up with a shoulder, Sumpner could not follow and down they had to go to Wasdale, ignominiously. There they met W. M. Crook who took them next day to try Pillar by the Slab and Notch. From him at last, Jones was able to get a clear picture of the exact problems of Alpine mountaineering, of which up to now he had only read, and at the same time learn of the practice ground now available in the surrounding hills. From the first Crook saw in Jones a potentially brilliant natural climber, who could be expected to go far.

We can dispose easily of the story that Jones was attracted to climbing by a photograph of Napes Needle seen in a shop in the Strand. It is quite clear from his own book that he saw this picture and bought it a few days before Easter, 1891, while, as we have seen, he knew all about the climbing at Wasdale Head at least a year earlier.

The early years were characterized by an abundant enthusiasm but a low level of technical achievement. He found it difficult, too, to find companions to match his energy and zeal. There is an odd story of this period, the accuracy of which it is difficult to assess. Writing many years later (1916) J. N. Collie claimed that one September he rescued Jones from the top of Napes Needle, which he had climbed but was unable to descend. In Jones's own account we find him leading the Needle with every appearance of competence at Easter, 1891, and giving, moreover, the impression that this was his first attempt. If Collie's recollection is accurate, the incident probably occurred in September 1890; it is hardly likely to have been 1891! Yet Jones, who could tell a story against himself when the

occasion arose, never mentions it anywhere, nor, says George Abraham, did he ever speak of it to him. There is no record of either Collie or Jones at the Wastwater Hotel in September 1890. Was it a case of evasion by Jones or of mistaken identity by Collie?

At Easter 1891, in Wasdale Jones fell in with an enthusiastic alpinist—C. G. Munro; they had several climbs together and the upshot was an invitation to Jones to join an Alpine party in the Val d'Hérens in the summer. Jones arrived at Ferpècle on September 2nd and the next day, as his first ever Alpine expedition, he made the first ascent of a mountain, the Dents des Rosses. The following day Jones and Munro, this time without guides, climbed the East Arête of the Petite Dent de Veisivi, again a first ascent. They then all crossed to Italy and, after one or two minor summits, made the first ascent of the South-East Arête of the Grand Combin. Jones was elected to the Alpine Club in December 1892, but this brought him few extra companions for his Lake District holidays. Mountaineering was still largely a recreation for the leisured and well-to-do, and in spite of his academic achievements the gulf separating Jones with his working class origins from the typical Alpinist of his time was too wide as yet to be bridged simply by a common interest in mountaineering. It was not until Jones met and was befriended by J. W. Robinson that he slowly began to be accepted into the Alpinist circle in the Lake District. His struggle was not helped by an unfortunate practical joke which he played on a "Sketch" reporter at Wasdale at Christmas 1893, when a series of leg-pulling answers to some rather naive questions was treated all too seriously and published under the authorship of "The Youngest Member of the Alpine Club." Through Robinson, however, he met Haskett Smith and so came to help him with his Welsh guidebook, and also the Abraham brothers, who soon became among the closest of his climbing friends.

The Wastwater Hotel was the centre of all their climbing activities and the Visitors' Book there was for many years the only up-to-date record of what had been done on the surrounding crags. After full days on the mountains the climbers returned in the evening to huge meals, sing-songs and endless discussions on climbing, relieved occasionally by horse-play and feats of

strength, with which the more gymnastic entertained the rest. Here on one occasion two climbers stood on chairs with an ice axe from shoulder to shoulder forming a horizontal bar. After various exhibitions by others, Jones stepped forward ; he held the bar with three fingers of one hand, lifted George Abraham with the other arm, and chinned himself three times ! Jones was an expert at the Billiard Room Traverse, in which the climber had to pass round the room without touching the floor, the Billiard Table Leg Traverse and the Stable Door Traverse. The playing of a form of fives on the billiard table came only at a later date ; in any case Jones was useless at ball games because of his poor eyesight. Christmas Day was always reserved for an expedition to Deep Ghyll by a very large party concerned, appropriately enough, more with company and conviviality than with climbing.

By the end of 1895 Jones had established a firm reputation as a cragsman. The next two years were to be devoted to the exploratory work for a book on Lake District climbing, which he now projected and which he above everyone else was most qualified to write. This period saw a thorough investigation of all existing climbs and a systematic search for new ones of what might be termed the traditional type, i.e. gullies, cracks, etc. Jones began a new and important friendship at Easter 1896, when he called on the young Abraham brothers at Keswick. They had already been scrambling and climbing for a few years and had begun work on the series of climbing photographs, which have since made them famous. To them, Jones represented a chance to widen the scope of their work ; to Jones they gave the opportunity of illustrating his book in a unique and outstanding way. That holiday saw the first ascent of Jones's Route from Deep Ghyll and of Pisgah Buttress on Scafell, and they experimented with the interesting new combined tactics, which were just coming into use as an aid to leaders.

To this period, too, belongs the first ascents by Jones of the dreadful "C" Gully on the Screes (where he was later injured making the second ascent) and of Kern Knotts Crack, done first on a rope and later led. Kern Knotts illustrated the beginnings of an extending outlook towards the British climbing problem. Though the British climber had of necessity to

seek his route up the steepest side of his mountain, he had so far selected crags which were major features, the ascent of which might reasonably be regarded as leading to the summit of the mountain itself. Kern Knotts on the other hand was a mere outcrop on a long mountain side and, therefore, nothing more than rock-climbing for climbing's sake. Haskett Smith had of course mentioned the possibilities of climbing on rock outcrops in other parts of England in his book, but Kern Knotts was an outcrop in the mountains themselves.

Rock Climbing in the English Lake District by Owen Glynne Jones, B.Sc., magnificently illustrated by the Abrahams' photographs, was published in the closing days of 1897. In it he demonstrated convincingly that it was no longer necessary to go abroad to find interesting and exciting stories of mountaineering adventure. In the readily accessible and relatively familiar Lake District a new sport of climbing was springing up, and here were descriptions of what to do and pictures of men, and women too, doing it. While its lavish size and weight were appropriate only to a library volume, there is evidence that it was sometimes taken in the rucksack on an actual climb. A notable introduction was the adjectival system of classification of climbing difficulty, which in spite of advances in technique and of buffetings from the mathematically minded has endured in more or less the same form until the present day.

In his Introduction Jones set out some of the reasons why men climb, though not all of them were necessarily his own. From the body of his writings and from what his contemporaries have said of him it is clear that the physical side of the sport was for him the greatest attraction. He was extremely tough and he revelled in it. On British rocks he tended to neglect footwork and to concentrate on his arm strength ; in the Alps he developed a reputation for long expeditions involving several peaks in a day or several consecutive days of high ascents. His "joy of conquest without any woe to the conquered" has led Claire Engel to conclude that he had a modern, "north wall" attitude towards mountains, but there is nothing in his writings as a whole to support this viewpoint. For us today the book is a historical document of the greatest importance, as well as a poignant reminder of the days when the British hills were big enough to hold all the people who wished to visit them.

With the publication of the book Jones may be said to have completed his contribution to the traditional types of route. True, one outstanding gully remained, Walker's Gully on Pillar, but this fell finally to an inspired lead by Jones himself under dreadful conditions of ice and cold in the early days of 1899. More important in this period were the tentative attempts at face climbs. At Christmas 1897, Jones made an attempt somewhere near the line of Botterill's Slab but was defeated by cold and ice on the rocks. Then, at Easter 1898, came the fine climb on Scafell Pinnacle, now called Jones's Route from Lord's Rake, the first climb on the Pinnacle completely independent of the great ghylls on either side. It is a face climb of superlative quality and reveals in Jones a latent ability for this type of work often overlooked by those who regard him as a mere muscle-man. This one ascent gives a clear clue to what he might have done for British climbing had he lived longer ; many a route of this quality would have fallen one, or even two, decades earlier, as would others of the strenuous type in which he had excelled all along. As things turned out, Jones's Route from Lord's Rake was not repeated until the advent of S. W. Herford and G. S. Sansom in 1912.

Though Jones was a Welshman he climbed only infrequently in Wales. When writing up Cader Idris for Haskett Smith they made a visit to the district together ; the first ascent of the Great Gully of Craig y Cae (Craig Cau) resulted. This became one of Jones's favourite climbs and soon after striking up the friendship with the Abrahams, he took them there to sample its delights. With characteristic élan he attempted to lead the party straight up a waterfall, but to their great relief it was too much for him. They then went off to Pen-y-Gwryd to try the Slanting Gully of Lliwedd. The weather was poor and impressed by the opinion of a noted Alpinist that the climb was impossible anyway, Jones left for the Lake District and "C" Gully of the Screes. The Abrahams stayed on and a few days later the Slanting Gully fell to them without excessive difficulty. Jones played a part in the formation of the Climbers' Club in 1898 and was a member of its first Committee ; now, with his book on the Lake District out of the way he began to turn his attention seriously to Wales. At Easter 1899, he took a large party to Ogwen Cottage to start the exploratory work

for a companion volume on Snowdonia. In the older tradition they made first ascents of the Devil's Staircase and Hanging Garden Gully and a second ascent of the Devil's Kitchen. But they went out on the faces also ; the Milestone Buttress was discovered, Terrace Wall Variant was climbed (with some trepidation and not immediately recorded), and a route attempted on the right hand side of Idwal Slabs. Devil's Staircase was the last climb of the holiday. Afterwards Jones and George Abraham sat on the top of the Clogwyn y Geifr discussing plans for an expedition to the Himalayas ; but their last climb together was over.

After his first two Alpine seasons with Munro, when they climbed several new, but minor, peaks on the Italian slopes of the Pennine Alps, Jones never again attempted any pioneering. He tried the Dolomites but did not like them, saying " we have plenty of rock climbing at home." All his other Alpine seasons were spent on big snow and ice climbs in the Oberland, the Valais, the Graians and the Mont Blanc Group. His programme was noted for its strenuousness—many guides are said to have refused to accompany him—rather than its originality. Unfortunately for him he never struck up a good partnership with another first class climber, either guide or amateur, otherwise Alpine history must surely have benefited more from his presence.

On August 27th, 1899, Jones left Arolla with F. W. Hill to climb the Dent Blanche by the West Arête. Their guides, Elias Furrer, Clemenz Zurbriegen and Jean Vuignier, were met at Les Haudères and the party proceeded to Bricolla Alp where they spent the night in bivouac. Early the following day the climb began. At about 10 a.m., when they had made most of the height, a small buttress was found blocking the ridge. A human pyramid—a familiar feature of the Lake District climbing technique of the time—consisting of Jones and Zurbriegen was formed to assist Furrer to surmount it. At the moment when he stepped from their backs, the leader lost his grip ; he fell back on them, knocking them from their holds. Vuignier was in turn pulled off but the rope broke between him and Hill, having been belayed quite fortuitously over a projection. Jones and the three guides fell to their deaths, while for Hill a terrible ordeal ensued. It was not

until fifty hours later that he arrived in Zermatt, after traversing alone and unaided round the scene of the accident, crossing the summit of the mountain and descending by the South Arête. In due course search parties from Evolène and Zermatt recovered the bodies and Jones is buried in the little cemetery between Evolène and Les Haudères in the valley from which he started the first and last of his Alpine climbs.

Jones had been much more than a mountaineer. He was a good and popular schoolmaster and in addition to his school work was engaged on research on the viscosity of oils for his doctor's degree. He appreciated and wrote poetry, though unfortunately his own compositions are lost to us, otherwise we should probably know much more about why he climbed. He was a great cyclist and had done the journey from London to Brighton and back in a day on occasions—quite a feat on the bicycles of his time. There are many legends of building climbing and other feats carried out in London between holidays.

It is easy to assess his place and his likely influence on British climbing. He was undoubtedly the greatest home cragsman of the last century; of his contemporaries only Collier and Solly could match him technically, but neither of them had his devotion to the rocks. He was primarily a muscle-man, but he showed in the later stages distinct ability to adapt himself to the requirements of more open types of climb, so that it can be confidently asserted that he would have been a leading figure for many years to come. His high mountain place is not so easily determined. His Alpine career, though very tough, was uninspiring and we do not know what he really had in mind for himself. At the end he was just turning to the Himalayas and here possibly was his ultimate mountaineering objective.

GRAND CORNIER, N.N.E. FACE

The photograph shows Philippe Bühner, Adrien and Rose Voillat descending straight down from the summit on 31st July, 1956. This party made the third ascent and first descent of the face on 30th-31st July, in 40 hours from Mountet Hut to Petit Mountet. The route of ascent is seen on the left of the face, with the ice cave cut for bivouac on the night of 30th July.

W. Strath





SESTOGRADISTS IN SCOTLAND

JEREMY SMITH

IF you approach Lochnagar from Crathie, you are sure to stop for a breather after the moraine that forms the lip of the corrie. From here Parallel Buttress appears to justify all the rest of the corrie. One can imagine the excitement of J. H. B. Bell and W. H. Murray as they started the assault one fine summer's day in 1939, and their disappointment when they arrived on the plateau a few hours later, for no one can pretend that it is a particularly good summer climb. Their route starts up grassy rock on the left of Parallel Gully "A," crosses it a hundred feet up and continues rightwards over blueberry ledges to attack the central slabs at a groove overlooking Gully "B". The next three hundred feet follow an unsatisfying line of least vegetation, but eventually the buttress steepens to a tower providing a splendid pitch of steep and clean rock before the last easy rock arête. Only one of the two pitons originally used in this pitch is now considered sporting.

In February 1956 Parallel Buttress was the next great problem to be tackled in winter. Tom Patey, Bill Booker and I slept at Lochend bothy, the best in the Cairngorms, for it has a good floor and roof, a fireplace and a plantation beside it with unlimited wood. But in spite of these amenities it was a nagging heather stem in my back that woke me when it was almost daylight. At first I was alarmed to hear the steady roar of wind through the trees outside, but as the implications of bad weather sunk in I relaxed and thought of the strenuous evening that had passed ; the drinking and dancing ; the ride up Glen Muick in an old Austin taxi as far as the Bailey bridge, where drifts blocked the road ; the sobering four mile walk to Lochend, often stumbling through knee-deep snow ; and finally brewing tea and exchanging bothy jokes before turning in at a quarter past two.

One of Tom's boots woke me for a second time. In spite of the wind he thought that snow conditions would be superb.

Bill was the only other awake and in a few minutes we were eating a greasy fried mess washed down with black tea. I started to lace my "Commando" soled boots, intending to use crampons for the climb. "Good Lord! You can't wear those!" Bill was quite indignant at this affront to Lochnagar. "Iron boots are the only thing, man! And it happens that I've a spare pair that may fit you". He produced a new, but inexpensive, pair of boots sparsely fitted with tricouni nails; they seemed a good fit so I was glad to accept his offer. Tom muttered something that I didn't quite catch about getting a sucker to soften up his next new pair of boots.

We left our rucksacks in Jock Robertson's barn at the Spittal, thus saving half an hour in the evening when time would probably be short. Bill and I both carried small packs up the hill. I saw him slip into his some silvery objects which he called his "secret weapons." They were strips of angled "dural" about eight inches long and intended to be used as pitons in frozen turf. I was impressed.

We crossed the flat bottom of Glen Muick and wandered through the woods of Allt-na-guibhsaich. Already Tom was fifty yards ahead and Bill's new boots were pinching my toes. An hour later, at the saddle, Tom had been waiting ten minutes for us and my feet were so sore that I doubted whether I could do much climbing. The corrie, now visible for the first time, was so plastered with new snow and hoar frost that scarcely any rocks were visible. Cloud hung about a hundred feet below the plateau, its lower shreds eddying in the gusts. To me sudden death haunted every chilly corner. But Tom was all enthusiasm. "Conditions look first rate," he said when there was a lull in the wind. Remarks such as this about "conditions" are Tom's favourite gambit; the first climb that I did with him was an easy gully in a blizzard. It was purely a problem of survival. Afterwards he said: "A terrific route, man! It was at least severe in the conditions."

We descended into the corrie, Tom racing towards the rocks like a sheepdog recalled by its master. Bill and I, the two submissive sheep, followed for a while, then, thankful that our tormentor had left us, made best possible use of the respite; Bill got out his sandwiches and I delved in my sack for a tin of peaches.

"What's that fanatic doing?"

Tom was two thirds of the way up the first pitch of Parallel Gully "A." Normally a waterfall in summer and vertical ice in winter, it had never been climbed.

"It looks as if he's soloing Parallel "A." Have you got a tin opener, Bill?"

He hadn't. But we managed to prise the tin open with one of his "secret weapons" and then passed the tin between us, spearing the fruit slices with pitons. Suddenly our peace was shattered again.

"For God's sake get a bloody move on! We haven't got all day."

"What are you going to do?"

"Parallel Buttress of course."

We collected our wits and within a minute were running across the lumpy snow of the avalanche cone below Douglas Gully.

The pitch that Tom had just climbed was what any decent mountaineering author from G. W. Young to Hermann Buhl would call vertical snow; that is, it was soft enough to kick steps and punch armholes, and so steep that snow had to be cleared away before one could bend a knee. "Quite a good pitch, about v. diff.," was Tom's verdict, though I can imagine F. S. Smythe having had more to say about it. Fifty feet above Tom was making fast progress towards the right hand side of the buttress where the "great difficulties" would start. In the main it was easy snow, but often ice or frozen turf outcropped and we stepped in his rough nicks. A month before I had watched Bill and Dod Adams laboriously chip their way over glazed rock where now we were moving unroped; in half an hour we covered more ground than they did then in four hours.

Tom had disinterred a rock bollard when we arrived with the ropes, and while we tied ourselves to the various ends a discussion started as to who should lead. Finally Bill allocated Tom the first groove, and himself the two succeeding slab pitches; I would tackle the Tower. Meanwhile Tom had already led the first thirty feet of glazed rock and was tugging for me to follow. Having started in the lead he was in a position to stay there as long as he pleased, since as soon as I joined him,

he pronounced the stance unsafe for three, and he must move on before Bill could start. Tom is a very experienced mountaineer.

The steep groove above is in summer a slab pitch of Very Difficult standard about seventy feet high. Now the rock was obscured by layers of tough ice. Fresh crystals of hoar frost had stuck here and there to this surface, though the patches of white and grey bore no relation to the configuration of the rock beneath. Above, on the left of the groove, was the ring-spike from which Tom and Alan Will had abseiled a week previously. Tom reached the peg and started to traverse a sloping ledge back into the groove, sweeping away masses of powder. Having exhausted the handholds, he asked me to hold the rope tight while he crossed the ledge supported by tension from the piton. Thus he stood for fully fifteen minutes, occasionally poking down a chip of ice with his axe. I couldn't imagine what was keeping him for there appeared to be perfectly adequate holds. But I said nothing ; it wouldn't do to rush the chap, for the leader often has to be nursed up a tricky bit. At last he stepped across, the tension in the rope slackened and he was on his own. Slowly he worked up the slab and from the amount of his sole visible I saw that it must be quite delicate. I shuddered to think that if he came off those steel spikes would crash on my head.

The rope ran out quickly as Tom reached easier ground. As far as the ring-spike I found easy, but the traverse was indeed poor in handholes. I asked Tom for all the slack rope and grasping a loop threaded through the ring, shuffled across to the groove where I placed my right toe on a frozen divot. Still clutching the reassuring handful of rope I stood for ten minutes contemplating the next move, feeling as I did the first time that I dived from the thirty foot board at the Uptown baths. " Well, here goes ! Pull like hell !" I balanced across and letting go of the rope, I watched it snake through the ring until there was a pleasing tension from above. But there was no retreat now. The holds were minute and widely spaced. I hesitate to call them infinitesimal, for these ice steps half an inch wide would be " jug handles " on a warm slab, but numbed fingers encased in leather gloves need something correspondingly more finite to curl round. I was scared stiff. That left toe was

just stuck onto the ice and with the slightest wobble would go. I pulled up on a snowball squashed against the slab. More panic, and a fight to regain my balance as a piton I grabbed came out in my hand ; I fancied I heard Tom chuckle at the success of this macabre joke. A glove pressed against the ice froze to it giving me courage to step up again, and by a series of such desperate manoeuvres I finally emerged at the top of the pitch.

The stance was very small, so to avoid unnecessary crowding, Tom decided to lead on at once. The promising snow slope that he started to climb turned out to be the slightest veneer of powder over perfectly smooth rock. Plainly he wasn't sure where the summer route went ; in most summers he climbs in the Alps keeping his hand in for winter climbing in the Cairngorms.

When he had climbed down again he consulted my watch. There were another three and a half hours of daylight, and many more difficult pitches. "As we're pretty hard pressed for time, I think that we had better avoid the next two pitches by climbing this middle section of Parallel "B," and traversing back at the "Necklace." The snow in the gully looks in terrific condition." No sooner had Tom said this than he plunged to his armpits in snow as soft as eiderdown. He led out the full length of the rope, then waited while I brought up Bill. It was deathly cold in the gully. Clouds of spindrift sweeping down from the plateau penetrated my several layers of wind-proof clothing, numbing my body. This frozen Scotch mist crystallized onto my clothes, hair and eyebrows ; even my day old beard had a bead of ice hanging from each hair. I chewed some chocolate, but could not find sufficient heat in my mouth to melt it. Only this time to-morrow I would be well-fed and warm in a thermostatically controlled laboratory.

When Bill discovered that his two pitches were being bypassed he was very angry. In a few terse phrases the denigration of Patey was complete. I commiserated with him as best I could, though I thought this possessiveness over pitches hardly in the true tradition of pioneer climbing. I found Tom half buried by the drift and looking cold, his hair matted with snow. his face, where visible, shades of mauve and green. I learned that he had left most of his kit at home and had borrowed the

clothes that he had stood in, which were inadequate. I was surprised that with eight people at the bothy there wasn't something better for him to borrow.

A horizontal belt of snow breaking the steep gully wall enabled us to traverse back onto the buttress. It was an exposed pitch, though a landing in the gully would more likely have resulted in suffocation than a broken bone. The soft powder was crossed by distributing one's weight as evenly as possible on all nine points of contact ; if one step slid down a few inches, support had to be transferred smoothly to knees, fists and chin until a new equilibrium was reached. At the end of this dangerous traverse it was disconcerting to find Tom safeguarded only by his axe driven a few inches into snow with the consistency of confetti. Bill and I spent some time trying to improve the security with a piton, but when at last a "secret weapon" had been driven into an extra wide crack, Tom had already led up the next exposed pitch, and it was time to remove it again. I climbed fifteen feet of ice and stepped onto the wall overlooking the gully. Luckily it wasn't iced and beneath the hoar frost were good rock holds. It was the first rock climbing of the day.

One more pitch with a delicate stride from a rock pillar to a steep bank of ice led to the foot of the Tower. The sepulchral walls of rock suppurating verglas looked uncompromising. I knew that it was going to be trying on the nerves, and probably dangerous, and started the attack feeling like a soldier who performs an act of gallantry not through any love for his country, but because it has been ordained in Daily Routine Orders.

Soon a useful piton sprouted from the corner crack. With it I could hoist myself fully three feet from the ground, but no more holds came to hand. I asked Bill to give me a shoulder, and standing first on his neck, then on his head, swept away masses of snow until he roared with agony. At last I thought of the solution ; returning to the ledge, I pulled from my sack two *étriers*. This would make the editorial page of the Cairngorm Club Journal hum. Clipping one into the peg, I climbed it until I rubbed shoulders with the bulge from the second rung. That was a much better base for further exploration. At the back of the upper groove was a crack that ought to assist the high step to the ledge on the left. Finding it solid with ice, I drove in a twelve inch ice piton, glad for the opportunity to

use one of these white elephants that I had bought at the start of the winter, and with it I pulled onto the ledge.

So far, so good ; I was up the steepest part of the groove. Next came the part customarily climbed with the aid of a piton. At Bill's direction I swept away more powder until I found the horizontal crack that was to take the peg. It was full of ice, and only after several attempts could I hammer my shortest piton into the deepest part. I clipped in an *étrier* and after climbing and descending it a few times, clumsily changing feet after each, I stood with my left toe on the top rung. Still that wasn't high enough. With my right limbs pressed across the groove, I stooped down and mantelshevelled onto the piton, a movement of such ghastly delicacy that at once I wanted to reverse it. But now the steps of the *étrier* were flat against the wall and I could not go back. I called to Bill asking him where to look for holds, but had to wait while he photographed Tom, a shot that he hoped would rival Rébuffat's "Après le second bivouac" in conveying the atmosphere of this climb. Apparently there was a good flake under the overhang above me, but first I had to remove several cubic yards of compact snow, my left toe quivering unsteadily on the peg all this while. At last, jamming my axe behind the flake, I swung over to a bank of snow on the left.

Arriving on easy ground at the end of a fierce pitch is one of the great joys of climbing, the respite being all the more exquisite for that one has satisfied oneself in the physical test. The bank of steep snow where I found myself seemed as cosy as a warm fireside ; not only had I succeeded in my own maximum effort, but it appeared that the climb was almost over, since the snow continued round to the left covering the smooth impassable slabs of summer. Thus we could avoid the last thirty feet of the Tower which undoubtedly would have been as hard as the first. I shouted down this good news which was received with rejoicing, for already it was getting dark.

Tom came up quickly, the only incident being when he discovered that the second piton was loose. I couldn't resist smiling as he thrashed the air with one arm in an effort to keep his balance. He passed me and traversed the steep snow. Sure enough it provided a straightforward route to the neck behind the Tower. When he had led out about eighty feet,

Bill removed the pegs and climbed the pitch by a ladder of slings and *étriers*. We moved across the traverse together to where Tom was crouched beneath a great wall of snow, still shivering, but exuberant. "The most exciting thing about a winter ascent is to climb pitches that are impossible in summer." While he elaborated on this theme with examples from every corrie in the Cairngorms, I led on up a twenty foot high wall of snow. It was very steep but of a fine consistency ; one could thrust in an arm to the shoulder, kick steps with feet and knees, or drive in the axe as a snow piton. I emerged on a sharp ridge of snow which, in spite of near darkness, I could see stretched for another thirty feet, gradually steepening to merge with the corniced edge of the plateau. There was no doubt about the outcome now, and when the others arrived all precautions were cast aside as we chased each other up the last hundred feet like children dashing out of school. It was a beautiful snow ridge, the finest that Bill had seen in the Cairngorms, but already it was too dark to appreciate the position.

The Cairngorm summits all look much alike, wide undulating expanses of tundra from which granite tors protrude as on Dartmoor. The highest point of Lochnagar is a particularly prominent tor set well back from the edge of the corrie. There was no question of continuing to it for we only had an hour and a half to catch our taxi. We coiled the ropes and started to run. As circulation returned, pockets full of snow thawed and the melt water trickled down my legs. Fifty minutes saw us at the Spittal where we collected our rucksacks. We pressed on down the glen and found the taxi waiting after only two miles. At last there was someone else to talk to about the climb, and to a wide-eyed audience we relived the whole expedition, each ten feet of the route taking us a mile nearer home. In the warmth of the bus I found it impossible to stay awake ; the last proclamation that I heard was : "Every inch a grade VI."

★ ★ ★

But the pundits say that Parallel Buttress is only V sup.

MOUNTAIN GREENERY

C. H. FRENCH

HOW naive one feels these days on returning to the rugosities of Snowdonia after a lapse of time. Even a strange new language has come into being since the gully epoch. A veritable metamorphosis in fact.

Gone are the possibilities of finding a sound pair, or even part worn pair, of corsets in the Great Gully on Snowdon, and even if one did unearth something of this nature today it would probably be referred to as a little X. The discovery of a deer-stalker's hat, snatched from a high-brow by the upward current of wind from Glaslyn as he reaches for the final handhold on the last pitch of the Ladies' Gully, is gone for ever. Now apparently one talks in a hushed and slightly husky voice of such things as Karabiners, pitons, expansion bolts, prusik loops etc., and the latest climbs appear to have contracted considerably in length, if not in difficulty. I here hasten to enquire if a summit is ever made in the day's attainments. Future guide-book descriptions will probably be written thus:—

“Rock'n Roll Buttress. Length 35 feet. Absolutely impossible by ordinary methods, but a route is feasible with the aid of scaffolding provided the leader is a super suctionist.

Note.—Trapeze nets are available at the base of the climb to ease the strain on mountain rescue.”

Even the Helyganda rat is reported to have worked out a new technique for pot-holing and will shortly be producing a revised guide on this subject.

But how naive one can truly be was proved on my first day out. Whilst ambling along the road I was indeed alarmed when my companion suddenly said: “Here come three tigers!” I was immediately filled with a jelly-like fear and with the thought that a travelling circus might have come unstuck. But great was my relief when I was hastily assured that he was referring to the three mere mortals approaching us from the opposite direction. I observed as they passed us that there was no great

predominance of spots but that they all had furry jowls and possessed a stealthy tigerish tread. This was possibly due to the fact that rubber nails had supplanted tricounis, and an impish thought made me wonder what would be the outcome of making that perilous descent from the road to Helyg under soggy conditions and darkness. I was not at that moment aware of the thirty nine steps (according to the Log Book) which have come into being, thus turning a V.S. into a moderate. Truly sad, but gone are the days when that hard metallic crunch could be heard as nailed boots bit into the equally hard highway.

Judging by a photograph in last year's C.C. Journal I was glad to see that Crib Goch is still patronised. But that photograph made me shudder and shudder! Here was a climber actually starting the ridge walk with his hands where his feet should have been, whilst the latter were silhouetted against sky and space. Yes, he was standing on his head! The only conclusion I could reach was that it must now be considered non-"U" to use one's hands and knees in this present age. Maybe this is what the *Daily Mail* was referring to during last summer when the headlines of an article instructed one to "walk the Disley way." Even in one of the local hostelries there are footprints on the dashboard—or was it the ceiling—upside down. Truly the suctionist epoch with a vengeance. I was informed that the market had been caught short in Honorary Custodians, and with a view to lightening their burden, potential members would have to do a course in domestic economy and chores. I take it this would be run under the auspices of the C.C.P.R. or W.V.S.

I was indeed relieved on glancing up at Tryfan to see that Adam and Eve had not been tampered with. Perhaps I should here hasten to explain for the benefit of some person or persons unknown who have not yet reached the crest of Tryfan, that Adam and Eve are the two large stones standing side by side in the rarified atmosphere of the summit's highest point. They somehow lend themselves to the handiwork of some budding bearded Picasso, for chiselling holes in the wrong places and twisting their conventional outlines into sensuous curves. Hence my relief when they appeared as mother nature has decreed.

On my way to Helyg my thoughts turned to what diabolical changes I might find there. Would I plunge into an organised meet of Mars men or Abominable Snowmen? Perhaps even a

robot custodian ! Would there be a Rolls-Royce, or a Harpsichord parked in the loft ? I was ready for almost anything. However, on entering I was greeted with what appeared to be the sound of bees swarming, and momentarily concluded emigration must be taking place from the Bees' Buttress. My error was short lived, however, when I spotted the Honorary Custodian in characteristic attitude, with a mop in one hand and his electric razor in the other, chanting a Helyganda Calypso. Here, I thought, was something harking back to the "near Gully epoch" and at last I could relax in my memories.

Should I be very naive in asking someone to take me for a gentle amble up Route II, when I could once again examine the Quartz Babe, or should I have an afternoon at the London Zoo studying the habits of Tigers ?



FIRST FACE NORD

S. G. McH. CLARK

FOR the fourth time in 1956, Mike Gravina and I arrived at Plan de l'Aiguille. By now our visits had become routine, like the bad weather which accompanied us, and the five hundred francs changed hands without comment. As on the other three occasions, polite hopes were expressed that it would be fine for us tomorrow. "Peut-être . . . je ne sais pas . . . j'espère . . .": murmuring the usual formalities we repaired to dinner in the barn.

It was fine. On the moraine we stopped. Dawn was coming, but the North Face of the Aiguille du Plan hid in its shadows, the spur merging in the wall behind, the hanging glacier invisible. At last, after so many disappointments, we were on the way. "We'll get up it if it takes five camps," said Mike, and the snow crunched under his foot. It was getting light as we left the glacier and moved onto the rocks. After a few feet Mike suggested roping—a sensible suggestion, but one which became irrelevant before a sudden discovery I made at that moment. If we were where we thought we were, on the left of the spur below the hanging glacier of the Plan, the icefall over to the left should be that of the Blaitière. As it was undoubtedly that of the Plan hanging glacier, it became distressingly clear to me that we were not only on the wrong route, but on the wrong mountain. Once agreed on this we abandoned our involuntary attempt on the North Ridge of the Peigne, and crept sheepishly away to resume the North Face of the Plan.

We reached the foot of this spur, which leads up to the ice section of the route in some 1,500 feet, with the loss of half an hour, and climbed rotten chimneys on the right to the ridge. From here we were able to get some idea of the conditions. After the recent snowstorms we had expected to find everything somewhat snowbound, and we were not disappointed. The face of the Blaitière and the walls below the Pointe de Lépiney were hoary with sheets of ice and snow, and there was no doubt we

were in for a hard time. However, the lower part of the spur was free, and we made fast progress up easy rock to the third gendarme. Here one traverses right for some way; one pitch, a chimney choked with decaying flakes and tottering blocks, provided a neat lesson in the art of climbing without actually touching the rock. About the level of this traverse the snow and ice we had observed from below began to show itself, and the passage of IV which leads back to the arête was submerged beneath a long tongue of ice. Eventually I managed to excavate a route after completely stripping the pitch with the hammer; it took over an hour to do the fifty feet, a rather trying lead. Mike followed and led the easier continuation to the arête very fast, but by the time I had joined him we were well behind time.

The ridge ahead was covered with snow, and gave us much trouble. We were slowed by the need to clear the ice crust away to find the route and holds, and our speed dropped. One pitch on the Blaitière side was so insecure that we used four pitons to force it. It was with greatly revised ideas of our eventual time at the summit that at long last we reached the top of the spur, and had a ten minute rest for lunch. We had hoped that conditions on the glacier might be better otherwise a bivouac looked possible, for although the guide time from the hut to the top of the spur was only five and a half hours, here we were, after a 3.30 a.m. start, and it was now 1 p.m.

It was a good lunch place, rather better than the lunch. The views were extremely impressive, with the face of the Blaitière across the little basin to the left, and the sheer north wall of the Pélerins, swept by falling ice, beyond the final plunge of the Plan icefall. From here the Aiguille du Peigne looked no more than a gendarme on the skyline, but sharp and smooth as a needle.

We started once again, and Mike led off onto the glacier. Almost immediately we were at grips with difficult ice, and used a peg to safeguard the initial steep wall. Then we were able to test the snow conditions on an easier slope, but it was late in the day and too soon after the recent storms; we sank deep in new powder. At the top of this we met the first crux, a steep wall, started by a steeper scoop. Mike led up and traversed left, having to cut for his crampons for the first runout. From his peg we reached hard snow-ice and were able to continue on the pick, toe kicking. I was glad of my twelve points.

To add to our troubles the afternoon clouds rolled up at this stage, and reduced visibility to about thirty feet. Finding the best route among the séracs must be sufficiently awkward when you can see; in this cloud it became a real problem, and we had constantly to make decisions blindfold. It was useless to wait, and as it turned out the cloud lifted only once during the whole time we were on the glacier. Miraculously we contrived to avoid an impasse, and gradually gained height, moving first left, then up, then back right. Here the clouds kindly drifted aside for a few moments, and after a breathless running traverse under a large sérac I was able to see the route before they returned. Engulfed once more I led up to the second crux, a very delicate move round a bulge, up and over into a steep little couloir. I belayed in a cave, and Mike started, but soon stepped back to leave his rucksack. Without it he was just in balance, and cutting handholds edged out to a precarious position on the bulge, one hand trying to extricate his hammer, the other gripping the driven pick of the axe to keep him in. It was tense; the hammer stuck in its holster, came, and stuck again; the pick began to slip back and he bent over it to hold it in. It was very quiet; I fingered the rope on the belay. Mike swore and the hammer came; a handhold was made, and it was over. "Sack!" Up it went like a helpless turtle, belly up, pawing feebly at the ice. I put mine on, and teetered up the bulge on my little front points. I suddenly noticed one had broken off, and wondered if Snell's would replace it. A piton brought me back to the present. It was a tough one. Eventually, knuckles bleeding, I dug it out, horribly contorted.

Thereafter we were back to sock-deep snow, weary stuff which balled in the points and gave as the full weight was put in the steps. I struggled on, making the movements automatically now. After each kick the uncertainty as the leg straightened: sometimes the step held, sometime jarred a few inches deeper; and each time the unseen axe struck the free foot dully. The clouds were below us now, but we were too tired to care or even to look at the view we had so desired lower down. Above, the summit rocks were autumn red in the late sun, beckoning us up this last slope. In and straighten, and the axe hurt as it missed the crampon and struck the shin; a hundred steps and rest. The Crocodile came level, and then at last we trod the harder snow to the rock. As we took off crampons my left hand betrayed me

as usual and snapped shut with cramp. I knew I could not lead a rock pitch now, but Mike had been spared the trail breaking below and seemed to find a new lease of life as he reached the top remarkably quickly. Deriving much comfort from the rope I joined him.

For a few moments we enjoyed the tremendous view around us. It was eight o'clock and the Aiguille Verte and Mont Blanc were glowing in the last warm rays of the sun. Over the Chamonix Valley a great sea of clouds stretching as far as we could see, lapped softly against the Aiguille du Midi. Some photographs, and it was time to go. After fifteen hours on the climb the spirit was willing enough, but we shambled down to the snow like a pair of old men.

We admitted to each other that we felt more tired than ever before; this made us feel much better and we were able to make steady progress down to the Glacier d'Envers du Plan, mainly by a slow and restful sitting glissade. Mike shot the little rimaye comfortably, but stopped on the far edge: I was close behind, and so, after a brief rest on the bridge, plopped gently in. By the time I had emerged from my grotto, night had fallen, and a bright moon was coming up over the Grandes Jorasses, as we tottered down the awkwardly crevassed glacier. It was not until we were a long way down that we met the hoped for tracks: it seemed that the Plan had not been climbed by the normal route since the storms. The path led us to a short rock section. The moonlight was lost on this, so we abandoned a small gnarled peg and slithered swiftly to the snow slope beneath. A traverse brought us to a moraine and a path, and then to the Requin Hut, haven at last.

It was a few moments before midnight, and no sign of life within. We sat around eating oranges and sugar lumps for a while, and then went upstairs. The blanket room was soon found, and snores led us to the various dortoirs; they were incredibly full. Heaven knows how the occupants ever got out in the morning; it was certainly impossible for us to get in. However, the last room had several places, and we thankfully made ourselves at home.

Next morning someone mentioned casually that it was the guides' room. But no-one seemed to mind, and we were too happy to care.

CRAIG COWARCH

R. E. LAMBE

CRAIG COWARCH, in the Arans, has been mentioned from time to time in climbing journals, for instance in *Climbers' Club Journal* 1950 (with a picture, p. 69), but few people seem to realise its potentialities. Part of the reason may be the rather scathing comments on the Arans written by Owen Glynne Jones in Haskett Smith's *Climbing in the British Isles*. His remarks may be true of the east face of the Arans proper, though there is an area of clean rock high up on Benllyn which might repay exploration ; but Craig Cowarch offers a very different prospect. One can only conclude that O.G.J. was unaware of the crag's existence, which is strange since its North Gully at least ought to have attracted him. Now, however, after more than half a century of neglect, the crag has been receiving considerable attention, especially from members of The Mountain Club, and it is being demonstrated that the highest massif in Wales outside Eryri contains a climbing ground that may eventually attain equal status with others many years its senior.

Climbing began on Craig Cowarch in 1907, when a party of members of the Rucksack Club held their Easter meet there, having been persuaded to do so by C. H. Pickstone, who had spent his boyhood in the valley, or at least at Aber Cowarch at its foot. They naturally concentrated on the gullies, and the three dividing the main buttresses were climbed. An attempt on a direct ascent of the South Buttress was not successful, and various other possibilities which were tried did not yield either. The same Club returned in 1915, when Pickstone was their president, again at Easter, but the end of the meet found nothing new achieved, and on this occasion North Gully, though attempted, remained inviolate. In the following year's *Rucksack Club Journal* Pickstone wrote: "In view of the meticulous accuracy with which every potty little 'crack' in Cumberland has been exploited—'with variations'—it is inexplicable why this fine crag remains neglected." In spite of this *cri de cœur*,

however, he does not seem to have been able to arouse any more enthusiasm amongst his fellows, and there is no record of anyone climbing in the area during the next thirty-five years.

1950 found P. R. J. Harding, accompanied by N. L. Horsfield, exploring the possibilities, but the only thing which can be definitely established is that they climbed the short side of the fine pinnacle which lies well to the south of the main buttresses, and called it the Shark's Fin. On a later occasion they tried to force a route up the North Buttress, but were unsuccessful. Horsfield having left the country, Harding continued his explorations with D. Kay, and in 1952 they succeeded in making a route up the North Buttress ; but the line seems now to have been lost. Kay climbed the pinnacle by its long frontal arête and visited the crag on various occasions, but emigrated to Australia and left no record of his doings. At about the time that Peter Harding's visits tailed off I first discovered the crag for myself, and began visiting the area with fellow members of The Mountain Club. Some exploration was done, but progress was slow until the Club took over Tyn-y-Twll, a farm house at the head of the valley, at the beginning of 1955. It is from this time that most of the existing routes have been done. Many more people from numerous clubs have visited the valley and climbed there, but with at least two dozen members having already participated in first ascents, The Mountain Club can certainly claim to be taking a leading part in developing the rock-climbing possibilities of the area.

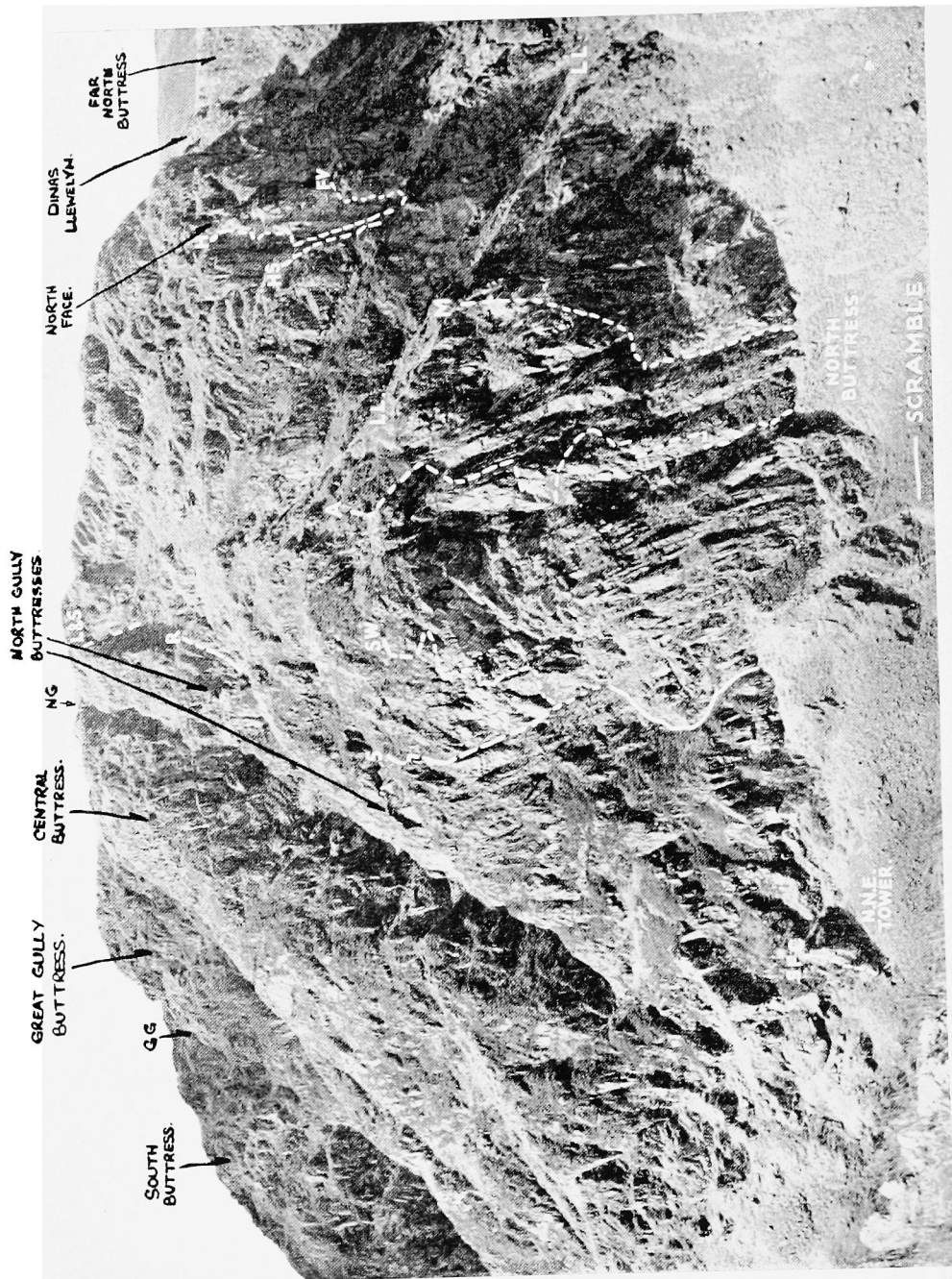
The crags stand at the head of Cwm Cowarch, some three miles practically due north of Dinas Mawddwy. The hill rising behind the crags bears no name on the Ordnance Survey map despite its bulk and eminence of 2,557 feet (National Grid reference SH837195). A surprising feature of the summit is Llyn-y-Fign, quite a sizable pool only 50 feet below the cairn, surely the highest in Wales ? On a clear day one can verify from this viewpoint that Wales is truly a land of mountains ; there can be few finer viewpoints in the Principality.

To reach Cowarch by public transport can prove awkward. From the Midlands leave the train at Cemmaes Road in the Dovey Valley and, with luck, catch a bus to Dinas Mawddwy. The nearest approach by rail is to Drws-y-Nant station on the Bala-Dolgelly line. From there a three-mile walk over the 1,900 foot

pass to the south of the Arans will bring one beneath the North Face. Those travelling by road will encounter a very sharp rise immediately after the sharp and narrow turning into the valley at Aber Cowarch. Camping is allowed anywhere on the common (Fawnog Fawr) and on some farmland, but we have to be careful not to trespass when approaching the crag, since complaints have already been made. Beware also of dogs : more than once campers have returned to find food gone and tent damaged. The cottage of Tyn-y-Twll may be used by members of clubs after prior application to The Mountain Club Hut Warden, c/o 73 Wolverhampton Road, Stafford. A new routes book and a first-aid kit are available there.

Craig Cowarch is not a single rock face, but consists of many separate buttresses and faces which have a frontage of about a mile and a half on the map. The topography is complicated. The maximum height is reached at the northern end, where the South, Central and North Buttresses stretch some 700 - 800 feet from top to bottom ; the longest climbing routes are, however, not more than 500 feet. The lack of definite features in this mass of rock tends to make the lines taken by some of the routes somewhat tenuous ; but this need not interfere with their enjoyment, since they are not often artificial, nor do they strive for difficulty for its own sake. Much of the rock is extremely steep, and this is not always obvious until one is actually on it. At present many of the routes involve handling vegetable matter of doubtful security, and some of the climbing tends to be dangerous on this account ; but more gardening should improve this. Climbing having started here at a late date, the general standard is high, for the larger and steeper faces attracted attention first. The more broken and less steep crags are more verdant, but cleaning often reveals good rock, and in such places there is scope for more routes of lower standard to give the crag more general appeal. Pitons have been used on several routes, and there is already one completely mechanised route, Purge, on the 300 foot south face of Tap-y-Gigfran (Crag of the Carrion Crow), towards the southern end of the crags.

It is hoped to publish shortly a complete guide-book to the crags with details of the many routes that have been made there. Meanwhile, as a foretaste, the photograph opposite the next page shows the northern end of the crag.



The North-North-East Tower, with its South Face Crack climb, is obvious at the foot of the North Gully. The North Gully is a sound gully climb of the old type, with the hardest pitch at the top and immediately below it a narrow chockstone pitch, called the Tombstone by the pioneers, Houghton, Ewen and others, at Easter 1907. Farther right is the start of Styx and of Stygian Wall, the former climbed by D. Adcock and F. Williams, the latter by Adcock and J. Sumner. Both routes are very severe, and Stygian Wall has been compared to Longland's, both for difficulty and for quality. A steep approach over rock and heather leads to two trees below an overhanging wall. The first pitch is the white slab going up left under the overhanging wall. Styx continues up the groove below the wall, but Stygian Wall takes a zig-zag course to the right up the wall itself. A groove near the top requires a piton.

Further to the right, round the toe of the Buttress, is Acheron, a long climb of very severe standard made by Tony Moulam and myself in May 1956. It starts at the foot of the grassy couloir left of the most prominent rib of the Buttress. We thought it a good climb, varied and inescapable. Fifty feet farther right is The Midlander, another Very Severe, made by Biven and Peck. It starts up an obvious wet and mossy slab.

Also visible in the photograph, some way round to the right at a higher level, are three shorter but interesting climbs called Hope Street (Very Difficult), Hopsit (Hard Severe) and First Visit (Very Severe). Hopsit is perhaps the best. The line is obvious, but it is by no means easy, and a piton and even an *étrier* may be found useful.

These are only a few of the climbs. I recommend this area, unspoiled and little frequented, most warmly. There are still many obvious possibilities of new routes. For further details of what has been done already, I refer those interested to the log-book at Tyn-y-Twll. I should be grateful if anyone who does anything new or unusual would, if possible, enter details in the log-book, and also, especially if that has not been done, send details to me, R. E. Lambe, 191 Broadstone Road, Reddish, Stockport.

BEFORE AUTUMN

As the clouds form upon the hills in autumn
the damp grass flattens under the cloven feet;
black rock is greasy, and the voice of water
falls, falls, falls with an inner stealthiness
like an old blind man that mutters in his sleep;

like an old blind man that talks in his last sleep
stirred to response by voices on dream-breezes,
plays without power to hurt; for the wind recalls
images only, thyme scent; his brows are damp
where the mist globes heatherly and slowly freezes.

Where the rain globes heatherly and nightly freezes
where the sheep seem stones, and stones may cry aloud,
where the mist searches whining in the cwms and crannies
for her lost children that fall with an inner stillness,
the wan raven makes merry in a misty shroud.

The black stranger makes merry in the sifting cloud
and picks the bones of summer. No recall.
If there were men who spoke with chattering voices
shall the stones repeat their void and empty phrases
or the hill echo to a dead footfall ?

When the hill echoes to a dead footfall
so soon shall it syllogise, ache with a sense of sin,
rack itself inly with words, murder its neighbour,
arrogate power for a broken principle, forget,
or conscience-soiled, set up a God within.

Conscience and power, prayers and God and sin,
vexation, kindness, even love, man-thoughts, flying
down the amoral wind like early snow
over the ancient, innocent hilltop that does not know
panic finality of man's dwarf-cycle dying.

Sensing the drum of feet towards yearly dying
I would walk there in the aseptic, unquerulous wind,
my damp hair flattened under the hand of mist,
touch the grey rock, wait for a revelation,
sorrow for my sorrow, but world-long, without end.

World-death for mine, the god slain without end,
expressed in colour of the soft Octobral sphagnum,
expressed in the gaunt gesture of the patient crag.
See, resignation. "Swim in destructive element immersed,"
As hills that breast a sea of cloud in autumn.

As clouds are torn upon the hills in autumn
damp grass is flattened under tormented feet;
patience of nature in the voice of water
that falls, falls, falls with an inner stillness
like the forgotten god that turns again to sleep.

G.J.S.

NEW CLIMBS AND NOTES

I. SNOWDONIA

JOHN NEILL

GENERAL

During the greater part of 1956 the weather was poor, but the most was made of the occasional fine spells by numerous active parties in North Wales and some fine climbing has been done. Several major outstanding problems were solved, including the White Slab on Clogwyn-du'r-Arddu, the complete girdle of the main part of Dinas-y-Gromlech, the face between Ogof Direct and Outside Edge, Cwm Silyn, and the great slabs between Poor Man's Peuterey and Scratch, Tremadoc. Details of these climbs are given later.

The number of climbers capable of leading the routes pioneered by J. Brown and other members of the Rock and Ice Club has increased considerably, and such climbs as Hangover, the Sickie, Erosion Grooves, Cemetery Gate, the Corner and East Gully Grooves have achieved some popularity. To the list given last year of leaders, and others sharing the lead, on such climbs must be added the names of M. W. Harvey, H. G. Nicol and G. J. Sutton, all members of the Climbers' Club, and H. Smith. Further climbs done include Cenotaph Corner on Dinas-y-Gromlech and Octo and Diglyph on Clogwyn-du'r-Arddu. Cenotaph Corner has been led by H. I. Banner and by R. O. Downes; the latter's party included Miss J. E. M. Clark, sister-in-law of G. J. Sutton and the first woman to do this climb. H. I. Banner's lead of Diglyph was the second ascent of this route, and the first time that one of J. Brown's major routes on Clogwyn-du'r-Arddu has been led by a member of the Climbers' Club, though in the thirties C. F. Kirkus got some way up the climb now called Vember before escaping into Curving Crack. D. T. Roscoe has shared the lead on the White Slab, also a second ascent.

Several new climbs have been made by Club members in mountain districts other than Wales and Cornwall. In accordance with recent practice, most of these climbs will not be recorded here but in the appropriate journals of kindred clubs, for example the *S.M.C. Journal* and the *Alpine Journal*.

Further negotiations about access to the Tremadoc cliffs have taken place during the year. While arrangements are not yet finalised, it appears that parties wishing to climb on Craig Pant-Ifan should apply to Captain Livingstone-Learmonth, the Nature Conservancy or the Cave and Crag Club. Routes of access to Craig Pant-Ifan will be

limited to the paths at the Tan-yr-Allt end and from the road at the Bwlch-y-Moch end, a path along the foot of the cliffs, and Hound's Head and Porker's Gullies. On the two eastern cliffs, to which these restrictions chiefly refer, the prospecting of new routes will be permitted, as will limited gardening activities, provided these are confined to the walls and buttresses; the Nature Conservancy wish to be informed of any intention to carry out gardening.

A. CARNEDDAU

CRAIG BRAICH TY-DU

F SHARP. 130 feet. Very Difficult.

On the small isolated buttress up to the right of F Buttress, separated from it by a grass couloir, across which there is a short wall below the buttress, and at the top of which is an ash tree.

From the toe of the buttress, slightly right, climb a crack to a ledge. Then move left onto the nose, then up, finally by the left edge.

First ascent: 21st May, 1956. J. W. B. Barnes, P. B. Wellings.

DECAMERON RIB—BOCCACCIO'S START. Severe.

The natural way on to the Rib. Start under the rocks on the right of the slab under the *toit* on E. Buttress. From the stance traverse into the groove, delicate, go up to the tree and join Decameron Rib.

First ascent: 7th July, 1956. A. J. J. Moulam, R. F. Jones.

B. TRYFAN AND GLYDER FACH

TRYFAN WEST FACE

The following climb is included in the new Tryfan and Glyder Fach guide:

CANNON RIDGE. Just Very Difficult.

First ascent: 9th August, 1956. E. Byne, Miss U. Milner White, F. Tomney, B. Thorneycroft.

MILESTONE BUTTRESS

BISHOP'S GUT. 90 feet. Very Severe.

Goes up the left wing by the "sheer square corner" of the second wall—i.e. presumably the corner right of Hangman's Wall. About 30 feet left of the corner, go up the steep little groove and to the right to the grass ledge. Traverse downwards to the right to the foot of the corner proper. Climb the corner, not without interest.

First ascent: 18th September, 1956. J. R. Lees, J. W. B. Barnes, A. R. Gordon-Cumming.

GLYDER FACH EAST FACE

GREAT TOWER BUTTRESS

In the new guide the first ascent of this is credited to C. H. S. R. Palmer in 1944. Probably, however, it more or less coincides with Short Wall Climb made by A. D. M. Cox and J. R. Jenkins on 13th June, 1937.

GLYDER FACH MAIN CLIFF

The following two routes on Dolmen Buttress have recently been claimed as new routes. It is doubtful however whether there are any possible lines hereabouts which have been left untouched by military parties.

ETHELRED. 150 feet. Mild Severe.

Take a steep straight line on the Buttress, starting from the same place as Route I.

Ascended: 15th September, 1956. J. W. B. Barnes, W. J. Halford.
EBEDIW. 160 feet. Severe.

Goes up the line of weakness in the buttress between Routes I and II, slightly right of the central depression, starting at a cairn 30 feet left of Route I.

Ascended: 4th August, 1956. J. R. Lees, M. Driscoll.

The following climb is given in detail in the new guide-book:

GIRDLE TRAVERSE OF EAST BUTTRESS. 365 feet. Very Difficult.

Followed: 23rd June, 1956. A. J. J. Moulam and G. J. Sutton.

C. CWM IDWAL AND GLYDER FAWR

GRIBIN FACET

NÉE LANGLEY. 120 feet. Very Severe.

On the West Wing. Probably not a first ascent.

Start: 10 feet left of the start of Flake Crack, up a steep groove. From the steep groove a ledge level with the cave behind the Flake is reached, then a tree on the left. Two cracks continue to the top.

Ascended: 21st July, 1956. R. James, R. L. Roberts, W. M. Macleod.
NAMELESS CWM

A climb, LASSITUDE, done on 6th July, 1956, by R. J. H. Chambers has been described on the apparently very vegetated slabs opposite Suicide Wall. It starts at a slight recess 10 yards left of the lowest point of the slabs and follows a slight rib coming down from an overlap at 100 feet. Another climb was done 10 yards to the right at the same time. These are not new, and not worth detailed description.

D. LLIWEDD

FAR EAST BUTTRESS

ROUTE III. 410 feet. Hard Very Difficult.

The lower part is steep and exposed.

Start: On the Terrace, left of the Great Chute, and 8-10 feet left of the break in the Terrace where it steepens and comes up close to the main face (where it forms a little brownish wall facing east). From here the top of pitch (5) can be seen as the overhanging bottom right-hand corner of the steep east wall of a boldly-built tower.

(1) 100 feet. Very steep broken rock up a low-relief bulge.

(2) 80 feet. Continue, as pitch (1), to a sloping terrace at the foot of slabs.

(3) 50 feet. Up the left edge of the slabs to a belay.

(4) 70 feet. Continue, as pitch (3), to a break.

(5) 60 feet. Continue in the same line to a pile of bollards at the foot of the vertical wall.

(6) 70 feet. From the main bollard attain the right-hand edge of the wall by a long stride and an awkward pull-up onto a ledge and continue up the ridge forming the edge of the wall. Then about 100 feet of scrambling to the summit, taking in an interesting 20 foot wall in the direct line.

Ascended: 14th July, 1956. D. A. Lomas, J. Lomas.

E. LLANBERIS—NORTH

DINAS-Y-GROMLECH

A new route (XS) has been made by J. Brown and D. Whillans on the face well to the left of and separated from the main cliff (the Thumb is in this neighbourhood). Details are not yet available.

ROUTE LEFT OF PARCHMENT PASSAGE. 100 feet. Severe.

Left of the lower part of Parchment Passage is a corner topped on the left by a large heather terrace. From the ledge rise three corners, the two right-hand ones converging towards the bottom. The wall between the left-hand and central corners has a small grassy ledge at half height. The climb takes the centre of the wall, trending to the right. One pitch.

Ascended: May, 1953. G. J. Millwood, A. Taylor.

ROUTE LEFT OF CENOTAPH CORNER. 120 feet. Extremely Severe (artificial).

A short though very exposed route up the thin crack in the left wall of Cenotaph Corner. Slings are used for direct aid and progress is rather slow and trying. Three pitons were used to overcome the last 30 feet.

Start: At the top of the Forest and on the edge of the wall of Cenotaph Corner.

(1) 120 feet. The wall to the right appears impossible but hidden pockets lead to a good spike above. Now move right to the crack curving up to the top of Cenotaph Corner and follow this with increasing difficulty. It soon becomes impossible to move and one must resort to the use of chockstones and slings for direct aid. After 50 feet another even narrower crack breaks off to the left and goes straight up a light streak to the top. With the aid of three pitons follow this crack to rather shaky holds leading left to the arête. Easy climbing now to a good stance and belay.

First ascent: 6th May, 1956. R. Moseley, J. Smith, J. Sutherland.

A direct start to this climb has been made by D. Whillans.

CROCKETT CRACK

An alternative start to Neb's Crawl, a few yards left of the usual start. An awkward step into the crack, vegetated. About 40 feet.

Ascended: 21st April, 1956. M. H. J. Baylis, J. F. Pagella.
 THE GIRDLE TRAVERSE. 755 feet. Extremely Severe (artificial).

Start: At the foot of Parchment Passage.

(1) 90 feet. Straight up to the holly at the top of pitch (2) of Parchment Passage.

(2) 50 feet. Climb a few feet above the tree then traverse right into Cobweb Crack, down this for 8 feet then hand-traverse on jams round to the right to stance and belay in Pharaoh's Passage.

(3) 40 feet. Climb down and round the corner on the right to stance and belay above pitch (2) of Pharaoh's Wall.

(4) 60 feet. Traverse across the wall ascending diagonally to the right to stance and belay on Holly Buttress.

(5) 110 feet. Traverse right and down to join Dives Route. Follow this to the Forest then up to stance and belay on the edge of the left wall of Cenotaph Corner.

(6) 100 feet. For this and the following pitch two ropes were used, to enable the rope moves to be made and for the protection of the second man.

From the stance climb the arête for about 8 feet, then go round on to the wall, where there is a piton. From the peg step right to a thin crack and climb this to a good spike formed by the flake crack. Fix a runner, then descend 10 feet. The next move is made by leaning across on the rope to reach a pocket on the right, after which the end of a horizontal break is reached and is followed into Cenotaph Corner. Climb up the corner to where the crack is widest. Stance in sling from a piton.

(7) 50 feet. Climb up the corner to a chockstone, fix a running belay then descend again to the start of the obvious traverse line across the right-hand wall. Start with the feet on the traverse, lean across on the rope and plant a piton as high up the rising traverse as possible, move up and across to a small ledge at the top of the rise and continue as a hand-traverse, with the feet in a sling on a small spike, until good holds can be reached. Continue to the stance on Cemetery Gate.

(8) 45 feet. Traverse to the arête round the corner, descending slightly on rather friable holds, then straight across to the tree in Ivy Sepulchre.

(9) 50 feet. A descending traverse by ledges leads to the heather terrace on Jericho Wall.

(10) 160 feet. As for Horseman's Route, pitches (6)-(8).

First ascent: 1st April, 1956. D. Whillans and J. Brown.

CARREG WASTAD

LITTLE WIZZER. 150 feet. Medium Severe.

This climb is not on Carreg Wastad proper, but on the wall above and to the right of it (i.e. beyond Bryant's Gully?).

Start: At the foot of a tree in the small cwm at the base of the crag.

(1) 30 feet. Go up, angling right, to a spike belay.

(2) 60 feet. A short step up to a large quartz ledge; go along this for 12 feet, then back again at a higher level and up the overhanging wall on small fingerholds. Stance and belay to the left.

(3) 60 feet. Traverse left to a conspicuous V groove then go up on very small fingerholds just to the right. Round the corner to finish on a rounded slab.

First ascent: 15th April, 1956. P. H. Biven, H. T. M. Peck.

CRAIG DDU

The two routes by Brown and Whillans described in last year's Journal have now been named: (a) is called SCROG, and (b) is YELLOW GROOVE.

CRAIG-Y-RHAEADR

THE GIRDLE TRAVERSE. About 750 feet.

In normal conditions (which are very wet) the standard is Hard Very Severe. The leader needs 150 feet of rope.

The route starts from a grassy bay at the right-hand end of the crag and takes a gently rising line to the left over very grassy rocks.

From an obvious corner traverse left to the top of an overhung shallow groove. Descend this groove and traverse left again into Waterfall Climb Direct Start.

Ascend a few feet and come out on to a great shelf swept by falling water. Traverse easily to the far end. Continue to traverse left until the line of weakness ascends diagonally up to an awkward corner. Above this, traverse left to a region of grass and then ascend diagonally across a clean wall to a poor stance. Again traverse left to a spike on the skyline and from this go diagonally up to finish on an obvious terrace with a cave part way along.

First ascent: 29th April, 1956. R. Moseley, J. R. Sutherland.

CYRN LAS

DRUID'S DILEMMA. Severe.

A rising traverse of the left-hand part of the crag. Start up Main Wall, and from pitch (2) traverse from the top of the slabs up left across grass to a stance in Great Gully 40 feet above the overhanging wall. From here go up 30 feet and traverse left to a grass ledge on the edge of the gully. Then up insecure grass to another grass ledge about 60 feet away. Traverse right on grass to a stance on the edge of the second rib going left from the gully (40 feet). Continue the traverse across on easy slabs to a stance on the edge of the gully above its pitch (4). Then up the steep rib for 30 feet. Traverse left awkwardly past a spike to a narrow ledge (belays at left hand-end). Straight up the flake and finally up the overhanging crack to easy ground (40 feet).

Ascended: 6th August, 1956. R. C. Evans, C. J. Simpson, E. J. Clegg.

CLOGWYN-DU'R-ARDDU

The climb by Brown and Whillans on the Far East Buttress reported in last year's Journal has now been named WOUBITS.

THE ORB. 190 feet. Just Very Severe.

An obvious corner guarded by a short wall and situated on the enormous grass terrace of Jubilee Climb.

(1) 20 feet. Climb a thin crack to gain the bottom right-hand end of a grass shelf leading into the corner. Large pedestal belay.

(2) 95 feet. Straight up the corner, jamming and laybacking. After 40 or 50 feet the angle eases and a few feet higher broken rocks lead to shattered pinnacles on the left.

(3) 75 feet. Climb the deep chimney and grassy corner above to the top.

First ascent: 1st April, 1956. R. Moseley, J. Smith.

TAURUS. 130 feet. Extremely Severe.

The route takes the groove on the left side of the Pinnacle, directly above Sunset Crack.

Start: At the foot of the groove.

(1) 130 feet. Climb the groove, first by the crack then by holds on the right wall to the overhang. Traverse left to a large spike (running belay). A few feet higher is a piton. Climb direct, mainly on under-pulls, to the second overhang. Surmount this then traverse right and climb the arête to the top.

First ascent: 24th July, 1955. D. Whillans, J. Brown.

THE WHITE SLAB. 545 feet. Exceptionally Severe.

Separating the Middle Rock from the West Buttress is a wet break. Some 100 feet right of this the overhangs peter out for a few feet where a rib of rock abuts against them. Start a few feet left of this rib.

(1) 60 feet. Make a difficult pull over the overhang and traverse left into a wet groove; cross this and continue up to the stance of Bow-Shaped Slab. Care should be taken to protect the last man on the first few feet.

(2) 80 feet. As for Bow-Shaped Slab. Alternatively, after stepping round from the stance continue up the slanting groove to the left. This is more difficult than the Bow-Shaped way.

(3) 120 feet. Reverse the first few moves of Linnell's Jump and then continue up the edge of the White Slab itself. From a good spike step up to the right and as high as possible insert a piton in order to gain a good flake. Step back on to the edge again and make an awkward traverse into the groove on the left. This leads to a small stance with piton belay.

(4) 45 feet. Traverse back to the edge of the slab and lasso a good spike on the opposite side. With the aid of the rope cross over and climb leftwards to an awkward stance where Sheaf breaks away to the right.

(5) 120 feet. Keeping close to the edge go straight up the slab above to a good resting place at 60 feet. This is thin work with very poor protection. Step up a few feet and follow a line of holds into the corner on the right. A piton was used on this section for aid while gardening. Climb the corner with some difficulty and traverse left at the top to a stance and belay round the arête.

(6) 30 feet. Traverse left on to Longland's Climb and follow this to the crevasse stance.

(7) 90 feet. As for Longland's Climb. Several stances etc.

First ascent: 19th April, 1956. R. Moseley, J. Smith.

The first three pitches had been led previously by J. Brown using the same number of pitons and seconded by J. R. Allen and R. Moseley. On the first ascent the start of Narrow Slab was taken to save time for gardening the upper pitches. On the second ascent, by D. Whillans and D. T. Roscoe on 20th April, 1956, the complete climb, as described above, was done.

The climb left of Red Slab made by Whillans and Betts, reported in last year's Journal, has been named SLANTING SLAB.

I am indebted to D. Belshaw of the Rock and Ice Club for information for this and the previous section.

G. CWELLYN AREA

LLECHOG FACET

BATELIA. 130 feet. Mild Severe.

A fine slab climb, though short, starting at the foot of the same buttress as for Bar Steward and going first to the grass ledge, thence straight to the top.

First ascent: 6th April, 1956. J. W. Marshall, B. W. S. Marshall.

CASTELL CIDWM

FRESHER'S FOLLY. 135 feet. Very Severe.

On the buttress across the stream left of the south wall of Afon Goch. Not exposed.

Start: Left of a large dark cave on a wall just left of a heather groove, directly above the quarry.

(1) 25 feet. Up the wall for 8 feet to a niche, then a diagonal traverse left to a heather stance (flake belay high on left).

(2) 25 feet. Step left to the belay then right across the wall until a direct movement can be made to the ledge above and to the left (piton left here; piton belay on the ledge).

(3) 45 feet. Step right into the groove and mantelshelf on to a triangular grass ledge. Straight up the crack above to a grassy terrace (block belay).

(4) 40 feet. Up the rib between a wet crack on the right and a mossy slab; then easier climbing to the top.

First ascent: 21st October, 1956. R. Wilson, C. Buckley.

CRAIG-Y-BERA

HANNER CORON. 75 feet. Difficult.

West of Sentries' Ridge is a nearly vertical wall, 70 feet high. At the south end is a steep grassy groove and then an obvious route in the corner of the wall. The finish is on the left looking down into the grassy groove.

First ascent: 4th April, 1956. K. C. Treacher, E. H. Hulton.

CRAIG CWM SILYN: CRAIG-YR-OGOF

OGOF DIRECT: DIRECT FINISH. 70 feet. Hard Very Severe.

Continues immediately above the crux on the original route, bearing slightly left to finish up the top pitch of Outside Edge.

(1) 25 feet. Climb the overhanging corner crack with aid from a piton. Piton belay.

(2) 45 feet. Climb the corner on the right then bear slightly right to the foot of the top pitch of Outside Edge.

First ascent: 11th August, 1956. H. Smith, R. Handley, C. T. Jones. BRIGGS' CLIMB. 200 feet. Very Severe +A3 (because of insecure pitons).

Between Ogo Direct and Outside Edge. 14 pitons used.

This climb had been attempted on numerous previous occasions. The name commemorates, in spite of the objections of the party concerned, an attempt on 18th March, 1956, by D. H. Briggs and D. P. Davis, during which for the first time a considerable height was reached on the line which was eventually used by the successful party.

Start: 30 feet left of Outside Edge Direct Start.

(1) 80 feet. Up the dièdre—greasy but not hard. Belay and poor stance.

(2) 30 feet. Climb the back of the dièdre; pitons may be used. Traverse left to a piton stance.

Or—traverse diagonally left to the rib bounding the dièdre on its left and so up; probably better climbing (done by Briggs and Davis).

(3) 90 feet. A nasty-looking overhang is directly above; reach it by free climbing (Very Severe). Traverse left under the overhang, then climb the left-hand bounding crack by very loose pegging, and so up a slab to a niche. Make a long step left then go pleasantly up steep rocks with holds, to the big grassy ledge on the Ordinary Route.

First ascent: 26th May, 1956. H. G. Nicol and T. D. Bourdillon.

CENTRAL ROUTE

A line apparently corresponding to this was led on 30th June, 1946, by C. Preston.

H. SNOWDON SOUTH AND WEST

(a) NANTGWYNANT

CRAG ABOVE POWER STATION

This is the large very broken crag high up the hillside just below the power station. It is about 300-400 yards further up the valley than

the North Buttress of Clogwyn-y-Bustach, from which it is separated by a stream and low rocks, and is considerably higher up the hillside. The front face consists of two long very broken ribs with a gully between; round the corner to the left is a smaller but more satisfactory face.

GOEBBELS. 145 feet. Hard Difficult.

On the face round the corner to the left. This has a large overhang in the middle with a big tree-filled niche to the right, and right of this a long, apparently broken rib. The route takes the rib, which is much better than it seems, though care is needed with loose rock and vegetation. The nearest climb to the Pinnacle Club Hut.

Start: At the foot is a tree at the back of a corner, with ribs left and right. Start at a cairn by the left-hand rib.

(1) 20 feet. Pull on to the left-hand rib and go up to a small tree in a wall.

(2) 40 feet. The rib, to a stance on a pinnacle where the face steepens.

(3) 40 feet. Up the steep face, then pull over left to the niche with trees.

(4) 30 feet. Up the face a few feet, then traverse right earthily to a tree.

(5) 15 feet. The dirty corner behind the tree.

First ascent: 9th September, 1956. J. Walmsley and J. Neill.

CLOGWYN-Y-BUSTACH

ANNIVERSARY WALTZ. 120 feet. Very Severe +A2.

Named so because it was first attempted by M. P. Ward, M. H. Westmacott and T. D. Bourdillon on 29th May, 1954.

On the North Buttress.

Start: Directly under the obvious very large overhang in the lowest part of the buttress, about 10 feet right of a detached flake.

(1) 45 feet. Small holds on the smooth wall lead with some artificial aid to a difficult open groove, also climbed by artificial means. Then over an easy slab and up to the belay after Gallop Step pitch (1).

(2) 40 feet. Up the back of the corner on large holds to the overhang. Then traverse left under the roof (A2) to a comfortable stance. Exposed.

(3) 35 feet. Traverse 10 feet left and then climb the wall above, trending slightly right to a large tree.

Or, traverse farther left for an easier line to the top.

First complete ascent: 28th May, 1956. T. D. Bourdillon and M. H. Westmacott.

A previous ascent had been made by the same party plus F. Fitzgerald on 8th January, 1956, using pitch (1) of Gallop Step and the easy variant to pitch (3).

GALLOP STEP. 165 feet. Severe.

Takes the obvious fault going up from left to right across the face of the North Buttress below the big overhang; a very long finger traverse.

Start: At a split-block ledge at the left-hand bottom corner of the buttress.

(1) 65 feet. Finger-traverse diagonally up to the right, thin in parts. At 50 feet pull round the corner strenuously into a niche, exposed (piton belay).

(2) 40 feet. Cross the groove and follow the same line of weakness across the face—loose rock in places. Stance and belay at some ferns.

(3) 60 feet. Continue right easily until one can step off the cliff.

First ascent: 8th January, 1956. J. I. Disley, Miss D. Morin.

TENTH RIB—DIRECT START. 130 feet. Very Difficult.

There is a lower part of Tenth Rib starting deep in the trees and heavily overgrown, finishing at a huge grass ledge leading off left into South Gully under the great final wall. This ledge is reached by pitch (1) of the original start from the Corner of Roots. The new start makes more of a climb.

Start: At the toe of the rib, in the forest.

(1) 30 feet. Up a few feet then left over vegetation to a tree at the foot of the steep wall left of the rib nose.

(2) 60 feet. Diagonally right up the wall to the crest of the rib, up this and finish out left over vegetation to a tree.

(3) 40 feet. Traverse back to the edge and go up to grass ledges. Avoid the gorse above by a step or two to the right, to reach the huge grass ledge. Pitch (2) of the original route is above.

First ascent: 26th January, 1957. M. J. Harris, E. W. Dance, J. Neill.

CLOGWYN DU

CRYSTAL RIB. Difficult (hard).

The rocks on the right of Shadow Gully throw out a long tongue of rock with an overhanging left wall. Above the tongue is a well-marked ridge, with a fairly deep gully on its right. To the right again the rocks are steep at the foot, with a short hanging gully prominent about 100 feet up a little way along. The route takes the steep buttress-ridge immediately left of the hanging gully, and above this follows a sharp little quartz ridge with jolly pinnacles, giving altogether about 200 feet of climbing on very good rock with pitches reminiscent of Tryfan East Face. Above this is only scrambling.

First ascent: 3rd March, 1956. G. W. S. Pigott, J. Neill.

MISTRUST. Very Difficult.

Scrambling up successive bands of easy-angled rock on the front of the long tongue, then ascends the well-marked ridge above, in pitches of 40, 40 and 30 feet, the last being about Very Difficult and steep. Above lie hundreds of feet of scrambling and walking.

First ascent: 3rd March, 1956. G. W. S. Pigott, J. Neill.

CONTEMPT. Severe.

On the main face, to the left of Shadow Ridge, there is a well-marked gully about two-thirds of the way along the steep part of the face, going

up to a little nick in the skyline. Above a preliminary wall there is a little scree amphitheatre out of which the gully rises. To the right is a long deep chimney; the route follows the chimney, getting a better finish artificially by using the steep rocks to the right where the chimney widens at the top into vegetated broken ground. Not more worthy than the name suggests, but one or two interesting pitches.

First ascent: 2nd April, 1956. D. H. Briggs and J. Neill.

RANCOUR. Difficult.

To the left of the well-marked gully is a curving ridge, steep in parts, with a large open gully on the left bounding the main face. The route takes this ridge, giving pleasant climbing on rough rock, which however proves easier than expected, and tails out into rough scrambling.

First ascent: 2nd April, 1956. D. H. Briggs and J. Neill.

All these routes are on better rock than is Shadow Ridge, contrary to earlier reports, and are less artificial.

(b) GLASLYN VALLEY

CRAIG-Y-GELLI

The right-hand of the two routes climbed by Briggs and Dance reported in last year's Journal has been repeated by A. J. J. Moulam and D. Thomas, who consider it quite a worthy little climb and have named it *TUMBLEWEED*. A detailed description is appearing in the *Rucksack Club Journal*.

VIA GELLIA. 120 feet. Very Severe.

Probably much the best climb on this cliff. Short, but interesting and very good while it lasts, on clean rock throughout, though the upper sections are artificial.

Immediately left of the main face and separated from it by a vegetated corner is a steep buttress with an overhang at the foot and a fine slab forming its right flank. The route takes this buttress.

Start: Just below and to the left of the overhang at the foot.

(1) 60 feet. Go a few feet up the groove left of the overhang, then swing across on to the crest of the buttress and climb on the edge or just right of it to a big heathery ledge.

(2) 30 feet. Crux. Get on to the block under the steep face directly above and climb this, starting with awkward moves working up right.

(3) 15 feet. Scramble up the ridge to a large grass platform below the final section.

(4) 15 feet. Pleasantly, straight up the final section of buttress.

First ascent: 17th June, 1956. M. J. Harris, J. Neill, R. F. Jones.

MOEL DDU

The following routes on Moel Ddu have been reported:

EAST FACE

HOLLY BUTTRESS. 240 feet. Very Difficult.

Ascended: 6th May, 1956. J. Trumper, S. Styles.

NORTH EDGE ROUTE. 160 feet. Difficult.

Ascended: 6th May, 1956. J. Trumper, S. Styles.

JUNIPER CRACK. 85 feet. Very Difficult.

Ascended: 6th May, 1956. J. Trumper, S. Styles.

SOUTH FACE

SOUTH FACE ROUTE. 175 feet. Difficult.

Ascended: 6th May, 1956. S. Styles and J. Trumper.

M. J. Harris and J. Neill visited these cliffs on 7th March, 1954, and scrambled up a line which appears to be the same as Holly Buttress. They found the crags so broken that any line would be very artificial, joining up isolated areas of rock separated by heather. They considered that neither was their route worth recording in detail nor was the crag worthy of further exploration.

(c) TREMADOC

CRAIG BWLCH-Y-MOCH

MERLIN. 185 feet. Just Very Severe.

Just right of Rienetta a vegetated weakness runs up, and farther to the right a tiny overgrown chimney.

Start: At the foot of the chimney.

(1) 20 feet. The chimney, to a ledge on the right.

(2) 90 feet. Down the chimney, about 5 feet, and break out on the left wall. From the ivy-covered ledge thus attained gain the overhanging groove. Climb this to its junction with the slabs of Rienetta, and follow these to the belay on that climb.

(3) 60 feet. Climb the sharp-edged crack in the steep wall just to the right from the belay tree, then go over the flake at the top and follow a delicate traverse right. Easy slabs lead to the tree of Oberon.

(4) 15 feet. The crack behind the tree, as for Oberon.

First ascent: 15th April, 1956. A. J. J. Moulam, B. A. Jillott.

Full details of the following climbs, received too late for inclusion here, will be given in next year's Journal.

TRIANGULUM. 160 feet. Hard Severe.

To the left of Hail Bebe.

First ascent: March 1957, H. Smith, H. Fox, J. Sims, C. T. Jones.

GRIM WALL. 200 feet. Hard Very Severe.

To the left of Shadrach.

First ascent: March 1957. H. Smith, C. T. Jones, H. Fox.

CRAIG PANT-IFAN

W.O.B. 175 feet. Very Severe.

Adds a new finish to the variation start of Hogmanay Hangover to make a separate climb.

Start: 10 feet right of the chimney breaking through the obvious line of overhangs left of Hogmanay Hangover.

(1) 25 feet. Up to the right over a small overhang, pulling awkwardly into the subsequent groove on the right. Traverse right for a few feet to a niche (piton belay).

(2) 40 feet. Move up the easy-looking rocks ahead to a long stride right and an obvious traverse to a large shattered ledge (ivy belay).

(3) 30 feet. Up the rib above to vegetation on Hogmanay Hangover. Move left to a small stance.

(4) 40 feet. Step left into a groove and climb up until the wall steepens. Traverse delicately left and climb another groove on the left of the buttress to a stance and chockstone belay.

(5) 40 feet. Up the groove above and break out right to a cave. Exit awkwardly on the right to the top of the cliff.

First complete ascent: 8th July, 1956. D. H. Briggs, A. J. J. Moulam.

RAVEN'S NEST WALL. 200 feet. Very Severe.

On Hogmanay Buttress, left of W.O.B. A good and interesting route, extremely steep. A number of pitons were used, mainly for protection.

A landmark hereabouts is a pillar at the foot of the cliff on the right. The climb starts at a tiny cave some 30 feet left of this pillar.

Start: From the cave; go 30 feet through the bush to a rocky corner.

(1) 50 feet. Climb the slab of slaty rock forming the right-hand side of the corner, which slants to the right and narrows. Break right to the edge and go straight up to the Raven's Nest.

(2) 20 feet. Traverse left to a large ledge (belay on oak above).

(3) 40 feet. From the oak work left round the corner on to the face of a large block (the block does not appear to be attached; a piton placed high and to the right can safeguard against the block coming away). Follow the groove to the ledge on the right above, avoiding use of the large pointed block at the top of the groove, which is loose.

(4) 40 feet. Traverse right at about the same level round the corner to the foot of a clean wide groove.

(5) 50 feet. Climb the groove to the top.

First ascent: 6th October, 1956. G. W. S. Pigott, A. Birtwistle.

PINCUSHION. 210 feet. Severe+A2.

Takes the left-hand of the three clean slabs at the right-hand end of Peuterey Buttress. Numerous attempts had previously been made on this climb by different parties. 16 pitons were used on the first ascent.

Start: 10 feet right of Poor Man's Peuterey.

(1) 50 feet. Climb the rib and past a small tree. Traverse right to a large ledge with two or three large trees under a big square-cut overhang.

(2) 20 feet. Across to the farthest tree on the right.

(3) 110 feet. Climb up to the overhang by a chimney (30 feet)—running belay over pinnacle at top. Traverse left under the over-

hanging roof (several pitons). Immediately after the first bulge in the roof a crack appears in the upper slab. Continue up the crack (many pitons) until 10 feet below the next overhang. Traverse right into the second crack and go up to some trees in a corner under the third overhang.

(4) 30 feet. Traverse horizontally right (pitons) and go up the crack on the edge.

Variation start: Start as Scratch.

(1) 70 feet. Up grass and brambles to the oak at the foot of the middle slab, as Scratch pitch (1).

(2) 30 feet. Descend slightly to the left and then make a difficult swing round the overhang to the oak after pitch (2) of the ordinary route.

First ascent: 6th October, 1956. D. P. Davis, M. J. Harris, the Hon. R. R. E. Chorley.

Variation start: Ascended 31st December, 1955, by J. Brown, R. Handley, E. Price, during an attempt on the climb.

STROMBOLI. 220 feet. Extremely Severe.

On Two-Face Buttress. A very delectable last pitch.

Start: As for Olympic Slab.

(1) 35 feet. }
 (2) 45 feet. } As for Olympic Slab.
 (3) 35 feet. }

(4) 20 feet. Where Olympic Slab traverses left along a ledge, go up a vegetated corner on to a small ledge (tree belay).

(5) 90 feet. Crux. The conspicuous feature of this pitch is three overlapping slabs. Go up 20 feet towards a wide chimney which overhangs at the top. Traverse left under the first overhang for 15 feet then swing up on to the second slab. Go up a groove in the slab and into an overhanging V-chimney. Go up this and on to the third slab; climb this to the final wall (piton for protection). Move to the right up the overhanging wall for the finish.

First ascent: 7th August, 1956. H. Smith, C. T. Jones.

OLYMPIC SLAB—VARIATION TO PITCH (2)

Instead of the right-hand corner, climb the overhanging nose of clean rock on its right, thus avoiding much vegetation.

Ascended: 27th September, 1955. J. H. Longland.

An alternative way of avoiding the unpleasant early sections of this climb is to use pitch (1) of Helsinki Wall, which is more in keeping with the rest of the climb.

Details of the following climbs were received too late for inclusion here. Fuller notes will appear in next year's Journal. Until then, those desiring further information should refer to the log book at Pant Ifan or to the compiler of these notes.

THE GREAT WESTERN. 310 feet. Extremely Severe.

Starts between Pincushion and Poor Man's Peuterey and finishes between the latter and Strapiombo. A very fine climb. No pitons.

First ascent: 19th January, 1957. C. T. Jones, M. Hanson

H. Smith has made an artificial climb up the dièdre directly above the lower parts of Scratch (16 pitons).

KRAKATOA. 280 feet. Hard Severe.

Starts up the flying buttress left of Ave atque Vale, and finishes right of the latter.

First ascent: 7th October, 1956. C. T. Jones, G. Eveson.

THE ARCTIC CIRCLE. 630 feet. Very Severe.

A girdle traverse of Peuterey Buttress.

First ascent: 27th October, 1956. C. T. Jones, H. Smith, C. Pryke, M. Hanson.

ROCK 'N' ROLL. 90 feet. Hard Severe.

On the second buttress on the right of Hound's Head Pinnacle.

First ascent: 8th December, 1956. C. Pryke, N. Knight.

SEVEN LEAGUE CHIMNEY. 190 feet. Very Difficult.

On the right of Hound's Head Pinnacle.

First ascent: 28th October, 1956. C. T. Jones, M. Hanson.

EIFIONYDD WALL. 100 feet. Very Severe.

On the buttress left of Hound's Head Gully, 30 feet above the wall in the gully. A good climb.

First ascent: 24th December, 1956. C. T. Jones, G. Eveson, M. Hanson, K. J. Clarke.

DAMNATION. 80 feet. Hard Severe.

20 feet higher up than Eifionydd Wall.

First ascent: 26th December, 1956. C. T. Jones, B. Ruston.

BRENDA'S GULLY. 60 feet. Very Difficult.

25 feet higher up than Damnation.

First ascent: 2nd February, 1956 (? 1957). C. T. Jones, Miss B. Clarke.

OLYMPIC SLAB. Direct Start. 60 feet. Mild Very Severe.

From the foot of Helsinki Wall to the end of pitch (2) of Olympic Slab.

First ascent: 6th October, 1956. B. D. Hogan, C. T. Jones.

Variation Finish.

Diagonally right up the slab, then over the overhang (pitons).

Led by C. T. Jones.

THE NEXT OF KIN. 110 feet. Just Very Severe.

Up the wall left of Helsinki Wall climb.

First ascent: 10th November, 1956. C. T. Jones, M. Hanson.

GIRDLE TRAVERSE OF TWO-FACE BUTTRESS. 180 feet. Very Severe.

First ascent: 13th October, 1956. C. T. Jones, E. Eveson.

UPPER TIER—K.M.A. 75 feet. Very Difficult.

20 feet left of Ivy Crack.

First ascent: 18th November, 1956. C. T. Jones.

DIAGONAL. 50 feet. Hard Severe.

At the right hand end of the Upper Tier.

First ascent: 24th March, 1955. B. D. Hogan.

GIRDLE TRAVERSE OF UPPER TIER. 140 feet. Severe.

First ascent: 27th October, 1956. C. T. Jones, M. Hanson

CRAIG-Y-GESAIL

JAVELIN. 270 feet. Very Severe.

This is the route referred to in the interim guide as not having yet been completely led. A good expedition.

Start: As Alpha.

(1) 60 feet. As Alpha, to a stance beneath the overhang below a prominent rib, up on the left at the top of the slabs.

Or (original route), start at the left-hand end of the slabs and take a diagonal line up right to the same stance. Or Beta, or the slight rake between Beta and Alpha, may be used to reach the same point.

(2) 60 feet. Step off a loose block to the right of the overhang and climb the rib, finishing by a horizontal knife-edge to a stance in the gap between it and the wall above.

Or, go into the dièdre on the right and climb the little rib right of it.

This pitch may also be walked round on the right.

(3) 50 feet. Climb the wall above to a tree in thick vegetation. There is a grassy ledge up left, below the final wall.

(4) 100 feet. Start up the final slabby wall above by the right-hand part, with an over-arching crack bounding it. At about 15 feet make a big step over the right-hand edge of the slab across a corner to the tree beyond. Then go up through vegetation to a horizontal tree branch 30 feet higher. Traverse left by this under the topmost face and finish up a somewhat vegetated open corner left of this face. A fine hard pitch.

Or (Jupiter Finish), walk left over grass to a grass chimney round to the left of the slabby face; climb this and the rocks above, trending left to the top.

Or (Original Finish), from the top of the grassy chimney take a steep chimney crack up right to join the direct finish for the vegetated open corner.

First complete ascent: 16th September, 1956. D. P. Davis, D. Thomas, J. Neill, M. J. Harris (Thomas and Neill used the Jupiter Finish). On 12th April, 1953, M. J. Ridges and D. Thomas climbed most of this route, using the original start and finish and ascending the right-hand variation of pitch (2) on a top rope.

(d) PENNANT

I am indebted to B. Cooke and J. N. Millward of the Oread M.C. for information for this section.

CRAIG ISALLT

SLAB ROUTE

Direct variations to pitches (2), (3) and (4) of this were made on 30th March, 1956, by J. N. Millward, P. Janes, J. Welbourne, R. Handley—standard severe.

OWL

This is called "Muddle" by Oread parties. The variation finish goes up the slabs left of the overhangs.

RAKES BUTTRESS

This is the buttress between Owl and Sloe Passage. Four routes have been made up this buttress, but three of these do not reach the top of the crag so can be regarded as only variation starts to the fourth: HANUMAN. 200 feet. Severe.

Starts up the right-hand wall of the buttress, bears right across the base of the Field to a ridge of gendarmes leading to the upper tier and surmounts this by a 20 foot wall, a groove, and a short overhanging groove at the back of a large grass terrace.

First ascent: 22nd July, 1956. J. N. Millward and P. Janes.

IVY BUTTRESS

This is the buttress up which Sloe Passage starts. It has been completely denuded of vegetation, and three routes made on it.

LEFT HAND ROUTE. 180 feet. Very Difficult.

Starts up the left-hand side of the buttress and follows the continuation buttress forming the right-hand end of the upper tier.

First ascent: 2nd April, 1956. J. N. Millward, J. Welbourne, P. Janes.

DIRECT START. 60 feet. Very Severe (hard) + A2.

The thin crack in the middle, requiring 2 pitons.

First ascent: 2nd June, 1956. R. Handley and J. N. Millward.

RIGHT HAND ROUTE. 180 feet. Severe.

This appears to be the same as Sloe Passage in the lower part.

Ascended: 2nd April, 1956. J. N. Millward, P. Janes, F. Allen.

EASTER WALL. 150 feet. Very Severe.

Starts up the face of the large detached block 120 feet right of Ivy Buttress. A fine delicate route.

First ascent: 2nd April, 1956. J. N. Millward, P. Janes, F. Allen.

THE CRACKS. 100 feet. Very Difficult.

Takes a series of cracks starting 10 feet right of Easter Wall.

First ascent: 6th August, 1956. J. N. Millward, Miss V. Phillips, P. Janes, J. Welbourne.

THE CHASM. 100 feet. Severe.

The cleft 40 feet right of Easter Wall.

First ascent: 6th August, 1956. J. Welbourne, J. N. Millward, Miss V. Phillips, P. Janes.

SWEPT WALL. 100 feet. Very Severe.

The buttress on the immediate right of the Chasm.

First ascent: 10th August, 1956. J. N. Millward, Mrs. M. Millward.

ASH TREE WALL

The next buttress to the right, facing south, and the last sizeable one.
Three routes:—

CENTRAL ROUTE. 90 feet. Very Severe.

Up the left and centre of the wall. 2 pitons used.

First ascent: 3rd June, 1956. J. N. Millward, R. Handley.

GROOVE AND CRACK. 90 feet. Severe.

Starts up the groove on the right of the wall, then uses the left-hand crack above.

First ascent: 3rd April, 1956. P. Janes, J. N. Millward.

FISSURE ISALLT. 80 feet. Very Severe.

The crack at the right-hand end of the upper wall.

First ascent: May 1956. C. T. Jones, R. Handley.

CRAIG-Y-LLAN

SHELTER RIDGE. 80 feet. Difficult.

The prominent ridge about 100 yards from the gate on the Pennant road from Dolbenmaen.

First ascent: 16th June, 1956. J. Russell, B. Cooke.

BUZZARD CRACK. 65 feet. Just Very Severe.

On the steep grey pillar seen easily from the road 300 yards from the gate.

First ascent: 16th June, 1956. J. Russell, B. Cooke.

SUNTRAP WALL. 80 feet. Severe.

To the right of Buzzard Crack.

First ascent: 17th June, 1956. J. Russell, Miss B. N. Bird, B. Cooke.

(e) MOELWYNS

It is learnt that numerous solo ascents on the Moelwyn cliffs were made by R. Elfyn Hughes in the early 30's, anticipating many of the present climbs. Further details are being obtained.

CRAIG NYTH-Y-GIGFRAN

ASAHEL. 160 feet. Severe.

Takes more or less a direct line up the right-hand side of the great slab of Usher's Dilemma. Rather messier than the latter, and more quartz, but quite interesting.

Start: At the corner at the extreme right-hand end of the foot of the slab.

(1) 100 feet. The easiest line near the corner, to an unstable ledge with a holly bush.

(2) 40 feet. Continue up near the corner to just below the overhangs at the top of the slab, then traverse left pleasingly, to pull over the edge and join pitch (3) of Usher's Dilemma.

(3) 20 feet. Anywhere.

First ascent: 23rd June, 1956. H. I. Banner, J. Neill.

(f) LLEDR VALLEY

CARREG ALLTREM

PENAMNEN GROOVE. 130 feet. Very Severe (hard).

The prominent steep corner capped by a large overhang, left of Moulam's Route.

(1) 45 feet. Ascend the overhanging corner to grass ledges (pinnacle belay).

(2) 85 feet. Jam the crack strenuously to the overhang, until it is possible to step right with the aid of a sling. Continue up the groove above.

First ascent: 18th September, 1956. R. O. Downes, Miss J. E. M. Clark.

II. OUTLYING CRAGS OF WALES

More climbs have been made on Craig Cowarch (see the article elsewhere in this Journal), including:

BLUEBELL BABYLON. 230 feet. Very Severe.

Takes a line of good rock-climbing up the centre of the left-hand triangle of South Buttress. Starts near the centre of the base of the triangle at a large boulder (cairn), and finishes up a prominent final tower.

First ascent: 27th May, 1956. A. J. J. Moulam, R. E. Lambe.

RELAXATION. 105 feet. Very Difficult.

Start: At the foot of the smooth slab, on the right edge of North Gully Buttress.

First ascent: 26th May, 1956. A. J. J. Moulam, R. E. Lambe.

ACHERON. 460 feet. Very Severe.

First ascent: 26th May, 1956. A. J. J. Moulam, R. E. Lambe.

HOPSIT. 300 feet. Hard Severe.

On the left-hand side of the North Face is an obvious grassy corner starting from the bed of a wide gully, just right of the avalanche scar. Start about 250 feet up the gully; the corner is immediately steep.

First ascent: 31st March, 1956. A. J. Moulam, R. E. Lambe.

These latter climbs are referred to in the article, and are marked on the photograph reproduced with it.

III. CORNWALL

There was a remarkable amount of exploration in Cornwall in 1956, partly because the new Supplement to the Guide-Book acted as a stimulus. New crags were explored, and on well known cliffs several gaps were filled by climbs of a distinctly advanced technical standard. Most of these climbs were accomplished with traditional techniques, but pitons were used for direct aid to surmount one rather improbable overhang. The full details will be found in the Bosigran log-book.

On the Bosigran Face, P. H. Biven and H. T. H. Peck achieved a magnificent series of first ascents; a brief account of most of them is contained in the new Supplement. In August they succeeded in forcing two routes through the main overhang; named Ghost and Phantom, they both include very hard free climbing, which, added to the exposed peg climbing, makes them into formidable propositions. D. Holroyd and A. Blackshaw added an easy V.S., Sinistra, to the left of Beaker Route. The Great Zawn, below Rosemergy, was visited; Biven, Peck and B. Biven traversed the Green Cormorant Ledge (this is not likely to become overcrowded—the last man has to swim !), and the first two did two artificial routes. Of these, the Great Zawn Chimney, which is the overhanging chimney to the left of Green Cormorant Ledge, was found to be A3/A4, while the Garden Walk was easier but dirty.

At Land's End, J. H. Deacon and J. Day did one X.S. and a V.S. on a vertical face between the Hotel Buttress and Dollar Point; and one of the ribs gave a good 120 feet Severe to Blackshaw and Holroyd. Fox Promontory was also explored to good effect; on the Nose itself, Deacon and Blackshaw put up The Muzzle (V.S.); a less direct alternative (H.S.) was added later, and on the north side, a V. Diff., Sunshine Cracks, was climbed. At Chair Ladder, Deacon and J. Oakes added a fine direct route (V.S.) right of Flannel Avenue on the Bishop's Buttress. About ten routes of varying standard were done on a steep crag about two miles west of Lamorna Cove.

A. BLACKSHAW.

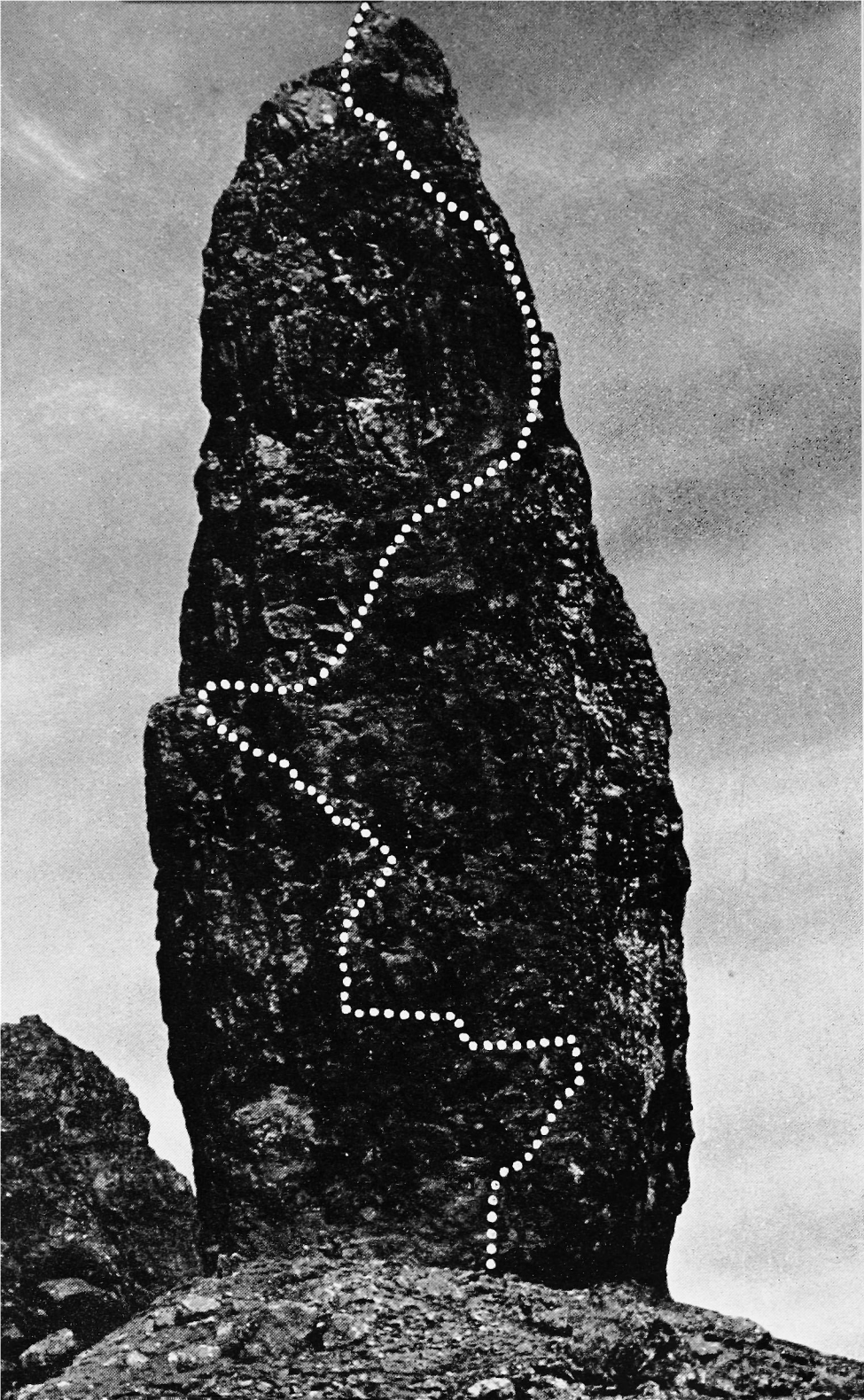
IV. SKYE

The OLD MAN OF STORR was climbed in June 1955, by D. Whillans, J. Barber and G. J. Sutton. Their route is marked on the photograph opposite. Sutton writes: "The leftward traverse at about 20 feet is the hard part, on small, loose holds. Whillans led, an extraordinary piece of climbing, and Barber and I avoided this part by climbing the rope for the first 20 feet straight from the bottom over the overhang. A stance was made on the ledge on the left skyline at about 60 feet. The upper part is quite easy. The summit is a narrow blade. The descent was made in two rappels."

V. IRELAND

WICKLOW

Four of us went to Ireland in October 1956 for four days, Geoff and Ann Sutton, Harold Drasdo and myself. We stayed at the new hut of the Irish Mountaineering Club 30 miles from Dublin. For the most part we climbed on Camaderry, a fine 300 foot cliff of steep granite at the head of Glendalough, overlooking the famous vale of St. Kevin's City. On this crag probably the pleasantest climb is the combination





of Prelude and Nightmare (mild V.S.), of which the hard part suggests a more difficult version of Gimmer's Amen Corner. The rock is superb, the situations clean and open. On the same buttress the Suttons climbed Deirdre (hard V.S.), a smooth arête bounding the left side, and Quartz Gully (severe), the central weakness. Drasdo and I made a second ascent of Spillikin Ridge, the razor-edged arête rising above a 30 foot spillikin and one of the dominant features—and legends!—of the crag. It is considerably more difficult than Kaisergebirge Wall in Wales but unfortunately becomes very artificial as a line in its upper part.

Always to hold the eye are the white quartzite mounds by the mine in the valley bottom, the dark lough a mile or two away trapped between spurs of Camaderry and Lugnaquilla. For bare fells there is endless colour in this Wicklow plateau. Well to the right of the main crag we all climbed Cuchullain Groove, of fierce reputation and look. It went with surprising ease, despite a stream down the first 40 feet, and turned out to be a fine, sustained 130 foot pitch of severe standard. It entails continuous jamming, at an easy angle, which had us gurgling with pleasure. A good finish (after wringing out one's clothes) is to descend a little (short rappel), then take the last two pitches of Aliens' Way, a recent climb of the brothers Drasdo. This climb apart, the absence of cracks was most disconcerting: even where one does occur, normally it is in the form of a square shallow trench, shut at the back by quartz.

Our last day was spent at Luggala, a large, rambling cliff of amazingly compact and smooth granite. Despite its connections with the Guinness family, the place has an almost Italianate air, with a lake that then was an electric blue, and backed by a white shingle beach. Probably the main face is too steep to be climbed free, but one never knows; it has not had the same attention as Camaderry.

Altogether the visit was an eye-opener. And these are Ireland's *small* crags . . . Anyone who goes to Ireland is sure of a warm welcome from the I.M.C. They seem only too glad to see English climbers and to dispel the impression of Haskett Smith that "there are no peaks in Wicklow presenting upon any side material of interest to the rock-climber."

R. O. DOWNES.

VI. SOUTH GEORGIA

The climbing on the South Georgia Survey 1955/56 had perforce to be secondary to the main objective of surveying and mapping the unexplored regions of the island. The various limiting factors—chiefly weather, time, and our awkward survey loads—did not permit us to attempt anything but the quickest and easiest routes up those summits which appeared the least fearsome and the most suitable for survey purposes. Invariably we followed a snow and ice route—we

never indulged in any actual rock climbing—the snow being generally hard and frozen rather than soft and powdery. The summits or summital crests consisted more often than not of an icy accumulation of piled up snow, formed and sculpted by the ferocious winds, narrow and heavily corniced.

The Allardyce and Salvesen Ranges (in the north-west and south-east respectively), divided by the Ross Pass, together form the backbone of South Georgia, itself a part of the Scotia Arc. Rising steeply from the waters of the Southern Ocean, they form an impressive mass of mountainous ice-covered country, whose innumerable glaciers flow right down into the sea. The highest summit of all is Mount Paget (9,625 feet). We had hoped to have a chance of climbing Paget, but unfortunately circumstances, and the fact that survey inevitably took precedence over any mountaineering project, prevented us from making the attempt. Our reconnaissances, however, have convinced us that, given sufficient time, Paget and its neighbouring peaks could be climbed without great difficulties, the easiest approaches being from the south.

In the course of our survey work, our party of eight (Duncan Carse, Keith Warburton, Tony Bomford, Stan Paterson, John Cunningham, George Spenceley, Tom Price and Louis Baume) achieved some 20 first ascents of unnamed peaks of various heights. The first ascent of a 5,637 foot peak to the immediate east of Smillie Peak was undertaken in mid-October 1955. A few days later, a party of three managed to climb Spaaman (6,367 feet), situated at the head of the Neumayer Glacier and on the rim of the Kohl-Larsen Plateau, the greatest height then reached in South Georgia. In February 1956 four others made the first ascent of another unnamed peak above the Novosilski Glacier, from whose summit (7,209 feet) a full survey station was also observed.

The other ascents (all made with the object of establishing survey stations) were mostly on the periphery of the Kohl-Larsen Plateau, in the King Haakon Bay—Possession Bay area, the Kade Ridge—Brunonia Glacier area, and in the Brogger Glacier—Novosilski Glacier—Philippi Glacier area in the south-eastern corner of South Georgia.

Normal climbing gear was used, though our clothing was of special design. The polar-type rations, tents and other gear were man-hauled on three sledges of Nansen pattern. Four journeys were undertaken, the longest being of 60 days' duration. The bad weather lived up to its reputation: heavy precipitation and accumulation of snow, bad visibility, and high winds of 55 to 110 knots (during 30% of days in the field). In all, the percentage loss of working days caused by bad weather—whole days only, not taking into account the many wasted mornings and afternoons—amounted to 35%. Undoubtedly the most favourable weather is at the beginning of the season.

L. BAUME.

EDITORIAL

Nineteen fifty-seven is the centenary year of the Alpine Club, senior of all the mountaineering clubs of the world. Clubs have been an important influence in mountaineering history, and the Alpine Club set the pattern. We congratulate our first parent, mindful that the centenary of the A.C. is a landmark not only in the history of that particular club but in mountaineering history generally, and a festival in which all mountaineers anywhere in some sort share. Various celebrations are to be held during the year, and in November 1957 will be published a special number of the *Alpine Journal*, to which, as usual, many of the contributors are members of the Climbers' Club. This will be on sale to all at the usual price of one guinea, and sale copies are to be strongly bound in book form, for this special number will be of general, and permanent, value, and many who do not normally buy the *Alpine Journal* will want to possess it.

★ ★ ★

And what of our own Club? Members have attained distinction in many fields. A. E. Marples is Postmaster General. Brasher won the steeplechase in the Olympic Games and Disley was in the final. Charles Evans was awarded the Founder's Medal of the Royal Geographical Society for 1956. Chris Briggs has been awarded the B.E.M. for his mountain rescue work in Wales. Commander Simpson has the C.B.E. Geoffrey Winthrop Young attained his eightieth birthday in October, 1956, and he, Dr. Longstaff and R. W. Lloyd, all three already honorary members of our own Club, have been made honorary members of the Alpine Club. John Longland preserves family tradition by being president of the C.U.M.C. like his father before him. Bernard Pierre has won a Grand Prix Littéraire de la Montagne with his book about his Nun Kun expedition. We congratulate them all.

★ ★ ★

There are important changes among our Club officers. We welcome our new president, David Cox, and wish him all success on his inaugural trip to the Himalayas. The retiring president, Herbert Carr, has earned our warmly affectionate thanks. Our debt to him is immense, for all that he has done for the Club not only during his presidency but ever since in the twenties he took the lead in rescuing the Club from doldrums and set it on the road to its present prosperity. We must record also the retirement from office of Stuart Chantrell, custodian of Helyg since 1928. No man has served his fellow members, and indeed all those, notably the university clubs, who use Helyg, more devotedly or for a longer period. His retirement seems scarcely credible:

Chantrell has been as much part of Helyg, and Helyg climbing, as Adam and Eve of Tryfan. We thank him, both for making for us at Helyg the beloved base of many of our happiest Welsh days and for his counsels in Club affairs over so many years. Moulam succeeds, with all our good wishes.

* * *

To the Club's losses by death during the year the In Memoriam section bears sombre witness. We need not repeat what is said there in tribute to the friends we mourn. But that the loss even of a secretary so efficient, so devoted, so popular and so much the centre of Club affairs as was Dick Viney, does not prove crippling, is a token of the strength and virility of the Club and of our confidence in his successor, Blackshaw, whom we welcome to his arduous office.

The indications—they cannot be more—that the breaking of a thin nylon sling may at least have played some part in the accident on the Jägihorn, emphasise once again the lesson that has been apparent from other episodes, that there are serious limitations to the ability of nylon to withstand tearing. These limitations are especially significant when we use the thinner sizes. Thin slings certainly have their uses, especially when there is no room for anything thicker; but there is no doubt that it is unwise to rely on them for sole protection, even if they are doubled or trebled.

* * *

We also noted with great regret the death during the year of Charles Lehmann, for many years a pillar, perhaps *the* pillar, of the Association of British Members of the Swiss Alpine Club. He was not a member of our own Club, but many of us must have benefited from his services as the chief liaison officer between British climbers and the Swiss Alpine Club, particularly in connection with payment of subscriptions during the years of currency control.

Two eminent Alpine guides died during the year. Arturo Ottoz, one of the leading Courmayeur guides, was killed by falling ice while approaching Route Major on the Brenva Face of Mont Blanc; and Angelo Dibona, famous as the guide of King Albert I of Belgium and eponym of several Mayer-Dibona routes, died at an advanced age.

* * *

The run of successes on the great Himalayan peaks continued in 1956. We were delighted by the triple triumph of the Swiss expedition in their ascent of Lhotse and two ascents of Everest, and by the deserved success, at long last, of the Japanese on Manaslu. But the most exciting event for our Club was the ascent of the Muztagh Tower by the British party which included two of our members, J. Hartog and McNaught-Davis. This was not only a splendid achievement in itself but of significance for Himalayan history both in the technical difficulty of the climbing and in the fact that the mountain was climbed again by a different route by the French party a few days later. Hartog was

severely frostbitten on the descent and has lost several toes, but we are delighted that he has made a good recovery, and is now assistant honorary treasurer of the Club.

Banks took part in a determined and sustained attempt on Rakaposhi by a party with very slender resources, who were unlucky to be robbed of success by bad weather at a crucial stage, when they had got considerably further than previous parties. E. S. Williams was with the London School of Economics party in the Karakoram. In Peru, Westmacott and Streetly reached the summit of Huagaruncho, and Band was also a member of the expedition. Tilman and Marriott crossed the Patagonian Ice-cap, and travelled to and from South America in their own small sailing boat. I. C. Bennett, Holland and Morin climbed Mt. Atter in Greenland. In the Antarctic Lowe is with Fuchs' party in Vahsel Bay and Brooke with the New Zealand party on the other side of the continent. J. Smith and R. Brown are with the International Geophysical Year party in South Georgia; and Baume was in South Georgia in 1955-6.

In the Alps 1956 was another season marred by poor weather, but some good climbs were done. Nelson and Keen did Roch's route on the east face of the Zinal Rothorn, the north ridge of the Peigne and the Younggrat on the Breithorn. On the last climb they had been preceded earlier in the season by Harris, Mawe and G. D. Roberts. Fraser and O'Hara climbed the Flat-iron Ridge of the Piz Gemelli, with a bivouac since, influenced no doubt by Welsh habits, they did not start till after lunch. Kendell and Steele did the north ridge of the Piz Badile. In the Mont Blanc chain, Clark and Gravina climbed the north face of the Plan and made the first traverse of the season over the Charmoz and Grépon. They also made an attempt on the complete Peuteret ridge; they climbed the Aiguille Noire by the east ridge, descended the north ridge (first British descent), and after a bivouac on the Dames Anglaises, continued up the Aiguille Blanche, but from there were forced by bad weather to descend. Emery and Jillott made what is believed to be the first ascent of the north-east couloir of the Pointe Supérieure de Pierre Joseph, and they and Lawton made the second ascent of the Leininger-Neuerschwander route on the Blaitière, including a new finish. Cunningham and J. Hobhouse did the east face of the Moine. Chorley and Ball made a new route on the Argentine. Downes and Whillans (non-member) were forced by storm to retreat from half-way up the east face of the Grand Capucin.

In the Pyrenees, Marks and Steele, with W. Turrall and M. James (non-members), climbed the north face of the Pic Longue de Vignemale, and what is believed to be a new combination of routes in the Cirque de Gavarnie, where Chambers and Turrall also made a new finish to the Voie Chandelier on the Mur de la Cascade.

Some striking climbs in Wales and Cornwall are mentioned in New Climbs and Notes. On Carn Dearg (Ben Nevis) Downes and O'Hara made the second ascent of Sassenach, and Downes later joined Whillans on another very hard new route nearby.

We have been taken to task, and apologise, for various blemishes in *CCJ* 1956. The most reprehensible was the mis-spelling of Mur y Niwl; we blush. We must admit too that the spelling Kangchenjunga has now established itself, though we varied it in authoritative company last year. Then it has been complained, reasonably, that in some of the articles the use of Christian names only involved for most readers an anonymity not intended, and abhorrent to the historian. With the co-operation of contributors we shall try to avoid this in future, and in case anyone is still worried about it, it may be revealed now that in *CCJ* 1956, "Tom" in "Roof Climbing" was Tom Bourdillon, in "Cassin Classic" the party was Bob Downes, Geoff Sutton, Eric Langmuir and Alan Blackshaw, and Joe Brown and Don Whillans were with Roscoe on Kilnsey Crag in "Northern Limestone." We hear rumours, incidentally, of further advances on this crag.

Doubt has been cast on the statement on page 237 of *CCJ* 1956, that the edge of the Fiddler of Coigach remains unclimbed. But enquiry confirms that it was correct: the true line of the arête above the notch known as the "Hansom" has not been climbed, although several parties have inspected it and climbed the lower section to the Hansom. In *SMCJ* 1933, P. D. Baird recorded a route escaping from the notch onto the north-west wall to the right, which he described as "moderately difficult." Later parties have thought that any route in this direction must be much harder than that. In 1954 Mr. and Mrs. Greenald climbed to the notch and then by the north-west face to the top: "It was quite the hardest and most frightening climb we have ever done. It was delicate with great exposure and few natural belays. The leader wore socks and pitons were used frequently, two being left behind."

* * *

In view of the large size of the last two numbers of this Journal it has been decided that these two numbers alone shall constitute Volume XI of the current series, to prevent the volume becoming too unwieldy for those who bind the series. Accordingly this present number is the first of the new Volume XII.

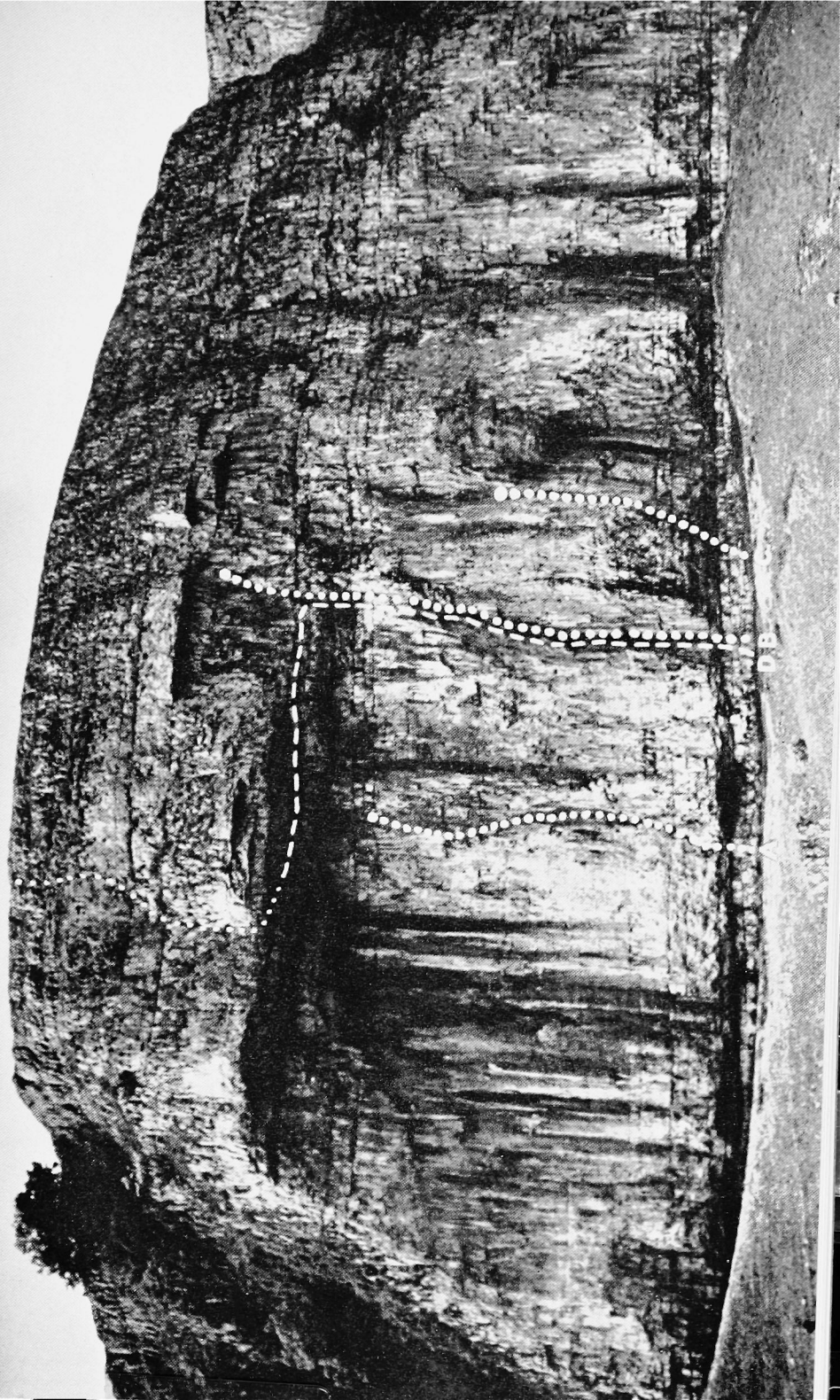
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In the next number, to be published in 1958, Emlyn Jones plans to write an article on the Great Gully of Craig Yr Ysfa. We repeat the request already made in a Club circular, that anyone who knows any unpublished anecdotes or stories tall or short about the Gully is asked to get in touch with Emlyn Jones (Flat 114, 6/9 Charterhouse Square, London E.C.1). Photographs will also be welcome, especially any of historical interest.

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A scientific member reports an article in the journal *Geophysics*, Vol. XXI, No. 4, October, 1956, on an electrical crevasse detector. It is understood to give valuable details of the detection by geophysical

KILNSEY CRAG, WHARFEDALE: South section. As we go to press, it is reported that the ascent over the overhang has just been completed (April 1957) by route D, after many visits, by members of the Rock and Ice Club. Three expansion bolts were used and many pitons. Previous attempts are marked A, B and C. An attempt by B was described in *CCJ* 1956 (p. 264).





methods analogous to the four electrode method of measuring earth resistivity, but different in that an alternating dielectric displacement current field is used rather than a field of conduction current, since ice is a non-conductor. Unhappily the method has limited utility for mountaineers, since "two defects were noted:—(a) background fluctuation required continuous readjustment of the threshold which might better be done by a slow A.G.C. control circuit; (b) the system did not give any warning to the operator until he had passed over the crevasse."

★ ★ ★

The Librarian has made further progress during the year in re-stocking the Club library and bringing it up to date. Any book reviewed in this journal is normally in stock. Books may be borrowed by post on application to Miss Corby at the Chelsea Copying Office, 43 King's Road, Chelsea, London S.W.3. As mentioned elsewhere, the collection of the writings of our late honorary member Dr. Blodig, which was presented by his widow, has been placed in the Library, and so has a copy of the first number of the *CCJ* ever published, in 1898, which belonged to the late L. K. Pagden, an original member, author of a reminiscent article in the 1948 Journal; it was presented to the Club by his son, Mr. H. T. Pagden.

★ ★ ★

The Club has published a revised guide-book to Tryfan and Glyder Fach, by Moulam. It combines in one volume the area covered by two in the previous edition, and is a completely new work, containing not only routes done since the old books but revised descriptions, and gradings, of the older routes. We owe thanks to Moulam for his labours. There has also been published a supplement to the Cornwall guide, by Biven. Some have complained that the emphasis is on the harder routes, and many of the easier climbs previously recorded in the New Climbs and Notes section of the Journal are not included. For the recent harder routes, however, Biven's guide is indispensable. That there is so much to record is one symptom of the growing popularity of Cornwall as a climbing ground and of Bosigran. The Club is lucky to have a hut in the area.

★ ★ ★

Apart from these publications by the Club itself, mention may also be made of two books likely to be of special interest to members, *Snowdon Biography*, by Geoffrey Winthrop Young, Geoffrey Sutton and Wilfrid Noyce, which is reviewed in this Journal, and *A History of Climbing in Britain*, by Ronald Clark and Edward Pyatt, to be published during 1957 by Phoenix House. The death of Tom Bourdillon has given a new, though tragic, interest to that charming book *Visit to the Sherpas*, by Jennifer Bourdillon, published last year by Collins, in which Mrs. Bourdillon writes of her travels in the Sherpa country in 1952, while her husband was on Cho Oyu.

Once again the Editor records his thanks to all who have helped to produce this Journal, to the contributors, both writers and photographers, to those who sent information or suggestions, to those who liked the last issue (and, up to a point, those who did not), and especially to John Hobhouse who has taken over the duties of business editor from Tony Bertram, whose kind and enterprising offer to continue his work by remote control from Stockholm was regretfully declined by the Editor. For the photograph of the climb in Avon Gorge we are indebted to the University of Bristol Mountaineering Club.

CORRESPONDENCE

To the Editor, Climbers' Club Journal.

DEAR EDITOR,

In Leslie Shadbolt's happy recall of his early climbing in Skye, he quotes a quatrain which was an impromptu in the Pen-y-Pass smoking room, on the first appearance of our first pocket guide to British climbs, Thomson and Andrews's *Lliwedd*, with its diagrams of involved ascents.

I hope he will allow me to mention also the original version, which preserved the archaic form throughout in order to emphasise the Welsh aspirate.

" The climber goeth forth to climb on Lliwedd
And seeketh him a way where man hath trod ;
But which of all the thousand routes he doeth
Is only known to Andrews...and to Thomson . . . "

G.W.Y.

CLUB MEETS, 1956

The year started well with Alex Jones' meet at Ynys Ettws. In March, Derek Bull organised an enjoyable weekend at Helyg: the weather was good, and the entire party of eight spent the Saturday on the East Face of Tryfan, where the Terrace Wall proved the main attraction; the following day most of the feasible routes on the East Wall of the Idwal Slabs were attempted, followed by a mass ascent of the Sub-Cneifion Rib. Eight places were booked at Lagangarbh at Easter, and we owe apologies to the S.M.C. because only three were taken. Herbert Carr led a small, but enjoyable meet at the Robertson Lamb Hut in May; the weather was fine, and climbs were done in Borrowdale, and on Dow Crag. Whit weekend was great fun at Bosigran; Admiral Lawder and Jack Denton had a busy week-end fitting people into odd corners of a pleasantly crowded Count House, but, like everyone else, found time to climb, in excellent weather. Moulam chose Black Rocks for his meet in June. " Most of the climbs

were done, including the hardest ! Don Roscoe followed Don Whillans up Demon Rib. On Sunday, Whillans and I (A.J.J.M.) went onto High Tor, Matlock, and climbed the Original Route. We were watched by hundreds of people, and the local Cave Rescue team came out for us after it had been reported that I had been sitting immobile on a ledge (the ground !) for $2\frac{1}{2}$ hours. Most of us camped." Three weeks later, John Neill proved himself once more the skilled Hutsman at Ynys Ettws; even so, most people climbed. Rudolf Loewy very generously made his holiday in the Engadine the centre of the Club Alpine meet, on which there is a report below. It is regrettable that Alan Hargreaves' meet at Birkness was not better attended; perhaps this year, in Langdale, it will get the popularity it deserves. In October, Longland minor organised a splendid dinner at the Royal Victoria Hotel, Llanberis. Finally, Geof Piggott was the host at Helyg in November, when he brought the Meet Year to a successful close.

ALAN BLACKSHAW.

ALPINE MEET—BERNINA

Despite very mixed weather all the main peaks of the massif were climbed, the Morteratsch and the traverse of the Piz Palü being done on various days by virtually everybody. As should happen on a good meet, the pattern of the climbing parties was kaleidoscopic and too complicated to detail. Though we were robbed of the Biancograt by high wind, the Bernina had previously been climbed over the easier S.E. ridge by two of the party. Other good days were the S.W. ridge of the Morteratsch, the Crast' Aguzza and the ice nose of the Scerscen. Six of us climbed the Piz Roseg, a fine expedition and a most beautiful mountain. The main valleys are perhaps too much oriented towards winter sport but the Val Roseg up which one goes to the Tschierva hut must contain more carefree marmots than any other place in the Alps. We were based on Silvaplana where Max Loewy, to whom all the rest of us owe a great debt, had arranged for a majority of us to live in two rooms above the village laundry. Members on the meet were:—Bill Crawshaw, Pat Erskine Murray, Andrew Griffith, Roger Hartog, Richard Hobhouse, Max Loewy, Adrian Littleton, George Michie, S. (Tommy) Thomas and Jeremy Wills.

R.H.H.

IN MEMORIAM

T. D. BOURDILLON AND R. M. VINEY

Tom Bourdillon and Dick Viney were killed on July 29th, 1956, while attempting the ascent of the east buttress of the Jägihorn, in the Bernese Oberland. No-one saw the accident, and its cause is not known ; but a quarter-weight nylon sling, severed in two places, is reported to have been found on or near one of the bodies.

They were buried together at Visp on August 2nd. As well as members of their families, a number of members of the Club were able to attend the funeral, together with representatives of the Swiss Alpine Club. The large congregation, including many members of the Club, who later attended a memorial service at Aylesbury was a moving tribute to the respect and affection in which they were held.

H. R. C. Carr writes :—

In years to come men in this country may look back to the nineteen-fifties as a Golden Age which saw the mastery of the technique of the world's highest and hardest mountaineering ; but there will be a shadow on the year 1956 as there was upon 1865. For the year has taken from us two men who represented almost to perfection all that a climber in any age can wish to be. Tom Bourdillon and Dick Viney were indeed men of stature in their generation.

Dick seemed to me an ideal secretary for this Club. He had a zest for friendship, a patience for detail and correspondence, and above all a flair for right decisions, which have been beyond price and beyond praise in the direction of our affairs. It is so easy for things to go amiss. There are the problems of our scattered membership, of our various enterprises and of the maintenance of our several properties. Dick had a calm assurance in dealing with all the difficulties as they came, and he saw to it that things went well.

I count myself fortunate to have been in the chair at the Alpine Club when Tom read a paper on his achievements in the season of 1955 ; it was a thrilling experience just to listen to him. I count myself fortunate to have been President of the Climbers' Club while Dick was Secretary. Their share of life's course was all too short, but the manner of their running will inspire those to whom the torch must now be handed on.

Tom Bourdillon was educated at Gresham's School, and at Balliol College, Oxford, where he obtained an honours degree in Physics. Later he was attached to the Ministry of Supply experimental station at Westcott, and it was during this period that, in conjunction with his father, he devised the closed-circuit oxygen apparatus which had such success on Everest.

I first met Tom in 1949, when, in his last year at Balliol, he was already a legend amongst Oxford climbers. He used to live in a tiny room on the top floor of the Taj Mahal, and one would ascend through the aromas of the Far East to see him. Dal Gosht and Bindi Gosht—why had he chosen such exotic bed-fellows ? Because, so he said, there was an excellent drainpipe leading all the eighty feet up to his window overlooking the Turl, and it made an interesting climb when the doors of the restaurant were locked. But whatever the reason, this apparent isolation in the clouds emphasised his position as a god of Oxford climbing.

There were all sorts of stories about him. About his climbing prowess—he had soloed up the top pitches of Great Slab on Cloggy in the dark ; about his prodigious strength—it was stated that he could bend wrought iron bars, and I later confirmed that this was true. It was even rumoured that, as an officer of the O.U.M.C., he had run a meet on nothing more substantial than porridge and strawberry jam, and in spite of this, the club had risen under his inspiration and leadership to tackle climbs far harder than any they had before dared to attempt.

I therefore laid in a stock of conventional foods for our winter meet at R.L.H. in 1949, and awaited his arrival with some curiosity. There is a photograph of him as he then was, leaning up against the door of the hut, a patch two feet long down one trouser-leg, bearded, scruffy, and wearing that half smile which

so often played over his lips, and which made it difficult to know just what he was thinking. Later in the week Tom took me out to tackle Gimmer Crack in six inches of snow under the pretext that it was essential to "give the mountain a chance," and on the return journey we climbed and abseiled, somewhat unconventionally, through the bed of Dungeon Ghyll. Tom did not climb because he had to, or because the mountain was there, or for any of the obsessive-compulsive reasons which mountaineers sometimes use, but because he enjoyed it, and it was fun.

Our first big Alpine season was that of 1950, and it marked the beginning of the post-war renaissance of British climbing. The responsibility for this was of course entirely Tom's, his party being much less experienced than he, and content to go where he led them. Our first climb was a *Très Difficile*, and in the next three weeks we completed seven climbs, of which the north face of the Dru was perhaps symbolic of the new emphasis in British climbing. This particular expedition went without a hitch, except that Tom had to spend an hour quietly looking for his crampons on the rognon beside our bivouac site, before we eventually started off. This emphasised one thing, that Tom frequently left the organization of climbing holidays, the equipment, the routes to look after themselves, and indeed the only sort of competition which we ever had together was one which concerned the number of times we had each lost the way. Nevertheless, and it is an apparent paradox, Tom was one of the most determined, accomplished and single-minded Alpinists of our time. He always knew what he wanted to do, and with a minimum of fuss, he did it.

We did not climb again together for some time. Tom was either in the Himalayas, on Cho Oyu and twice on Everest, and every schoolboy knows what he there accomplished, or living quietly at his home at Quainton. There was nothing that Tom could not do about the house. Building and demolishing out-houses, removing trees and replanting them—Birnam wood to Dunsinane had nothing on the activities of North End Lodge, and the inhabitants of Quainton, like Macbeth, must often have wondered what was going to happen next.

In 1955 we went together to the Alps again. It was an appallingly wet season, but in spite of this we climbed in quick succession the Peigne, the Crocodile, the Aiguille Noire de Peuterey

and the Grand Capucin by routes of some difficulty, the last two ranking amongst the hardest of the Western Alps. It is impossible to praise too highly Tom's performance on these expeditions, not only from the technical viewpoint, one took that for granted, but because as a companion in difficulties and under the various discomforts which these climbs entail, he was so cheerful, so unruffled, so dependable and safe. Even a bivouac on a two by four ledge and 15 degrees of frost became almost enjoyable. One discussed astronomy, or perhaps the mechanism of acclimatization to high altitude. Tom was a man of wide interests and knowledge, and he often knew more about my own field than I did myself.

Tom was the greatest of contemporary English climbers, and yet it is not for this that he will be remembered by his friends. They will think of him as the man who was as nearly a saint as any human being can be. Here anyone who did not know Tom will perhaps say "another panegyric," "another perfect memorial." Any biographer tends, in reverence, more to praise than to blame, and it is therefore necessary to express how much more the customary superlatives are due to Tom. If anybody was generous, anybody sincere, anybody unselfish, he was. It is true that he had faults. He was too shy, and had he been less so the pleasure of his friendship would have been more widely known. He would willingly put himself out to protect the feelings of others. His very presence made argument and discord ugly things, and so it happened that everyone who knew him was his friend for ever. Perhaps not only his friend. There is a quality of admiration between one man and another in perfection of character clearly his superior, which is friendship and emulation and even love. Tom was loved by his friends, and in his company they partook of his peace and happiness, and were better people for it.

He was a devoted husband and father ; and to his widow Jennifer we express our deepest sympathy, we who, having known Tom, can understand in part what his loss means.

H. G. NICOL.¹

(¹) This notice is reprinted from the *Alpine Journal*, by arrangement with the Editor.

The death of Dick Viney not only deprives British mountaineering of a distinguished climber, but a very large number of mountaineers of a personal friend. Dick had the gift of ready friendship with all sorts of people. His acquaintance was enormously wide. Often he was the bridge between groups of different age or different outlook. To the Climbers' Club this gift of friendship made him much more than just an efficient honorary secretary, though he was all of that too. His personality helped to draw the Club together. He made a special point of getting to know personally as many as possible of our members, especially new ones. In other ways too he did much selfless work that went beyond the ordinary duties of a secretary. He was a helpful friend to many beginners, and if anyone wanted to put a stranger in touch with British climbers, Dick was rightly the first choice for an introduction. He would go to endless trouble to arrange week-end lifts to Wales or the Lakes for people living in London.

He was aged 31, unmarried, the fourth son of Colonel O. V. Viney of Aylesbury, the youngest of an exceptionally happy and close-knit family. At the age of nine he almost died, of glandular illness, and spent two years in bed. His later mountaineering and parachute jumping were a tribute to his mother's nursing. He was at school at Oundle and Phillips Academy in the United States. The latter gave him a lasting interest in America. It also freed him from some of the prejudices of most English boys and perhaps developed that streak of unorthodoxy which helped to make him such a good mixer with all types of people. Aged 18 he returned to enlist in the Army. His ship was torpedoed in the Atlantic. He spent seven days in an open boat. Only rarely, and to most intimate friends, could he be persuaded to talk of this experience, but his youthful courage must have contributed in no small measure to the survival of the whole boat party. His fingers were touched by the cold and wet, and on mountains he was often bothered by cold hands.

After rescue he served first in the Oxford and Buckinghamshire Light Infantry, then in the Black Watch. He was awarded the Military Cross—an immediate award—as a platoon commander at the Rhine crossing, and was later adjutant of his battalion. After the war he continued to serve as a Territorial. He learned parachute jumping and became a staff captain in the

Independent Parachute Brigade, T.A. In 1947 he went up to University College, Oxford, where he read Modern History in two years. Thereafter he worked for B.X. Plastics Ltd., latterly as a sales manager.

Mountaineering was his chief recreation, but it was far from being his only interest. He believed in living life to the full ; indeed he amazed his friends by the amount of varied activity he crammed into his day. He worked extremely hard at his job, in which he was intensely interested, and successful. Then besides the Territorial Army, there was a constant round of social engagements. He loved conversation, meeting people and seeing things. He loved too the theatre—he was a regular playgoer—and books. He was unusually well read, the gift, he used to say, of a home full of books and of leisure during his childhood illness to acquire the habit of reading.

A natural leader, confident, vigorous, with a quick mind and a quick, forthright tongue, Dick Viney was always at the centre of any group. To all he did he brought energy and cheerful enthusiasm ; and especially to mountaineering. Mountains were in his family. He was taken to the Alps as a boy before the war. At Oxford he was one of the leaders (Bourdillon was another) at a notable epoch of O.U.M.C. climbing ; he edited *Oxford Mountaineering*. In vacations, and subsequently on all holidays and many week-ends, he climbed in most parts of Britain, especially in North Wales, and in the Alps each season from 1948. He enjoyed the fellowship of mountaineering clubs. He was a life member of the O.U.M.C., for which he had a great affection, and of the Oxford Alpine Club, which he helped to re-invigorate after the war. He was elected to the Alpine Club in 1951, and was one of the founder members of the Alpine Climbing Group. The Climbers' Club he joined in 1948, and he became honorary secretary in 1953.

I met him first at Buttermere in 1943 ; we spent a wet afternoon in Birkness Coombe. The friendship was renewed at Oxford, and from then on we were often in the same party. Dick was a splendid companion on mountains, cheerful, sympathetic, calm and reassuring in a crisis, and a very sound mountaineer. His natural pace was fast, and he seemed to need little training to become fit. He was always very safe and responsible, especially if leading. He would not normally lead rock-climbs

of great difficulty, but he took part in many fine climbs, adding strength to the party by his experience and steadiness. In the Alps especially his friends valued his judgment, and his enthusiasm. In planning Dick would speak up first to urge the enterprising course, leaving others to point out doubts and difficulties. But he would as readily throw his influence the other way if the party veered towards a rash decision, for he always put achievement second to the safety and happiness of his friends and himself. He was well read in Alpine as in other literature, and this influenced his choice of climbs. He loved to ferret out some neglected route of promising description, especially anything pioneered by Ryan and the Lochmatters, for whom he had a special admiration.

We shall miss Dick. In our Club we shall miss his good humour and his wisdom. On our climbs we shall miss his companionship. All the time we shall miss his smile, and his initiative. Dick was never at a loss for an idea. For week-end or holiday it was Dick who proposed plans, Dick who made the arrangements, Dick who organised things. And how well he did it: under his guidance climbing was always fun. This indeed might be his epitaph: He was a leader of happy parties.

We offer our deepest sympathy to his family, and especially to his father.

A.K.R.¹

KARL BLODIG

Dr. Karl Blodig, honorary member of the Club, died at his home at Bregenz on 7th September, 1956, in his ninety-seventh year. His Alpine career was of heroic span. He first came into prominence by making the first traverse of the Silbersattel on Monte Rosa with Christian Ranggetiner in 1880. He was the first to climb all the Alpine four thousand metre peaks, and though at the time of achieving the last of these, the Pic Luigi Amadeo, during the ascent of the Brouillard Ridge of Mont Blanc in 1911, he maintained that this should be his last great climb, in fact he continued to climb. As late as 1932, when he was 73, he ascended alone the Argentière face of the Col Armand Charlet, one of the great ice climbs of that side of the Aiguille Verte group, and next day descended by the same route.

(¹) This notice is adapted from the *Alpine Journal*, by arrangement with the Editor.

The Club remained in contact with him to the end. His reply to the President's letter of congratulation on his ninety-fifth birthday was quoted on page 126 of *Climbers' Club Journal*, 1955. Only in 1956 was he unable to reply himself to our greeting at the time of the Annual Dinner. Frau Blodig replied on his behalf to express his appreciation, and on his death she has presented to the Club a collection of some of his articles in mountaineering journals, which have been placed in the Library.

We salute the memory of one of the grand figures of Alpine mountaineering, whom we are proud to have counted among the honorary members of our Club.

Geoffrey Winthrop Young writes :—

Blodig was the first Honorary Member elected by the Climbers' Club ; and he deserved that honour, because he was the first great foreign mountaineer, after British rock-climbing began, who came over to climb on our cliffs, and to acknowledge the modest beginnings of the Climbers' Club. An Alpine climber of much energy and enterprise, he was making new ascents as far back as in the 1880's. Possibly he was the first mountaineer who made it his ambition to climb all the then known four thousand metre peaks. This, and a liberal interest in the development of mountain technique, brought him into contact, and friendship, with Eckenstein, Andrews, Humphrey Owen Jones, and the small group at Courmayeur who, under Eckenstein's inspiration, were studying ice technique and its implements, and, incidentally, prospecting the southern ridges of Mont Blanc and the Grandes Jorasses, whereon several new four thousanders had just been located.

I invited him to join my Easter party at Pen-y-Pass ; where he climbed on Lliwedd, helped in a rescue party on the Parson's Nose, and shared in the social evenings, with equal enjoyment ; and observed our tradition by joining the Climbers' Club, in his case as our unique Honorary Member.

In the following season of record sunshine, 1911, he was waiting for us in Courmayeur, agitated because his advancing years were being challenged by the discovery of new four thousanders, the Punta Margherita and the Pic Luigi Amadeo, and his nearest rivals in the race, engineer Pfann and Dr. Pühn, were overtaking him, and one even forging ahead on the post.

Blodig, a man of culture and a linguist, was also a fine athlete and gymnast, with a robust figure, a square greying beard, and glasses. During his long career as a pioneer, his geniality had developed strong and independent views as to food, equipment and method. One long-term prejudice, against climbing with a guide, he now sacrificed, when I offered him Josef Knubel as an ideal companion for the Punta Margherita, while Jones and I were engaged prospecting. He then joined us for our assault on the Brouillard Ridge and the Pic Luigi Amadeo. This was his last, and winning, four thousander, and he then maintained that it should be also the last great ascent he would make. On a wet day's waiting, he kept himself fit by gymnastic feats of balance on the pointed crags outside the Quintino Sella hut. The Pic Luigi Amadeo attained, he stood on the summit, waved his green hat wide and courteously, and gave "Three cheers for the Climbers' Club!"—certainly the first time that happy association was acclaimed in the high Alps. It proved a long, varied and racing day, and back to Courmayeur the same night; and the Doctor accomplished it with an agility and endurance miraculous for his years. On one and the same great first ascent he established his record, and crowned both his ambition and a notable high mountaineering career.

Soon after this, the war clouds separated him from us. But it is pleasant to know that he lived on in the same generous spirit, and long enough to become a legendary figure.

L. W. CLARKE

L. W. Clarke died in 1956 at the age of 82. By profession a solicitor, he was a member of the Alpine Club, and of the Climbers' Club an original member, who in common with the other survivors of that band of 1898 was made an honorary member at the jubilee of 1948. He climbed in the Alps in the last years of the nineteenth century, and was a lifelong climbing friend of the late S. B. Donkin. He was one of the group snapped by the latter at Pen-y-Gwryd at Easter 1898, in the picture reproduced in *C.C.J.* 1948 (facing page 233).

He married late in life. We offer our sympathy to his widow.

A.K.R.

CHARLES GUY ATTLEE

Though a keen walker since an early age, it was not until 1949 that Charles Attlee first began any serious climbing but, despite this late start, he made up in enthusiasm for what he may have missed in earlier years. It was at Zinal that I first met Charles and I joined him there for his very first ascent, that of the Besso. Thereafter the Valais seemed to hold a particular fascination for him and he returned year after year, either with his section of the S.A.C. (La Prevotoise) or with his close friend Louis Frelechoz, Curé of Moutiers.

During his brief years as a climber, Charles achieved many fine ascents which included Dent Blanche by the Arête des Quatre Anes, Weisshorn by Schalligrat and descent by Arête Young, traverse of Zinal Rothorn (at least three times), Zmutt ridge of Matterhorn, Obergabelhorn, Grand Combin, Sudlenzspitze and Allalinhorn.

This summer he returned to the Valais once again. The last climb he undertook was of the Aiguille Purtscheller, in the Massif du Tour, on August 1st. A slight malaise, a fall, and he was killed. He now lies buried in Chamonix.

Charles was Manager of Lloyd's Bank in Worcester and President of the Worcester Chamber of Commerce, and apart from his many interests connected with his work, he had also many outside interests, not least of which was colour photography. His untimely death is a sad loss to his many friends as well as to this Club ; his cheerful and friendly company will be widely missed, particularly by the Section Prevotoise where he was rightly held in high esteem.

L. G. BAUME

HENRY CREWDSON BROADRICK

On 9th December, 1956, there died at his family Lakeland home, Highfield, Windermere, H. C. Broadrick, an outstanding connection with the early pioneering days of English climbing. He was aged 81, and had been a member of the Climbers' Club since 1899. He and his brother, R.W., were well over six feet in height and both of great stature. To see them and their big friends starting off to tackle Walker's Gully made one think that the Pillar Rock would have a poor show. There was a keen

contest for the first ascent of Walker's Gully. Yet for a long time it held out until at last O. G. Jones made the first lead up the terrific upper pitch.

The Broadricks were tremendous walking enthusiasts, and H.C. was one of the earliest attackers of the Lake District fells record, when he did part of the route on a bicycle. The two brothers must have done dozens of new unrecorded ways on Lakeland crags, especially around Langdale and Coniston. H.C., safe, steady, and possessed of a long reach, was a born leader. One of his finest days was the first lead up the South Crack on Easter Gully, Dow Crag, with varied finish. He also led up the C Buttress direct to discover one of the best of the long Dow Crag face routes. Rake End Chimney on Pavey Ark, Scafell, Pillar and Gable were visited by H.C., but after the Scafell disaster of 1903, when his brother was killed, he seemed gradually to lose keen interest in the crags. He did some noted walks in the Cuillin, Skye, and in Scotland.

H. C. Broadrick was educated at Haileybury and Cambridge. He was a keen lover of outdoor sports and became an athlete of no mean merit. He captained his public school cricket XI for two years, and was a member of the Trinity College rowing team. He became joint headmaster of Orley Farm Preparatory School, Harrow, and retired in 1933. Latterly his interests were in the Windermere area, and to the end he was an ardent lover of Lakeland walking, motoring, skating, and golfing especially. For a time he was captain of the Windermere golf club, and he could "see a ball" to the end. He played on the course within a month of his death. After he retired from Orley, he became an active member of the Royal Windermere Yacht Club, and though he raced his own yacht for many seasons, he probably loved most the peace and quiet of pleasure cruising, enjoying memories of the lovely mountains, far and near, which cluster round his own home lake.

GEORGE D. ABRAHAM.

O. THORNYCROFT

Oliver Thornycroft, who died on 24th August, 1956, at the age of 71, had been a member of the Climbers' Club since 1910. He was a distinguished engineer, who for the greater part of his career worked in industry, but in 1939 joined the Admiralty,

where in 1946 he became Director of Aeronautical and Engineering Research. He was awarded the C.B. in 1948.

He started climbing in North Wales about 1907, and in the next few years, when he was working in Manchester, spent much time in Wales and the Lake District. He led a direct ascent of the Door-Jamb pitch in the Great Gully of Craig-yr-Ysfa at Easter 1909, taking advantage of the unusually high bank of snow. He visited Skye in 1913, and over the years had a number of holidays in the Alps, the last in 1935, when he and his wife attended a joint meet of the Climbers' Club and O.U.M.C. at Lognan. As well as summer climbing he enjoyed ski-mountaineering, though his opportunities were limited. He was a member of the Alpine Club.

Sir David Pye, his companion on several Alpine climbs, has written of him : " His greatest interest apart from his work was undoubtedly his passion for the mountains, especially the Alps. There was a sureness about his judgments that inspired complete confidence. I never knew him make a false step in his climbing, or be in doubt as to his next move. He would wait, if in doubt, but there was always a sureness about the move when it came that filled you with confidence that it was the right one and the only wise one in the circumstances. As the leader of a mountaineering party one always had the consciousness that he was aware of the skill of those who were following him, and he was ready to vary the pace to suit the weakest member of the party."

Mrs. Thornycroft accompanied him on many of his climbs, and also to Ladies' Dinners of our Club. We send her our deepest sympathy.

A.K.R.

H. COURTNEY BRYSON

H. Courtney Bryson, whose death was reported recently, had been a member of this Club since 1936. He contributed a macabre short story to the Journal in 1952.

In the 1930s he was a chemist in the paint and plastics industries, then during the War he started his own plastics business in the Midlands. After 1945 he divided his time between this and a consultant post in Portugal.

He was an original member of the Mountaineering Section of the Camping Club (1933), was editor of the Section Journal and,

about this time, collaborated in the first guidebook to Harrison's Rocks. Later (1936) came his *Rock Climbs Round London*, which did so much to attract southern climbers to the Wealden sandstone in the pre-war years. This extended the description of Harrison's Rocks as well as noting numerous other possible outcrops, a worthy piece of research in an untouched field. After moving north he was instrumental in forming the Peak Climbing Club (1941), of which he was President until 1949. Here he is remembered for "the encouragement and advice he so enthusiastically gave to youngsters just beginning to climb." On British rocks he led climbs up to V.S. standard. He contributed no significant first ascents, though his last climbs in Wales (1952) were new routes on Clogwyn y Bustach led by Menlove Edwards.

He had travelled widely, including crossing the Sahara Desert, canoeing down the Danube and climbing extensively in the Alps and in Norway and Portugal.

His *Rock Climbs Round London*, which came as a sudden revelation where previously there had been nothing, was a significant contribution to mountaineering literature and many of us in the 1930s took our first steps in climbing under its guidance. In those days we regarded his style as perhaps too flippant for such a serious subject as rock climbing; only with maturity, and a surfeit of guide-books of near-scientific precision, can it be seen that his was the *real* way to write of outcrops of this calibre—"practice pitches, performed *faute de mieux*, proceeding from the light-hearted joy which exists in the hearts of those who love mountains and think of them often." We shall long remember him for this.

I am grateful to D. G. Sheffield, A. Shutt and E. Sproston for supplying most of the facts on which this note is based.

EDWARD C. PYATT.

WALTER P. MARLER

W. P. Marler, who died in January, 1957, had been a member of the Club since 1899, thus missing Original Membership by one year.

E. N. Bowman writes:—

I was very sorry indeed to learn of the death of Walter Marler. Although I had not seen him for some years, I have very happy

memories of serving with him in my capacity of Hon. Secretary. He was Hon. Treasurer from 1926 to 1937, and a very efficient one at that. He officiated at a time when the Club was in process of building after the First World War into the flourishing institution which it has now become. He was a most amiable man and never allowed himself to be worried or depressed, and I always found him a tower of strength both to myself and the Committee. He finally left the Committee in 1943 after a continuous service of 17 years. He was Vice-President from 1932 to 1935. Those older members of the Club who had the privilege of knowing him well will, I feel sure, join with me in mourning his passing.

G. F. WOODHOUSE

G. F. Woodhouse, who died in March 1957 at the age of 82, had been a member of the Climbers' Club since 1904. He was an original member of the Fell and Rock Climbing Club, and first editor of the *Fell and Rock Journal* in 1907, although he resigned this post within a few months. He was a Vice-President of the Fell and Rock in 1909. His working life was spent as a master at Sedbergh, and he continued to live at Sedbergh in retirement until his death.

He was a sturdy rock climber of the old school and a life-long lover of the British hills (he never climbed abroad) especially the Lake District and Skye. He was best known for his part in the opening up of Dow Crag, where he and his brother made a whole series of pioneering routes in 1905 and 1906, including the ever popular climb that bears his name. For many years he did Intermediate Gully ceremonially once a year "to test his condition," as he put it. Borrowdale too was a favourite centre; he claimed to have climbed the Needle Ridge on Gable 57 times. He was proud that in a lifetime of climbing he had never had any sort of accident, and that he had led routes like the Eagle's Nest Direct, in nails, at a time when this was still one of the hardest climbs.

I met him at Buttermere in 1940; I was a schoolboy with my parents, he already retired, solitary, silent and observing in the hotel. He walked by himself on the fells by day and in the evening busily knitted comforts for soldiers. He was pointed

out as a well-known climber and I looked at this short, stocky figure, and tiny feet, with admiring respect. He was a little sad, I think, because he had recently given up climbing, and I was sad too because I should have liked him to take me on a climb. But he explained that if he could not lead, he would not climb, and his doctor had told him that no-one ought to lead after the age of 60; he had continued until 65 and then given up, solemnly giving away his rope.

But he did take me for a walk, and that was the beginning of a lasting friendship, for though I met him but once again, in 1947, for another walk from Honister, we corresponded regularly. "Bobby" Woodhouse, as he soon told me to call him, was full of encouragement and sage counsel for an enthusiastic boy. Whenever I went climbing I was expected to write and tell him exactly what I had done, and in reply would come a letter of kindly interest and renewed advice, often repeating his two favourite maxims, "never climb alone" and his pet quotation from St. Paul, "prove all things; hold fast that which is good." In his youth he was one of those who helped to create our sport of British rock climbing; and I am sure that there are many besides myself who owe him deep gratitude for his guidance in our own beginnings in following it.

A.K.R.

We also record with regret the deaths of G. C. E. Wilson, a member of the Club since 1945, who was killed in Cyprus in September, 1956, and of A. E. Riddett, a member since 1907.

REVIEWS

SNOWDON BIOGRAPHY. By Geoffrey Winthrop Young, Wilfrid Noyce and Geoffrey Sutton. Edited by Wilfrid Noyce. (J. M. Dent and Sons, 1957, 25/-)

Let it be said at once: this is a splendid book, amply fulfilling the promise of its authors' names. If it is here and there esoteric, it is written within, and for, the circle to which members of the Climbers' Club belong. The Snowdon mountains are our mountains. The better we know them and their climbing, the deeper our delight in this book.

1925 and 1948 saw the two editions of Carr and Lister's *The Mountains of Snowdonia*, comprehensive and, in Noyce's words, of many mansions. *Snowdon Biography*, says the preface, is a successor of, not rival to, the earlier book. Narrower in scope, it is concerned only with the men and women who have frequented and frequent these hills, with their climbing and their writing. After a short introduction by Noyce, it is divided into three parts. First, Geoffrey Winthrop Young surveys climbing in Snowdonia from earliest times to the 1920's. Young has written more than once of the great days of the Pen y Pass parties which were the centre of Welsh climbing for so long. Some of the traditional anecdotes recur; but this is not just a rehash of other writings, for here the survey goes wider, and the Pen y Pass parties are seen in the perspective of the larger story of Snowdon climbing. Judgment is shrewd, stimulating, and youthful, as ever; and the characteristic and evocative use of names emphasises once again how climbing is the very personal sport of individuals, with no history save that of the men and women who have climbed. In the 1920's Sutton takes up the tale and carries it to 1956. The earlier years he wisely presents mainly through well-chosen quotations, especially from Kretschmer's admirable chapter in the second edition of *The Mountains of Snowdonia*; for recent years he draws on his own intimate knowledge of modern climbing and climbers. Of absorbing interest is his survey and assessment of the achievements of Joe Brown and other members of the Rock and Ice Club, and their advance from the balance epoch of rock-climbing into the out-of-balance epoch. Both of these chapters are enriched by photographs of many of the great climbers referred to. The third contribution is "The writer in Snowdonia," in which Noyce surveys the literature. He is knowledgeable and comprehensive, but does not hesitate to follow where his interest leads. Modern books get the most space, and several are discussed in considerable detail, among them Elizabeth Coxhead's novel *One Green Bottle*, often underrated in climbing circles, and the writings of the young Oxford poet, William Bell. It is right that in this book, writing about the hills should

keep its place alongside climbing them; of the many mansions, these two are traditionally and delightfully adjoined.

All three contributors write objectively and with authority, but all three write personally too, reflecting their different age and outlook. "It is the play of man's changing personality over the static hills that has called this book into being." All three have in common a love of the Snowdon mountains and they have written a proper book for those who share that love. At the beginning of his chapter, Young quotes the earliest record of a rock ascent in Wales, from Sir Thomas Malory: "King Arthur yoed up to the creste of the cragge, and than comforted himself with the colde winde." The wind that blows from this book is not cold but warm and human, and of recurring comfort; it is a book for the permanent shelves, to be read and re-read with familiar pleasure.

A.K.R.

KANGCHENJUNGA: THE UNTRODDEN PEAK. By Charles Evans.
(Hodder and Stoughton. 25/-)

The story of the climbing of Kangchenjunga in 1955 by Charles Evans' party will be well known, in outline at any rate, to everyone with an interest in mountaineering achievement; and there are surely only very few people too blasé or too ignorant to appreciate that this first ascent ranks with the very greatest mountain exploits of all time and is unlikely to be surpassed in the days to come.

The book is altogether a worthy account. It conveys far better than the lectures just how outstanding an achievement the ascent of Kangchenjunga was. There is little false modesty and none whatever of exaggeration or bravado. Instead, the expert's factual description of an expedition, its members and their Mountain is nicely blended with just enough of the feelings and reactions of those concerned. The Mountain looms supreme throughout the book and the people are always subordinate to it, which is as it should be. But they are always there and always entirely human, in spite of a number of exploits which might well be considered a long way above even a very high standard of human endeavour.

A number of grave risks which the party took appear to be entirely justified. The last, and by no means least, of these seemed to be the final ascent by a second summit party at a time when an already temperamental weather situation was about to deteriorate rapidly with the onset of the monsoon. A radio report relayed from Base to Camp V at 25,300 ft. stated that the monsoon would reach the Eastern Himalaya in three days. "We did not know whether we counted as in the Eastern Himalaya, but we hoped not: we needed five good days." This apparently rather light-hearted statement probably sprang from a thought light-hearted only in retrospect, but in a quiet way it seems to sum up the spirit of the venture very well.

In his concluding chapter Charles Evans says that his party had the advantages both of the large sponsored expedition, lavishly equipped but often subject to too formal an atmosphere, and of the small, frugal

but friendlier expedition. This happy state is well brought out in the book. The undertaking was obviously well planned, equipped and organised from start to finish, but the underlying warmth and friendliness is there throughout, and every now and then it bubbles pleasingly to the surface, as, for instance, when the Sherpas officiously hold back spectators with the warning that "crowding makes them restless and difficult," or at the final victory dance round flaming canisters of butane gas. Lest reference to these brighter moments create the wrong impression, it must be said that this was of course by no means a light-hearted venture. Joie de vivre was merely one of the weapons with which the battle was won. The conquest of Kangchenjunga was the outcome of a stern fight against tremendous odds: the severest weather, treacherous ice and snow conditions, and climbing of such difficulty that even the redoubtable Joe Brown talked about "VS stuff" at 27,000 ft. and looked for an easier way up.

The book is well set out in short chapters, each of which makes good reading in itself. The photographs vary from good to excellent, and the sketch maps are clear and helpful. As with so many books describing a journey, one has to choose between two irritating alternatives: to memorise maps and diagrams before reading a chapter, or to turn back continuously to them. This could so easily be avoided by attaching plans to folding sheets bound into the book in such a way that they could be left opened out while one reads the sections to which they refer.

The Appendices on Equipment, Food, Oxygen, and Medical Care, by members of the expedition, are brief and to the point.

This is certainly not a book where quantitative merit exceeds qualitative. In fact, it is so eminently readable that at the end of the concluding chapter one is left with a greedy feeling that one could do with a good deal more of it. Immediately after reading the last six chapters, I found myself avidly ploughing through every word, figure and sketch of all the appendices and most of the Index—evidence surely that this is a very good book indeed.

J. M. KRETSCHMER.

ON CLIMBING. By Charles Evans. (Museum Press, 30/-.)

Reading this book I kept making comparison with G. I. Finch's *The Making of a Mountaineer*. *On Climbing* should do for thousands what Finch's book did for hundreds thirty years ago—give beginners, and many who have already begun, a clear, encouraging view of their craft. Manuals on climbing technique tend either to leave one chillily suspended by non-prusik loops in the chasms of one's ignorance, with the feeling that it would almost be better so to remain than to learn yet another necessary knot; or else they fall over backwards to be friendly, old fashioned and reassuring, and forget to mention pitons and étriers.

On Climbing only gives rock pitons a passing tap, but this is not so serious an omission as some would suppose, for the book is not aimed at the étrier level. Though the author skips airily from Tryfan to

the Täschhorn, and from step-cutting to mountain camping, there is a unifying balance and theme : it is fun ; it is worth doing well.

There is a sound beginner's portion on rock climbing and several excellent chapters on snow and ice—a useful corrective for our usual British ice-deficiency. Technical points particularly worth making are : the vital importance of practising the more complex rope evolutions, especially crevasse drill and checking falls on steep snow ; the importance of getting one's " crampon feet " at the beginning of a season ; and the dangers of the homeward slog on an " easy " glacier.

This is only half the book. The whole text is interspersed with delightful accounts of Charles Evans' own climbs, with his own pen and ink sketches (shades of Badminton and Fougasse) and with a good supporting array of photographs—mainly Douglas Milner's.

If one were to measure this book merely on the scale of usefulness to climbers now and in the future, it would rank high ; but it has another great merit. Charles Evans is so quiet and gentle about it all. Climbing isn't seen as a key to enlightenment or as a triumph for MAN, but as a game and a craft and a part of good living.

ROBIN HODGKIN.

TO KISS HIGH HEAVEN. By J. -J. Languelin. (Kimber).

WHITE FURY. By Raymond Lambert and Claude Kogan. (Hurst and Blackett)

EAST OF EVEREST. By Sir Edmund Hillary and George Lowe. (Hodder and Stoughton)

Three more expedition books, each in its own way with something of interest and importance to say. And yet one wonders how many people will actually select them to read from the floods of climbing books that inundate us : they will probably have glanced at the expedition article and left it at that. In the case of *To Kiss High Heaven* this would be a pity. Officially, it is the account of the tragic Lyons expedition to Nanda Devi in 1951 ; in fact it is Languelin's portrait of their leader, Roger Duplat. The book is interesting only in the way it shows the impact of this forceful and unusual personality on the rest of the party and how it carries them uneasily along on its wake to the Götterdämmerung. To traverse the mile and a half of ridge separating the twin summits of Nanda Devi was an objective ahead of its time, and that is commendable. But surely, if you wish to do such a thing, the whole basis is an appreciation of the past ? And therefore it is alarming to read that only a day after his arrival at Base Duplat left with Vignes for the summit (three camps had already been established by the rest of the party), that they went straight through to Camp II, and that in the following day, they carried up to Camp IV, missing out Camp III. When they were seen on the third day through a gap in snow clouds just below the summit, one is no longer surprised that it happens to be for the last time.

It is a relief to turn to *White Fury*, Raymond Lambert and Claude Kogan's joint account of their expedition first in the Gaurisankar area

and then on Cho Oyu. But here too is a problem, for they arrive at the Nangpa La to find that Dr. Tichy is already attempting Cho Oyu. Lambert wishes to treat the problem as if it were Alpine, two parties on the same route ; but perhaps not unnaturally Tichy is not amenable to the idea. When their turn finally comes, the winter is beginning to arrive, and in the face of bitter winds they fail about 1,000 feet short of the summit. It was a fine performance by Claude Kogan, but somehow one seems to take her achievements for granted nowadays. As a book, it is slight. Its chief trouble is the chatty French idiom turned into English, and this becomes unsettling when one author hands over the narrative to the other with "and so over to you Claude," who replies "thank you Raymond" in the next chapter.

East of Everest is mainly a picture story of the New Zealand Barun expedition of 1954. But Ed Hillary's terse account of the crevasse accident to Macfarlane and George Lowe's story of the ascent of the Baruntse, probably the most difficult of ice climbs to date in the Himalayas, are effective. Apart from the unlucky crevasse accident, and Hillary's own illness, this was a most successful expedition ; nearly a score of peaks in the 20,000 foot range were climbed and several new cols crossed. Hardie's crossing of the Imja-Barun divide alone with a party of Sherpas was particularly noteworthy, and is excitingly told. The pictures, particularly those taken at Namche and Thyangboche, are good.

R. R. E. CHORLEY.

NANGA PARBAT PILGRIMAGE. By Hermann Buhl. (Hodder & Stoughton)

THE SIEGE OF NANGA PARBAT, 1856-1953. By Paul Bauer. (Rupert Hart-Davis)

One approaches the autobiography of a person such as Hermann Buhl with a great sense of expectation. Here surely will be revealed the great inner force that must have kept him still moving, still alive, during those two incredible days on Nanga Parbat. It is perhaps only this sense of expectation that keeps one reading on through the overwhelming succession of vertical faces and overhanging cracks—each described in minute detail—hoping that sometime Buhl will reveal a little of himself, a little of his philosophy. But it is not to be.

After the first thirty or so pages I lost count of the death roll of Buhl's friends and climbing acquaintances and became submerged in the pitch by pitch description of every climb of note around Innsbruck. The narrative does begin to show signs of life once the story of the great Alpine climbs starts, and the labour of reading is eventually made worthwhile by Buhl's account of the final days on Nanga Parbat; but this we have had in substance already in the *Alpine Journal*.

One is left with a slight shudder. If this is mountaineering, it cannot be for many people. Certainly any non-climber picking up the book must give thanks that he has never ventured into the sport. I cannot

believe that it is a true picture of Buhl himself; there must be some softness, some relaxation in his character. His was the greatest solo feat in the history of mountaineering; sheer animal force could not have sustained him throughout. I only wish that someone other than Buhl had written this book. Perhaps they could have revealed more of the man.

Whereas *Nanga Parbat Pilgrimage* is overlong, Paul Bauer's book, *The Siege of Nanga Parbat*, 1856-1953, is overshoot. In two hundred and eleven pages of large print the whole story is told from before Mummery to Buhl's final ascent. If you are interested in the mountain itself, then this book gives you a very clear picture of the history of the attempts on the summit by the man best qualified to do so.

As a summary or as an introduction to a closer study of those attempts, it is admirable, although made less useful by the omission of an index; but it is not literature.

C. W. BRASHER.

CHO OYU. By Herbert Tichy. Translated by Basil Creighton. (Methuen. 25/-)

The ascent of Cho Oyu in 1954 was remarkable in many ways, but conspicuously for the small size of the party for so great a peak and for the perfect partnership of Europeans and Sherpas. Cho Oyu will always be remembered first as Pasang's mountain: Pasang suggested it, Pasang led the way, and Pasang performed the unique feat of climbing from Namche Bazar to the summit in three days, thereby winning the peak, a wager and a bride. But it is Tichy's mountain too: it was his expedition, he shared the dream that an 8,000 m. peak could, and should, be climbed in this way, and it was his courage that so wonderfully and deservedly took him to the summit despite his frostbitten hands.

It is a romantic story, and most charmingly does Tichy tell it. It was a very personal sort of expedition; it is a very personal book, and in this unlike the general run of expedition books. "The things we are doing, the things we are seeing, and the things we are feeling"—all three of Geoffrey Young's strands of mountain experience are here. Three passages stand out: the appalling storm of wind which repelled the first assault and nearly brought disaster; the final climb to the summit and Tichy's feelings upon it (an exalted passage, but the stamp of honesty spares embarrassment); and, in a different *genre*, after the climb is over, Pasang's wedding, with all the fun and the drinking. Tichy and his friends clearly endeared themselves to the Sherpas; and his modesty and humour endear him to his readers also.

The translation, by Basil Creighton, is very good; scarcely ever is one conscious of reading a translation. 25/- may seem rather a lot for 196 pages, but there are four coloured and 32 halftone plates.

A.K.R.

STARLIGHT AND STORM—THE ASCENT OF SIX GREAT NORTH FACES OF THE ALPS. By Gaston Rébuffat, translated by Wilfrid Noyce and Sir John Hunt. (J. M. Dent and Sons Ltd., London, 1956, 18/-)

Three years ago this book appeared in French as *Étoiles et Tempêtes* and was reviewed at length in this journal by Richard Viney (*C.C.J.* 1955, pp. 153-5). In his review our late secretary made his usual shrewd comments on the writing, the climbs and also on the fact that Rébuffat, one of the greatest Alpine climbers of the post-war years, was describing his best climbs without being able to include a single first ascent. He remarked that it seemed as though Alpine standards in the decade following World War II were on a plateau after their sharp upward bound in the thirties.

This reviewer had read Viney's description but not the book in French and so turned to this English edition with great expectations. It should be said at once that he found the work disappointing and, after reflection, thinks he knows why. The trouble is not the writing; Rébuffat is that rare phenomenon, a first class guide who can write well. It is not the subject; the six North faces are a wonderful theme (they include the Matterhorn, the Eiger, the Drus, the Grandes Jorasses both Walker and Central Spur, the Badile and the Cima Grande di Lavaredo. Nor is the translation badly done; Hunt and Noyce have kept the true Gallic flavour of exaggerated language and reported conversations. The photographs and diagrams too are good; there are 36 of the first and six of the second, and they give an excellent impression of the terrain, the route and even of the difficulties.

The real trouble is that this reviewer was expecting a book aimed at the serious climber, the regular alpinist, or at least the regular reader of Alpine literature. In fact it seems aimed at a much wider public. That this is so is clear from the short introductions with which the translators preface each chapter (e.g. a typical one beginning "The Matterhorn, or in French le Cervin, 14,780 feet high, is one of the highest peaks of the Pennine Alps in the district known as the Valais"). In M. Rébuffat's writing too the actual climbing gets very short measure. His formula is to give a page or two on the location of the cliff and its character, a little on the early attempts to climb it, a word on his feelings at the thought of tackling the giant and a thumbnail sketch of the circumstances in which he and his companions finally took the plunge and set out. All charmingly done, but as each chapter is only some ten to twenty small pages long, he is left devoting some three or four pages to his ascent itself. The extreme example is the Central Spur on the Grandes Jorasses which is covered in two pages.

To these observations there are two exceptions. His description of the Badile with Bernard Pierre, complete with two bivouacs and terrible storm, is very good. And in a class by itself is the magnificent twenty-two page treatment of the ascent of the Eiger with its five ropes of German, Austrian and French, its bivouacs, its blizzards and

eventually success. As a climbing description this chapter stands out head and shoulders from the rest of the book. For this alone it is worth buying.

KENNETH BERRILL.

GIVE ME THE HILLS. By Miriam Underhill. (Methuen. 25/-.)

In her Foreword, Mrs. Underhill writes: "I had recently passed my fiftieth birthday, the first one to seem to me of any particular significance. But these fifty years, I mused, had made up an outstandingly satisfactory life!" I wonder how many of us will be, or have been, able truthfully to say this. And so it was with some expectation of a climbing book out of the ordinary that I started to read. Nor was I disappointed. This is no book written out of a sense of duty or fashion; Mrs. Underhill writes because she has lots to tell that is worth telling. Her reason for climbing is simple—a deep enjoyment of mountains and mountain people and mountain places. Her enjoyment is evidently maintained when writing of mountains, and this results in a gay and lively style.

The story is told by ranges or by subjects, which make things geographically simple but chronologically slightly confusing at times. Most of the climbs described are in the Alps—the Dolomites, the Oberland, Valais and the Mont Blanc massif. It is through these climbs that Mrs. Underhill (as Miriam O'Brien) is best known to British climbers; for the first ascent of the Aiguille de Roc in 1927 with Alfred Couttet and Georges Cachat, and for the first traverse of the Aiguilles du Diable in 1928 with Robert Underhill, Armand Charlet and Georges Cachat. But Mrs. Underhill is of independent and pioneering spirit; she sometimes makes her guides climb on mountains which they have never visited before, and persuades them to let her lead, and occasionally even tries to pull them over. Many of her climbs are guideless. Some are even "manless," she being one of the inventors and main exponents of "manless climbing." So too the chapter on skiing is not about fashionable *pistes*, but about early days of the sport in her native New England, and ski climbs (some of them "firsts") on Alpine mountains in winter. And it is the pioneering instinct that leads her in the United States to write (in my opinion in the most interesting chapters) not about the more popular and accessible climbing grounds in California or the Tetons, but about the remote unspoilt ranges of Montana and Idaho, where virgin peaks could still be found after the War, and where problems of technique and weather are replaced (or sometimes only added to) by problems of access through untrodden forest and of grizzlies astride your ridge.

The book is not just the story of her ascents (Mrs. Underhill often unfortunately spoils our suspense by telling us whether the climb was successful before she has started to describe it). Occurrences in huts, remarks and observations, and even the occasional slight naughtiness, many of which probably seemed trivial at the time, are recalled with a vividness that makes the book live. One of the more remarkable

features is the way Mrs. Underhill almost invariably strikes a deep and permanent friendship with the guides she climbs with and the ranchers who help with her transport problems. Her relations with Adolf Rubi and Angelo Dimai, noted Oberland and Dolomite guides respectively, are not in the least those of a client and professional, but those of perfectly suited climbing companions. The warmth of feeling and joie de montagne that make this possible penetrate through to the reader.

The four colour plates are of much photographed subjects, but still notable. The black and white plates, though some are good leave something to be desired both in choice and reproduction. 25/- is not cheap, but we get 248 pages of text, when now we often have to be satisfied with little more than half as much.

G. J. FRASER

ALPINE SKI TOUR. By Robin Fedden. (Putnam, 30/-)

"The high climbing season lasts only for some two and a half months. There remain nine and a half months during which the traveller in the high mountains will find skis all but indispensable in some places and very useful in practically all. But the pure mountaineer shuts his eyes to this obvious truth, because it has never occurred to him that mountaineering is reasonably practicable except during the season which he is accustomed to regard as appropriate for the purpose." The passage of a generation has rendered no less true these words of the late Lord Schuster, that great liaison officer between skiers and climbers. Among the former, there has been no British renaissance comparable with that in the summer Alps; most of the milling hordes of "strap-hangers" who pack the *pistes* of mountain Margates are little interested in the peaks. In drawing attention to the splendid routes that even the moderate performer on ski can achieve, *Alpine Ski Tour* by Robin Fedden is an important book.

It is the story of the Haute Route, the famous High Level Route from Chamonix to Zermatt and beyond, which on account of its length, the altitude of the passes, and the magnificence of the surrounding peaks is perhaps the most dramatic and sustained of the great ski tours of the Alps. And it is a delightful story, told in a pleasing style which masks the erudition of its author. As geographer and historian he views the Haute Route in its many facets. His theme, woven into the narrative, is the long determination of man to overcome the barrier of the Alps, from "the Salassi—indistinct figures, shaggy, wrapt in verminous furs—dropping their rough coinage on the pass for the convenience of the historian" to the first bearded pioneers of the Alpine Club.

On more practical matters, to which a valuable chapter is devoted, he sets out to give "a few Hints, which may be, useful to such as shall hereafter have the same curiosity". After outlining the fundamentals of winter and spring skiing, including a discussion of the best months for skier and for climber, he deals with the problems of equipment. For speed and stability relatively long ski are recommended, preferably

of ash for lightness, and with good release-bindings. On the question of skins, the Swiss-made "trima," clipping directly beneath the ski, are considered the best. The rucksack should be of one of the Continental makes specially designed for ski-touring, with slots and straps for carrying ski, axe and crampons. The question of guide or no guide is dealt with sympathetically ; in this connection it is worth noting that the only unguided attempt on the Haute Route in winter by British skiers failed to force the key passage between the Valsorey and Chanrion Huts. For the skier, this section is "l'étape la moins sympathique." Your reviewer shamefacedly sidled round by the Val de Bagnes.

On the journey itself, weather seriously hampered the party, reminding them that the ski-mountaineer lives on sufferance, that his projects, his pleasure, and sometimes more than these, depend on forces over which he has no control. But Mr. Fedden takes it all philosophically, and whether he is dealing with föhn or Fendant, choughs or Chasseurs, he is equally entertaining and enlightening.

J. B. TYSON.

ACONCAGUA: SOUTH FACE. By René Ferlet and Guy Poulet, translated by E. Noel Bowman. (Constable, 25/-)

Aconcagua, whether or not, at 23,075 feet, it is the highest mountain in the Americas, must be a unique mountain. It has a great south face (it is in the Southern Hemisphere) that reproduces on a Himalayan scale and at a Himalayan altitude all those factors that have made the great faces of the Alps the élite of climbing achievement. But it also has a northern aspect, which is a gentle scree slope like the Alps of the Plan de l'Aiguille, with a mule-track up it to within 2,000 feet of the top. Thus a simple route down is provided for the party that has made the ascent of the south face. In fact two of the French party who had taken seven consecutive days on the 10,000 feet of the face descended the same height on the northern slopes in $3\frac{1}{2}$ hours. It was the challenge of the south face that the French expedition accepted. Their leader, René Ferlet, had been a member of the team that climbed Fitzroy (11,290 feet), probably as difficult technically as anything previously done outside the Alps, but still a climb at Alpine levels.

The climbs done in the Himalayas themselves to date still belong to the first period in the development of mountaineering which is primarily concerned with the exploration and the conquest of virgin peaks. (The French attempt to traverse Nanda Devi was an exception.) As in the history of Alpine climbing we find the transition from the period of first ascents into a second which is directed at the climbing of particular routes, where the summit is subordinated to the route, so the climbing of Aconcagua's south face, regardless of its technical difficulty, represents a new period of higher altitude climbing. One of the most striking features of this book is that everywhere it is the challenge of the face which inspires the party, and never that of the summit, which is a mere incidental anticlimax.

Each period of climbing has had to overcome its own special difficulties and to evolve its own special equipment and techniques. Oxygen equipment provided the answer to the extreme altitude of Himalayan summits, and pitons, étriers and duvets have made possible the ascent of the most severe Alpine faces. However, the French party climbed the south face by the traditional bivouac technique of the Alps. For the seven days of their final assault, they had a fortunate spell of fine weather. They had an assured and easy descent once they reached the summit. But nevertheless five out of the six of them returned to the valley with severe frostbite necessitating amputations. Furthermore if during the later days of the ascent a retreat had become imperative, as it well might have, a more striking and poignant parallel might have been drawn between this face and that of the Eiger than that of the steepness and difficulty of the rock and ice. As it was, the party succeeded, although tormented by thirst, frozen by temperatures of -35° , and sustained at the end by little more than courage, coramine and visions of beautiful women.

Hitherto climbs at this altitude have been done by a considered and calculated ascent from camp to camp. The difficulties of the south face necessitated an all-out attack interrupted only by Alpine-type bivouacs. The frostbite and the months in hospital that inevitably followed this ordeal cannot be avoided as can objective dangers. Indeed, the party showed great skill in avoiding the very severe objective dangers of the face. I imagine that there is a limit to the physical sacrifices and risks which the mountaineer will accept. Consequently, if climbs of this type continue to be done, we may expect a corresponding development in equipment and technique to meet the aggravated dangers inherent in such climbs at such altitudes.

Meanwhile, this book stands as a record of the perseverance and skill of the Frenchmen. The ice at twenty thousand feet seems to be more difficult than that most of us meet at ten. It is an extremely well produced book, excellently translated (apart from one or two curios). The text and marked photographs achieve a model level of clarity. This heightens the drama of a story told simply and with a pleasant Gallic humour, which should endear the members of the party to the reader as much as it obviously endeared them to the Argentinians.

J. S. HOBHOUSE.

UNE VICTOIRE SUR L'HIMALAYA. By Bernard Pierre. (Hachette.)

This is the account of the climbing of Nun Kun in 1953. The original edition, which had the title *Une Montagne nommée Nun Kun*, was reviewed in *C.C.ŷ.* 1955 (p. 155). It has since been awarded a Grand Prix Littéraire de la Montagne, on which we congratulate the author, our member, Bernard Pierre.

L'ART DE L'ALPINISME. By Pierre Allain. (Amiot-Dumont.)

This looks a slim volume, but it is a comprehensive and detailed text-book of Alpine technique, of all the high quality one would expect

of so distinguished an expert as its author. In pattern reminiscent of, say, Barford's *Climbing in Britain*, its aims are brevity and clarity rather than literary embellishment ; one must read it for instruction, and not expect entertainment as well. But within its chosen field it is exceedingly good.

It is a text-book of *Alpine* technique. Himalayan or other expeditionary mountaineering is only discussed in a short final chapter about equipment. At the other end of the scale, it would not be very much help to people whose interest is in rock-climbing as practised in Britain, nor perhaps would it be the ideal book to guide the transition from British rock to the Alps, for that is not the approach Allain envisages, and if his book has a fault, it is that it too little distinguishes the elementary from the advanced. But there can be very few of those already familiar with Alpine problems who will not learn from reading it ; it is indeed the most knowledgeable who are likely to profit most. A few of the recommendations, for instance the use of the *baudrier* or harness instead of a waist-loop, are out of line with accepted British practice, but these divergencies from our doctrine add to rather than detract from the interest of the book, coming as they do with such weighty authority.

There are no photographs, but a large number of lucid drawings and diagrams. The equipment section is one of the most valuable ; but there is a great value in all of it.

A.K.R.

SIX GREAT MOUNTAINEERS. By Ronald W. Clark. (Hamish Hamilton, 10/6)

A PICTURE HISTORY OF MOUNTAINEERING. By Ronald W. Clark. (Hulton Press, 30/-)

Neither of these books is important. They are not, and do not attempt to be, a serious contribution to the history of mountaineers or their sport. But they are good fun, especially the *Picture History*, readable, and written with an entirely modest lack of pomposity. *Six Great Mountaineers* makes (thank goodness) no apology for its choice of heroes, and scores high marks for including Collie, with Mummery, Winthrop Young, Whymper, Mallory and the inevitable Hunt. None of the sketches adds any original research to the total of knowledge about these men, but the author really knows his stuff and mistakes (such as the placing of Young's great "Mer de Glace" climb on the west face of the Grépon) are few and far between.

The *Picture History* provides the formidable total of some 352 photographs, ranging from Everest to Harrison's Rocks, from Conrad Gesner to the Editor of this Journal. The accent is on historical rather than pictorial interest, not a bad thing considering the quality of reproduction, which is up (or rather down) to the usual deplorable English standard. Foreigners are allowed quite a small place, the development of mountaineering being treated from an insular viewpoint; the contemporary foreign scene for instance is represented only

by André Roch, Raymond Lambert, Lionel Terray and a few unidentified Germans. Cassin, Gervasutti, Buhl, Bonatti, etc., are ignored. *But*—the book is a superb repository of pictures of the Golden Age. Here are to be found a whole host of early photos, water-colours, prints and drawings. Absolutely pre-eminent among the early photos are those of the Bisson brothers, their technical standard being staggeringly high for 1860, so much so that they are quite the equal of the rather unflattering selection of the works of the great master, Sella, working 40 years later. They put to shame the efforts of present day mountain photographers, working with all the latest equipment: their view of the Aiguilles from above Chamonix is the clearest I have seen published, and the picture on the same page of the Col du Géant finds a fascinating pattern in what might be the dulllest of views. Let us hope that someone will reprint their "rare folio album . . . of twenty-four photographs."

Final verdict: pleasant bedside books.

E. A. WRANGHAM.

CAMBRIDGE MOUNTAINEERING, 1956.

This edition marks the C.U.M.C.'s fiftieth jubilee and does so fittingly. Geoffrey Winthrop Young, L. A. Ellwood, G. A. Dummett, Wilfrid Noyce, J. W. Cook and R. O. Downes each write briefly about a period of the club's history, so that the fifty years are covered in thirteen pages, thirteen pages showing the path the club has taken, cairned so frequently with famous names that a wall seems to be formed alongside which the reader progresses bareheaded.

The greater part of the journal is concerned with more recent expeditions and it is evident that the spirit of the past is more than alive today. If you want to read good literature about good climbing (and a healthy crop of new routes in Scotland and Wales) it may be bought for the price of an ounce of tobacco and is guaranteed to give satisfaction.

OXFORD MOUNTAINEERING, 1956.

R. W. M. Johnson and J. S. Hobhouse open the batting with a joint article on an ascent of the Gervasutti Couloir, and the reader is left wishing that they had described too their ascent of the Sentinelle Rouge route which they made two days later. K. Neville Irvine comes in next with a revealing account of the early days of the O.U.M.C. G. Murray defends his wicket with easy humour and writes of a good bag of peaks in the Oksfjord peninsular in arctic Norway. Scotland and Zermatt are represented, and A. K. Rawlinson rounds off the innings with a literary adventure story under the heading "Fou." "Fou it was in three senses . . .," but read it for yourself. Despite its slimness the dark blue volume contains a fair measure of meat.

G. W. S. PIGOTT.

THE CONQUEST OF FITZROY. By M. A. Azema. (André Deutsch, 21/-)

This is the book of the first ascent of Fitzroy in 1952 by the French expedition, told by its leader, M. Azema, and well translated by Lady Chorley and Mrs. Morin. The rock spire that is the peak itself was only climbed by Magnone and Terray, but as the rock face up which the route was forced is apart from the overhangs to all intents vertical, Azema was able to get an excellent view of the climb from the expedition's third and highest camp at the foot of the face. Fitzroy is the vindication, if one is needed, of the use of artificial techniques, for it was only by means of them that the mountain could be climbed at all. Indeed, had Lionel Terray not remembered at the crucial moment a last *as de coeur* left in an empty sardine tin, the summit of the mountain might still be inviolate today.

The technical difficulties were redoubled by the Patagonian weather, especially the perpetual gales, which do not seem to have changed much since they impressed Magellan. The cloud, which we gather is the normal concomitant of the summit of Fitzroy, long caused explorers to suppose that it was a volcano. The winds made conventional camps impossible, even with the best equipment, so the party at each of their three mountain camps dug elaborate ice caves, which are described in useful detail.

M. Azema shows himself a keen observer of nature, and reports not only the condors and armadillos that we should expect but also ostriches, black swans and the phoenix, not to mention gigantic hares that the party mistook for antelopes. The steppes to the east of the mountain are an Argentinian nature reserve, which produces the curious result that the only animal which is at all frightened of man is the domestic sheep, which by custom of the country travellers may shoot and kill for food.

The book contains some helpful maps and a good portrait of M. Azema.

J. S. HOBHOUSE.

CLUB JOURNALS, 1956.

Taken together, the two numbers of the *Alpine Journal*, May and November, do very well. But the harvest comes at the end of the season. In the November issue there are all manner of riches: an account of the Swiss ascents of Lhotse and Everest (which increased to over six the number of man-hours spent on top of the world); Tilman on his double crossing of the Patagonian Ice Cap; Hartog, less stylishly, on the Muztagh Tower; and E. Beletsky on Mountaineering in the U.S.S.R., which describes how the classification of climbs may be extended to climbers, how 500 collective farmers once climbed Elbrus and how the "Spartak" team which climbed the east wall of Dykh-tau in only five days claimed to have reached the limit of all possible human abilities. But the May issue was less satisfactory. Over a quarter of it is taken up by A. W. Moore on the Caucasus in 1874—page after ponderous page of fleas, bivouacs, bouquetins and Caucasian colonels. And then there is the Hindu ascetic, Swami

Pranavananda F.R.G.S., discussing with even greater aridity the snowman the world so rightly abominates. "Let us now closely examine the real meaning of the Tibetan words . . . mite, miteh-kangmi, me-te, yeti . . ." Has the gentle Alpine reader ever been plagued with more depressing an invitation? But as if this were not scholasticism enough we have Hannibal's passage of the Alps as well. It is all rather wearing.

After the British Museum library, the *American Alpine Journal* is like a breath of Welsh air. It is full, not just half full, of excellent things—Don Claunch on the Wishbone Arête of Mt. Robson, Norman Dyhrenfurth on the hard-hit international expedition to Lhotse in 1955, Charles Evans on Kangchenjunga and, perhaps most interesting of all, Charles Houston on Expedition Philosophy—1956. As usual the photographs are many and beautiful, including one of an immaculate ski jump in the Western Cwm of Everest by Herr Doktor Spirig, who also descended the Khumbu icefall, removing his skis only twice for short stretches. The editorial is lama-like obeisance to Charles Evans and the Kangchenjunga expedition—which "should be studied again and again as a model of great mountaineering." The note on Europe is a pleasant piece of vituperation. Marcel Kurz comes down like a ton of falling stones on someone in the previous issue who had read "the scanty details" in his (Mr. Kurz's) guide book. The Cresta Rey is "a simple rock rib. Its description does not imply any details." Mr. Everett was obviously on the wrong climb.

The *Canadian Alpine Journal* is a mixture of backwoods, first rate alpinism, campfire ecstasies, sermons and science. The main contribution to the scientific section is by Adam Szczawinski who considers the economic importance of lichens, which is greater than anyone thinks, and ends with an appeal to which British climbers and indeed the Everest Foundation may like to respond: "Please help us to solve the mystery of the lichens, and to build a proper lichen herbarium." How varied too the activities at the annual camps. The fiftieth was held in 1955 on the edge of Berg Lake in "the shadow" of Mt. Robson. "The evening campfires were magnetic with their songs and speeches and skits and cocoa-steaming cups." And in the intervals of yo-ho-hoing, "how fine were chats with people like grey-bearded Dr. Bassett of New York, auburn-pigtailed Marg Bugler of Calgary, mountain-lore-ful Phyl Munday of Vancouver . . ." How jolly, what fun indeed. Auburn pigtails round the bonfire. Hiawatha in his wigwam. Try it in South Audrey Street? Try too the sermon preached by Frank E. Gaebelein called What the Mountains Say. But we need a further sermon explaining what Mr. Gaebelein says.

The *Ladies' Alpine Club Journal* is as attractive as ever. It has the *American Alpine Journal's* refreshing discipline: no make-weights, no nonsense. There are articles on the Himalayas, Morocco and the Sudan—the Ladies' Alpine Club is nothing if not travelled. And there are some interesting conclusions from the Scottish ladies' who visited Nepal. "One was that we seemed able to stand the cold rather better than men. At our highest camp (at about 20,000 feet) Evelyn was able

to sleep in pyjamas only . . . The higher we went the less fearful we became. At 20,000 feet there was a serenity about us and we got on even better with one another than usual. We were tempted to conclude that the usual deterioration of relationships in high camps is due not to altitude but to discomfort and boredom and that women are better able to endure these." Nea Morin in her article on Family Mountaineering has a polite but rueful comment about "the segregation of the sexes in many of our older climbing clubs."

The *Fell and Rock Journal*, in a jubilee edition, has a number of piously historical and reminiscent articles primarily designed for internal consumption. There are also a number of early photographs; the one I liked best showed a group of Raw Head including the moustachio'd, saturnine and highly suspicious Botterill. A page from the club's minute book of 1909 records the decision that ladies *must* be asked to the annual dinner, but neither the previous discussion nor the nature of the compulsion is recorded. Mary Rose FitzGibbon, reviewing *The Ascent of Rum Doodle*, wonders how many people will miss its subtlety and be taken in.

The *Scottish Mountaineering Club Journal* is much better this year. We are allowed, as an uncovenanted treat, to hear from Tom McKinnon about Kangchenjunga and there is more about Nepal from the Scottish ladies. There is also a nine page treatise by Dr. Guy Barlow On the Possibility of seeing the Cuillin from the Cairngorms. It includes a great many technical terms, a formula, two diagrams (one of which, he says, can only be properly appreciated at a distance of 21 feet) and the beautifully donnish conclusion: "After having 20 times traversed in my imagination the nearly 100 mile line from Cairn Toul to the Cuillin, over the high mountain ridges and through the deep glens, the thought now comes to me how wonderful it would be for once to follow that line in reality." As Dr. Barlow says of another vexatious problem, "This is a matter which seems best decided by direct observation." Golden lads please note: the journal records the death of Lord Mackay who was reputed "to have climbed the Matterhorn by three different routes within 24 hours" and whom, at the age of nearly eighty, hardly anyone could be found to beat at croquet.

In the *Rucksack Club Journal* J. N. Mather describes the route to Camp VI on Kangchenjunga and J. R. Hastings "the biggest catastrophe since Crecy"—his exploration of the underground river of Labouiche in company with the Tritons Lyonnaises, some boy scouts, the local press, a radio commentator, a contingent of the French army and a bishop who, before giving his blessing, "detailed carefully—or as one reporter put it, enumerated movingly—all the perils before us."

One of the pleasantest items is an account of a walk from Land's End to John O'Groats which begins: "My age is 82."

Finally, the *Iowa Mountaineers*—"E Montibus Vires"—are still having a simply marvellous time. In 1955, as a change from the Alps (to which they are returning for a "dream outing" in 1958), they visited

Alaska—that “wild and rugged frontier land.” As anyone familiar with the club will have taken for granted, the leader was able to attract “outstanding persons to direct the various phases of the operation.” The Iowa Mountaineers deserve a better motto: *Omnes montes intra vires*?

The *Bulletin of the Alpine Climbing Group* is written by tigers for tigers about tigers, and is itself tigerishly in the know and up to the minute. From Brown to Bühl, from Higgar Tor to Huagaruncho, it is all here. The Bulletin scorns the name of literature and is yet the very reverse of a frothy glossy magazine: like the tiger himself, in its writing and its illustration, it is single-minded, spare and efficient.

For those who want to know what the tigers are doing it is indispensable. Reading it is like going over an assault course. Take D. Whillans on the Cima Su Alto, for example: “Climb the yellow dièdre to a huge roof (150 m. V-VI, sustained, steps of A1-A2, 40 p.). Climb the toit and follow a series of overhanging cracks (A2, VI, 15 p., hard).” The ferocity is relieved only by the tiger’s grim fun: the best joke is about a party on the S.W. pillar of the Dru, obliged to retreat from above Bonatti’s 4th bivouac—they had dropped their bag of pitons. How Mr. Irving will love that one!

P. S. NELSON.

The *Bulletin of the Mountain Club of Kenya*, which arrived too late for mention in the above review, looks forward to the reopening of Mount Kenya after the long interruption of the Mau-Mau emergency. Our member, R. A. Caukwell, is editor and a prominent contributor. A party of scouts and girl guides, including some Africans, climbed Kilimanjaro; they are believed to be the first African women to do so.

CLIMBS IN CLEVELAND. Edited by M. F. Wilson. Published by the Cleveland Mountaineering Club. (Copies obtainable from Dr. R. E. Goddard, 176 Durham Road, Stockton-on-Tees, at 7/6 plus 3d. postage). (pp. 83; diagrams; 1 illustration)

This is a pleasant little guidebook to the sandstone outcrops of the Cleveland Hills in the North Riding. Recorded history began here in the 1920’s, but only after the last decade of intensive exploration is the publication of a guidebook at last warranted. The chief crags described are Wainstones, Park Nab, Highcliff Nab, Raven’s Scar, Beacon Scar and Whetstone Nab. There are others lesser.

The positions of the climbs are identified on a series of elevation sketches, similar to the latest gritstone guidebooks. They vary in length from 15 to 55 feet, with a sprinkling of longer climbs and girdle traverses. There are some also as low as 10 feet. The inclusion of so many short routes is, perhaps, the chief point of criticism.

While these crags are unlikely to attract climbers from a distance, everyone living near enough or visiting the area should have a copy

of this little book, so that he can take full advantage of the local facilities, which are here presented as being in every way worthy of attention.

EDWARD PYATT.

Two books were received too late for extended review. *A Pictorial Guide to the Lakeland Fells, Book Two: The Far Eastern Fells*, by A. Wainwright (Henry Marshall, Kentmere, 12/6), is the second in the author's series, of which the first was reviewed in *C.C.J.*, 1956 (p. 332). In the same style and format as its predecessor, it covers the High Street group of fells. In *In Highest Nepal* (Allen & Unwin, 21/-) Norman Hardie tells of his travels in the Sherpa country after the 1955 Kangchenjunga expedition, at first alone with his Sherpa friends, later in company with his wife and Joe Macdonald.

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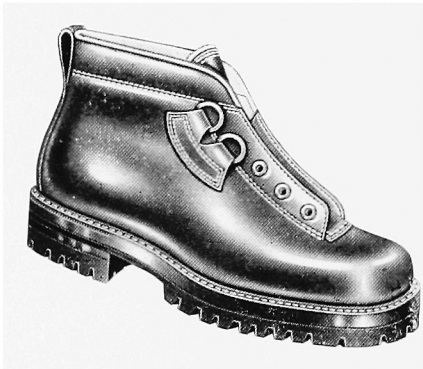
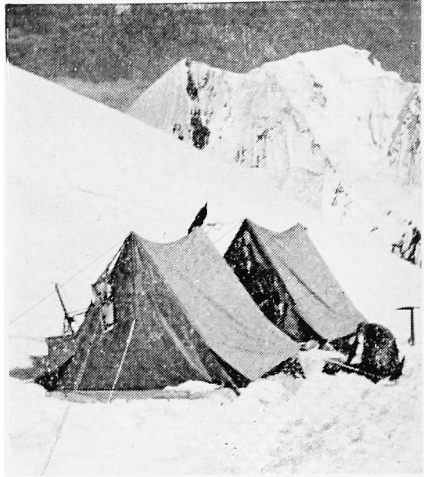
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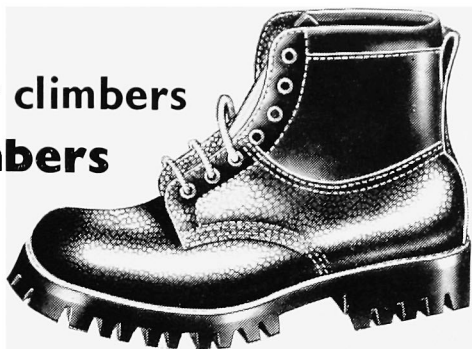
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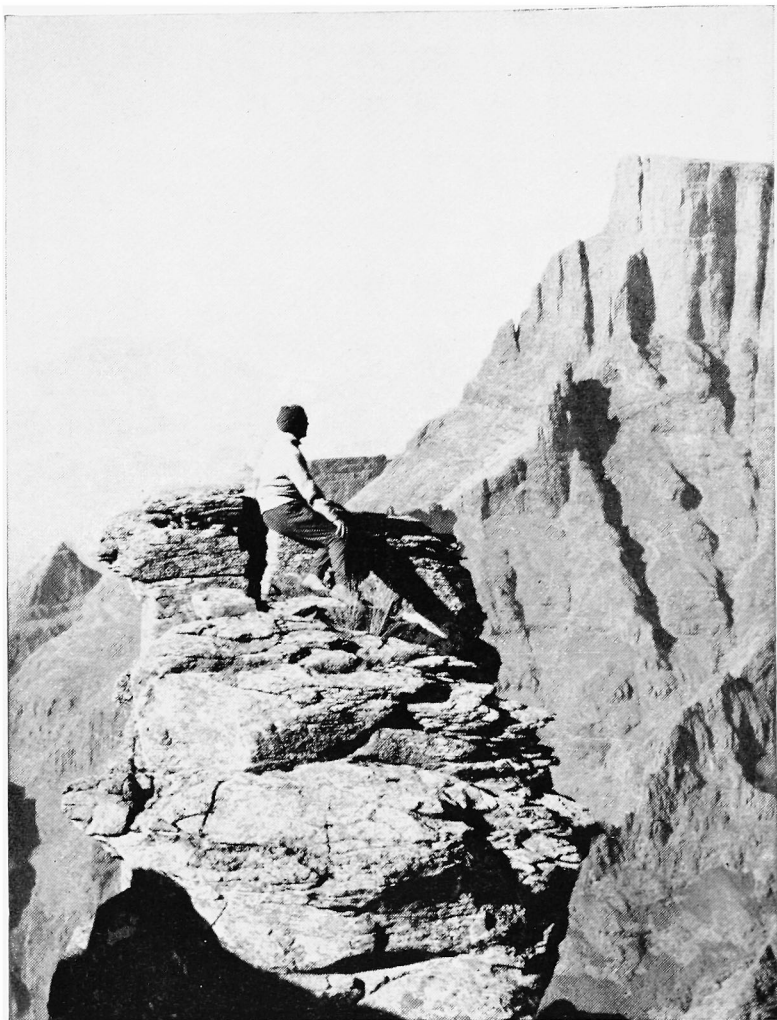
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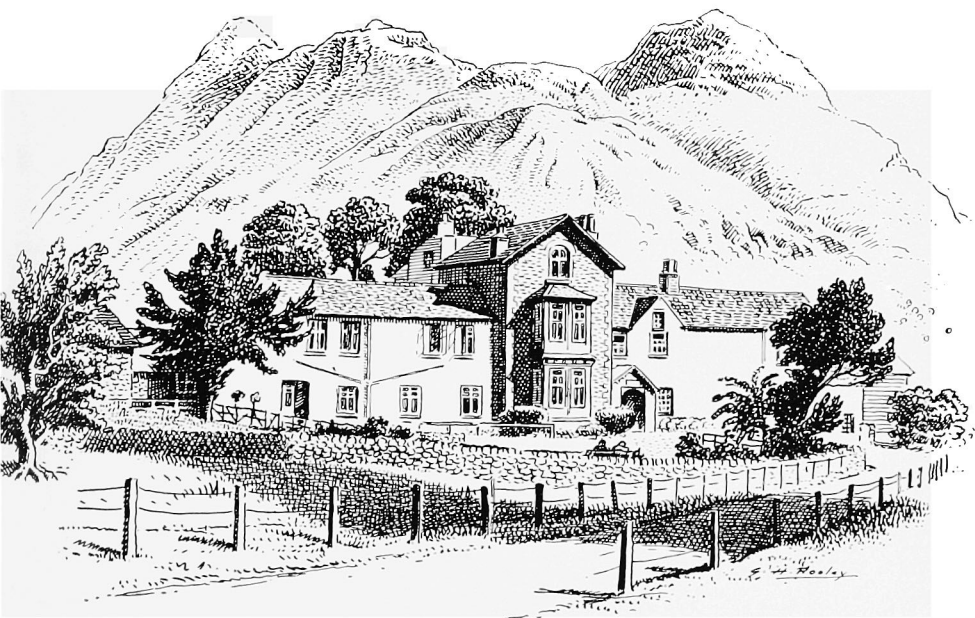
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