

THE
CLIMBERS' CLUB
JOURNAL

1963

THE CLIMBERS' CLUB JOURNAL

Edited by
JOHN NEILL

1963
THE CLIMBERS' CLUB, LONDON

This is the eighty-eighth issue of the
CLIMBERS' CLUB JOURNAL, Vol. XIV,
No. 1 (New Series), edited by John Neill.

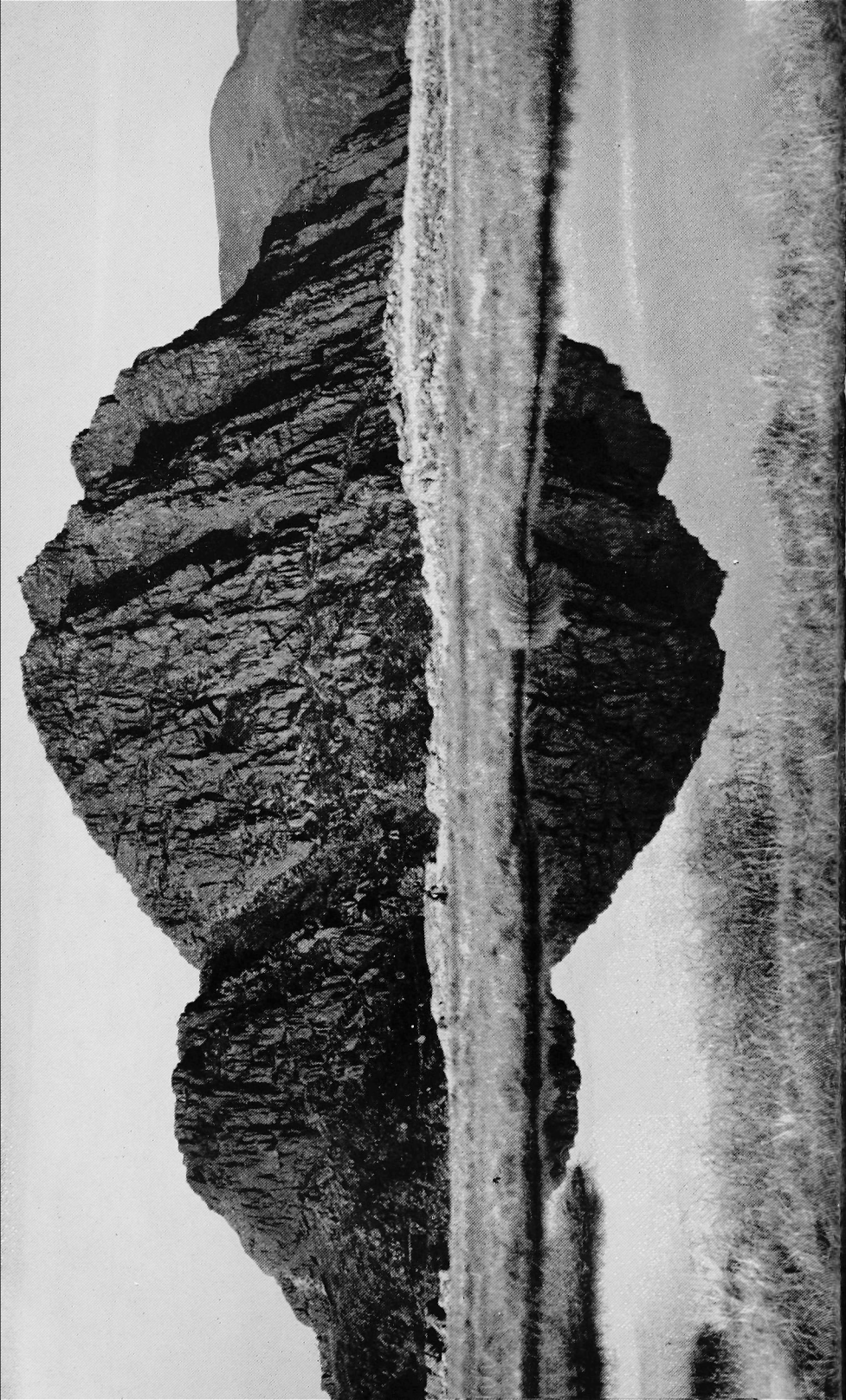
Business Manager:

M. J. CUNNINGTON, 18 Northumberland
Place, London, W.2.

Copies of the Journal may be obtained
from Mrs. M. F. Walker, 22 Asmunds
Hill, London, N.W.11, price TWELVE
SHILLINGS AND SIXPENCE. Cheques, etc.,
should be made payable to the Climbers'
Club and sent to M. J. Cunnington,
address above.

Published by the Climbers' Club in
1963, printed and bound by THE
CLOISTER PRESS LTD., Heaton Mersey,
Stockport.

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THE CLIMBERS' CLUB JOURNAL

Vol. XIV. No. 1 (*New Series*) No. 88

1963

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TRYFAN FROM LLYN CASEG FRAITH

W. A. Poucher

THE TOWERS OF PAINE
The faces are approximately 3,500 feet high





THE CENTRAL TOWER

DEREK WALKER

"BIG NED IS DEAD!" Vic Bray and I heard this faint cry from high above at 7.30 p.m. on the 16th of January. We were nestling on a col 2,000 feet below the summit of the Central Tower of Paine; we knew then that Don Whillans and Chris Bonington were standing on the top. This was the culmination of seven weeks of sustained effort during which we had carried loads, prepared camps and fixed ropes on the lower part of the mountain in the face of appalling weather conditions.

The Cordillera del Paine is 200 miles north of the Magellan Straits in Southern Chile, and we arrived in our Base Camp in late November. For Barrie Page, Vic Bray and myself it was a return visit. Two years before, on our reconnaissance and survey trip, we had been captivated by the spectacular and dramatic beauty of the Towers; we had also been shocked and chastened by the severity of the weather. The newcomers to the Paine, Don Whillans, Chris Bonington, Ian Clough and John Streetly, were equally spell-bound by the breathtaking scenery of the mountains, but somewhat sceptical about our stories of 100 m.p.h. winds and freezing blizzards, for we arrived in Base on a warm, cloudless day. Ten miles away the three Towers, soaring 9,000 feet high, appeared perfectly clear and visible against a brilliant blue sky. We erected base tents and sorted equipment, relishing the warm sunshine.

It remained perfect for the next 5 days. During this time, despite the agony of unfitness and leg-weariness caused by the lethargy and indolence of a four-week boat journey, we tortured ourselves into carrying huge loads towards the Towers, and set up three camps. The distance between the Base Camp and Camp 3 (about 12 miles, and 6,000 feet of climbing) was not great, but the going was atrocious — particularly for the unfit. There seemed far too much uphill grind, dense and damp forest and interminable moraine to negotiate. But we knew we could not waste time; we heard that an Italian Alpine Club expedition was also due to arrive in the Paine during December,

and we wanted to be fully established on the Central Tower before they came.

On the fourth day Barrie and Don had reached the col between the Central and North Towers, and the next day the rest of us were fixing ropes from the Col down the 700-foot steep and broken gully which led to easy ground. In these five days there had hardly been a breath of wind and we had all walked and climbed in shirt sleeves. It all seemed rather too good to be true. Here we were, after less than a week in the mountains, equipped and prepared to begin the serious assault on the Tower. We thought that perhaps it really had been a freak season two years ago, and even dared to hope that "Big Ned", as we nicknamed the Central Tower, was in for a very rapid hammering and defeat.

So much for the first five days. In the next five weeks the expedition accomplished just one and a half hours' climbing on the Central Tower. We were hurled from the bandwaggon of sunshine and optimism to the depths of gloom and frustration. The Patagonian weather, after its brief and bright welcome to us, reverted to normal — a normal which is difficult to envisage unless you have been there. Don and Chris thought it the worst weather they had experienced anywhere, including the Himalaya. From Base all that could usually be seen up the valley was a vast, imposing mass of black cloud which completely obscured the Towers. In the mountains it either rained or snowed with stinging force, but the major hazard, as we had expected, was the wind. At times the wind would literally stop you in your tracks or blow you over.

We attempted to siege the Tower by keeping two people high all the time, to catch any bright spell which might arrive. It was virtually impossible, for no tent could stand the sustained battering indefinitely. Successive teams of climbers would go up from Base, reasonably hopeful, only to return two or three days later fairly shattered and having accomplished nothing. Even reaching the Col now became a serious mountaineering exercise, for heavy snow had covered the fixed ropes and coated the rocks. Only on one afternoon was real rock climbing possible, when Chris and John in one and a half hours pegged 80 feet up the first vertical section and left Electron ladders in place there.

This was the situation at the end of December, when the Italian expedition arrived. They seemed competent and well equipped, under the leadership of Carlo Frigieri, and had as their stars Armando Aste

and Josve Aiazzi. We were hardly satisfied when they announced their intention of attacking the Central Tower also, and we were more determined than ever to keep two men high on the mountain all the time, prepared to launch a summit bid as soon as the weather changed. Tents had proved virtually useless; there was no convenient snow or ice-cliff in which to dig a cave; so what could we do?

It was Don and Vic who hit upon the idea which should in reality have been developed in England before we set out. We must build a portable hut which could be carried up the valley and erected at the Camp 3 site, 1,000 feet below the Col. Borrowing wood from a local farmer, Vic and Don designed and built the framework for the two- or three-man hut, and cut up a nylon tarpaulin which was to cover the frame. On New Year's Day, which was grey and damp, we all left Base, each carrying about 40 pounds of wood, in 6- or 7-foot lengths strapped on our backs. It hardly needs saying that struggling with such an awkward load through forests and across moraine was not our idea of a pleasant ramble, but we made it, ultimately, through waist-deep snow drifts, to the old Camp 2 site. The next day we continued up the long 2,000-foot snow couloir which led to the Camp 3 site. It was blowing a blizzard as we arrived, and was bitterly cold. Vic bravely shed his gloves, and for three hours hammered in the vital nails which held the hut together.

By 5 p.m. it was up, and lashed down securely with ropes. We all crowded inside for a few minutes and shut the door. On the outside of the door was printed in bold yellow letters "BRITANNIA HUT — MEMBERS ONLY". It was also "A.A. & R.A.C. approved" and in small print "Manuf. by D. Whillans Construction Co." We then retreated to our new advance base in the woods, happy in the knowledge that we had solved the problem of survival high up. Morale was sky-high.

The breakthrough came at last on the 9th of January. It was the turn of Don and Ian at the hut when the first fine day for weeks at last arrived. They climbed 450 feet that day (about half the major difficulties), and while returning fixed ropes on the whole section. We had to wait a week for further progress. Ian and I spent the week-end of January 11th-13th in the Hut, but could not venture out for high winds and blizzards. The constant battering of the tarpaulin against the wooden supports made one feel as if one was in a tube station with express trains rushing through every minute.

It faired up on Tuesday afternoon, the 15th of January. Our

strongest combination, "storm-troops" Whillans and Bonington, went up to the Hut with Page and Streetly in support. The next morning was perfect, and, when Vic and I arrived at the Hut from Advance Base at 8 a.m., we could see Don and Chris already 450 feet up, at the highest point so far reached. From then progress was much slower, as the climb reared up and became virtually all artificial for the next 300 feet. After climbing an initial roof, there was a long, grey dièdre, topped by a shorter but no less steep red groove. Leading alternately, the pair spent most of the morning and afternoon climbing this section, until eventually at 4 p.m. Don took a drag at his cigarette, pulled over the final red overhang, and nonchalantly flicked his ash in the direction of those below. The major difficulties had been overcome.

Meanwhile, in mid-morning five Italians stormed past Vic and myself in gleaming red crash helmets and carrying huge rucksacks, and proceeded to begin a perfectly legitimate second ascent of our route, using all our fixed ropes, ladders and pitons. They had obviously forgotten all about the "Via Italiano" which they had promised to make. John and Barrie came down from the foot of the grey dièdre, passing the Italians on the way, while Chris and Don were pegging their way up above.

From the shoulder of the Tower the angle eased considerably and a series of long terraces led the way for about 800 feet to the summit. Though the technical difficulty was much less, tension was still maintained, for at this stage verglas was coating much of the rock. After three and a half hours Don was standing on what he described as "just another lump of rock", but there was a difference, for this "lump of rock" was the summit block of the Central Tower. It was then that Vic and I heard their shout. "Ned" was indeed "dead".

They bivouacked at the shoulder on their way down, and abseiled down the next morning, where we all met them at the Col at 11 a.m. They looked tired and were dehydrated, but they had that tremendous air of satisfaction which comes after the successful ascent of a great climb, when tension is at last released. That afternoon, the 17th, when Ian and I made the third ascent of the North Tower, we saw, far above, the Italian party standing on the summit of the Central at 5 p.m. — the same time at which we reached the top of the North.

None of us have seen or expect to see again a mountain of such startling proportions as the Central Tower. It is a true "Tower" in every sense of the word, unrelentingly steep, perfect in line with no

ridge to ease and break the smooth flow of red granite. For Don and Chris the ascent was yet another personal triumph to add to their brilliant list of achievements of the past few years, and their success, snatched in a brief interlude of beautiful weather, was made possible by the state of preparedness achieved by the whole expedition. We had been waiting for *the* day for weeks, constantly maintaining the build-up of food and equipment, so that all would be ready when that day came. With the conquest of the Central Tower of Paine one of the truly great prizes of modern mountaineering had been taken.

ALPINE PUGILIST

A study of the correspondence of W. A. B. Coolidge

ARNOLD LUNN

I RECENTLY SPENT a delightful hour in the Zurich headquarters of the Swiss Foundation for Alpine Research discussing modern mountaineering with Mr. Clinch, who was visiting Zurich on his way back to America from the Himalaya. Mr. Clinch made the excellent point that, whereas it is no longer possible for a mountaineer to achieve anything outstanding in the Alps unless he was an acrobatic athlete, success in the Himalaya was largely a matter of logistics. Endurance, good judgement of snow and weather conditions and the organising ability to ensure the proper delivery of supplies were the qualities demanded of the Himalayan leader.

Much the same was true of the golden age of mountaineering. The Rev. W. A. B. Coolidge (1850–1926) for instance, a famous mountaineer who completed seventeen hundred expeditions of which nine hundred were of a certain importance, was the least athletic of men. A friend of mine, who had been an undergraduate at Magdalen, Oxford, of which Coolidge was a Fellow, described to me his astonishment when he discovered that Coolidge was a great mountaineer. “I remember him,” said my friend, “as a tubby undersized little man.”

From 1868 Coolidge’s leading guide was Christian Almer, and no mountaineer was ever more dependant on his guides. Coolidge was extremely short sighted. He could not have led a guideless expedition up the easiest of Alpine peaks, the Wildstrubel for instance. He was never happy on rocks, but he was amazingly tough and deserves great credit as a pioneer of winter mountaineering, no sport for the soft. He made the first winter ascents of the Wetterhorn, Jungfrau and Schreckhorn.

Coolidge bequeathed to the Zurich Zentral Bibliothek his Alpine correspondence, thousands of letters in all. He hoarded every scrap of the most trivial communications, postcards announcing that a friend would arrive at such and such a time, telegrams recording similar information. Every library suffers from increasingly acute

problems of space. Some day a specialist in Alpine history should be invited to destroy all the uninteresting letters and postcards which Coolidge collected; only about one letter in ten contains anything of the slightest interest.

I recently spent more than a fortnight wading through the Coolidge correspondence; and I should like to express my sincere appreciation of the friendly welcome given to me by Dr. Sieber and of the co-operation of the librarian, Dr. Bucher. I was rewarded for many hours of boredom by the occasional letter which was of interest and value to Alpine historians, and even more so by the many letters in which Coolidge's insatiable appetite for controversy found expression.

Quarrelsome people are seldom entertaining; but there is a certain fascination about the best specimen of a particular class, even a tiresome class, and as an Alpine pugilist Coolidge was unique. He had no rivals, and for this reason his character continues to exercise a kind of grotesque fascination even on those who never met him, Mr. Ronald Clark for instance, whose recent biography of Coolidge, *An Eccentric in the Alps*, is very entertaining.

Many of his vendettas were the by-product of a vanity which might almost be described as a collector's piece, and as such was disarming. In fact I was conscious of a bemused and reluctant admiration when I received from Coolidge a reprint of his biographical notice in *Who's Who*, surrounded by an embroidered border of edelweiss and gentians, a reprint which he circulated as a Christmas card to his friends. He disapproved of guideless climbing because he was wholly dependant on his guides, of ski-mountaineering because he could not ski.

He had only climbed in the Alps and therefore took no interest in any range outside the Alps. His books are invaluable as sources for the Alpine historian, but his prose was pedestrian and uninspired and he was therefore, to quote Douglas Freshfield, intolerant of any attempt at aesthetic description.

The most famous of the many controversies in which he was involved was his battle with Whymper, the opening shot of which was fired by a footnote to Coolidge's article on Christian Almer in the 1898 *Jahrbuch* of the Swiss Alpine Club (page 210). "I permit myself, at this point," wrote Coolidge, "to clear up a historical point. In Mr. Whymper's book there is a fine wood-engraving in which Almer is represented just after he had leaped over a gap in the Ecrins ridge.

I showed this picture to Almer immediately after the publication of the book (June 1871) and he assured me in all earnestness that he had never made such a jump nor indeed would have been able to do so. It is noteworthy that Mr. Moore's very detailed account of the same expedition, of which Mr. Whymper made good use, never mentions this jump, which could hardly fail to have left an ineffaceable impression on the memory of those who took part in the expedition."

Whymper reacted by sending a letter of protest to every member of the Alpine Club, whereupon Coolidge resigned from the Club.

Whymper never suffered from an over-scrupulous regard for what Clough calls "the merest 'it was' ". Many of the picturesque details in his final version of the Matterhorn story do not appear in his original letter to *The Times*, e.g. the "sharp-eyed lad" who thought he saw an avalanche on the Matterhorn, and the crosses in the sky which Whymper thought he saw after the accident.

The only mountaineer who claimed to have seen the gap in the ridge on a subsequent ascent was a Frenchman, Paul Guillemon.

"It is", writes Coolidge in a memorandum submitted to friends, "the only case since 1864 in which any notch is known to have been seen on that arête. I have six other printed accounts (Wh. saw this list) which make no mention of it though the parties went up and down this arête (the only printed notices as to this route known since 1864), while Purtscheller and U. Almer (both up this arête) deny the existence of any such notch".

That Whymper invented the incident is all but certain and the only perplexing aspect of the controversy is that Horace Walker, who was present on the climb, supported Whymper. This so infuriated Coolidge that instead of beginning "Dear Walker", as all his previous letters began, he begins: "Dear Mr. Walker", and continues: "I am obliged for your note of the 6th. inst. in which you give me your opinion as to Almer's alleged leap on the Ecrins in 1864 — We have now a most extraordinary contradiction on this subject — Whymper in print and you not . on one side: Moore in print. and Almer not. on the other. It is most odd that recollections should differ as to so striking an incident.

"You mention Mr. Whymper's 'veracity.' May I therefore direct your attention to a falsehood relating to myself told by Mr. W. in the first edition of his book 1891. and repeated in the 4th edition. note on p. 192? It is to the effect that I (for no one else climbed the

peak in 1870) made the ascent of one of the peaks of the Ailefroide in 1870. There never has been the slightest doubt in anybody's mind save that of Mr. W. that in 1870 I reached the highest point of that mountain. . . . There are a great many other misstatements in his book. and Mr. W. would do better to raise no public discussion as to his 'veracity' or he will meet with some unpleasant surprises.

I am

Yours faithfully

W A B C "

And he adds in handwriting at the top of the page "W. says (p. 204 of 1893 edition) that Almer had the rope on — Moore (p. 70) that A. had *not* the rope on."

Coolidge's typewriter would seem to have lacked a comma, for he uses nothing but full stops and colons in this letter.

Though it would seem that Coolidge's attack on Whymper was provoked because he was enraged by Whymper's doubts as to his claim to have made the first ascent of the highest point of the Ailefroide, I am convinced that Walker, challenged by Whymper to support him, was reluctant publicly to condemn Whymper as untruthful and therefore took refuge in evasive action.

Coolidge, having resigned from the Alpine Club because the committee refused to adjudicate on his dispute with Whymper, declined to continue as Editor of the revised *Ball's Alpine Club Guide* to the different Alpine regions.

On April 16, 1901, A. V. Valentine Richards, his successor, writes: "I have (unwillingly for many reasons) accepted the general editorship of the new *Ball*, and I am naturally anxious to carry on the work (as well as I can) on the same lines that you have laid down." Coolidge replied on April 18: "I regret that I cannot give you in your official capacity any assistance whatever such as I should have liked to give under happier circumstances. But the black lies of several members of A.C., to which the A.C. Committee by its disgraceful inaction seems to have given its sanction and approval, precludes any communications on my part with all officials and most members of that ungrateful society."

To this Valentine Richards replied (April 20): "I am sorry for the sake of the book that the best man should not do it, but if he won't" (against this Coolidge pencilled the word "no") "what is to be done? But don't think it is any pleasure to me to step into your shoes, and under the circumstances I would resign in your favour to-morrow

if it were of any use . . . I am quite sure that the members of the A.C. as a whole are not ungrateful to you, but the great majority are, like myself, at a loss to know how in the world the original molehill (I read your note in the Jahrbuch soon after it was published and thought nothing of it) has grown into such vast mountain chains. But I regret your taking up so uncompromising an attitude."

On the 22nd Coolidge replied: "Yours of the 20th. inst. is written in so kindly a spirit towards myself that I venture to reply to it. Of course my refusal to aid you in any way is a refusal to you in your official capacity. for of course *personally* I cannot possibly have any feelings towards you but those of gratitude and admiration . . . Of course I was aware that my long continued climbs has aroused jealousy in the minds of some. and my nationality also. But I counted on British love of fair play. and that remained invisible."

I have again reproduced Coolidge's punctuation. The last paragraph is interesting as being the only evidence that I have seen that Coolidge still thought of himself as an American and suspected that this might prove a source of prejudice. Actually he includes himself in his summary of British first ascents in one of his books.

The letter ends: "Two English ladies went up the Wetterhorn yesterday. in perfect weather. the 1st ascent of the century." Now this ascent was made on April 21, 1901, from which it is clear that Coolidge belonged to the school of thought which dates the beginning of the century from 1901.

In a letter to Valentine Richards (April 29) Coolidge wrote: "I am extremely obliged for your most friendly letter of the 27th. inst. covering the papers I sent you. I love candour above all things. and though the results of candour may sometimes (not of course in this case) be disagreeable. they still help to clear up misunderstandings." Once again I have retained Coolidge's comma-less punctuation. He then draws an unreal distinction: "I 'withdrew' because a 'withdrawal' cannot be refused as a 'resignation' may, and I wanted to be rid of the whole matter." Coolidge was obviously hurt that the A.C. Committee merely accepted his 'withdrawal'. "I expected overtures. seeing what I had done for A.C. re Ball. A.J. etc. etc. but none came. at any time."

Many years later Whympers called on Coolidge and the feud ended in a reconciliation.

Coolidge was an amateur controversialist in the original meaning of the word amateur, for the word is derived from amor, love, and

an amateur is a man who indulges in sport for the fun of the thing. Consequently when Coolidge had extracted all available fun from a particular controversy he had no difficulty in re-establishing amicable relations. The only mountaineer whom he never ceased to detest was Sir Edward Davidson, for Davidson had inflicted a mortal wound on the vanity of this irascible pedant by convicting him of misspelling "Schreckhorn". I told the story in *A Century of Mountaineering*:

"Coolidge had inadvertently omitted the first 'c' in *Schreckhorn*, in a tribute to his guide Christian Almer, a tribute written in Almer's *Führerbuch*, as the little book is called which the guide produces at the end of an engagement for the comments of his appreciative clients. Davidson, noting with pleasure the misspelling of Coolidge, the infallible pedant, added an anonymous comment: 'The usual spelling among Germans is Schreckhorn.' In the same *Führerbuch* Davidson's climbing partner had spelt Jungfrau without a 'g', and Davidson had added his signature, thus endorsing the tribute in which Jungfrau was spelt without a 'g'.

"In 1896 Almer's *Führerbuch* was reproduced in facsimile. Coolidge recognised Davidson's handwriting, and was infuriated by the public advertisement of his lapse. 'I hunted and I hunted', he exclaimed to me, 'until at last I found that Davidson had put his name to Jungfrau without a 'g'. And his little beard fluttered with excitement, as he recalled that fierce moment of anticipatory revenge."

In 1910 Coolidge was much concerned to prevent Davidson being elected President of the A.C. "Gardiner has been staying with me", he wrote to Captain J. P. Farrar, "and left for Liverpool yesterday (September 5) I sounded him but he seemed disinclined to accept an offer of standing for the presidency. He suggested the names of several seniors, such as Wallroth and Eccles. He told me that in all probability (he did not absolutely bind himself), he too would withdraw from the A.C. should D. (to whom he has not spoken since 1881) be elected".

Davidson, in spite of Coolidge's efforts, was elected President, whereupon Coolidge, who had been elected an honorary member in 1904, resigned for the second time. In 1923 he was for the second time elected an honorary member of the A.C. and did not live long enough to offer a third resignation.

In this particular vendetta my sympathies are with Coolidge. Davidson should never have been elected President. He always

employed the best guides and spent many summers at Chamonix but made no serious attempt on the then unconquered aiguilles and, according to C. H. Pasteur, who was in a good position to know, it was Davidson's jealousy of Mummery, who had made the first ascent of the Charmoz and Grépon, which was responsible for the blackballing of Mummery. Coolidge's sympathies would probably have been with Mummery in any case, but, as Mummery was a victim of Davidson's petty-minded envy, Coolidge was determined to get him into the club. In those days election was by secret ballot of all members present at a General meeting, one black ball in ten excluding. "I took charge of the ballot box", Coolidge told me, "and shifted some balls from the 'No' to the 'Aye' part of the box. I faked Mummery into the club." Though Coolidge's claim to have faked Mummery into the Club has been disputed, I am convinced that his story was true.

Douglas Freshfield had been an ally of Coolidge's in the battle against Davidson, but that did not prevent Coolidge from making grotesque demands on Freshfield and doing his best to quarrel with him. "I was simply stupified this morning", he wrote to Freshfield, at that time President of the A.C., on November 18, 1894, "on reading the names of two persons nominated for the A.C. committee. I do not care to enquire whether these nominations were made with, or against, your consent. nor does it matter to me at all whether the meeting confirms them or not . . . in the course of the next two or three days I will send to Wicks my formal withdrawal from the A.C. Nothing will change my resolve to take this course, though I much regret that I should have to adopt it while you are President. But you force me to take it. I had been warned some time ago that you were likely to throw me over, but this I could not credit till this morning, considering how long you have known me . . . Of course I must continue to correspond with you for a while to wind up affairs, but apart from that I decline to have any future communication with you whatsoever. You have treated me in a way not wholly unexpected by me, but contrary to all laws of friend (sic) and especially to the interests of the club of which you are the head."

On this occasion he did not resign and indeed we find him writing three years later (November 21, 1897) with real gratitude to Freshfield for his share in negotiations with the A.C. committee which resulted in an offer of two hundred guineas for Coolidge's editorship of the new edition of Ball's guide to the Pennine Alps. "I can never

forget," Coolidge writes, "the real friendliness and tact with which you have helped me in a very trying position and I am more than grateful to you."

Coolidge's Editorship of the Ball's guides provided him with enchanting possibilities of quarrelling with everybody, contributors, map makers etc. and finally with poor Freshfield who writes on February 2, 1898: "I warn you I am nearly at the end of my patience. The worm turns"; and two days later he writes: "I do think you are in one of your periodical outbreaks of utter unreasonableness in which you forget everybody and everything but your own feelings."

On April 26, 1900, Freshfield accused Coolidge of "sheer misunderstanding of the ordinary usages of at least British mankind". I remember his describing to me his quarrels with other luckless editors of Alpine journals. He certainly quarrelled with the editor of the *Echo des Alpes* in 1893. "You do enjoy," wrote Freshfield of this performance, "trampling on the fallen" (November 22, 1893).

Coolidge was not easily deprived of a grievance. He demanded from every editor of the *Alpine Journal* that his name should never be mentioned in the *A.J.*, and then complained bitterly that Freshfield had never mentioned that he and Whymper had lunched together at Grindelwald and resumed friendly relations. Captain J. P. Farrar, when commanded never to mention his name in the *A.J.*, replied with imperturbable good humour on October 6, 1913: "About not mentioning your name in the *A.J.*, I cannot undertake to clip my wings to that extent. The cases constantly arise when it would be ludicrous not to refer to you and your works, which are the property of the civilised world. The *Journal* is read by many who have no knowledge of your feelings towards the A.C. and I would lay myself open to a charge of ignorance or malicious suppression. As well might one attempt to write a Treatise on Strategy without ever mentioning Napoleon or a Treatise on Theology without alluding to the Bible . . . I hope you have forgiven Freshfield and Yeld. I am beginning to think you love a good fight and are never quite happy without one. You ought never to have been a Rev., but a warrior without remorse".

Farrar seems to have felt that Coolidge should have replied in detail to Whymper's pamphlet.

Coolidge lived in Grindelwald, and for some years I spent my summers in a chalet in Grindelwald and enjoyed his intermittent friendship, but my first contact with Coolidge had been an un-

fortunate one, in the course of a controversy in *The Field* in which Colonel E. L. Strutt had stated that ski were only of use for reaching Alpine huts in winter and should not be used on glaciers and added that no ski-runner had equalled Coolidge's winter ascents on foot. This I was rash enough to doubt, whereupon Coolidge contributed a letter to the controversy in which he seemed to think my age (twenty-one) had some relevance to the point at issue, the relative merits of ski and snowshoes. When I turned up in Grindelwald many years later he provisionally forgave me but eventually forbade me his house because I had been thanked in the preface to a new edition of Murray's guides which Coolidge considered he should have been asked to edit.

After my letter appeared in *The Field* Colonel Strutt wrote to Coolidge: "I rather think that A.L. is a sort of 'printer's devil' who is hired to write stuff about climbing for the paper." On April 19, 1913, Strutt wrote again to Coolidge: "Many thanks for your interesting P.C. I did *not* know that A.L. was the son of Sir H. L. who (is said) to have been knighted for accommodating Mrs. Asquith free of charge at Mürren!" My father was knighted two years before Mürren was opened in winter. "One of our officers here," wrote Strutt on May 4, 1913, "knows A.L. and says he is an offensive little cad. I shall be interested to see whether his professional parasite E. C. Richardson* has anything to say in return." I was consoled however by one grudging compliment: "I am bound to say that A.L. writes more sense than any other ski idiot."

It was imprudent for a young man who was not a member of the club to imply, as I certainly had done in *The Field*, that the Alpine Club were wholly out of touch with this new development of mountaineering, and in due course I met the fate of Mummery and was blackballed by the same clique which blackballed Mummery, Ryan and later Todhunter, all pioneers of new routes on the Grépon.

Many years later Strutt and I became firm friends, and it was Strutt who invited me to stand for the Alpine Club and who, as I subsequently learned, took steps to ensure that Coolidge's technique for getting Mummery into the club should be repeated if the candidate whom he had once described as "an offensive little cad" received too many blackballs. Actually this precaution proved unnecessary.†

* The father of British ski-ing.

† *A Century of Mountaineering*, pp. 99 to 101.

In his personal expenditure Coolidge exhibited the virtue of prudence in a somewhat exaggerated degree. Most of us who have lived in Switzerland are only too familiar with the surcharge postage stamps which decorate the letters of careless friends, but few would have the courage to recall our friends to their social duties by refusing to accept understamped letters. Coolidge was made of sterner stuff. The Rev. J. F. Heyes, one of his most faithful correspondents, writes sadly on January 18, 1907: "My rejected postcard came back this week so my new year greetings came rather late. In my haste and many stampings your card got a green instead of a red stamp."

During the First World War relations between Coolidge and Strutt were endangered when letters from the latter arrived in Switzerland unstamped. "I beg to apologize," writes Strutt, "for the 50 centimes, all our official letters from this country to France, Italy etc. which do not go in the F.O. bag, go unpaid, hence they imagine that the same was the case in Switzerland, please note any further cases and put in a claim here, the money only remains in the Treasury, hence it is right always to do so."

It is also disconcerting to discover that though Coolidge's fame as a mountaineer was almost entirely due to his guide, the great Christian Almer, he had taken no steps to ensure that there was a monument on Almer's grave. On October 28, 1898, the Rev. Hereford George, the first Editor of *The Alpine Journal*, wrote to Coolidge: "When I was passing through Grindelwald on my way home I went to look for Christian Almer's grave, and did not find it. I was hurried, and thought it was my own lack of eyes. But now Whympers tells me he did the same, and on enquiry found there was no monument. He saw Ulrich Almer and I suppose suggested to him that old Christian's English friends might put one up with which he naturally was well pleased. I should much like to carry out this idea, and will undertake raising the money. But first I would like to ask whether you have any idea of your own on the subject."

On June 29, 1899, Hereford George tactfully reminds Coolidge that he should subscribe and clearly has no hope of anything but the minimum. "Am I to assume," he writes, "in calculating that you give £1?" The total expenses were 650 francs.

On May 15, 1899, George writes: "I have to raise the balance from those who expressed their willingness to give more than £1 . . . I have by the way assumed that your contribution will be £1."

Coolidge was incensed when the Post Office at Grindelwald drew

his attention to the fact that bulky envelopes containing some of his pamphlets were understamped, and could not be sent as printed matter unless the envelopes were left open for inspection. He scrupulously preserved the various communications which he received on this matter not only from Grindelwald but from the Director of Posts.

Coolidge was deeply shocked when the Swiss demanded a war tax. He lived in a large chalet and paid a gross total (rates and taxes) of 175 Swiss francs a year, which was only £7 at the then rate of exchange. Nobody who is old enough to remember pre- first-war England and Switzerland can read such statements without a long nostalgic sigh. "In 1915," wrote Coolidge, "Ch. Montadon procured for me from the higher Taxing Courts a decision, stating that as I had only landed property outside Switz., and paid income tax in England, my Swiss 'conventional' income was fixed at 1,000 francs (£40 a year). The law was later altered, but still the decision is considered valid. Hence I pay a Swiss I.T. of 10 p.c. on 1,000 francs a year. The communal taxes or rates amount to 7½ p.c. extra, so that, in all, I pay 175 francs a year for Taxes and Rates — on my 'conventional' income of 1,000 francs."

But not content with extracting £7 a year for rates and taxes the grasping Swiss actually demanded a special war tax. "Then there is the Swiss War Tax," writes Coolidge, "to defray their foolish expenditure in mobilising against the allies."

Coolidge still continued to draw his income as Fellow though he had long ceased to reside in Magdalen, and he was pained to discover that the income tax charged on this income had increased. He confided his grievances to R. L. Poole, like Coolidge a Fellow of Magdalen. Poole replied: "The income tax is certainly a heavy burden. Yet so profoundly are we convinced of its necessity and rightness that I have not heard a single person here complain of the amount" (July 11, 1918).

Poole was a very distinguished historian and inevitably incurred Coolidge's displeasure in his role as Editor of the *English Historical Review*. "I cannot believe", writes Poole, "that I ever, as you say, declined an article on the Lukmanier. Surely I did no more than express an editorial doubt about length." On November 26, 1898, Poole writes with unruffled good humour: "I wonder if you have so far forgiven the misdeeds of the *English Historical Review* as to allow me to make a request on its behalf."

Poole was one of the few men with whom even Coolidge found it impossible to quarrel. He was abundantly endowed with tact, with good humour and with patience. He could soften a gentle expression of regret that Coolidge had started a new feud with the University Press by a diplomatic expression of sympathy. "I am sure," he writes on St. Stephen's Day, 1913, "that you have good reasons for breaking off negotiations with the Clarendon Press but I am not the less sorry for it."

Poole's sons were in the war and his eldest, who later became President of St. John's, was severely wounded; and though I never met Mr. Poole I began to feel that he was not a stranger as I read his delightful letters. He was a Don of the old school, a vanishing type. On March 13, 1920, he wrote: "In three weeks the old university has been destroyed. First, we secularized the degrees in divinity. Next, we admitted females to all degrees and offices in the university. And finally, in obedience to the demands of the 'commercial', we decided to kill the study of Greek. We shall soon see the women masquerading in male attire, and the university will be full of people whose education from the age of 13 has been strictly 'technical'. Were it not that I had to earn my livelihood here, I should be thankful to depart from Oxford and never visit it again . . . Another change may surprise you — nothing surprises me now: — some of the modern history men are sent for tuition to the new history tutor's wife."

One gets the impression on reading Coolidge's letters during the war that he believed himself to be the chief victim of this world calamity. On February 9, 1916, he wrote to Farrar: "This war is terrible, but so absolutely necessary that we must each of us stagger along as best we can with the heavy burdens it lays upon us", the heavy burden in Coolidge's case being a special war tax of about £20.

He clearly felt that it was the duty of his friends to give priority to his troubles. Mr. Poole and Colonel E. L. Strutt, later President of the Alpine Club, were specially charged to look after his interests. In an undated letter, written in reply to a letter from Strutt dated December 3, 1915, Colonel G. S. H. Pearson, Chief Postal Censor, wrote: "I think Mr. Coolidge would be happier if he were assured

- (1) that the British Censors do *not* delay the newspapers he received
- (2) that the object is *not* to prevent the news contained in the papers reaching neutral countries

- (3) that German agents *have* been in the habit of concealing messages in newspapers
- (4) that there are certainly over 100,000 persons in this country who are entirely above suspicion. Mr. Coolidge assumes that we could first satisfy ourselves that each of these persons is, in fact, above suspicion and then make the Censors learn their names — or else consult a book containing their names every time a postal packet (out of millions sent) comes up for examination. We spend quite enough on the postal censorship already!"

Strutt was severely wounded in the first months of the war. "Just a line", writes Strutt, "to let you know I am all right, but still a bit 'concussed' and rather weak, my left leg somewhat of the unemployed nature! I had an extraordinary escape, our Divisional General being blown to bits while talking to me." Strutt's letters are always interesting. "Bonacossa", he writes, "is rather a desperate fellow and is always on the look-out for new things." On July 20, 1913, he writes: "Farrar has definitely refused A.C. Presidency which has been offered to and accepted by Pickford."

Strutt was a man of strong prejudices which sometimes got the better of his judgement. Lord Acton, who at that was time First Secretary at Berne, had a German mother: "He wants watching as he is half a Bosche. He travelled all over Germany during the war." Had he done so he would certainly have been dismissed the Service instead of ending the war as Minister in Helsinki. Some of his children were caught in Germany during the outbreak of the war and it was they who travelled not "all over Germany" but from Germany to Switzerland.

Strutt's dislikes were never concealed. "Would you believe it that dreadful ass 'Jabber' Bruce managed to get £200 for the Swiss guides. It never occurred to the fool that the Chamonix and Dauphiné men are harder hit — in all senses and surely more deserving of English people." J. A. B. Bruce initiated the scheme which led to the presentation of the Britannia Hut to the Swiss Alpine Club.

Let me conclude with a few more gleanings from his correspondence. On November 17, 1887, Leslie Stephen writes: "May I ask you a question? In correcting a proof of the life of Sir Charles Fellowes for the *Biographical Dictionary* the other day, I found him credited not only with an ascent of Mont Blanc, mentioned in all the guidebooks, but also with having 'first traversed the Blümlis

Alps'. What this means I don't quite know, but as I have always claimed the first ascent of the Blümlis Alp Horn for myself, I was rather shocked by this new claimant and, I fear, suppressed his claim. I now feel some remorse and should like to know anything of this expedition. It may only mean he crossed the Tschingel or some of the passes about there." On November 21 Stephen wrote: "I am obliged for your information (or rather want of information) about my precursor. I guess that it was as you say some mistake about the Dündengrat or Tschingel."

An enthusiastic mountaineer, Miss Anna Pigeon, writes (December 1890): "By the bye I want to mention that Mlle. Mary Paillon is inaccurate in a statement she makes in footnote, page 15 — my sister and I were **not** the first ladies to use an ice axe. Mrs. E. P. Jackson was **before us**, and it was Mrs. Jackson who kindly presented us with ice axes and urged us to begin using them."

Norman Neruda writes on January 28, 1892: "I owe you an apology for addressing my letters in the way I have done hitherto. I don't remember who it was who told me that you and Mr. Leslie Stephen preferred being styled so and so Esq., though you were in fact Rev. gentlemen but I took it as a hint and am now sorry to have done so without further enquiry. But — never too late to mend — and in future I shall address you as Reverend."

Norman Neruda writes on December 7, 1892: "I am particularly anxious to get those to support my candidate who have met him, as it has come to my knowledge that a libelous statement is being circulated concerning Friedmann and his wife. I **know** the story told to be an invention, but as those who have been asked to blackball Friedmann do not communicate with me in order to ascertain what is the truth in the matter, I am reluctantly compelled to write to ask my friends requesting them to vote for him and to ask me for the facts should they have been told something to Friedmann's disadvantage. I should be truly grateful if you were to be so kind as to interest yourself a little on behalf of Friedmann and request your friends to vote for him and to communicate with me in case they had heard that foul calumny and had been requested to blackball him. I know I can prove to everybody's satisfaction that Friedmann is quite desirable as a member of the A.C."*

On December 18, 1905, Norman Collie writes to Coolidge about

* EDITOR'S NOTE: I am informed by Mr. T. S. Blakeney that Friedmann was, in fact, elected, being a member of the A.C. from 1892 to 1915.

Graham's disputed ascent of Kabru: "I was very glad to get your letter, and find that you agree with me about Graham. I have always felt that he was badly treated. The argument about mountain sickness always struck me as being very feeble, in fact after what Graham had done and considering how hard he was, it would have been more remarkable if he had been mountain sick on Kabru. Mummery used to say that he was very much surprised that such good men as Emil Boss and Graham had not got to a higher point than 24,000 feet. The last I heard of Graham was that he had lost all his money and was a cowboy out in the Western States of America, that was twelve years ago."

There are some very entertaining letters about Julian Grande, a journalist who had changed his name, his religion and his nationality without acquiring complete mastery of any known language. He forced himself to climb a few peaks, but no man, so one of his guides assured me, was ever more miserable on a mountain. He exploited his rare climbs for journalistic and lecturing purposes. I attended one of his lectures and was enchanted to hear his opening gambit: "People say, why is it that the British were the first to climb most of the big peaks and I say 'It is because we British are the gream of the earth and the gream always gets to de top'." Among the slides he showed illustrating an ascent of the Schreckhorn was a famous photograph by Abraham, "Crossing the great couloir". "That is my guide," said Grande. The lecture was advertised as illustrated by an unique set of photographs taken by the lecturer. Most of these were by Abraham, so when the usual vote of thanks was proposed I moved an amendment, "a hearty vote of censure for representing that slides taken by Abraham had been taken on his own ascents". This produced what the French describe as "mouvement" in the audience.

One of Coolidge's friends, Mr. F. T. Wethered, writes: "'New Alpine record — *Express* Correspondent Grindelwald January 8, 1913. Mr. Julian Grande created a new Alpine record yesterday by leaving Grindelwald at 6.10 a.m. and reaching the summit of the Jungfrau at 4.45 p.m. He was accompanied by two guides. Mr. Grande only remained at the summit ten minutes owing to the extreme cold'. 1. Kindly tell me is it **true**? Did he go up via the Bergli hut? 3. Did he sleep in the Bergli hut on the way down? If so, did he have to clear the whole hut from ice and snow !!!" (January 10, 1913).

Coolidge in his reply was no doubt caustic at Grande's expense, for on the 14th Wethered writes: "Profuse thanks! Quite stupendously marvelous !!! I hasten to ask you to send an account of the whole business that you have so clearly written to me to the *A.J.* Pray do. Job (chapter VIII-9) was clearly forecasting Jungfrau and Mr. Grande's work when he wrote of Jehovah 'He overturneth the mountains by the roots'".

On February 3 Wethered wrote again: "I wrote to *The Times* office to ask as to the date when Mr. Grande's ascent of the Jungfrau had appeared or would appear in that paper, and the reply I got was (on January 22): 'We duly received the account of Mr. Julian Grande's ascent of the Jungfrau but it was not published in *The Times*'".

I can find no evidence in Coolidge's correspondence of any disinterested efforts on behalf of his friends or on behalf of any good cause. He seems to have been wholly wrapped up in his own concerns and it is a tribute to the strength of the mountain bond that his undoubted services to mountain scholarship should have enriched his life with so many real friendships.

It is pleasant to conclude my review of a correspondence in which I could find nothing which warmed my heart to Coolidge with an extract from a letter written by H. Scott Tucker, which is evidence of the high regard in which this cantankerous eccentric was regarded by the Alpine world.

On July 21, 1921, he writes: "The effect of the war on your finances causes me serious concern. For some curious reason and unlike the Latins, we rarely speak of our investments and our income. I hesitate to say anything lest I intrude. On the other hand I should hate to feel that I had passed in silence the possibility of tendering some small help, which I am sure mountaineers throughout the world will cheerfully give to one to whom they owe a debt they can never repay. It is difficult to imagine the many great and important gaps which would have remained but for your help."

PIK KOMMUNIZMA

I. G. McNAUGHT-DAVIS

EDITOR'S NOTE: McNaught Davis has promised me an article on the Pamirs Expedition since January, but after 9 months it is still not forthcoming. To fill the gap the Editor of the *Alpine Journal* has kindly allowed me to use Mac's article on the second half of the expedition which is appearing in the November number of *A.J.*

THE FIRST PHASE of the expedition was over and, psychologically seamed by failing to get up our training peak, Joe Brown and myself were forcing out a dangerous pace to our Base Camp sixteen miles down the glacier. The deaths of Wilfrid Noyce and Robin Smith filled our thoughts and forced back the decision we were soon to make—to stay or to return to England.

As we kicked our way through the loose moraines of the glacier, I came to the conclusion that the decision was not an emotional one, but rather one that could be resolved on fact alone. I summed up the arguments. The mountains were made of some biscuit-like material known by the Russians as "moving rock". The snow conditions were equally demoralising: soft, wet slush overlying ice, undoubtedly the cause of the accident. The weather was Welsh, the food inadequate and uneatable, and Pik Kommunizma was a long way up and away. A cast-iron case. Then came the doubts. It was so far away, perhaps the rock would be granite; the snow above 20,000 feet must be good, or it would fall off; the weather could only improve, and the more people who returned the more food there would be. The mountain almost seemed to come closer. I must be tired, behind every decision there is rationality. Joe confused the issue momentarily by bringing up visions of sun-baked, golden slabs and fat, sizzling steaks. Discount the emotions.

Perhaps we were ill. Joe certainly was, which accounted for this remarkable pace when even the ground under foot hardly seemed to move. Therefore we were too unfit to go uphill. The premise was sound, the conclusion reasonable, and I lapsed into a less dynamic role as the scenery, drab at the best, moved monotonously by.

A rattling of stones woke me, and I found myself still lying on my rucksack, the recently discarded cigarette lying in a little pool it had

melted in the ice. The two Russians ran up to us, and we gave them the whole of our three-word vocabulary, and several gestures, to explain our sloth, Joe's illness and the fate of our party. They smoked our cigarettes furtively, glancing at the séracs that surrounded us, fearful that Abalakov, their leader, should appear and banish them to the plains for breaking their "sports plan". Suddenly they became restless, watches were produced and we knew the rigour of their "sports plan" was on them again. They jogged out of sight stripped to the waist, each muscle overdeveloped, fit and enthusiastic. I envied them.

We prised ourselves erect and limped after them. My eyes firmly fixed on Joe's heels, I slipped into automatic and went to sleep. I awoke as we started to cross a 200-foot high moraine in the middle of the glacier, and queried this break in the routine.

"Too crevassed; it's bound to be better on the other side."

"How do you know?"

"I don't, but it will be."

It was the M1, he was right. Then I realised that the pace had changed and we were scuttling along at full throttle. Four hours later, as we lay below the last rise before our camp, several things had changed. Joe was well, we were both fit and we had really enjoyed sorting out the glacier at a respectable speed. As we pulled on our cigarettes for the last time, there was a rattling of stones and the two Russians trotted into view. We were in exactly the same position as when they last saw us, and the expressions on their faces gave them away. We ran with them up the 500-foot slope to camp and arrived gasping, laughing and slapping each other on the back. All they could get out in broken English was, "How fast can Joe go when he is fit?" We had made a mark and I had decided, emotionally, to stay on.

John Hunt departed, leaving behind half the original party to continue the expedition.¹ The plan of action was resolved from one single axiom — to get up Pik Kommunizma as quickly as possible. Anatole Ovchinnikov produced a scheme which would, in theory, get us to the top of Pik Kommunizma, thirty miles away and 16,000 feet above our Base Camp, in ten days, with five days to get down

¹ The British members remaining were:

Malcolm Slesser, Ken Bryan, Ralph Jones, Joe Brown, Dr. Graeme Nicol, I. G. McNaught-Davis. When Sir John Hunt departed, accompanied by Ted Wrangham and Derek Bull, after the deaths of Wilfrid Noyce and Robin Smith, Slesser assumed the leadership of the party.

again. There would be no rest days, no fixed camps, no room for weakness, accident or illness. We had, after a month of astute evasion, at last been caught in the web of a Russian "sports plan". Malcolm Slessor and his Scottish colleagues, used to having to adopt similar measures to reach their native crags, were almost enthusiastic; the English trio were resigned and somewhat glum. Three days later we were back at Camp III. From this point everything would be new, the scenery would change from the gloomy month of toil on the Garmo glacier, new problems would arise — but always the loads would be the same: 60 pounds, give or take five or ten pounds.

Anatole had decided that for this form of attack a party of four² would be ideal, needing only one tent, one stove, one pan, one rope, plus food and personal equipment. Since we were a party of six the extra tent, stove and fuel would add to our already unwieldy burden.

The first day into new pastures started badly. The Russians rose early and ate their food in silence; Slessor, in a flurry of camp activity, lectured Joe and myself on our sloth. Then, his Scottish temperament strained to the limit, he shouldered his pack and marched towards the rising sun. I thought of his martyred expression and felt guilty; Joe slept on. This was a routine that seemed destined to repeat itself day after day and, in the spirit of Anglo-Scots relations, I vowed to be an early starter the following day.

Two hours later we had caught up with the Slessor party and followed them up the glacier. The march to Camp IV was new ground, and with good weather our mood slowly changed. From the closed channel of the lower Garmo glacier we moved into the upper basin, surrounded by a formidable ice-wall, with Kommunistma looking close and accessible.

Two days ferrying to Camp IV, then a further two days to Camp V, moved all our equipment and food to below the South face of Pik Kommunistma. At this stage we were poised to make a direct attack on the summit, three days to the top and two days down. Already, our last fixed camp was three days down the glacier. But things were not going well. Kenny Bryan had fallen ill with the same illness that had hit Joe Brown on our training peak, and it was evident that someone would have to take a tent and some food and accompany him back to Base Camp. Slessor had been going badly, clogged by food poisoning and mild dysentery, and seemed an obvious choice,

² Anatole Ovchinnikov, Vladimir Malakov, Eugene Gippenreiter, Nicolai Alkhutov.

but Ralph Jones, who seemed to be the strongest of us all, volunteered to take Bryan down. This solved the problem; although we could be sure of Bryan's safe return, it certainly reduced our chances of success. That night fate struck again. Graeme Nicol, the expedition doctor, fell sick with the same illness that had weakened Slessor. It was obvious that departure the following morning was out of the question.

Early the next morning the Russians, remorselessly following their "sports plan", wished us well and departed. We had two days' food in reserve, which Bryan and Jones had left, but unless we went on the following day there was no chance of catching up with Anatole and his team, who were moving fast and looked very strong and in high spirits.

The camp was in a crevasse formed, almost perfectly, into a parabolic shape, and it seemed that the full power of the sun was focused on our small tent. We melted snow and drank all day, watching Graeme and hearing his periodical medical reports. When the sun set and the temperature fell, we pulled on more and more clothes and eventually slid into our sleeping bags with very little hope of going any further.

The following morning, however, the doctor pronounced himself fit, and we prepared for an attempt to overtake the Russians. The next stage of the climb was the Georgian couloir, starting just above the camp at about 17,000 feet and running to a small col at about 20,000 feet. It looked steep and threatened by an almost unbroken line of ice-cliffs. For once the snow was perfect and, still with our 60-lb. loads, we moved slowly upwards. Snow and ice climbing, especially in open couloirs, is either boring or dangerous. The routine is unbroken, few difficulties present themselves and a slip means death or a laborious re-climb. For once the Pamirs were kind. The monotony was lightened by the interest of threading numerous ice-cliffs and negotiating small ice-walls. One of these gave us considerable pleasure as Joe Brown, reaching over the bulge, found his hand in a large Russian ring peg. We were on their route, and they had not completely forgotten about us.

At about 19,000 feet a small platform littered with debris meant that they had spent the night there or stopped for a prolonged rest. A distant cry solved the problem, and just at the top of a smooth ice-wall above a couloir we could see four figures waving. We had plenty of time and were only a few hours behind.

We crossed to the foot of the wall and looked up the 700 feet of smooth ice leading to the col. The sight of a few steps brought little cheer, and when we found a fixed rope of nylon line some 300 feet above we realised that the wall would be a very slow ascent by normal methods. Two people on the fixed rope at once would be folly, and as we had only one rope between the four of us the pitches we would have taken would have been short and we could never have made the col before nightfall. Joe solved the dilemma on good logical grounds. If we climb together and one slips we all fall, if we climb in pitches we lose a day, therefore we climb solo.

I watched Joe making his way up the thin rope, worried for him and apprehensive about my turn. I followed carrying the rope, the thin, icy line slipping through my gloves and the badly fitting crampons slipping on my boots. I was terrified. On reaching the stance I watched Graeme Nicol take his turn and, as he approached, it was evident that his sickness had taken a lot out of him. When he came in range I dropped the rope, and we climbed together to join Joe sheltering under an overhang and cuddling a tin of meat dropped by some earlier party.

The col was bleak and windy and the Russian tracks, only just visible, led round the side of Pravda Peak out of sight. They had their plan to follow. We camped for the night and, the following day, followed our own much modified plan.

An hour later we could see the camp site some 500 feet below, and to our surprise we could see climbers littered almost at random over the basin below the final wall on Kommunizma. It could only mean an accident. We slithered through the soft, deep snow as fast as we could.

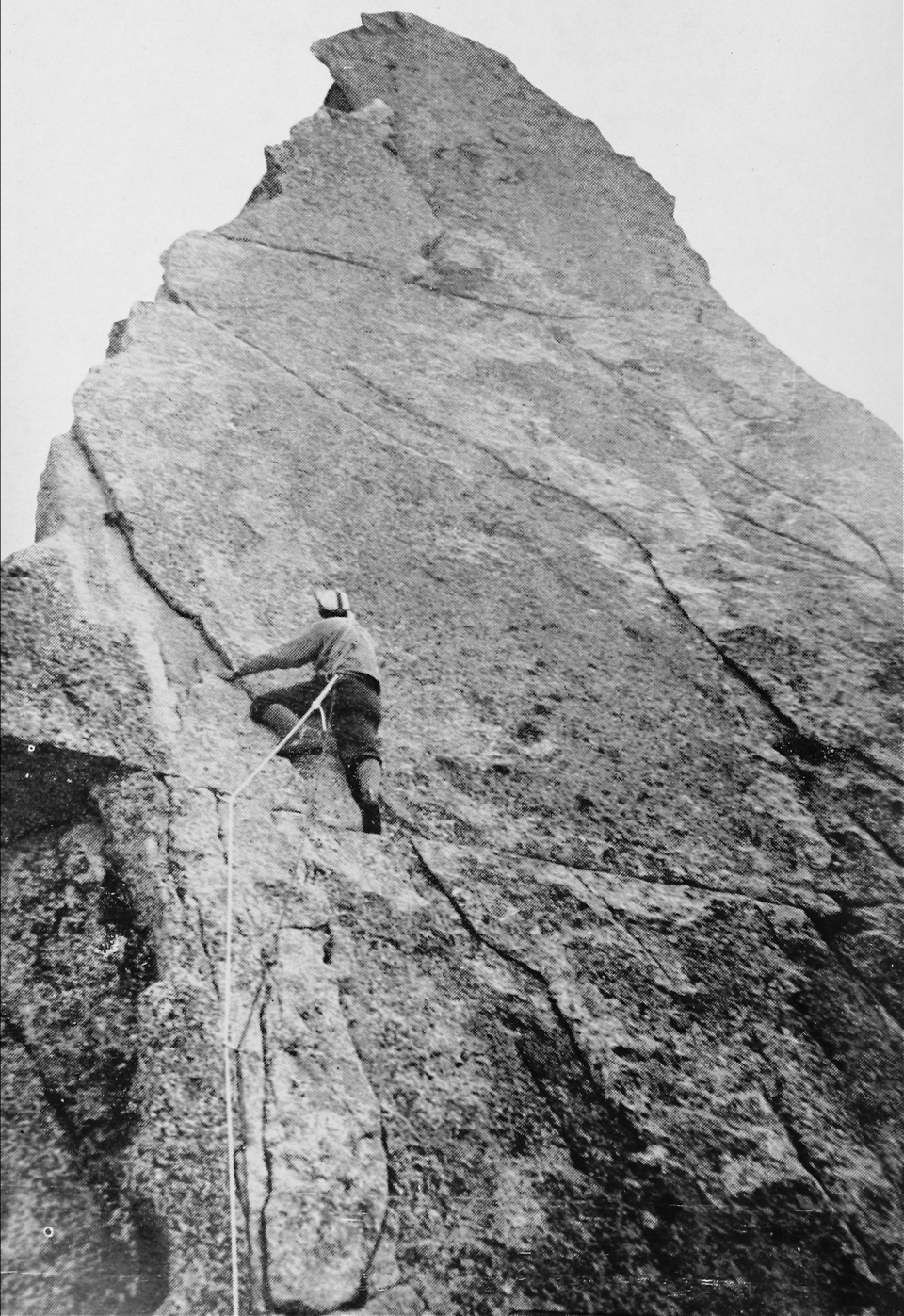
A party from Leningrad had been preparing camps for a descent route before attacking the huge South face. One of them had had a slight heart attack and was being carried down. They were a powerful and self-sufficient team and, after Graeme Nicol had given help and advice, they decided that they could manage for themselves and we could carry on with our attempt. This misfortune had some advantages for us. Our four Russian friends had helped bring the man down, and we were now all united on the same "sports plan".

Two more days to the summit and three days down to our last food dump. I counted them like a prisoner counting his sentence. The Spartak party had cut an ice-cave some 3,000 feet above our camp, which would ease our burden. Unfortunately it was by no



George Lowe

Medallion specially struck by Central Council of Physical Culture and Sport, U.S.S.R., to commemorate the British-Soviet Expedition of 1962 and presented to each member of the party. The presentation to the British members was made by Soldatov, the Russian Ambassador in London.



means clear to us how big the cave was or exactly where it was, so we decided to carry our tent. Anatole was more trusting, and the following morning they left as lightly laden as possible. We toiled in their wake.

Joe was making good progress tagging at the Russians' heels, and at this stage the climbing was easy; so we all moved at our own pace. At the foot of the wall I could see Joe sitting below an ice-cliff smoking; Graeme, below, was making heavy weather. It was going to be a long day. Rather than move as a group of four, we cut the rope in the middle, almost a symbolic act, and as I roped to Joe I realised that whatever happened we were going to cover the 5,000 feet that remained to the top in the next thirty-six hours.

The snow had frozen during the night and despite the ever-present burden of our loads we made good progress, sitting occasionally to watch for the two Scots to come into view. The climbing was straightforward: short ice-walls followed by steep ice-slopes, covered with a thin layer of reasonably firm snow. Above the ice-cliffs the face spread out into a featureless slab of snow, 2,000 feet high, cut on the left by the vertical South face and extending almost without limit to the right. No features, no interest, just a long, hard slog. Clouds had blown across the face, reducing visibility to 100 feet or so. The Russians were out of sight and their tracks, whipped by a brisk wind, had almost disappeared. We moved up monotonously, stopping frequently for short rests. A cry from below halted us, and we dug in to rest our loads until the Scots arrived. Both looked all in, and there seemed to be the mood in the air that we should turn back. Slesser suggested camping then and there, but a glance round the featureless 45-degree slope didn't encourage this idea. We seemed to be at a deadlock when Graeme, who looked grey with fatigue, stated emphatically that as long as he could put one foot in front of the other he was going upwards. It hardly seemed wise, but the climbing was never very difficult. To lighten Slesser's load Joe took the tent, giving some food and gas to Graeme. I took the poles, filmed the scene, and we set ourselves back into the punishing routine.

A gust of wind parted the clouds, and Joe saw a small, black flag marking the cave. In our excitement we almost burst our lungs, only to arrive and find nothing. No Russians, no equipment, only a small slit a foot high in the slope of ice. We shouted, with no reply, then Joe, a man of action, wriggled through the hole. When he didn't reappear we followed, to find him and the four Russians in high

humour in a spacious cavern which the Spartak party had hacked out.

The cave would comfortably sleep eight and, as we cut away more ice to melt, it grew even bigger. Smoking was forbidden by Anatole, reasonably enough, since the atmosphere was already rich; however, we managed to reach a compromise and Joe and myself were planted near the draughty exit, where we could puff our smoke outside. We estimated that we were about 2,000 feet below the summit. If the weather held and there were no more illness we would be on the summit tomorrow.

We awoke as the cold, grey light filtered through the exit slit. Joe suddenly kicked out of his sleeping bag and dived for the hole; half way out he stuck, and we watched his feet kick as he retched for several minutes; however, as he squirmed back into the ice-box we could see that he was determined to go on. Our food was low, so we ate sparingly, leaving as much as possible for our return.

We crawled out over the contents of Joe's stomach, now frozen hard, to bright sunlight. A cold wind rustled the ice-particles across the face. The night's rest had done us all good and Slessor, with something like his low-altitude vigour, led the way to the ridge a few hundred feet above. We had always thought that the final section to the summit was a monotonous slope of ice. To our delight we now found in front of us a crenellated knife-edge running up to the base of the summit pyramid. On each side beautifully fluted slopes of ice fell 6,000 feet to the glacier. It was the most enthralling section of climbing we had found in the whole visit, as if enjoyment of the Pamirs was proportional to the agony suffered to find it.

At last we were on the final pyramid, the summit out of sight. My altimeter showed 24,000 feet; I tapped it, hoping to gain a few feet without effort, then slipped it back in my pocket vowing not to look at it again until I had counted a hundred steps. A muttered phrase between a gargle and a cough broke into my oxygen-starved brain; with some effort I came to attention, switched off my motor and slumped into the snow. Eugene, the irrepressible climbing commissar, was calling us to attention. "We are going to have a union meeting." I took out the heavy cine camera and wafted it about, trying to look professional. I looked at the other five, the four Russians and Joe, buried deep in their windproofs; below, Slessor and Nicol were labouring in the deep, soft snow, occasionally flopping over like stringless puppets.

Anatole was standing as if he had energy to spare. He spoke sparingly in English. "The time is late, the snow is bad and we are far from the summit of the highest peak in the Soviet Union. To give us the best chance, the strong will climb with the strong, the weak with the weak . . ." It sounded like a prepared speech and my concentration lapsed. I tried to decide if I were weak or strong. I flexed a few muscles surreptitiously and put on a "hard man" expression, then crammed in a few boiled sweets to make up for the food we hadn't eaten over the past three days. Anatole droned on, the Russians listening with rapt attention. Joe seemed to be asleep.

The result of the meeting was for both Joe and myself to rope up with a Russian for the final section. We moved on, myself at the rear taking what film I could, quite sure as a result of Anatole's talk that despite the altimeter we were miles from the summit. Eugene and myself as the slower movers watched the other four draw away, and as the last one disappeared over a bulge some 50 feet above I felt sure I should never see the summit. Anatole was right, I was weak. The ground became easier and we synchronised our movements, kicking in the claws with renewed vigour. Then quite suddenly the others came into view sprawled on a large, rocky platform. "They've cracked: the weak shall be strong and the meek shall inherit the earth," I muttered at Eugene. He didn't hear and, looking at his face, it was evident why not. His plans over the past years had come to fruition and at least some of the party had reached the final objective. We caught our breath, then thumped each other, produced Buckingham Palace type flags for filming, took the note from the previous summit party to prove our ascent and left one of our own and generally went through a typical continental summit ceremony.

As we lay back flushed with whatever it is that makes people climb mountains, to our delight the two Scots rolled into view. We repeated the summit procedure for their benefit, and with our minds on food, comfort and England made our way back to the cave.

The descend during the following days was a mixture of agony and anticipation, enlivened by Joe Brown falling into a crevasse and myself doing some alarming antics on the fixed rope on the ice-face.

In retrospect, the climbing of Pik Kommunizma was a classical high speed ascent by the Russian method. With no porters or Sherpas to assist in carrying the amount of equipment necessary for a chain of camps, theirs seems to be a reasonable if somewhat

dangerous solution. In the Russian eyes a successful expedition is one where all the members reach the summit. In this I agree with them, but how this would work out on new routes of a high standard of difficulty or in areas with less stable climatic conditions remains an open question. Throughout the whole ascent we relied heavily on our Russian comrades; without them and the complete confidence they had in their "sports plan", I feel sure we would never have attempted to climb a 24,600-foot peak in fifteen days up and down from a Base Camp at 9,000 feet and over twenty miles away. We have the strength and confidence of the Russian party to thank for the successful outcome of the expedition, particularly the skill and forceful leadership of Anatole Ovchinnikov, and although the climb was rarely pleasurable it was nevertheless unforgettable.

LAZY MEN'S WAYS

J. A. AUSTIN

NOT SO LONG AGO the phrase "There's no room left for anything worthwhile any more" invariably cropped up when groups of climbers talked about future possibilities. You can still hear it tossed about now and then, but not, I hope, so frequently as in the past.

I started my climbing career at the opening of '55 and this opinion was very widely held among climbers at that time. Occasionally Cloggy or Scawfell would be excepted from the general rule, but there was no doubt about the scarcity of new lines on the "low" crags. During the last eight years this sentiment reappeared with monotonous regularity, and without question we accepted it. This is not to say that we were convinced that there were no new routes to be done on easily accessible crags, but we were very half-hearted about it all and didn't, in the main, bother to look for any. Yet in recent times (by recent times I mean the last 10 years) we have seen a whole guidebook full of new climbs appear and literally dozens of routes elsewhere in the Snowdon area have been discovered, the majority of which are to be found on "low" crags, cliffs which were unfashionable in the "golden" age of climbing. The best of these routes are very good, as good as the best of the old stuff, and I believe that in spite of their relatively unfashionable position these routes will, in the future, be as famous as their older, higher counterparts. I believe they will become classics.

Before I go any further perhaps I should state what I understand by a "low" crag. It is one that I can get to fairly easily, and one that is not normally swathed in cloud like Cloggy or Scawfell. This severely limits the field, for, while I am aware that some members of the Club would consider the Devil's Kitchen or Lliwedd an easy walk, I operate on much less exalted levels. Dinas y Gromlech, for instance, has always been, and to me always will be, one of Wales' more inaccessible crags. However, I have been persuaded, against my better judgement, that this is the result of my general lack of stamina and fitness and that normal people can get up there in only half an hour. This then is my upper limit for a low crag.

Naturally routes with a good line, or a "presence", or routes that are the solution to old problems, will be hard — they wouldn't have

been left until the 1950s if they weren't; but I don't think standards matter a great deal. Over the past two or three years my ideas on difficulty and standards have continually been knocked into a cocked hat by "beginners" who have declared routes which I regarded as pretty desperate to be merely very enjoyable, or pleasant climbing, recommendable and so on. I think we can be sure that tomorrow's children will carry this a stage further and will downgrade my "ultimates" into classics. They'll climb them in the rain, or as something the girl-friend can enjoy. Above all they'll climb them in crowds.

Paralleling this rise in standards is another trend, the trend of the shortening walk. Only a matter of 50 or 60 years ago climbers stayed at Pen y Pass in order to climb on Tryfan or the Black Ladders. I suppose it is possible to come across such people today, people who stay at Mr. Briggs' place and walk over to Cloggy to climb. I don't know, but I bet they are very few. You all know the trend today: drink until two in the morning, sleep at Ynys, rise at 10.30 and go perhaps as far as the Mot, but make sure you're back in time for an afternoon brew. If there is time to squeeze one in on the Wastad before opening time so much the better. If not we're not really bothered, one's enough and it's time to go over to Chris' joint anyway.

It is always an interesting exercise to try to pick the winners, and bearing in mind these two trends it is not difficult to decide where future classics will lie — and it won't be on the Black Ladders. I will not go so far as to say that all the classics of the future will be low down, but I do think that some roadside climbs of recent years stand a good chance of making the grade, particularly some routes led by the great J.B. In the Valley Cenotaph Corner and Cemetery Gates are already amazingly popular, so much so that their popularity almost equals that of established favourites such as Brant or Slape. Yet I think that of J.B.'s Valley routes one of his later ones, the Girdle of the Cromlech (climbed in conjunction with D. Whillans in 1955), with its magnificent passage across the walls of Cenotaph, is undoubtedly the best of them all.

In the last two or three years J.B. has been smitten with a great idleness. The summit of Cloggy seemed unattainable, the pull of the lowlands proved too much, and as a result we have been given three superlative new routes, all within 10 minutes' walk of a road. The tremendously intimidating cliff of Carreg Hyll-Drem, with its jagged

overhangs frowning down on the road, flanked on one side by a smooth impending wall 200 feet high, must surely be the nearest one. It is certainly the most frightening. Yet Hardd, even though it is an exceedingly bold climb on a vicious-looking crag, is a most attractive line. Its smooth sweeping contours contrast sharply with the abrupt unpleasant ceilings of the rest of the crag and give it an appearance that is almost friendly, at least when viewed from the road! Needless to say, on a cliff like this the line is pure; not even a girdle crosses it, and the position is exciting to say the least.

Castell Cidwm is another discovery, or rather a rediscovery, for the crag which appears to be a huge vegetated lump on the far side of the lake has been climbed on for years. It was just that no-one managed to get up its magnificent, and from the road invisible, gully wall. There are four routes on it now, and the best, called Dwm, will, I am sure, in future years come to be recognised as one of the "greats". The crag starts off deep in the gully at quite a moderate height and gets higher as it approaches the lake, the gully bed dropping lower, until the cliff reaches a height of 180 feet; here it turns a corner and begins to run back into the mountain again. In this extraordinarily steep blunt rib where the crag bends is a black corner. In appearance it resembles Ivy Sepulchre, but is more intimidating, much more. It is longer, being half as high again, and deeper too than Ivy Sep. Its bulges are bigger, and from beneath its 15-foot roof comes a continuous trickle of water which runs down the bed of the groove except where it drips off the bulges. In some respects a thoroughly repulsive line; and yet it possesses an indefinable something, a strength of character, a purity of line perhaps that draws a climber like few other climbs in Wales. In some ways it reminds one of that great route on the right of the Boulder, the Black Cleft, and to be perfectly honest, like the Cleft, it is not, on the face of it, attractive. Although the crux is a slab, generally the climbing is steep and strenuous, with only limited protection. It is a big bold route then, a hard lead rather than a difficult problem in technique. One of the most impressive single lines in Wales, it presents a tremendous challenge to the climber, a challenge that I believe will be increasingly accepted in years ahead.

Inevitably when talking of low crags or roadside crags one gets round to Tremadoc, a cliff that comes in at the very base-line of such places. Tremadoc is not a bad climbing ground and is fairly well known as a good wet weather crag, but it also has another, and

better, claim to fame. It is the home of the "mighty" Vector, perhaps the finest roadside climb in Britain. Its outlook is not good, consisting as it does of green fields and the sea, so its claim to fame is based on more intimate qualities, of itself and its rock. And what a rock! Milestone Buttress is its name and its resemblance to any other buttress of the same name ends with the name.

This cliff is no idle sprawl of rock relaxing on the mountainside; it is a veritable bastion, standing out from the rest of the cliff in a 200-foot sweep of smooth wall and overhang, lots of overhangs seaming the face of the buttress like so many frowning eyebrows. A tremendous buttress this and a tremendous climb. It winds its way, on perfect rock, tracing an incredibly bold line through a sea of overhangs to that short overhanging groove, high on the buttress, which proves to be the key to the final barrier of overhangs. The climbing is remarkably sustained and enjoyable, and the positions are superb, yet, surprisingly enough, only rarely does the rock one climbs tip forward over the vertical. Quite definitely it is one of the great climbs of Wales.

The following lines are an account of ascents of a couple of these routes. They weren't spectacular ascents, do-or-die attempts or anything of that nature, but they were thoroughly enjoyable days spent on the hills, even if they were only little ones.

Brian led off up the first pitch. It was not easy, but not hard either. It was the sort of pitch it is nice to start the day on, interesting, but shallow enough in angle to allow loitering and frequent pauses. It is a sort of curtain-raiser, and lands one on a small stance squatting beneath a line of overhanging walls and beetling square-cut ceilings, through which somewhere one must follow the route—an awe-inspiring reflection. The size of the stance, the array of doubtful spikes and the general air of the place all combine to impress one with the gravity of the situation and the size of the problem to be overcome. A good opening on the part of Vector.

This is the sort of place in which a guidebook is essential. I whipped it out and consulted it. The line went across into that overhanging corner, apparently much lower down than at first seemed likely, then an invisible crack gave access to an invisible slab and then the corner. I was not keen, but the sight of a healthy-looking flake for a runner after only a few feet instilled a bit of

courage. I hoped it would keep it up. I progressed, not steadily as a true mountaineer should, but in quick little spurts with pauses to collect myself. No rhythm here. At the end of the traverse I reached the spikes mentioned in the guidebook. Someone had been telling fibs, for these were unfriendly flat topped flakes; no chance of a runner. Below, the wall dropped away, smooth and slightly overhanging; already the exposure was making itself felt. The wall above was impending slightly, and the way up a thin crack, just wide enough to get my fingers in, looked a bit frightening. No time to hang about, so I started. Things began to look up when the excellent finger-jams I found in the crack gave out into hand-jams; sinkers they were. This is the stuff, I thought, as I leaned out over the void, even daring to miss a runner out because I could see a huge spike up on the rib at the top of the crack, and clambered up to the first resting place so far.

I took time out for relaxing and spying out the land, not that it needed much spying. There was only one way. Below, there was nothing but space. I was perched on a notch in a sort of overhanging arête, with smooth overhanging walls on one side and a line of ceilings stretching away to infinity on the other. The junction of the ceilings and the arête formed the groove above my head, one wall being made up of bulges, the other being the "Ochre Slab". The Ochre Slab is one of the main features of the climb, for it is the only way through the overhangs at this level, and thus the only link between the lower half of the buttress and the upper half. Ochre it certainly is, but a slab, never. If it is one degree under vertical I'll eat my hat.

"Step left and go up to the overhanging corner above". Thus the guidebook. A short sentence that concealed a wealth of meaning. It was hard enough to step left, but gaining the corner turned out to be the very devil. The ceilings above overhung even more, if that were possible, the considerable footage of space below seemed emptier and the overhanging groove that was my immediate goal, slanting through those ceilings, looked blank and uncompromising. At first things to come loomed larger in my mind than did the problem of overcoming this tiny piece of rock, a slab almost, inset among a sea of overhangs; but after a few tentative efforts I realised that this next few feet of rock were going to be considerably more difficult than anything we had come up against so far. The overhangs, exposure and everything else faded out and I was conscious only of the next 5 feet of rock. Although I did not know it at the time, this gentle and

innocuous little wall that I faced was the crux of the "mighty Vector". At last I made it. It was hard. It was thin, strenuous and awkward, all at one and the same time. Things would have been so much easier if there had been somewhere to land, but I finished up bridged against the overhang with one foot way out in a small triangular pocket about waist high at the foot of the bottomless Ochre Slab. I was impressed. Not only was I impressed, I was frightened. Cramp was beginning to strike in my twisted muscles and I was searching anxiously for a place to insert a chock, when I noticed, a few feet above, a peg, almost half-way up the Ochre Slab. I was shaking a bit by the time I reached it and clipped in, due no doubt to cramp and muscle fatigue or some such ailment. This is a well-known phenomenon in climbing circles and disappears immediately one becomes safe and clips into a peg. My case was no exception. The previously steep and nasty yellow wall relaxed magically in angle and I was able to stand almost in balance just below the peg. The position here and for the next 20 feet was exacting, to say the least. The Ochre Slab has no bottom to it, and below it are overhanging walls and arêtes. This is not just a case of the buttress being a little out of plumb; the slab must be 10 or 12 feet out beyond the foot of the cliff, and still above the left shoulder is a viciously overhanging wall, a slanting ceiling, which formed a bulge round which, a bit higher, one must layback. The climbing is exhilarating at this point, bold yet safe, and in a position which I am sure is unsurpassed in Wales. Round the bulge I went, to be faced by a very bold move, just at a time when I was certainly not feeling bold. The move consisted of lobbing a foot out sideways onto an angle on the sharp-edged rib on the right and pushing across onto it. I lobbed out, pushed and teetered into balance, then moved backwards across the groove to a good foothold above the band of overhangs. There is nothing to see from here but a few trees, the road and a couple of spectators in the field opposite. The path one has trodden is completely hidden under these massive bulges. The stance is not far away, and with some delicate use of a not too well-placed piton I arrived. The word stance conjures up a vision of ledges, of walls less than vertical, of belays and room to stretch and to stand in comfort. This is none of those things, but a sort of nest-hole where it is possible to wedge in with head bent against the roof, feet splayed out on sloping flakes and a couple of well-placed pitons in the back to fasten one in. As an exciting stance this one was the

equal of any I had yet met, and the changeover was something that had to be seen to be believed: it was almost indecent.

The next pitch, the notorious "tumble" pitch, proved somewhat easier than the last, although there was the same unrelenting exposure. The key to this pitch is a thin overhanging layback crack in a groove, which is approached via a long narrow slab running to the left and sandwiched between two lines of overhangs. Fortunately the slab is not difficult and one can enjoy this airy balcony as it deserves. At the far end of the slab one has to swing round a corner off the slab into a groove; it looks awkward, but a rattling good piton, with about 2 inches of play, bolsters up confidence . . . and then one is faced with it. The crack. Birthplace of falling leaders. It is an innocent-looking thing, quite short, no more than 20 feet at the outside; true, one wall overhangs considerably, but, as my teacher once told me, overhanging laybacks are the easiest sort — there's less friction that way; I knew that the angle couldn't be the difficulty. It wasn't, as I discovered at the top of the crack, when I couldn't get out and had to come down for a rest. We had come to the first place on the climb where strength counted for more than technique. It was a long way from the top of the crack to a hold, and reaching is difficult when hanging on in a layback position, especially with a built-in handicap like mine. I must admit that this would be a safe place to fall; there's nothing to hit on the way down, the protection is good, and at the end is a fine foothold on the lip of the overhangs to collect oneself on and start back. So with the confidence inspired by a good runner I made my summit dash. I tore up the crack at top speed, round the bulge and up to the top, where I was able to spin backwards into a queer sort of bridging position. The problem was solved and we were up.

"Four hours", I said to Claud as I wheezed my way to a standstill, adding a couple of extra pullovers before roping up, for it was cold up there, "I have promised to take Jennie climbing this afternoon". The route as far as Cenotaph Corner is an undistinguished affair and except for the so-called "Traverse on Jams" presents little in the way of interesting rock, steep, sound or otherwise. This Traverse on Jams came as something of a shock, for being a gritstoner I naturally regard hand-jam pitches as being my cup of tea. This one wasn't. The wall was very steep and smooth and was broken about

three-quarters of the way up with a little black overhang. The traverse ran along the wall immediately below this overhang, using the crack in the angle, presumably for hand-jams. I may be thick, I know I am, and my best friends fight to confirm it, but I swear the man has not been born who could hand-jam that crack; it was so thin I could only just get my fingers in, and thick though they be, they are not appreciably thicker than J.B.'s hand, so I had to hand-traverse it. Now those of you who know me will realise that I am not built for hand-traversing, the seat of my gravity being too low. Nevertheless I overcame all nature's obstacles and rounded the corner, where the crack took an upward turn. "Aha", I thought, "the rope will jam in the crack if I don't wedge a stone in". So I wedged and continued into the chimney to belay. It was on the very last swing that the rope jammed — shoddy workmanship no doubt — so back I went to the corner. Six times I returned along that by now well-known traverse to the corner to free the rope, and in spite of repeated wedged stones it managed to stick. It is only 10 to 12 feet to the corner, but six times 10 or 12 comes to a sizable amount. I was clapped out. Fortunately the next two or three pitches were not difficult, and I managed to coast round until we reached the "meat" of the route, the crossing of Cenotaph Corner.

It is an impressive viewing spot, this stance on the edge of Sabre Cut. One sits there in perfect comfort, peeping round the corner across a wall of appalling verticality. There are no overhangs round there, nothing but a piton some 70 or 80 feet above in the exit cracks of the Left Wall to break the clean awe-inspiring sweep of its smooth walls. Once started out, the impression of smoothness quickly disappears and the wall becomes a warm and friendly place, rough and spiky with lots of holds. Not many are large, most are very small, but always they are sharp and comforting.

The pitch looked a long one, but like all long journeys it had to start with a first step. So I stepped. Down to the ledge I went, then 20 feet vertically up the wall via a thin and very strenuous curving crack to a sizable flake runner. It was all very well-protected and I enjoyed it. The cold was gone now and the sun shone directly into the corner. I felt warmer and more comfortable. Two or three parties were congregating in the amphitheatre at the foot of Cenotaph, and several more were toiling up the slopes below. I was the only person in sight wearing an anorak, and I felt slightly superior, having been up here when it was still cold. From now on the pitch

was sheer delight, interesting climbing on good holds, safe, and on a superb piece of rock, and when I reached the Corner, along the last 20 feet or so of semi-hand-traversing, I felt almost sorry to arrive. But here I was and it behoved me to find a stance, especially as one of the parties below had decided to do the Corner and were not casting very friendly glances in my direction. So I started looking. The Corner in its middle section seemed sheltered and friendly with lots of holds, and knowing that one is not going to climb the difficult part at the top removes all the tension and everything seems comfortable and easy. But when one has said that, there's no more. There is certainly nothing remotely resembling a stance. Finally I settled on a spot. On the face of it there was little to choose between this spot and anywhere else in the Corner, but deep inside I had found a fine crack where I planted a fat channel peg. This was the stance.

I clipped in a big karabiner, added a few threads, and started to make myself a stance. It was hard work, twisting and turning, getting cramp, steaming up my glasses and using all the surplus rope in a complicated system of stirrups, slings etc. in which I vainly hoped to find comfort. Stances in *étriers* may be O.K. for hardened Alpinists, but for me this one was purgatory; somehow I was slowly being bent double and at the same time twisted in two. I felt like a worn-out corkscrew. The stance across the way on Cemetery Gates, usually numbered with the more precarious and uncomfortable stances in Wales, began to look more and more inviting. Claud took his time, obviously savouring to the full the delights of this pitch, and, it seemed to me, deliberately delaying the time when he would occupy my place in the sun.

He is a patient sort of lad, is Claud, and he made sure he was well and truly belayed before he allowed me to strip off my cradle. The confusion had to be seen to be believed. At one time, although we had started out with 320 feet of rope, all of it was used up in a massive series of knots and in general chaos. But at last order emerged from the chaos and I could start. Ah, what bliss to be out of that little corner of hell! It will be realised that by now we were extremely unpopular with the party below, the leader of which had been up the first 20 feet a good half-dozen times. Still, the sun was beating down and I have no doubt that they were enjoying their enforced idleness with a spot of sunbathing. There were plenty of idiots to watch that day.

A ledge ran across the right wall of Cenotaph to the stance on the

Gates, and the only difficulty seemed to lie in the 20-foot gap before the ledge started. Fortunately a narrower rounded gangway, perhaps a couple of inches wide, sloped up to the near end of the ledge and bridged that gap. Before starting I went up the corner a little way and clipped one rope onto a large solid-looking chock just below the niche. The last time I had been here some years ago this stone had lived at the bottom of the wide crack, but since then some public-spirited climber had moved it to the top of the crack, almost to the crux in fact. It may be a cad's trick, but I was grateful and silently thanked my unknown friend. On my first attempt the sins of my past, or maybe Claud's, caught up with me and instilled momentary paralysis when I reached the end of my rope, all 6 feet of it, with the rest still tied onto Claud's belay. I regained the corner, and, a few minutes later, temper and the rest of the rope, and sallied forth again. The required technique for climbing the gangway is unusual and worth describing. One starts one's feet off along this gangway giving them a couple of seconds' start over the body. This is then set in motion, being dragged along the wall by pulling on tiny pockets which crop up at intervals along the way. The position is such that it looks as though one is about to sit down, whereas in fact one is about to stand up, or would stand up if one could. Not only is the position undignified, but it is extremely strenuous, particularly so for a man of my build, when a considerable strain is imposed upon the fingers. Nevertheless it is a fine piece of climbing, blending precarious and unusual moves on steep rock with plenty of exposure. Once on the ledge I was able to regain my composure and proceed in a more leisurely fashion, still climbing, even though on a ledge, to the stance.

A party on Cemetery Gates had beaten me to the post; they already had two men there, but I smiled persuasively and offered to hold the rope while the leader led on to the top, thus freeing his second to bring up the last man. I noticed the second looking somewhat askance as I used him as a sort of belaying-pin, but it was in a good cause. I don't suppose he was very comfortable anyway. Eventually they went and Claud could start to free himself from his cage and all the angry glares from below, and start across.

While this was going on and I was paying out one rope and bringing the other in because Claud had left himself a back rope, I became aware of a white face and a pair of hands below: another party on the "Gates". I observed that the leader's eyes were bulging, his fingers

were shaking and he was showing signs of considerable strain. I thought he would have difficulty in completing his climb. No sooner had the thought crossed my mind than he enquired in a breathless sort of way about the chances of a top rope. I apologised and explained that I was fully booked at the moment; however, if he cared to hang on for a few minutes. . . . I then offered him the use of the slack rope which dangled from my waist if things got too bad, and turned my attention back to Claud, who was by now approaching "easier" ground. Suddenly he paused in mid-stride, so to speak, and his face paled as he looked towards his staunch belayer. I looked down. There was a sort of flash and there the other leader was, hanging from my free rope. Fortunately the rope was well belayed round my ample middle and Claud's expectation of being suddenly plucked from the rock remained unfulfilled. In the space of a couple of seconds he disappeared below at an ever increasing speed to the sound of a high pitched humming-cum-whooshing sound, until he was held by his second on a runner. There was much noise and commotion below as the rest of the team fielded their man. I was fully engaged in assuring Claud that he wasn't forgotten, that I wouldn't let him fall and that I was quite safe. Scarcely had we got Claud settled in on the stance when there was a cry from below: "Any chance of a top rope, mate?"

Finally motion was restored and I moved off onto the next pitch. From the rib I stood looking across into Ivy Sepulchre. I could see straight away that this would be a gripper, a piece of information I lost no time in passing on to Claud. This cheered him up no end, as he was already sharing belays he didn't trust with a party he expected to come to grief on the next pitch. The wall was steep and loose, with the holds resembling autumn leaves on a wire fence. There was no lack of them, holds I mean, but I wasn't impressed. A thoroughly nasty pitch. I seem to remember reading about a "small superlative class of climber specialising in unsound and uncertain holds . . . rotten rock, overhangs etc." This is it, the typical pitch. Still, it is the only rotten pitch on the traverse and makes one appreciate the rest, and anyway I managed it without pulling anything off. The stance in Ivy Sepulchre was a splayed-out, sliding-off affair and Claud refused to share it when he arrived, racing off round the corner onto the big roomy terrace affair that is the next stance. A few minutes more and we reached the top.

It had been a really enjoyable few hours. The crossing of Cenotaph in particular, on a sunny day such as ours, is superb.

THREE GRANITE RIDGES

WALTER DOWLEN

THE SALBITSCHIEN deserves to be better known among British climbers. Situated above Göschenen, a few miles from Andermatt, it offers climbs of the highest quality on its three main ridges and their subsidiary towers. These routes are easy of access and, since the peak is small (9,800 feet), often possible in doubtful weather.

Whenever one reads of the Salbitschijen the South Ridge is mentioned as a wonderful climb, and a picture of the "key position" in Roch's *On Rock and Ice* had always attracted me strongly. It was with feelings of great anticipation, therefore, that I set out from the Salbi hut with Tony Greenbank on the first day of our holiday last summer.

From the hut a little more than an hour of easy walking and scrambling brought us to the start of the climb. Normally the first tower on the ridge, the Salbi Zahn, is traversed to a col from which the real difficulties begin. This col can, however, be reached directly, and we took this alternative. Three long runouts of about V. Diff standard brought us to the col ideally warmed up for the severities to come. We stopped for a few minutes and as Tony with great generosity offered to carry my boots I changed into PAs.

The ridge now rose above us in huge sweeps of superbly solid granite. The difficulties began at once with a pitch called the Elephant's Back. Perhaps because it was the first hard pitch we found this the crux of the climb. The rock was liberally pegged but avoiding these still kept the standard within the Severe grade for the first 50 feet or so. Then an easy traverse to the right led into a little chimney which was very exposed and definitely harder (mild V.S.). A couple of Severe pitches followed where the semi-layback moves which one makes constantly on this climb began to become automatic. Suddenly we were at the foot of the Key Pitch, a huge tapering slab 100 feet high split by three horizontal cracks. Remembering the Elephant's Back I approached this pitch with caution. There were pitons every few feet for runners, until it was necessary to use one, threaded with a wire loop, to swing round to the left to a little stance. From this point the guide book describes various

movements up the edge and back across the slab on the right; these did not seem necessary nor particularly attractive so I continued up the edge itself to the top of the pitch. Tony followed quickly and we both agreed that this had been slightly easier than the Elephant.

Continuing more easily along the ridge we turned a small rock needle at half height, to reach a tiny col below the Plattenturm. The ridge line above or a traverse left on the flank of the tower were the two obvious alternatives, and, secretly hoping for an easy option, I embarked on the traverse. A few minutes later I realised that this was going to be the third crux, for difficulties increased rapidly, and the pitch ended with a very strenuous pull-up on rather doubtful holds.

Now at last, after three and a half hours of continuous difficulty, the standard of the climbing eased. We were soon up and over the next tower, the Zwillingsturm, and the final 300 feet of the summit wall were no harder than an easy V. Diff. The Summit Needle we left for another day, excusing ourselves on the grounds that the sun was in the wrong position for photographs!

Descending from the peak provided the only depressing climbing of the day. What can only be called a heap of rubble had to be descended for about 200 feet before easy snow was reached, which led below the East Ridge of the mountain and into a couloir down which we glissaded to a point only twenty minutes' walk from the hut. Without forcing the pace at any time the whole expedition had taken ten hours and had fulfilled completely our expectations in its excellent quality. In standard a fair assessment would seem to be TD with three or four pitches of V.

Two days later we climbed the East Ridge, a line which is not very obvious from the hut as it is seen end-on and consequently very foreshortened. In fact the East Ridge is nearly as long as the South one and gives an enjoyable climb though of a much lower standard. An unsatisfactory feature of the route is the constant possibility of turning difficult pitches by excursions which sometimes are merely rambles on turfey ledges. It is not too difficult, however, to keep a fairly direct line up the crest and if this is done several pitches of IV will be encountered.

The route begins in a snow couloir which divides the lower slabby part of the ridge. About 150 feet up this couloir (which is subject to a fair amount of stonefall) an obvious chimney leads out to the left and a further 100 feet of traversing left brings one onto the

ridge crest. The crest is followed for three runouts to a gendarme above a col. On the other side of the col rises a steep smooth tower, the Bastion. A recent rock fall has made the direct ascent of the Bastion unsafe and this can be turned on the left. In making this detour one should try to return as soon as possible to the crest or some pleasant climbing may be missed. Thereafter the ridge itself can be followed at no more than Mild Severe standard without the need for any further diversions.

From Göschenen Tony and I moved to the Bregaglia, eager to compare the routes we had done with some of the better known climbs of the Bondasca cirque. Our third ridge was the North Ridge of the Badile. This climb is too well known to warrant any detailed description, but a few impressions and comparisons are worth recording. Technically we thought that the North Ridge seemed a little easier than the Salbi East Ridge but that it was in a finer position. (We spent almost exactly the same time over these two routes—7 hours, hut to summit—and the Badile ridge involves a much greater length of climbing). We were surprised by the lack of exposure and also the absence of sustained difficulty, within its standard. Nevertheless we enjoyed ourselves, though not as much as a high-spirited marmot which we saw bounding about on the slabs half-way up the route.

Our final yardstick was provided by the Badile's N.E. face. Even beside Cassin's great classic the Salbi South Ridge stands comparison favourably. In fact Tony remains convinced that the Ridge was technically harder and more exposed—I think he has forgotten those boots of mine and two litres of raspberry cordial which he was carrying.

A SHORT STORY

CONSCIOUSNESS BEGINS with groaning. The half-starts, the delays, the ceilings going in and out of focus, the cringings back into black warmth. The insistence of the light. All that morning that has to be born and borne, the vista of repeated grey chill until the morning that is no morning. How can there be any purpose to this peevishness and frowziness? Stand up in despair. The stupid familiarity of underwear, the urgent necessity to urinate, the pronged angularity of the hated limbs, the flesh that longs heavily toward the Earth, these are the imperatives from which you will not escape until you have escaped and then you would wish if you could wish not to escape again. Dull reflections and smells of coffee and bacon against the cold walls of the cottage.

In morning sunlight the moor seems blue of grapes. An illusion, an image on the retina, later to disappear? And the retina? Here and now these are truths, and there no truths of sensing that are not here and now. Thus each step that morning was sensed, going up the fields toward the moor among contrasting truths of blue and yellow flowers and red grass that was still wet. The bits of metal on their ropes chinked and clicked and could not be escaped. The premise of heat brooded at a remove from the flesh of their bare arms. If they talked they laughed, as self-evidently, and it was a clear sound good on the heather. The realisation that they expected great things of him was exhilarating as drink, adding to his own balanced intoxication in the play of his muscles.

Jumping small boggy bits, they argued as they climbed with half their mind about the names of hills that came and went, raising heads and sinking them again on the close, saw-edged horizon, gaining and as suddenly losing significance as perceptions, then sinking back into unperceived actualities lumpily under the sky that was equally perceivable but did not, blandly, exist. The other half minds were like open mirrors, absorbing and storing their own reflections, able to change colours and clothes and then reject, adding the stored to the perceived, setting off reactions, folding away impressions to dress up in later. As they came up the corpse road to the moor it seemed wide (but not so wide as it really was) and the mountain was over them across it to the right, tawny

and long, sliding a foot towards them. Ahead on their left was a small lake with a lodge beside it, its gloomy stone and windows giving back a surface gleam in the earliness of the sun. Beyond the moor was a valley which they could not see, beyond which again rotund lichen-coloured mountains with ruins of screes at their sides heaved up and hunched together. The stone circles were on the western sides that faced the sea. It must have been a long walk up from the hutments on the fellside, staggering a bit with the weight of the dead body in its skins, but the evident poetry that had called them was still present in him and revealed the kinship. And suddenly the moor and the lake and mountain were possessed, perfected in an electric clarity and brilliance of outline, demonic with energy.

It had been like that the morning when a man had come up on to the moor by a different way through a long hidden narrow dale that ended in a cirque of green lawn, perhaps a hundred yards across, ringed in by a gallery of low grey cliff over which the water drained from the moor in four separate waterfalls, quite small at that time of the year. In no particular mood he had climbed up over the end and seen the moor and the mountain, and the small lake easing over its sill into the brook that turned a gleaming right angle through the reeds of the bog. He had sensed the rhythm and sensuality of the light gold sun, the amoral power of the June morning, and after a few minutes it assumed him too as he stood there so that he lost all sense of direction and afterwards felt quite wobbly at the knees as he went back down the narrow dale. That was when he decided to have the lodge built. The next spring workmen came up the other way, up the old corpse road beside the beck, with the cut blocks from the quarry in the main valley loaded in carts. The carts creaked and pitched and clattered on the stony bits, and sank to exasperation in the boggy places, so that on warm rainy days sweat and rain ran together down the faces and bodies of the workmen as they heaved and binded at the wheels. On sunny days their sing-song voices died out along the bog, interticked by the working of the beck, before they reached the foot of the mountain. In the sunlight their brown muscled arms were good as honey, they were as at home as a midge in the bog, and the blue line of the sea made level-headedness. The lichen on the grey liths of the stone circles grew dry and yellow. They took good care to be down before sunset. The mountain

was there in the sunlight or the moonlight or the noliht of clouds. There was absolutely no memory around in spite of the stone circles. Before autumn there was geometry on the fell and the lodge gloomed rawly.

He went up there in June with a woman, as he had intended, to place himself voluntarily in the power. The first evening a gull flew over him, standing outside the door, toward the sea. He felt a vague obligation to feel something, but that wasn't it at all. Then she called him to eat. They came out through the door in the morning and in the peat-stained shallows saw the male trout in refracted sunbeams passing across the spawn. Small blue and yellow flowers made their annual candidness among the couch and ling. All over the moor larks and chats popped circling each other into the air and dropped again. The turf was fertile of insects that buzzed and connected, and two foxes, disturbed, made a long undulating broken line as they streaked away together minute after minute tirelessly towards the sill of the moor. Suddenly all these movements and sounds connected into a rhythm, a pushing and pulling, a symphony, a triumph, a paean of copulation between moor and sky. They gripped and tore at each other like wrestlers, strength seeming to flow into them from terminals in air and ground, their four eyes blank and bleak with the impersonality of the encounter. Growing huge as the mountain they were jerked and shaken helplessly by the discharge. Then a cloud passed in front of the sun and the earth was mean and dank six inches in front of his eyes. Raising his head, hearing no midge or plover, he saw that the mountain was no longer tawny. The shallows were cold and brown and empty of fish. Grey-black screes rose into level woof, and behind, over his heels, the shadow was hastening on towards the sea. He drew back and got up. Someone was gone. After an unappetising meal of tinned food and tea made with condensed milk they went back down the dale hardly speaking until they reached the road. It all seemed quite gratuitous and ridiculous and he never went back again.

So they splashed rickingly in their rubber-shod climbing boots through the beck's shallows near the sill of the lake, and as the sun refracted in the brown and silver startings he felt the waste of the moment. Their feet were drawn after his on to the swiftly selected stepping stones where he affected craft, so instead he affected manly carelessness and heard them splashing through the water behind.

It would have been good for a sardonic smile if he had not been conscious that his movement forward was also dictated by their grouped intention. Some of the immensity was drawn regularly and unhurriedly into his lungs and expelled again, and he hoped it might leave a residue of some kind, the best he could hope for now. Why should they expect anything of him, sure foot and subtle finger limpetting the crimps of rock, success certainly and certainty as of success—all undefined and accepted unchangingly? They want you like the rock, unchanging, unmodified. Lifting and shortening of step on firmer ground as protracting the foot of the mountain; behind, the blue band of sea broadening as height was trodden down. The trained reflex kept adjusting itself to the changing ground, messages flashing up and down, muscles coiling up the broadening trunk and down the arms. No bloody head at all, dog-like grinning and panting and worrying in hunt on mountain or in kennel-pub, any time when the bitch isn't on heat. Cloud across sun, no vibrations left unless of chords so long and slow and minor a lifetime was too short to catch anything but a minim or two. Souls a millimetre at most allow no scope for change in a scale like that. Where does all that drumming and power of sun's vibration go, why does nothing get left behind? Except now and then a gloomy, temporary, unsuitable, and eventually meaningless geometry, breeding boxes and dying circles? But the warmth and the copulation, everything which counted, which actually built and felt, changed, chilled, scattered, ruined. Now plodding high bare scree among last reaches of heather and grass, you feel their unperceptive will tongue-lolling and sliding doggily behind you as you make into the cloud—what the hell do they expect, anyway? A sign? As if they hadn't been ignorant of enough already in the sunlit hour you all set out. Tablets of the law? Well, but you can get lost in the cloud and bring the tablets down into the wrong valley. Lots have, and it might not be the right language.

Over a narrow col between weird shapes of rock on a high shoulder of the mountain into the face in the wind, winding under dripping glimpses of meaningless layers of uncoloured eroded vertical dispiriting igneous nonsense. And after all that the buggers still trust you, sodden and chilled just like them, to do something they can talk about next year. Next year doesn't even exist, hasn't even the reason of a perception. So he saw, looking up, roughnesses where his fingers had curled their puny strength and drawn his

body up against gravity, the old dooming enemy, in another year, with a man that no longer existed, of whose erstwhile existence he was witness but not proof. Can you call a thing like that reality? The recurrence of inanimate phenomena wherever you left them last year, the stupid unchangingness of these perceived or unperceived buttresses and flakes that can bash the mercury out of the living, suddenly infuriated him until a rock rattled down the ghyll above and to the right, setting two scales together. Why then submit to the meanings of those jogging grey jellies in the skulls behind, stretched on an abacus thread of consciousness without the wit of the present? There was pride in rejecting as well as in choosing as he minced as climbers do mince up the earth and scree to the high neck connecting the mountain to the next one and without stopping to speak long-legged it down the far side towards the valley again, circuiting the mountain, sensing the surprise behind. But the rock changes and the element against it changes and all that vibration had changed length now and there were no memories in the crags and no future, only the genuine currency of the streaming water in the bays of the rock face, hidden one from the other with nothing to perceive the sound of falling. He ran towards perpetuation, conceiving a potentiality of perception of the clef of another summer. On taut threads fingers strike and intervals of chord or discord fade out equally among gorse and rocks as the threads slacken.

G.J.S.

WINTER CLIMBING IN WALES

B. INGLE

IN WINTER THE most obvious feature in the Pass is the frozen waterfall of Craig y Rhaeadr. This winter it invited attempts to climb it week-end after week-end, until one almost expected the Scots to rush down from Glasgow and attack it, while all the Welsh devotees turned a blind eye by going to Tremadoc until it melted. Most people will argue that 1963 was exceptional in affording opportunity to do it, but in fact, according to one well-known authority on Welsh climbing, most of the routes mentioned in this article are all in condition for at least a couple of weekends each winter. This is because they are primarily water ice and only need a good hard frost to get them into condition.

Martin Boysen and I decided to do some training for the "big waterfall" and went to climb Western Gully on Black Ladders. I had done it the year before and it again confirmed my belief that this fine gully does not give good winter climbing. On both occasions it has been a case of clearing powder snow and climbing icy rocks. It would need an exceptionally wet winter to give similar conditions to those that Brown had in 1948.

After the snow swim we decided to stick to the water courses, and after a preliminary look at Rhaeadr we decided it might not be so bad after all. The first pitch was a vertical ice groove followed by a pleasant 45° snow ramp to the top of the pedestal. Martin brought me up on a poor axe belay and I decided that we ought to have a better belay for the next hard-looking pitch. After five minutes tapping and twisting an ice-screw we had a nicely drilled $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch diameter hole and no belay. Martin solved the problem by producing an enormous channel peg which he smashed into the hole. It took him 10 minutes to cut it out later on! The pitch consisted of a steep ice groove, up the left-hand of the two icicles which stretch the full height of the cliff. Fortunately the groove is close to the rock, so we got two good peg runners, but the step-cutting was still very awkward. The next pitch was a long traverse across the middle of the right-hand icicle (this





is the same place as the summer traverse), where the vertical sweep of ice was broken by a narrow 45° ramp. This is a tremendous pitch with little protection except for icicle runners. The finish lies up the snow-covered rocks on the right. We found these rather easy, but the powder snow consolidated so that Paul Nunn and Pete Crew had a bit of a fight on their ascent a few weeks later, and they found it the hardest section of the climb.

The following day we decided on something a bit nearer the road so we went to Central Gully on the Grochan, which had a fair amount of ice in it. This proved to be harder than Rhaeadr for a couple of moves and Martin looked distinctly worried when I climbed onto the large and unstable umbrella of ice above his head on the second pitch.

The weather deteriorated for a couple of weeks, during which we amused ourselves by establishing records in the abnormal snow conditions, such as jumping off the top of the Unconquerables on Stanage or kicking steps up Rusty Wall, or where Rusty Wall used to be.

Another anticyclone set in, so we were back in Wales again and intent on the Black Cleft along with Nunn and Crew. We walked up to Cloggy together expecting everything to be plastered. In fact we were disappointed at the amount of snow and ice, though a fair amount of ice had built up on the Cleft. We all soloed up the preliminary ice pitch on the Middle Rock and studied the cleft with awe. The ice started as a 30-foot wide boss which tapered up for 150 feet to disappear at the overhang; the rest was covered in powder snow. Crew and Nunn decided that they weren't bothered anyway and ploughed up the Eastern Terrace to look at Rhaeadr.

Martin avoided the first bit by a rock groove on the right and then settled himself on a good ledge. I set off on the ice, which was extremely steep and with a bulge 30 feet up. The climbing was extremely awkward and strenuous because of the lean of the blank right wall. After 3½ hours I was only 50 feet up but with the overhang and four ice pegs beneath me (compared to 4 hours for the whole of Craig y Rhaeadr). By this time I was more shattered than after 3 days on the Dru, so we roped off, since it was getting late anyway.

Next day we were late getting up again and didn't start on the route till 12 o'clock. We decided that Martin had better finish the ice pitch since he would have more chance of holding me if I fell off the rock pitch (he is 13 stone, I am 9 stone!). This time we cut steps up the first ice pitch to avoid the difficult rock groove. I settled myself clear

of the falling ice chips and studied the ice blocks which rattled down on the Boulder as evidence of the sun on the slopes above.

After 3 hours Martin had finished the pitch but it was too late for anything else, so we roped off again wishing we were hard Italians, who would no doubt have pressed on, and bivouacked.

On the third day we took the bivvy sack, determined to finish it off somehow. We also got up early and were on the route at 9 o'clock. The first pitches were now easy, with all the steps in place, and the ice pegs had frozen in well. Martin cowered in the back of the groove while I swarmed over him and sat in a sling under the overhang to take my crampons off.

It was impossible to climb with gloves, and after what seemed an age of intensely cold hands and desperate searching for peg cracks I crawled into the niche below the overhang which is common to the Boulder and the Cleft. Martin came up quickly, sure that he was to get piles from sitting on ice so long, and soon disposed of the last overhang. We raced up the snow-covered slabs above to the top, to be met by a brilliant sun and a howling gale. Although we had taken 3 days to get here, we had only had 11 hours' climbing time, so presumably a fit fast party could do it in one go.

Unfortunately we had to dice down the Eastern Terrace to pick up some gear, and by the time we were crossing the frozen lake the sun was setting and the gale howling. We looked back once more at the Far East, where a snow plume was streaming over the Mostest and covering the rocks in "icing sugar". We shuddered at the thought of being up there and pressed on over the ridge to the Pass.

ALASKA '62

BARRIE M. BIVEN

I DEVOTE the first paragraph of this article to excuses. I have no literary talent, as the reader will soon discover; he will probably question the sanity of the undermentioned party and accuse the whole expedition of being ill-equipped, poorly financed and amateur. On this assumption I direct the whole of my defence with the admission that this was so, but that we (that is, Tony Smythe and I) enjoyed it; and what better reason to travel and climb than that? Almost every day as we journeyed across Canada something exciting or amusing took place, whether it was being chased over the state border by the police for shooting out-of-season duck or being fooled on a bear hunt by a constipated rabbit; these and many more incidents I shall remember for many years.

Last spring I was busy making arrangements to travel alone to Canada for a holiday when I read that Mike Banks was leading a British Services expedition to Alaska. This forgotten chunk of America has always fascinated me, so I immediately wrote to Mike pleading for a chance to act Sherpa. Unfortunately this was not possible for reservist Biven. B., on a Treasury-sponsored, regular services expedition. However, included in the reply was the name of Tony Smythe, who had written an identical letter to mine, and we soon arranged a meeting; but we managed to spend only twelve hours discussing the trip before sailing. Meetings were difficult, usually in a railway station halfway between our places of work, but we did determine that we had little money and that if we were to reach Alaska at all we would have to forget it while we were still on this side of the Atlantic.

We had very little, in fact only 300 dollars each! With our Atlantic fare paid and sailing date fixed for April 10 we packed with some slight apprehension, hoping that work would be available in Canada prior to the beginning of the climbing season.

After six days of party-going aboard the liner "Saxonia" I arrived in Ottawa slightly merry, and found waiting to greet me at the station my hardworking companion, who had sailed out earlier to arrange accommodation with an old R.A.F. buddy. Feeling some-

what guilty I installed myself in an automatic car wash, drying off the wet backsides of Spyders and crumbling Cadillacs. Meanwhile Tony was busily signing papers for the purchase of a '51 Chevrolet for 170 dollars. It proved to be a good buy, for it faithfully carried us and our four cwt. of gear over 5,000 miles across Canada and over the rugged Alaska Highway. At last we were nearly organised; we bought bulk quantities of food, a rifle and shotgun, and a 10-gallon drum of oil. To cover all breakdowns we equipped ourselves with Chevrolet spare parts from the local car lot—during the night.

The following morning we confidently drove out of Ottawa, and in the days that followed we nursed our "Chevvy" through a wide variety of road conditions—sand and gravel highways, mountain roads covered with ice and super sunny six-lane expressways. Our mechanical troubles were small, a broken fan belt and rear spring, a blocked carburettor and a coil that refused to do what it is supposed to do, all replaced from our Ottawa treasure-chest of spares.

After four weeks of camping and driving we arrived in the Yukon, practically bankrupt. By shooting our supper and cutting down on alcohol we had managed to travel fairly cheaply, but petrol, although cheaper than in England, remained the most expensive single item. The problem of earning dollars once more became essential, and after many days of searching for work we heard that a number of men were required as labourers at a silver mine. That evening, in one of his usual drunken stupors, Tony accepted the offer of a beaver-hunting trip with a couple of fearsome-looking Red Indians.

I didn't like the sound of this at all, and with hurried farewells I leapt into the car and headed for the mine. This was situated on the northern tip of a very rough road which leads off the Alaska Highway into dense bush and forest. I made the 150-mile journey knowing that there was only enough petrol for one way and that should there not be work available I would be virtually stranded. However the "bossman" was sympathetic to my hard-luck story and I was engaged as a bulldozer driver. In a few days Tony arrived, to be employed as a miner's assistant. We spent the next six weeks learning how to blast silver ore, drive tractors and build forest roads. Our fishing attempts in Canada were all dismal failures; to ensure that this did not happen again Tony acquired a few sticks of dynamite from the store, which he carefully stored beneath the back

seat of the car. My heart missed many a beat as we drove over the rough potholed roads in the camp.

On the first of July, with 350 dollars each in our pockets, we left the mine and headed for Dawson City, scene of the famous 1898 gold rush. This was to be our only camp site on the 600-mile journey from the mine to Anchorage, largest city in Alaska. We chose Dawson because of last year's festival and of the première of the new Broadway musical "Foxy", which we did see. After this refreshing evening of sophistication I was rather shaken by the gaudiness, glare and vulgarity of Anchorage, so typical of the smaller American town. We departed hurriedly and by two o'clock the following afternoon the 100-mile journey to the Mckinley airfield was behind us. We discussed our plans with Don Sheldon, the most famous of all Alaskan bush pilots, but before I was aware of what was happening Tony and Don had loaded the gear on the plane and were racing down the runway for the take-off, with Tony demonstrating his undying support of Sir Winston Churchill.

I settled down under a tree for a snooze, hoping to catch up on lost sleep, but within two and a half hours Don had made the 120-mile round trip and was eager to fly me into the range before the evening cloud clamped down.

After 15 years of mountaineering the hard way, I was delighted to be flown straight into the mountains within the hour, even if it did cost 80 dollars! I expected to see only one figure on the glacier, but there were seven. Climbing out of the plane I was greeted by six American mountaineers who were due to be flown out that evening. It was now obvious that Don considered the weather good enough to fly all evening, and with our base camp in the landing zone it would be impossible to sleep.

We decided to set off right away and cross the glacier during the night. With easy going underfoot we could possibly make the four miles to the base of the mountain we were to attempt. The Americans were very helpful and gave us some interesting news regarding the two peaks we wanted to climb, coupled with an invitation to stay with them at their homes in New York on our return.

Both Mt. Dan Beard and the Mooses Tooth had previously been attempted; on the latter an American expedition failed two years ago. This was to be our first objective. The Mooses Tooth has two peaks; the west peak rises 9,780 feet above sea level, and the east peak, which is the true summit, stands at 10,335 feet.

For four days we battled with some of the worst snow and ice conditions either of us had ever seen. The ice fall was a nightmare in itself, ice gone wild, with crevasses so large that Nelson's Monument would have no trouble in standing upright on the bottom without being seen. At one stage we climbed a 300-foot ice gully which had been swept by an avalanche hours before, thus relieving us of the fear that we might be caught while still in the gully.

On the morning of the fourth day we stood on the West summit knowing that we had been pushing our luck, but we felt that the East summit was now within our grasp. We were soon to be sadly disillusioned; the ridge connecting the two peaks looked impossible. In present-day mountaineering there is no such word, but to have forced on in those conditions we would have been taking unjustifiable risks. The snow cornices, besides being wet and loose, broke away every few minutes, falling freely for 2,000 feet before crashing onto the steep ice slopes below. With success so near at hand it was a hard decision to turn back but a decision we knew we had to take. We sat the day out on the West summit, tired and cold. The evening freeze would make our return journey safer, we reasoned, and freeze it did as we swiftly retraced our steps, reaching the main glacier by the following midday. After four cold bivouacs our tent transformed magically into a centrally heated Bedouin's camp surrounded by a thousand miles of hot shimmering sand.

We spent a useful couple of days at base sorting gear and drying clothes, during which time we had a surprise visit from Don, checking to see if his customers were safe.

Our plans had already been made the night before, so we were able to go about our duties the next morning without arousing the bitterness and impatience which often hits base-bound climbers. With a breakfast of porridge, glucose and tea lining our stomachs we were prepared for the 10-mile uphill glacier walk to the base of Mt. Dan Beard. The walk was not uneventful, as the sun was very hot and the snow melted rapidly; four or five of the snowbridges spanning the larger crevasses gave way under the leader. Not being able to forget the heat we were prepared for this and the second man always managed to hold the leader immediately his legs disappeared from view.

We made our camp on the site of the Americans' old base, which they had thoughtfully marked with a large bamboo pole flown in for that purpose. While levelling the snow for our tent we discovered a





cache of food, unwanted surplus after completion of their climb. As often happens the food turned out to be a lifesaver; the following three days we were stormbound and were unable to move from our tents.

There is little one can do in situations like this except read; foolishly I had forgotten to bring my ". . . third Reich" and spent most of my conscious hours reading recipes on the sides of food packets, or discussing with Tony the merits or failures of our respective girl friends, always a good topic. On the morning of the fourth day the storm had abated. We hurriedly dressed, not daring to show our true delight lest the wind and snow should return. The sky was clear and the sun pleasantly warm as we discussed our needs for the next few days.

We left camp at midday, hoping to time our arrival at the base of the Icefall for early evening, enabling us to climb what appeared to be the most dangerous section in frozen conditions during the night. Alternately hacking and chopping our route through the icefall we made good progress. Our way to Dan Beard was blocked by two smaller unclimbed peaks. These presented no difficulty at all and by mid-evening we were racing along the saddle between unnamed peak II and Dan Beard. We rested briefly beneath a small ice wall, the beauty and solitude broken only by a few small avalanches which shovelled themselves down Tony's neck with monotonous regularity. We were urged to continue the attack by an ominous cloud which drifted across the orange glow of sun, and packing our brew kit hurriedly we affectionately cursed the hypnotic effect of the Alaskan sun. Back in reality we gaily swung our axes, instinctively aware that the peak was ours.

On the route to the final ridge our way was blocked by a massive impossible-looking buttress. Closer inspection showed a right-hand traverse formed by a crack in the ice. Neither Tony nor myself liked this section; at times when cutting steps our axes hit rock under the thin film of ice. We wondered just how many square yards of ice were actually in contact with the steep rock.

Once on the final ridge the angle eased off, and it was just a case of clenching teeth against the cold and plodding the last few hundred feet to the summit. Not a difficult mountain as a whole—some fine sections and some most uninteresting—but quite worthy enough to give us both a feeling of satisfaction and elation, emotions one would expect from any first ascent.

Ten minutes of photography and a short rest, then we turned back for the not too difficult descent. The round trip of eight miles and 7,000 feet of ascent and descent was completed in 18 hours.

With the climbing over it seemed a good idea to walk out and save the 80-dollar airfare. We reasoned that weight would be no problem, as we would need no more than four days' food for the 60-mile trip. Our plan to walk the 30 miles of glacier and bush and raft the remaining 30 miles of river seemed unorthodox but exciting. The glacier proved to be a tough nut to crack; again enormous crevasses slowed our progress. At one stage in our efforts to find a way through we covered only 100 yards in four hours. Four days elapsed before we were clear of the mountains, none shorter than 12 working hours. By this time our food supplies were fairly low but we knew that once we reached the rivers it would be only a matter of hours on board the raft to the airstrip.

The rivers in this area are glacial and therefore extremely cold, but the main problem is the swift current which races along at 15 to 20 knots. The raft was constructed in 10 hours, using 250 feet of nylon climbing rope and light Pine and Alder logs, all 16 feet long. After working in the pouring rain all day the intrepid sailors took to the river; the raft lasted only five minutes after we had been pounded against rocks and driftwood by the sheer force and volume of water. We were soon completely out of control, unable to steer without poles, and sprawled flat on our bellies goggle-eyed with amazement as we were sucked into the jaws of a huge rock monster.

We were eventually pitched into the icy water, just managing to reach the bank with half our gear. In the space of a few seconds we lost: ice axe, crampons, air beds, hand axe, ice pegs, foam rubber sheets, overboots and one rucksack. As we were cold and wet through and somewhat shaken it was now imperative that we reach the airstrip. Our polythene sheet for sleeping had also been claimed, and with heavy rain still falling it was obvious we could not hang about.

To reach the airstrip we had to cross the river, but it was too fast and wide to wade or swim. The only solution was another raft; this we built with bootlaces, bits of string and strips of cloth. The logs we cut with our remaining ice axe. In water that seemed a little smoother we launched the crude vessel, feeling strangely happier with this effort than the first. All went well until it smacked into some driftwood. Besides getting completely soaked again we found ourselves stranded on a sandbar surrounded by water boiling along at

15 knots. We felt it would be suicide to swim the 400 yards to the near bank in the fast current and near freezing water.

The dilemma was either to stay in hopes of being spotted from the air or to attempt the swim. After four days without food, during which time we had managed to keep a fire going with driftwood and lit with our remaining waterproof matches, it was decided to swim before we were too weak.

Feeling rather depressed, knowing that what we were about to attempt would probably end in our bodies being fished out of the river, we settled down for the night. Suddenly we heard the sound of a small plane; we both jumped to our feet and, while Tony waved frantically, I piled wood on the fire until it was blazing furiously. Our efforts were not in vain; a message was dropped from the circling aircraft which read: "Float plane on its way." The pilot, sizing up the situation, had radioed for Don Sheldon and within the hour we were clambering aboard the Cessna to Don's comment: "What the hell have you boys been up to?"

Back in Talkeetna we ate a meal in quantities rarely witnessed, but we were oblivious to all stares, just happy to be alive.

In the morning came the train journey to Anchorage, and hurried efforts to sell the car and escape to the summer sunshine in the States. A friendly truck driver agreed to give us a lift to Seattle 2,500 miles away, and we were on our way to an illegal entry into the U.S.A.

N.B. The climbing area mentioned in this article is shown in Bradford Washburn's map at the back of the 1961/2 *Mountain World*.

A LONGING FOR WALES

S. GONZALES

HE WAS SICK of walking up to Cloggy so I reckoned it was time to tell him about this new line I had seen on Dove Crag in the Lakes. He was derogatory as usual, but I pointed out that we might escape the Whitsun crowds, so he consented to go.

Now whenever I see a line I get really nervous and jittery in case someone else should swipe it and so we expected Oliver and Brown, L or Ross to come rushing round in the night to steal a march. Even though they didn't come we got up early just in case they crept over from Dunmail.

Flogging up to the crag he kept moaning about the b — y long walks up to Lake District crags, even though this one was only half as far as Cloggy. And then we were there and he was impressed ("nearly as good as the East") and I was even more impressed because I would get the first pitch since it was my idea. Anyway there was no one else around so I talked him into doing this Dove-dale Grooves route which hadn't been repeated for 10 years.

So we went over to the climb but the idiot fell off straight away trying to shift a loose block. I swear he's only the clumsiest bloke in all the world. Not to be defeated and determined not to let me have a go he leapt up again and pushed the block off and some more lurching and swearing and he crept into this hole under the overhanging chimney and tied onto some cranky chocks. And I tried to look nonchalant on the hard bit, because I never admit that anything he does is hard and vice-versa, but this was hard so I said "good un, youth" and left it at that.

So I grabbed his spare slings and climbed over him and stood on his head. And he started moaning so I said the block above his head was loose to make him moan more. Then I rushed up and grabbed the block and there was this big thrutch and a long step onto a slab on the left. But one of the ropes got jammed so I had to untie it and I was dead chuffed because it's always him that messes the rope up and leaves me in desperates. And he came up the chimney with the rope pulling him off but he didn't fall off so I was dead sick. There was a lot of spare rock above for a direct finish but we

reckoned we would just make a dinner-time pint so we leapt past this raven's nest and rushed off down the valley.

But we couldn't get in for the tourists so we went back to camp and he moaned about drunkard tourists and threatened to smash the loudspeaker which blared out music all day for the spartan campers in their Richard-III-type tents across the river. We could even hear the b — y thing on the crag.

Next morning we got up later but burnt up to the crag in record time determined to smash this new route into the deck. It was my idea so I got first go. A crafty thread and a queer mantelshef led to the first hard bit. He said traverse right, so I went straight up and nearly fell off and as usual he was right but he got gripped following so that made us even. The stance was a sloping grass ledge that was sliding off, especially with him on as well so I sent him up this steep wall and he lurched round the corner and muttered something sick. But he was at the stance in no time so I let him off, seeing as he hadn't used a peg either. The next bit started off two loose blocks which he kicked off later saying "that'll sort 'em out" and they hit the deck like an H bomb and shifted a tree and half a ton of grass and scared the wits out of these two birds who had come up to watch us. I got lost on the bit after and he was jeering so I leapt up this green groove that was hard and unprotected and I was really chuffed when he had a tight rope. Evens again.

The wall above was full of overhanging grooves but he couldn't do any of them so he traversed right and descended to a stance about 5 feet above me and several feet out and passed the buck. But the overhang was easy for me but I got gripped on this queer slab that would be even harder in normal damp conditions. We looked down the top bit of Extol and I persuaded him to save it for tomorrow and we got down dead on opening time. We decided to call it Hiraeth because we were longing to get back home again to Wales.

Black clouds were rolling over on Monday but we reckoned we might do Extol before it started raining so we rushed up even faster than ever. The first pitch was a rotten narrow chimney that he couldn't get into so I had to give him a tight rope again. But he got his finger out on the big pitch and was up in under an hour which seemed good going considering its reputation (see CCJ 1961). The last overhang was a bit dicy and he kept the ropes slack to get his own back for Dovedale Grooves. If I had come off I would have

ended up in Ullswater but I didn't and we were dead chuffed and got back to camp with the black clouds chasing us hard.

It rained so we went to Keswick and they were all dead sick because we had swiped their routes but they bought us some beer and we bought plenty more for a party. But the clumsy fool dropped the case in Lake Road and broke half the bottles. Still, the empties made good missiles to throw at the tents in the next field.

THE NORTH FACE OF THE CIVETTA

TREVOR JONES

TEMPUS FUGIT. Only three months were left before marriage, the end of all things according to most of my climbing friends. The sky was blue and clear for many weeks during July and August 1962, and the massed ranks of young British climbers swarmed happily up and down the vertical Eastern Alps and then braked uncertainly as they moved west to the snow and ice mountains. I too had acquired a liking for the Dolomites and their good weather after many seasons of waiting in the Nationale and other bistros of Chamonix.

Jim Swallow and I warmed up on the pleasant serrated South Ridge of the Salbitschijen and then went hot-foot to the Cassin classic—the North-East Face of the Piz Badile. We had a pleasant surprise, for we were able to stand in balance on nice big ledges and the angle of the rock was surprisingly gentle. We did it in ten sunny hours and only two of the pitches were above Severe standard. The route is beautifully sculptured and its firmness is beyond doubt. Incidentally the jam omelettes at the Sciora hut are first-class.

Then, like J. H. Doughty, we went “to fairyland”—to the Dolomites and to the massive Civetta group, which has a little snow and ice to make its peaks seem like proper mountains. The southern end of the range rears up into two Eiffel-Tower-like monoliths, Torre Val Grande and Torre Venezia, with the tree-shaded Vazzoler hut nestling at their foot.

Next morning I gave the alarm a sleepy uppercut when it rang at 3.30. At 4 o'clock we stumbled out into the starry blackness and heavily dew-coated grass. After two hours we saw the chilly black-streaked face of the Civetta.

The North Face of the Civetta is 3,300 metres long and was climbed as long ago as 1925 by the Dolomite guide Solleder. Have you read Gervasutti's book of reminiscences? Do you remember the photograph of the Civetta?—it shows the first difficult pitch about two hundred feet above the névé.

Sestograde (but inferior of that grade). A sandy twenty-foot pillar

abuts uncertainly on to the enormous overhanging right wall. A horizontal crack led from the top of it away left until it reared up abruptly into difficulty, pitons, overhangs and black dampness. I pawed at the pillar pulling away sand and stones, so Jim took over in a determined manner, heaved himself into the crack and clipped into the pegs at the foot of the overhang.

Meanwhile I had been idly kicking stones off the ledge and waited during those terrible Dolomite pauses for them to hit something. I took over and then started the usual staccato self-cursing at my stupidity in artificial climbing. Clipping-in the wrong ropes, de-clipping, cutting my hands (must get some alloy karabiners some time), karabiner gates that wouldn't open and those that wouldn't shut. Now vertical cracks nestling in the corner of the overhanging, wet right-hand wall, which soon soaked anorak, jersey, shirt, vest and then ugh! skin as well.

The first quarter of the climb was honest gully climbing: chockstone after chockstone, and occasionally, when the pitches became difficult, an iron flower sprouted from a convenient crack.

After another combined, grunting effort on the next pitch of VI there was a wonderful scree-covered ledge traverse to the foot of the Cristallo, a kind of poor man's White Spider, Dolomite version. So at 2 p.m. we sat down for our first rest in the mushy afternoon snow. Still not half-way up the climb.

Above the snow patch the colour of the rock changed to a soft yellow, slashed with redder veins of more porous material. As we munched our chocolate we looked at the final pitch of VI, which reminded me of the first pitch of Brant in construction, and, curiously, it was surprisingly similar when we tried it. A niche and then a pull-out to a wobbly wall where the rock creaked in a tired manner and our breathing became restrained. But after climbing round a bulging pillar a deep strenuous crack went up into the sunshine and at the top we were thirsty again.

After many rope-lengths of easier climbing, during which cannonades of stones hummed by and filled the air with sulphurous smells, I traversed round a narrow ledge into an enormous gully and on across to a narrow chockstone. Water tumbled down on to the chockstone, and as both walls looked unclimbable the water-course was the only way. A continental climbing poet was drowned in the Solleder summit gully during a terrible thunderstorm and I had a suspicion that this was the place. Feeling like Captain Bligh

I stepped into the waterfall and started back up the shallow chimney as the foaming icy water inflated my shirt and trousers and quaintly gushed out of the fly-holes.

At the top of the pitch the first few lights blinked on in Alleghe. It was 7 p.m. and we still had thirteen hundred feet to go. The sky became darker and the climb looser. At one point I led out about one hundred feet of rope on to a scree-covered ledge and stepped from it onto a fluted rib. It looked a bit loose but we were in a hurry. With a crack it snapped off and the cliff somersaulted out of vision; I hit the ledge and skidded to a stop with my head hanging over the edge. I could see the rope flapping slightly in the breeze as it went down out of sight towards Jim. There wasn't any flash-back of my former life; just that terribly surprised feeling that it's actually happened to me. My hands were bleeding badly so I put my gloves on, and when Jim arrived on the ledge I didn't tell him about my near-nasty fall.

Still more pitches, and then we did the last wall in complete darkness like blind men, feeling for the holds, and at 9 p.m. we popped out onto the summit ridge. We cursed each other for a few minutes over something quite trifling and stumbled down the scree slope of big boulders to the deserted Torrani hut. There were no blankets, but ten minutes later we were fast asleep on wet mattresses. An eighteen-hour day and a good one too!

THE COPPER MINES OF SNOWDON

JOHN AND RUTH NEILL

EDITOR'S NOTE: My wife has again done most of the work in the preparation of this article. It concerns the mines in the central part of the Snowdon district. Little has been published as a connected account of these mines in the past, but our researches have shown that a good deal of information can be unearthed. The present article records what we have found so far, though there is little doubt that much more can yet be uncovered.

One side-thought concerns the name "Pig Track", as it appears on one of the diagrams illustrating the article. This name has long been the subject of controversy, some spelling it "Pyg Track" (as on the Ordnance Survey) meaning the track to Y Wyddfa from Pen-y-Gwryd, while others render it "Pig Track" (as in the recent official guide to the Snowdonia National Park), saying that the name is derived from Bwlch-y-Moch, where the track crosses the ridge between the Grey Cliffs and Crib Goch.

The present P . . . T . . . was created in the 1880s, as a more direct route to Y Wyddfa from Pen-y-Gwryd via Pen-y-Pass than the two existing routes, the mines road and the pony track, by habitués of Pen-y-Gwryd of whom a leading light was Halliday (the "Tom" of Pont Tom — see diagram). But only the section between Pen-y-Pass and Bwlch-y-Moch was new, as the part beyond Bwlch-y-Moch utilised the old pony track (probably first a miners' track) and on the zigzags the miners' track from Glaslyn to Bwlch Glas; the zigzags have the Welsh name Llwybr-y-Mul, i.e. mule path.

It is uncertain how old the name Bwlch-y-Moch is, and some maintain that it is a modern offspring of "Pig Track", which is therefore a corruption of "Pyg Track". But Dr. Elfyn Hughes has pointed out to me the relics of transhumance to the east and north of the lower end of Llyn Llydaw; the site of a hafod, in the midst of relatively rich pasture, is marked on the diagram in this article, while there are remains of an old wall near Bwlch-y-Moch which may have been intended to prevent livestock straying onto more dangerous ground further west. So Bwlch-y-Moch may well be an old name, and be derived from pigs kept by the dwellers in the hafod, the bwlch representing the furthest limits of the wanderings of these beasts.

I thus propose the hypothesis (which does not seem to have been suggested before) that both "Pyg Track" and "Pig Track" are correct; that when the habitués of Pen-y-Gwryd coined the name they intended it to refer both to the quickest route from Pen-y-Gwryd to Snowdon and to the route over Bwlch-y-Moch. This innocuous double-entendre was just the sort of rather feeble pun in which the later Victorians delighted.

MOST OF THE COPPER MINES of the Snowdon area were associated with small veins of low-grade ore and the workings, with the exception of those at Drws-y-Coed and Llanberis, had no great success. As with many other mining ventures in this country and elsewhere a great deal of money was lost through speculation in optimistic companies, particularly during the nineteenth century.

Although the copper mines of Caernarvonshire had all ceased to work by the Second World War their traces are still evident in ruined buildings and yellow spoil heaps. Many of the paths which the present-day walker and climber use were originally made by the miners, such as that over the Glyders from Pen-y-Gwryd to the Holyhead road. The path which climbers take to reach Clogwyn-du'r-Arddu, branching off the Llanberis route up Snowdon above the Halfway House, was the way to the Clogwyn Coch mine: a constructed path, built up where soil slip was likely to occur and contoured so as to provide the easiest way for man or pony. The men working at the mines were incredibly tough by modern standards, walking great distances from their lodgings in all weather, winter and summer, often carrying sacks of dressed ore on their backs to the nearest road. Some mines in remote cwms provided barracks for the workers, who were then able to go home for weekends and holidays.

The ordinary miners and labourers employed by the various companies were usually local men, while the captains and managers seem mostly to have been Cornish, and therefore of great experience. And Captain Thomas Julian, who had been manager of Great Wheal Vor and Sithney Wheal Metal in Cornwall, was called in to confirm the opinions of the directors of the Great Snowdon Mountain Copper Mine in 1872 about the future prospects of their enterprise.

Tradition has it (as with most metalliferous mining districts in this country) that the Romans mined copper on Snowdon. No evidence has been found to substantiate this claim, although the Romans did have mines on the Orme's Head and at Parys Mountain in Anglesey. The Anglesey mine was considered so important, according to Professor Richmond, that the Roman garrison at Segontium was maintained to protect it for some years after that at Chester had been withdrawn. The copper of Anglesey was then neglected after the final Roman withdrawal and forgotten until the eighteenth century.

The mines in the Nantlle valley were being worked during the thirteenth century and Edward I is said to have visited them. The Tudor Company of Mines Royal was not interested in Welsh copper,

and concentrated on the silver and lead deposits in Cardiganshire which during the Civil War provided silver for the Royal Mint at Aberystwyth. Only in the mid-eighteenth century did a new demand for copper arise, especially when the metal began to be used for covering the bottoms of warships to prevent worms boring into the wood.

A group of Cornish adventurers was working at Drws-y-Coed in 1761, and a Macclesfield company, Messrs. Roe, taking a lease of Penrhyn Du in Llein, were required by the landowner, Sir Nicholas Bayley, to prospect also on Parys Mountain. In 1768, after some years of fruitless exploration, the company made the strike of what proved to be the richest copper mine in the world for the next thirty years. The Macclesfield company had several other mineral interests on the mainland upon which they were obliged to concentrate when their Anglesey lease expired in 1785. One of these, known as the Llanberis Copper Mine, was at the head of Llyn Peris, on the slopes of Snowdon, and they may well have worked the Clogwyn Coch mine at this time. It was a miner from Clogwyn Coch who opened the first refreshment hut at the top of Snowdon.

The Llanberis Mine was active in 1762 and continued until some time after 1838. The vein runs from quite near the lake up the hillside for 250 feet, and it has been mined away vertically for about 100 feet, with numerous shafts, levels and open gunnises. The dressing floors are the subject of a painting by Warwick Smith, dated 1792, in the Lady Lever Art Gallery. Before the road through the Llanberis Pass was built in the early 1800s the dressed ore was taken to the foot of Llyn Padarn by boat, and taken on by road to the port at Caernarvon. Most of the Welsh ore went to Swansea for smelting, although there were furnaces built to take low-grade copper at Amlwch.

The Rev. W. Bingley, visiting the district in 1797, mentions one Margaret Evans who built and worked her own boats on the Llanberis lakes while under contract to carry ore.

The last lease taken of this mine, with all the others in the parishes of Llanberis and Betws Garmon, was that granted to E. H. Hartmont in 1889. No work seems to have been carried out there, for Hartmont was bankrupted as a result of his mining activities.

Other mines were started during the boom in copper in the Nantgwynant and Aberglaslyn areas. Two are situated in Cwm-y-Llan, Braich-yr-Oen and another near Plas Cwm Llan which may be one of the two Lliwedd mines mentioned in various books on the

district. The Lliwedd Bach mine, at the extreme head of Cwm Merch, has a good cart road leading up to it from Hafod-y-Llan. The ruins of a large office, dressing plant and cast iron water-wheel may still be seen. This mine looks as if it was still being worked early in this century.

Below Llyn Dinas there are various mineral veins around Beudy Bedd Owen, and old workings here are indicated in the prospectus of the Great Aran and Snowdon Mine, dated 1872. This company proposed to investigate the older workings 1,000 feet up on the slopes of Yr Aran, where numerous hypothetical lodes are shown on their plans. Here the miners carried the sacks of dressed ore to the road below, a mile and a half away, though a road was constructed in later days which probably took carts. The plan of this mine, like that of the company at Cwm Dyli, indicates the line of the narrow-gauge railway which was proposed at that time to run up Nantgwynant and go to Betws-y-Coed by way of Capel Curig. This was, of course, never built in the end, but it would have been advantageous to the various mines.

The workings on Moel Sygun are visible from the road. Various levels and heaps of spoil mark the courses of the respective veins, and the dressing floors near Cae'r Moch were used for the foundations of a "Chinese" building when the film unit was here in 1958. This mine was working in the sixteenth century, according to Jenkins; it was certainly active during the wars with Napoleon and later until at least 1843, as an account book for this year is preserved in the library at Bangor. The lodes seem to run straight through the mountain to outcrop in Cwm Bychan on the east side, where a small mine was working about 1720 and then later in 1872. This little valley was the scene of the last active copper mining in Caernarvonshire, when a company started in the 1920s reopened some of the old levels, building a dressing plant beside the railway track near Nanmor village and a telfer to bring the ore down from the workings. The company went bankrupt in the Hatry crash, and the equipment was sold for scrap, possibly to the late W. O. Williams of Harlech — "Will Scraps". The dismantling was never completed, for in the upper part of the cwm about 500 yards of telferage still stand, complete with cables and buckets.

In Aberglaslyn there are old levels on both sides of the river. Ore from the Bryn-y-Felin Mine was dressed beside the river at the "Hen Stamps", the wheel pit of which can still be seen. Most of the

Aberglaslyn mine has been swallowed up in the undergrowth in the grounds of Aberglaslyn Hall. The stamps for it was farther down river, and has since been converted into the stables of the Hall. The ore from here was formerly shipped direct from Pont Aberglaslyn, before the embankment was built at Portmadoc.

The mine most familiar to walkers and climbers must be that in Cwm Dyli, with its ruined crushing mill on the shore of Llyn Llydaw. This was known at various times as Cwm Dyli Mine, the Great Snowdon Mountain Copper Mine, and, more recently, as the Britannia Mine. The five main copper lodes were worked by levels all over the rocky slopes between Glaslyn and the Snowdon Gullies; these lodes were thought to join beneath the centre of Glaslyn. One silver lead lode crossed the copper lodes roughly at right angles.

The mine was working in 1810, and probably earlier. Jenkins remarks that very ancient copper smelting refuse had been discovered at Gwastad Annas about 1850, and that although some thought it to be of Roman origin it could not have come from the mine on Snowdon as this was a fairly recent discovery. In the early days of the mine there were no carriage roads nearer than Beddgelert, so the labourers carried sacks of dressed ore up the zigzag path to the summit of Snowdon, and then took it by sledge to the road between Caernarvon and Beddgelert. When the road up the Llanberis Pass was built in the early 1800s it was obviously less trouble to take the ore to Caernarvon by this route. The path which is today known as the Pig Track is in all likelihood the way which the miners built to reach Pen-y-Pass, where there was a storehouse for the dressed ore, but they almost certainly followed the line of the pony track to the south and east of Bwlch-y-Moch to avoid the more difficult ground. The level of Llyn Llydaw was lowered in 1856 in order to construct a proper cart road to the mine around the shores of the lake. The miners' barracks by Llyn Teyrn was probably built at the same time in what must have been a very damp position; and the building was soon abandoned. There was no causeway across Llydaw originally, but a raft was used to take horses and carts across. One day the raft capsized, the horse was drowned, and a valuable load of ore went to the bottom of the lake. As a result of this it was determined to build a causeway across the lake, and this was carried out for the mine company by David Jones of the Prince Llewellyn Hotel, Beddgelert.

The Great Snowdon Mountain Copper Mine Co. was active in 1872. Between 1858 and 1865 £4,297 worth of ore had been sold, and

INES ON SNOWDON

building

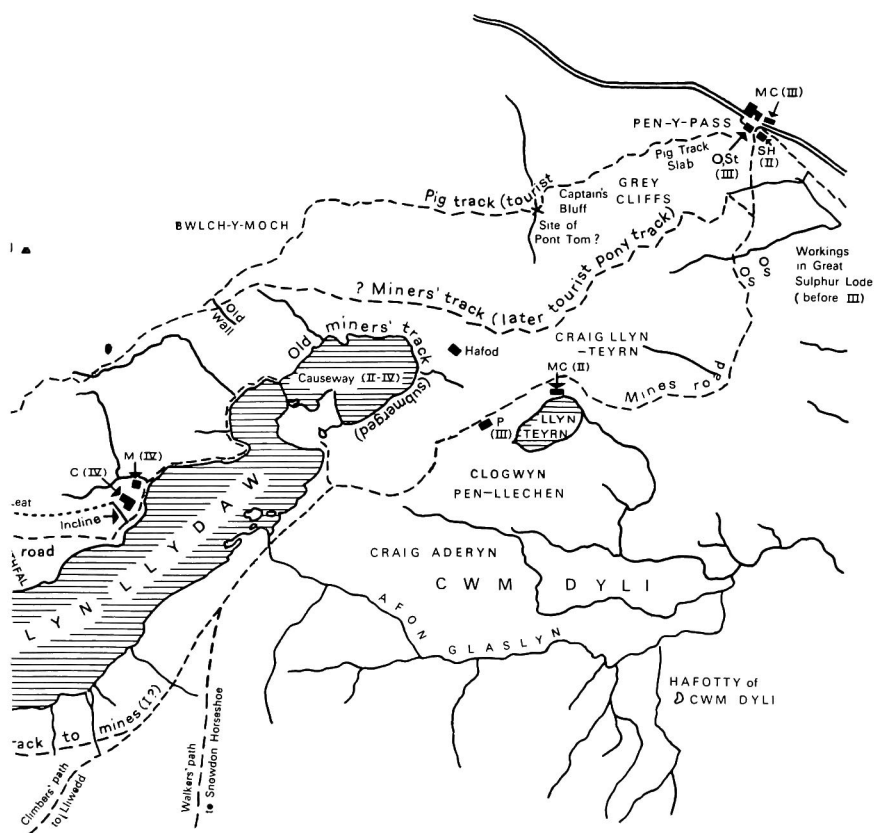
The Roman numerals indicate probable periods of use:

I = *before 1858 (e.g. ca. 1810)*

II = 1858-65

III = 1872-4

IV = 1898-1916



BASED UPON THE ORDNANCE SURVEY MAP WITH THE SANCTION OF THE CONTROLLER OF
M. STATIONERY OFFICE, CROWN COPYRIGHT RESERVED

the company thought they could do better than this. Indeed, with glowing testimonials from various mining experts, their estimated annual profits were inflated to no less than £112,548. In their prospectus of 1872 they stated: "An extraordinary discovery . . . is confidently expected at the great junction of lodes and courses in the bottom of the Green Lake." The rich ore which they expected to lie there was to be reached by the draining of Glaslyn, but a Government geologist was brought in to advise and he thought it wiser to concentrate on the lodes above the lake. The drainage scheme would obviously prove costly, and in any case the lake was an excellent source of water power for the crushing plant.

The prospectus mentions that Henry Owen of Pen-y-Gwryd was at one time in the 1860s the local agent for the mine.

The first report by the manager, Edmund Spargo, was made in April, 1874, and was not very hopeful. Before this there had been some trouble between two of the captains, and in December, 1873 the company secretary had written to one of the directors saying that he had no belief in any "large body of ore" above the lake. There had been considerable capital expenditure: the tramway to the crusher at the outlet of Glaslyn had been relaid, a new barracks was being built for 100 men beside the lake, and a new cart road built between the barracks and the crusher. Only about 13 tons of ore had been gained from underground work (about a third of the copper produced from this mine came from "halvans" — rock debris from old spoil heaps and screes). Transport difficulties had been encountered, as the company owned only two carts and for some reason were unable to hire more locally. Apparently the shareholders were concerned about the large expenses incurred by the London office of the company, and about the salary which the secretary was being paid, for in a draft scheme dated a few days later it is suggested that the costs be drastically reduced. In the same month, however, the manager was stating that he feared the company faced liquidation: "All operations at the mines are suspended and most of the workmen paid off . . . the London management has been very bad although I fear the directors have been a party to it."

Spargo's fears were shortly realised, and the company was liquidated. In 1889 a London merchant, E. H. Hartmont, took up the lease together with leases of mines on the Vaynol properties. He spent £38,000 in eight years and then went bankrupt. Another London man, George Charles Howard, tried to make the mine pay, but also

lost money before he handed over to the Britannia Copper Mine Co. in 1898.

Most of the buildings which stand today were built at about this time by these various concerns. The most obvious is the crushing mill beside Llyn Llydaw, which was worked by a waterwheel supplied by a leat running from Glaslyn. The manager's house, a substantial building, stood beside it. A telfer cableway brought the ore in buckets across Glaslyn and down to the crusher, and the road up to Glaslyn was good enough in those days for Arthur Lockwood to drive a car there.

The manager, C. Vercoe, was a Cornishman who had worked in mines all over the world, and he remained until the mine finally closed in 1916. In 1910 and 1913 assayists reported unfavourably on the ores being raised, and it must have been quite obvious that these were continuing to be of poor quality.

The North Wales Power Co.'s power station below Cwm Dyli was built about 1905, and the company constructed sluice gates at the outlet of Llydaw to raise the water level, also being obliged to raise the causeway for the mine company. A retired naval rating living at Pen-y-Pass used to act as postman for the mine, and on a night of exceptionally strong gales was apparently blown off the causeway and drowned.

In 1915 the mine company installed a quantity of new plant, but as costs rose and the copper failed to improve the Britannia Company was wound up in 1916. All the plant that could be taken away was sold for scrap, but two of the heavy crushers fell off the lorry removing them when it got stuck in a ditch, and are still there where they fell.

The buildings, road and causeway have all deteriorated owing to the heavy rainfall and frost action. The timbering in the levels is rotten and they are unsafe to enter. Part of the zigzag path used by hundreds of walkers each year passes over an old open gunnis just above Glaslyn, supported on timber of doubtful strength.

Included on the mine plan of 1872 are two other workings whose histories are unknown: two levels in "the Great Sulphur Lode" (this may mean copper pyrites) $\frac{1}{4}$ mile south of Pen-y-Pass beside the mine road, and a honestone quarry in the Gwastadnant Grits on the south-east slopes of Moel Berfedd. Buildings and a small cottage stood below the quarry, where the pill-box is now.

There were a few small mines in the Nant Ffrancon dating from

the late eighteenth century, but little is known of them. The mines of the Llanrwst lead district were active a hundred years ago, and one, the Parc Mine, which stopped production in 1958, was recently reopened for a short period for experimental work on ore treatment. An attempt was made in the 1930s to mine gold and platinum on Moel Siabod, where some of the strata do in fact bear a trace of gold, but this failed.

Documents relating to many of the various enterprises are rare, having been destroyed either accidentally or deliberately, and because in many cases records were never kept. The fragmentary evidence available can be put together to gain some idea of the nature and activity of the companies, and there is always the possibility that more may come to light.

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NEW CLIMBS AND NOTES

I. SNOWDONIA

P. CREW

1962 was one of the most productive years in Wales for a long time. As well as the unusually large number of new routes, two of the last great problems of Snowdonia were climbed: the central wall of Cloggy East Buttress and the left arête of Cenotaph Corner.

Nearly all the pre-1962 routes which had gathered reputations for extreme difficulty were repeated, some of them by several parties, notably The Mostest, Woubits, Taurus, Serth, Troach, Scorpio, Slanting Slab (two ascents in one day!), The Thing, Dwm and Agrippa on Craig yr Ysfa. Suicide Wall, which is undoubtedly one of the most difficult pitches in Wales, had two further leads. Woubits Left Hand, The Pinnacle Girdle and the Groove on Llech Ddu are the only pre-1962, major routes without a second ascent.

A note written by J. A. Austin indicates modern trends:

"The three years 1960-62 have seen the final demise of the Rock and Ice as the moving force in Welsh climbing. This is not to say that new routes of extremely high standard have ceased to flow beneath the boots of Brown and Whillans, but that the chief developments and repetitions on the barometer of Welsh climbing, Clogwyn du'r Arddu, have been the result of new groups of climbers. Competition which was virtually killed under the sway of the Rock and Ice has returned in a virulent form with some unforeseen but noticeable results. Several first ascents have been done using aid which was found to be totally unnecessary only one or two ascents later. Not only on new routes has this problem become noticeable, for competition in repeating a few of the very hard routes has led to the use of pegs, for aid and protection, on pitches which were recognised as 'clean'. Unfortunately this tendency hasn't been confined to the hard routes, which only involve the minority. Since the publication of Roscoe's guide to the Pass the harder climbs there have become much more popular, but it is with great regret that one finds routes like Sickie and Hangover mutilated with pegs. However the keenness resulting from this competition has had some good results. Climbs like the Girdle of Dinas y Gromlech and Vember have been done without pegs and aid . . ."

The exceptional winter of 1962 has resulted in much winter climbing of high quality, notably ascents of Craig y Rhoadr (Waterfall Climb) and the Black Cleft by B. Ingle and M. Boysen.

A. CARNEDDAU

CRAIG YR YSFA

Ancient's Wall. 140 feet. Very Severe.

A rock climb in the grand manner.

Start: 30 feet left of Pinnacle Wall start on Bilberry Ledge.

(1) 40 feet. Climb a small corner crack and the wall above on the left to the middle of the quartz ledge. Traverse along this to the right-hand end.

(2) 30 feet. Up to a scoop on the left and move left to a grass ledge (sling, for aid, on hidden spike). Climb another little wall to a ledge. Peg belay.

(3) 70 feet. Traverse the ledge to the left and go up the overhanging wall to a good thread and peg. Traverse left (crux) to a shallow groove leaning right, and go up this to the top.

First ascent: 19th August, 1962. H. I. Banner and C. T. Jones.

CRAFNANT

CLOGWYN YR ERYR

At the head of Crafnant Valley is a fine overhanging crag with several groove lines (map ref.: 734605). Several parties have been active here and the issue is somewhat confused. The crag called Craig Wen in the Carneddau guide and said to be Clogwyn yr Eryr in the 1958 *Journal* appears to be south-west of this one.

Belshazzar 120 feet. Hard Very Severe.

This is the right hand of the grooves, starting with a steep red pillar and leading past a holly bush.

First ascent: 1959. P. Nunn, R. Brayshaw.

Astoroth 150 feet. Extremely Severe.

10 feet left of Belshazzar a steep slab forms the left-hand side of another groove. The first pitch had been pegged previously by another party, and five of their pegs were used on the first ascent. It is now done with two or three pegs.

(1) 100 feet. Climb the slab up to the overhang and over this with difficulty to a good hold on the right wall. Bridge up the groove and over the second overhang to another smooth groove. Up this until it closes and swing right with a peg. Up the steep wall on good holds, then a groove leads to a belay on a perched block.

(2) 50 feet. Move right and up an awkward overhanging crack to the top.

First ascent: January, 1961. B. Ingle, P. Nunn.

Variation finish 70 feet. Hard Very Severe.

(2a) 30 feet. From the perched block traverse left across a steep wall and go up a crack leading to a good stance at the foot of the main groove of the crag.

(3a) 40 feet. Bridge up the groove to the top.

First ascent: June, 1961. R. James and party.

Connie's Crack 170 feet. Hard Very Severe and A2.

Start 10 feet left of Astoroth, which has been called Gamekeeper's Groove, and 15 feet right of the main groove, which is so far unclimbed.

(1) 120 feet. Climb a roof into a square niche (two pegs) and move left over the next roof into a groove. Up this to a natural thread, and tension traverse right to the arête. Up this to a small ledge at the foot of a steep groove and up a thin crack on the right (pegs) to a ledge on the left below a large leaning block. Climb past this to join the last few feet of pitch (2a) of Astoroth.

(2) 50 feet. As for pitch (3a) of Astoroth.

First ascent: August, 1961. R. James, J. R. Lees.

Daisy Chain 300 feet. Hard Very Severe and A1.

A girdle traverse of the main crag. Start on a holly tree ledge about 100 feet up the left-hand side of the crag.

(1) 90 feet. Follow the ledge leading right, down and round the arête onto the front of the crag. Step into a vee-groove and go up this to a ledge (peg). Swing down to the right and traverse with three pegs into the main groove. Up this to a stance on Connie's Crack.

(2) 35 feet. Step down for a few feet and go across the wall on the right to a stance on Astoroth.

(3) 55 feet. Traverse delicately right across a slab and go down an easy groove to a stance.

(4) 70 feet. Descend a few feet into some trees, then swing across the overhanging wall to the arête. Move round to easy ground on the other side.

(5) 20 feet. Step across to a corner groove and go up this to the top.

First ascent: 1962. R. James and D. Yates.

C. TRYFAN AND GLYDER FACH

MILESTONE BUTTRESS

Kangaroo Crack 135 feet. Very Severe.

Start: Just to the right of Canopy Crack.

(1) 60 feet. Climb the obvious crack, which gets wider and harder at the top.

(2) 30 feet. Climb easier rocks on the right.

(3) 45 feet. Up a cracked corner to the top.

First ascent: June, 1962. H. I. Banner, R. Wilson.

BOCHLWYD BUTTRESS

Bochlwyd Eliminate 110 feet. Hard Very Severe.

Climbs the wall on the left of Chimney Route.

(1) 110 feet. Start easily up a quartz slab, until it is possible to step right onto the rib. Up this to reach the traversing ledge of Wall Climb. Continue up a small open groove until a rounded hand traverse leads right to a ledge. Move up to a block, swing down to the right and then back left until good holds lead to the top.

First ascent: June, 1962. R. James, R. Barber.

D. LLANBERIS NORTH

CRAIG DDU

Yellow Wall 160 feet. Extremely Severe.

Start: 15 feet left of Petite Fleur.

(1) 60 feet. Up a steep black wall for 20 feet to a resting place. Make an ascending traverse left to the foot of a shallow groove and go up this and its continuation to a large foothold and peg belay under an overhang.

(2) 30 feet. Traverse right and go over the overhang, left of the holly. Continue up to a ledge and belay.

(3) 70 feet. Traverse left past a perched block, under an overhang, to a sloping ledge. Climb the overhang above in the groove and go up this, trending left to finish.

First ascent: August, 1962. D. Yates and D. Potts.

DINAS Y GROMLECH

Epitaph 180 feet. Extremely Severe.

Start as for Sabre Cut, direct start.

(1) 40 feet. As for the direct start.

(2) 20 feet. As for Dives to a stance on the arête.

(3) 100 feet. Move up left for a few feet and go up a thin crack till a sling can be used to reach a ledge on the arête proper. Continue direct, except for one move on the Left Wall, to easier rocks and the top.

First ascent: 8th October, 1962. R. James, M. Petrovsky.

CARREG WASTAD

Yellow Crack 70 feet. Hard Very Severe.

This is the prominent crack which connects the crux of the old Girdle to Shadow Wall.

First ascent: 1958. H. I. Banner, C. T. Jones.

E. LLANBERIS SOUTH

DINAS MOT

Hiawatha 350 feet. Hard Very Severe.

Start as for Bluebell Cracks.

(1) 70 feet. Straight up quartz and heather, moving right at the top to a belay on the right-hand of two trees (pitch 3, Bluebell Cracks).

(2) 60 feet. Move right from the stance and go up a steep crack. Move right at the top to a good stance.

(3) 40 feet. A rising traverse to the right to a shallow groove just in front of the skyline. Up the groove to Heather Terrace.

(4) 30 feet. Walk along the terrace to a good belay below a steep little wall with an obvious crack near its right end. (This crosses Jubilee Climb.)

(5) 50 feet. Move up right round the corner of the wall and go up on spikes until it is possible to move back left onto the front wall. Gain the crack and go up it to a good spike belay.

(6) 30 feet. Follow the crack up a mossy slab to a huge belay (end of Flake Traverse variant).

(7) 70 feet. Make a delicate rising traverse left up the slab to a central scoop. Regain the crack above a small overhang and go up it to the top.

First ascent: 2nd July, 1961. D. Turner, D. Kerr.

Plexus 480 feet. Hard Very Severe.

To the right of the Black Cleft is a large buttress with prominent parallel overhangs at half height. The lower overhang has a groove at its right-hand end. Start below this.

(1) 60 feet. Up to a tree on the right and traverse left across heather to a flake belay.

(2) 150 feet. Climb up to a small grass ledge at the foot of a depression which runs up to the overhangs. Climb over the first bulge and move right immediately (peg) to a scoop in the slab on the right. Move up and back left into the depression. Climb another bulge (peg) and up the smooth groove above to a large flake. Move left and up past a tree to the cave under the overhangs. Belay with a peg under the groove, on the right.

(3) 120 feet. Start the groove with a shoulder and move left onto a narrow slab. Climb the slab, moving right, and up to a large loose block. Climb over the block (peg for protection) and traverse left along a sloping ledge to another slab. Up this and the short wall above to a gangway leading up to the left and belays.

(4) 150 feet. Pleasantly up slabs to the top.

All the pegs were removed.

First ascent: 14th October, 1962. P. Crew and B. Ingle.

Gardd 150 feet. Very Severe.

To the right of Plexus is a long narrow slab with a wide crack at the top. Start at the left-hand corner of the slab.

(1) 150 feet. Move right and over a bulge to a ledge on the slab above. Continue straight up, keeping slightly left on the clean rock. About 20 feet below a small tree a peg was used. Up on the left of the tree, then back right and finish up the wide crack to a large grass ledge.

Finish up Garden Groove, or abseil off.

First ascent: 3rd December, 1962. P. Crew, V. N. Stevenson, B. Ingle.

DINAS BACH

The large slab to the right of Flake Chimney has been climbed several times in the past few years, but never recorded. It is a very fine pitch, 120 feet, Very Severe. Start up a thin shallow crack and follow this for 80 feet. Move left along a narrow ledge and finish up the prominent layback crack.

CYRN LAS

Trauma Grooves 355 feet. Hard Very Severe.

This follows the line of grooves up the left-hand side of the Main Wall.

(1) 100 feet. Start as for Main Wall and continue going left to a belay below the first groove.

(2) 60 feet. Climb the chimney on the left and traverse across to a ledge in the groove (rope move). Move right past a large loose flake and up the groove to belays on the left.

(3) 100 feet. Climb the short corner on the left and the short wall above to a ledge. Move left and climb the next groove. Traverse right at the top to a small stance.

(4) 40 feet. Move back left into the groove and over the overhang to a junction with Main Wall.

(5) 65 feet. The final slab of Main Wall.

First ascent: 26th May, 1962. B. Ingle and P. Crew.

The Grooves, Variation Finish 120 feet. Extremely Severe.

Start from the foot of the groove leading left onto the Overhanging Arête. Climb a thin crack on the right and move right into a shallow groove. Climb this, over a difficult bulge near the top.

Led by J. A. Austin, 1959.

CLOGWYN-Y-DDYSGL

Lectern Grooves 140 feet. Hard Severe.

Start about 200 feet right of Three Cave Gully. Scramble up slabs to the foot of a shallow buttress with twin grooves.

(1) 100 feet. Step left onto a rib and go up to the foot of the right hand groove. Step left onto the next rib and go up to the left-hand groove. Up this, steep but with good holds, avoiding the last few feet on the right.

(2) 40 feet. Continue up the deeper groove behind the belay. Step right at the top and go up to a belay. Scrambling to the ridge.

First ascent: 6th October, 1962. B. Ingle and P. Crew.

F. CLOGWYN DU'R ARDDU

Ghecko Groove, variation finish. 70 feet. Extremely Severe.

On the last pitch, climb the corner for 10 feet and traverse left to the arête on a sloping ledge. Climb this direct to join the original route higher up.

First ascent: 2nd June, 1962. J. A. Austin and Mrs. Austin.

Details of the following climbs can be found in the new guide-book:

The Shadow. 27th April, 1962. P. Crew and B. Ingle.

Daurigol. 28th April, 1962. B. Ingle and M. Boysen.

Bow variations. 29th April, 1962. P. Crew and N. J. Soper.

Pinnacle Girdle, new finish. 29th April, 1962. P. Crew and N. J. Soper.

Haemagoblin. 2nd May, 1962. P. Crew and B. Ingle.

The Great Wall. 27th May, 1962. P. Crew.

Naddyn Ddu. 2nd June, 1962. B. Ingle and P. Crew.

The West Buttress Eliminate. 3rd June, 1962. B. Ingle and P. Crew.

Gael. 12th June, 1962. B. Webb, B. L. Griffiths.

The Pinnacle Arête. 17th June, 1962. M. Boysen, C. J. Mortlock.

The Croak. 28th July, 1962. D. Yates, M. Phillips.

G. SNOWDON SOUTH

CRAIG Y GELLI

Force 8. 175 feet. Hard Very Difficult.

Start: About 50 feet to the right of the gully, above and to the left of a short, detached rock-wall, at the foot of the cliff proper. Cairn.

(1) 15 feet. Straight up the wall, avoiding loose blocks at the top. Flake belay.

(2) 30 feet. Round on the right and up a vegetated chimney.

(3) 30 feet. Straight on up the groove above to the twin trees.

(4) 40 feet. Behind the trees on the left is a gully. Follow this, then go straight up to an ivy-covered pinnacle.

(5) 30 feet. Step left and climb the wall to the foot of the obvious crack, then traverse right and swing onto the rib. Up this to a large ledge. Belay under final wall.

(6) 30 feet. The wide crack above is climbed, with a small tree to aid progress. Finish on good jams.

First ascent: 30th September, 1962. A. N. Gough, R. E. J. Gough.

Tornado 165 feet. Very Severe.

A hard variation on *Force 8*.

Start: As for *Force 8*.

(1) 15 feet. Straight up the wall, avoiding loose blocks at the top. Flake belay.

(2) 20 feet. Climb the very thin crack in the centre of the wall, slightly to the right of the belay. The first moves are hard. Walk round to the left. Chockstone belay.

Or (2a) 25 feet. Up the flake and climb the prominent crack above the belay.

(3) 25 feet. Climb the corner, starting on the left wall. Pull over the top strenuously and go up to the twin trees.

(4) 45 feet. Step back to the edge, and gain the ledge out on the left, above the line of overhangs. Then up to a pinnacle, slightly left. Over this and mantelshelf right, onto a good ledge. Move right and go up to a small ivy-covered pinnacle.

(5) 25 feet. Step left, and go up to the foot of the obvious crack. Climb it, finishing on good holds. Belay well back under the final wall.

(6) 35 feet. Traverse out left on the wall, then go straight up into a tiny square-cut scoop. Finish up this.

First ascent: 14th October, 1962. N. Gough.

CRAIG BWLCH Y MOCH

The Plumb 150 feet. Hard Very Severe.

This is the arête on the right of Christmas Curry. Start just to the right of the arête below a shallow corner.

(1) 45 feet. Climb the corner and move left below the overhang onto the arête, then go up this to a stance. Or climb the overhang direct by a difficult layback.

(2) 105 feet. Climb a shallow groove (peg) to a ledge below a wide crack. Climb the crack to another ledge. Climb the awkward bulge on the arête to the Micah finish and up that to the top. This pitch can be split.

First ascent: December, 1961. R. James and D. Yates.

Girdle Traverse 1,130 feet. Hard Very Severe.

Start up Valerie's Rib and traverse across the Grasper wall (peg) to the top of Clapton's Crack. Follow ledges through the jungle to the second stance of Christmas Curry, go up this for one pitch and part of the Plumb, then move into the gully on the right. Continue across another buttress (peg) and reverse the Fang to the peg stance. Traverse across Striptease and go across to One Step in the Clouds (abseil). Follow this and move right to the pegs below the last groove of Vector. Reverse pitch 3 of Vector and go up pitch 4 of Nimbus. Cross the gully and traverse across Shadrach wall to finish up First Slip.

First ascent: 16th, 17th and 19th December, 1961. R. James and I. F. Campbell.

Meshach 200 feet. Hard Very Severe.

Start as for Grim Wall.

(1) 110 feet. Follow Grim Wall for a few feet, until a weakness leads directly onto the middle slabs. Climb these for a few feet till near pitch 2, Shadrach, then move left to a grass ledge. Traverse left, over some blocks and down to the peg stance of Grim Wall.

(2) 90 feet. From the stance move up right and turn the overhangs by a large jammed block. Straight up (peg) and back left, then continue trending slightly right to the top.

First ascent: July and October, 1962. R. James with Alice Earnshaw and M. Petrovsky.

Y Broga 130 feet. Very Severe.

Start: The obvious corner crack between the starts of Merlin and Oberon.

(1) 40 feet. The corner crack to the trees of Oberon.

(2) 60 feet. Gain a small ledge on the left-hand edge by means of a thin crack near the edge. Up a short crack then a vegetated groove to a gnarled oak on the crest of the buttress.

(3) 30 feet. Start up the slab of Merlin then step out left onto the nose of the "flying" arête. Climb this with aid from tree branches.

First ascent: May, 1962. D. H. Jones, H. Morris, G. Williams.

Comatose 140 feet. Severe.

Start: At the bottom of the slabby buttress east of Far East Slabs.

(1) 40 feet. Up a thin crack in the slab to an oak-tree stance.

(2) 70 feet. The slab above, until one is forced by a steepening in the angle to traverse right along a grassy line to a ledge on the buttress edge.

(3) 30 feet. Straight up to the top.

First ascent: P. Lloyd, G. Williams (signs of previous exploration were noticed).

Tro 110 feet. Difficult.

Start: At the extreme east end of the rocks, behind a "Bend" road sign.

(1) 60 feet. Up a strip of un-vegetated rock, then traverse left to a stance at a rotten oak directly under the final nose.

(2) 50 feet. The crack behind the stance to the overhang. Turn this on the left and step back right onto the edge of the nose to finish.

First ascent: 30th December, 1960. G. Williams, H. Morris, D. H. Jones.

CRAIG PANT IFAN

Alkatraz 100 feet. Very Severe.

Start: At the corner of Strangeways Buttress.

(1) 50 feet. Climb a clean crack to an awkward bulge. Over this to a good belay.

(2) 50 feet. Traverse right and go up a crack to trees. Jungle scrambling to the top.

First ascent: December, 1961. M. Boysen, A.N.O.

Holloway 120 feet. Very Severe.

Start: At the foot of Alkatraz. Traverse the ledge on the right to an obvious pinnacle.

(1) 70 feet. Climb a steep wall on lay-away holds to a niche below an obvious crack. Peg runner. Traverse left for 10 feet to a tree belay.

(2) 50 feet. Continue straight up the steep slab to the top.

First ascent: December, 1961. M. Boysen, A.N.O.

Vulcan 150 feet. A1.

Between Strangeways and Raven's Nest Wall is a steep black wall with a corner crack on the right.

Start: At a clean slab below and to the right of the black wall.

(1) 40 feet. Climb the slab to a tree and then a groove to another tree. Traverse left for 10 feet to a peg belay.

(2) 100 feet. Climb overhanging blocks to the obvious corner and up this to the top. Fifteen pegs or less.

First ascent: 20th April, 1962. B. Wright, C. Goody.

Falcon 120 feet. A2 and Very Severe.

This climbs the wall to the right of the upper corner of Vulcan.

(1) 40 feet. As for Vulcan.

(2) 120 feet. Move up to the overhangs and go round these to the wall above. Continue up the wall with odd free moves to the top. Nine pegs used.

First ascent: October, 1962. R. James, M. Petrovsky.

(un-named) 200 feet. Very Severe.

Start: At the foot of the buttress right of Scratch.

(1) 90 feet. Go diagonally up to a grassy gully which leads to a thread belay at the foot of the right side of Scratch Slab.

(2) 90 feet. Climb the slab to the overhang. Move right round the arête (peg) into a loose crack. Up this to a tree.

(3) 20 feet. Up the arête as for Scratch.

First ascent: 24th March, 1962. B. Ingle, R. F. Jones.

CRAIG-Y-CASTELL

Corniog 160 feet. Very Severe.

Start: A section of yellowish rock at the foot of a buttress to the left of Mimsy. The buttress can be identified by its two protruding flake cap-stones.

(1) 70 feet. A wide irregular crack starting about 12 feet up is gained from directly below. Leave the crack on the right and climb the slab above. Walk right to a large rotten oak.

(2) 35 feet. Take the right-hand branch of the vee-chimney above to a large ledge with detached blocks.

(3) 40 feet. Pull up over an overhang into a thin crack. Traverse left along a horizontal cleft, then go straight up to a grass ledge.

(4) 15 feet. The wall above, finishing out between the cap-stones.

First ascent: 14th January, 1961. J. G. Trumper, P. Lloyd.

H. SNOWDON WEST

CRAIG CWM SILYN

(a) CRAIG-YR-OGOF

Kangie's Crawl 200 feet. Very Severe.

This takes a line of grooves up the buttress on the right of the main slab.

Start: At the lowest point.

(1) 60 feet. Climb the left wall of a groove to a belay on a large ledge.

(2) 40 feet. Start up the left corner of the ledge for 20 feet, then traverse almost horizontally right to the continuation of the original line. Poor belay.

(3) 40 feet. Move round to the right onto a steep wall and go up for 20 feet to a ledge. Continue up to a belay below an overhang.

(4) 60 feet. Move left across a short wall and left again to the arête. Up this to the summit fields.

First ascent: 20th October, 1962. A. Wright and M. Owen.

Tower of Strength 135 feet. Very Severe.

This is the prominent central crack in the wall above the stone shoot.

(1) 45 feet. Climb a cracked wall to the foot of the crack.

(2) 30 feet. Climb the crack, moving right at the overhang to a stance and belay.

(3) 60 feet. Move right and climb the overhanging chimney to the top.

First ascent: 22nd April, 1962. H. I. Banner, R. Wilson.

(b) WESTERN CLIFFS

Sideline 160 feet. Very Severe.

High up the Little Kitchen is an impressive tower. Start below a shallow groove in the centre of the tower.

(1) 60 feet. Climb the groove and traverse right to a stance below another groove on the right of the main tower.

(2) 100 feet. Straight up this groove to the top.

First ascent: Summer, 1962. R. Wilson, D. Sandall.

Flintstone Rib 300 feet. Very Severe.

This is the prominent rib on the right of Bedrock Gully. Start at the foot of the rib, from inside the gully.

(1) 80 feet. Climb up the loose vegetated wall and move round onto the rib front at the foot of a steep slab. From the right-hand side of this climb over a bulge on the arête and traverse left to a minute stance and chock belays.

(2) 120 feet. Straight up behind the stance to a slab which leads to a steep shallow groove. Up this to a ledge on the left. Move right and up a chimney to a grass stance.

(3) 100 feet. Follow the Alpine style ridge to the top.

First ascent: 20th October, 1962. P. Crew and B. Ingle.

CASTELL CIDWM

Hors d'Oeuvre 230 feet. Very Severe.

Start: Below the obvious open groove in the lower tier, by a red slab capped by an overhang.

(1) 80 feet. Climb a short wall to a grass ledge and a block belay.

(2) 80 feet. Step left into a groove and go up this. Move left through a holly to a grass stance.

(3) 50 feet. Easier grass trending left to a stance below a groove.

(4) 80 feet. Traverse down and right for 30 feet to the foot of the central groove. Up it to a small ledge. Make an awkward move right to a sloping ledge, and go up to the top.

First ascent: 29th April, 1962. C. Davies and C. T. Jones.

Tramgo 135 feet. Extremely Severe.

This is the overhanging crack on the right of Dwm. It is undoubtedly the most strenuous route yet done in Wales.

(1) 100 feet. Traverse left to a pinnacle in the groove. Up for 15 feet, with a peg for aid, to a block below a tree. Climb the overhang above (slings for aid) and the short wall above (peg) to another overhang. Climb this on slings to a groove and go up this to a steep wall on the left. Up this to a stance on the right.

(2) 35 feet. Climb a corner for 10 feet, then go right and up a groove to the top.

First ascent: 28th April, 1962. J. Brown and C. J. S. Bonington.

I. SNOWDON EAST

CARREG ALLTREM

The Last Post 130 feet. Very Severe.

This takes the corner in the middle of the bulging wall left of Penamnen Groove.

(1) 80 feet. Up an overhanging wall into the corner and up it, exiting left. Up a pleasant wall to a good chockstone belay.

(2) 30 feet. Step left into a steep groove (sling for aid) and go up this to a sitting stance and flake belay.

(3) 20 feet. Up a shallow wet crack, 10 feet right of the final pitch of Leviathan.

First ascent: 10th June, 1962. C. T. Jones, R. F. Jones.

YR ARDDU

The following remarks refer to the hill of this name on the east of Nantmor (map reference ca. 630464), not to that near the head of the Lledr Valley.

The south-west and west sides of the hill fall in the Snowdon South guide-book area, and were referred to briefly in that guide. A guide-book article to the cliffs on the east and south-east sides, which fall in the area of the proposed Snowdon East guide-book, is published in the *M.A.M. Journal*, 1962, and includes details of a fair number of short climbs, a few of which are quite worthwhile.

II. CORNWALL

Biven and Stevenson's new edition of the Cornish guidebook, which gives details of all new climbs, is still awaited but should be published soon.

J.N.

III. IRELAND 1962

SEAN ROTHERY

Kerry has always been a guide-book writer's nightmare. This large mountainous county has more bare rock than anywhere else in Ireland but unfortunately it is all Old Red Sandstone. This usually forms a series of steep slabs on walls with few cracks or holds and separated by horizontal bands of vegetation. Few interesting or even possible lines present themselves on many of the cliffs, and as a result the routes done to date are scattered throughout the entire mountain area without any particular area developing as a centre. Possible exceptions to this are Knocknagantee, where there is a very fine buttress but few routes to date, Mullaghanattin and the crags of Mount Brandon. The great corrie of Coom-sahran under Teermoyle Mountain was explored in the summer of 1962. This has a great buttress (not shown on the one-inch map) which looks most impressive, but there are no inviting lines of attack. There is a small subsidiary coom on the left, with a tiny lake, which has several smaller quite challenging buttresses. On closer inspection one of these looked reasonable if hard. One route was done here. This was a gully to the right of the buttress, one pitch, mild Severe, by Miss E. Healy, H. Quinlan and F. Winder, July 1962. The sea cliffs near Bolus Head were explored and a few short routes were made.

The only other new area visited was the great rock, 700 feet above the sea, known as Skellig Michael, off the Kerry coast. This has an Early Christian monastic site, and an ancient pilgrimage way which involves rock climbing of Difficult standard in a few places with extreme exposure. The rock again is Old Red Sandstone and is rather loose higher up. Miss E. Healy did a route on the south ridge of the rock.

New climbs of 1962 included:

CAMADERRY, CO. WICKLOW

Aphrodite. Variation on last pitch. June 1962. A. Ingram, E. Goulding. Harder than original pitch.

Go straight up crack behind tree, from start of last pitch, instead of left, and join original finish below the corner.

Little Eiger. Direct start. 120 feet. Hard Very Severe. August 1962. E. Goulding, D. Moloney, P. Higgins.

This is the obvious wide crack which has been attempted several times. A piton was used for direct aid at the top of the crack.

Great North Road. 140 feet. A2. March 1962. E. Goulding, A. Ingram, K. Shelley (leads shared). This artificial route follows a dièdre to the right of Sebastian, moving left near the top.

Setanta. 80 feet. Very Severe. P. O'Halpin, Miss E. Healy.

On the extreme right-hand end of the main buttress.

GLEN VEAGH, CO. DONEGAL

Ariel. 450 feet. Hard Very Severe. April 1962. E. Goulding, P. O'Halpin (leads shared).

This starts 100 feet to the left of *Sinn Fein* and follows the obvious weakness in the centre of the buttress to the top.

LOUGH BARRA, CO. DONEGAL

BEN GORM WEST

Erin Go Bráth. 160 feet of new climbing. Hard Very Severe. April 1962. A. Ingram, E. Goulding (leads shared).

This is a direct finish to *Rule Britannia* but is mostly a separate climb. From the second pitch of R.B. go more or less straight up, tending left.

Kestrel. 200 feet. Very Severe. April 1962. P. O'Halpin, E. Goulding. Follows a line to the right of *Ploughshare*.

Cripples Way. Hard Severe. April 1962. K. Shelley, N. Kavanagh.

This is the corner to the right of *Kestrel* and left of *Fomorian*.

Lazarus. 250 feet. Very Severe. 9th June, 1962. D. Moloney, P. O'Halpin (leads shared). This follows a line to the left of the Delta face.

Crudde's Original. Very Difficult. 350 feet. April 1962. J. Thornley, J. Murray.

This climb starts 500 feet to the left of *Dunfockery*.

Quarter Tense. 235 feet. Mild Very Severe. 10th June, 1962. B. O'Flynn and H. Quinlan.

This climb is somewhat left of *Turner's Corner*.

IRA and *IRB*. 30 feet and 70 feet. Very Severe and Hard Very Severe. P. O'Halpin and N. Kavanagh.

Two short routes on the left-hand wall of *Square Cut Gully*.

IV. NORWAY

F. L. Jenkins, C. C. Cornish and R. M. Gamble visited Nordmøre from 24th July to 4th August, 1962. Climbs done included most of the Trolla Ridge in bad visibility, the party withdrawing over Nordre Trolla and descending to Grasdal; Store Vinnufjell from Grasdal by the glacier and snowfield (the first ascent by this route according to Olav Innerdal); the traverse of Hesten by the East Ridge (second ascent); Dordinakken from Haremsdal—the rock wall below Haremsvatn was climbed and the East Ridge reached by its northern flank and climbed to the summit (the first ascent by this route).

V. TANGANYIKA

In a letter to David Yeoman, G. H. Yeoman writes:

The other day, travelling in the Singida district of Central Province, I found myself within a day's journey of Mount Hanang. As this is 11,215 feet high, and our third highest mountain, it is not to be sneezed at, especially as it has a noble aspect, rising in splendid isolation and quite suddenly from the surrounding 5,000-foot plateau. My plans for a small Tilmanesque expedition were shattered by an embarrassment of volunteers: first, two aboriginal Old Men of the Mountain, who explained that the mountain might not be climbed without them; next, an African school-master, who explained that now that we had independence the prerogative of Europeans for such supreme acts of folly must be shared with the indigenous peoples; next, a crafty villager who, it transpired, had seen through my story as a tissue of lies, and knew quite well that I was just another Anglo-American Co. prospector, and was sure to find diamonds on the summit; finally, my lab-boy and jack-of-all-trades who, it turned out, had mis-understood the whole purpose of the operation, and thought we were just going tick-hunting as usual. The outcome of all this was to demonstrate once and for all the ancient Chinese truth that one really well pressed man is worth ten volunteers.

The climb itself is unexceptional, apart from a zone of impenetrable bush through which transit is made by means of a well-established system of tunnels, made and maintained by the numerous rhinos with which the place abounds. Three situations may be met by the mountaineer: in the first, he finds himself following on the tail of a rhino going his way; this is no different from driving on A5 and calls for no special technique. In the second, he meets a rhino coming the opposite way; this simply proves, in a matter of seconds, that no impenetrable bush is impenetrable. Finally, he may become aware that there is a rhino just behind him; the exact formula relating the oxygen content of the air, the age of the climber, the length of the rhino's horn and the acceleration imparted needs working out, but the effect is to reduce *g* virtually to nil, and make the Lakeland Fell Race look like a school-girl's outing up Box Hill.

VI. CLIMBING IN CORSICA

J. C. LLOYD

Now that the invasion of our home climbing-grounds is making even the mountains seem crowded, it is comforting to know that modern travel and holiday-planning make it possible to take the family to a country where you can leave the non-climbing members on the beach and spend a couple of days in a region offering unlimited possibilities to the rock-climber. In the Cirque de Bonifato, once away from the road-head at the Maison Forestière, you can spend days without seeing a soul, and the quiet and solitude of the place have to be experienced to be believed.

Our climbing was limited to an exploration of the Col d'Avartoli and an ascent of the North Summit of the Capo al Dente. The first was done in a day from Calvi. Our hotel gave us a packed lunch and a taxi took us the fourteen miles to the Maison Forestière de Bonifato. This expensive method of transport was made necessary by the haphazard behaviour of the local buses, which cannot be relied upon to go at any particular time. The guide-book told us that the path to the Col was very little used and vegetation impeded progress. This, in Corsica, means fighting your way through a forest of tough shrubs, frequently head high, climbing over fallen tree trunks, and disentangling yourself from brambles, all on a hillside as steep as the path up to the Napes ridges on Gable. This and the heat are the two main obstacles to climbing in Corsica. With the heat goes shortage of water and an adequate supply is one of the essential items in planning an expedition in these mountains.

So much for the snags. On our left as we struggled up rose the fantastic south face of the Punta Piciailja. This is a wall of good climbing rock a mile wide and about 2,800 feet high. So far four routes have been done on it. There must be room for four hundred more. On the other side of the valley a long ridge with five superb towers leads up to the Punta Gialba. Certainly here is a valley where a tough party could find all they wanted. Nor is there any lack of water, as the Figarella rises here, and this river keeps Calvi supplied with water during the five months of drought from April till September. To the south of Punta Gialba the main ridge runs almost due south to the Punta Minuta, enclosing on its west side a small lake, the Lac de Mufrella, below which lies the Spasimata Bergerie. This can be reached by a good path in 3¼ hours from the Maison Forestière, and would make an excellent camping site with several inadequately explored peaks and at least one completely unclimbed aiguille, the Grande Colonne di Marcia, within reach.

To climb the Capo al Dente we arranged to meet Christopher on the Col de Tartagine, at the foot of the peak on the south side. We left Bonifato at 11.30 a.m. and followed the valley which starts to the North. With a really good path we made excellent progress for an hour, but then the inevitable bush-whacking began. The angle was not so steep as the valley to the Col d'Avartoli, but we were now carrying a tent, three sleeping bags and food for 24 hours. The heaviest rucksack weighed about 50 lbs. and carrying this through the fly-infested forest was exhausting. Flies seemed to be everywhere; they went up your nostrils and if you opened your mouth to get a breath at least two would go right down your throat. Our climbing between rests shortened to bursts of ten to fifteen minutes,

and the forest seemed endless. At last the Col was visible ahead, and, most welcome sight, a very fit-looking Christopher waiting to meet us about 1,000 feet below it and ready to give us a hand with the load. He signalled up the mountain to two students who had come over with him from Monte Cinto, and by the time we arrived at the Bergerie, where they were encamped, hot soup was waiting for us. We spent a warm comfortable night, two of the boys sleeping out in the open, and got away at 6.50 a.m.

Once on the Col the heat of Calvi was forgotten. It was a beautiful morning; cloud lay at our feet over the Forêt de Tartagine to the east, while to the west an uninterrupted view stretched to the beautiful Calvi bay and ahead lay our ridge to the Capo al Dente. We had a little difficulty in identifying the route from the description in the guide book, as we were approaching it from the opposite direction, but after descending 200 feet from the ridge we identified the North West face and started up a steep crack. This proved difficult and required a runner for the leader and a top rope for the leader of the second rope. Standing at the bottom there was time to feel the rise in tension as the leader tried to pass the hardest bit—time to realize just how far we were away from help if somebody was injured, and to contemplate the weakness of our party, ranging in age from eleven to forty-five. I was beginning to feel that the climb was altogether too difficult for us, but a cheerful shout of “No more than V. Diff.”, as the leader scrambled off his knees, encouraged us to make a start. The next two pitches continued at a steep angle and then the two ropes divided. Chris led round an impossible-looking traverse to the right to keep the route on the face. I chose an easier way to the left bringing us on the ridge and into the sunshine. A beautiful patch of Mod. Diff. standard brought us to the North Summit where we sat and waited for the others.

We had intended doing the traverse of the two summits, but the next bit up the South Summit looked difficult and we were behind schedule, so it was easy to decide that honour was satisfied. We left the peak down the great couloir between the two summits, by a combination of abseiling and free climbing, and were back at our bergerie by 1 p.m. Our cooks had an excellent meal of spaghetti and tea waiting for us. Fortified by this we set off on the three-hour plod down to the valley and the taxi, which we had arranged to meet us at 6 p.m. We were down at the stream soon after five and idled away an hour washing ourselves in the delicious cold water. Back at Calvi we returned to the different pleasures of Mediterranean sun and sea-bathing.

The guide books we used were *Les Topo-Guides de L'Alpiniste et du Randonneur en Corse* by Michel Fabrikant, which are excellent and include the best map of the district available. They are obtainable at Gaston's in Chancery Lane. Our holiday was primarily a sea-side sun-chasing one and our preparations were watched with horror by the other members of the hotel. But the pleasures of climbing are relative and the successful outcome of an expedition to the top of the Capo al Dente from the beach at Calvi brought as much sense of achievement to this party as any climb can. To get to know these mountains as they deserve one needs to spend several days among them with a tent or just a sleeping-bag in summer, and the thought of the virgin rock around the Spasimata Bergerie, easily accessible to anyone who could spend a week or two there, is enough to make any rock-climber's mouth water.

EDITORIAL

The year 1962 was a black year domestically for the Club, as it was marked by the death of Wilfrid Noyce, who would otherwise probably now be President. Wilf was killed on the descent of Pik Garmo in the Pamirs, together with Robin Smith of the S.M.C., who was well known to many in the Club. To complete what others have to say of him elsewhere in this *Journal*, may I add that during the last war Wilf was at first a conscientious objector, joining the Friends' Ambulance Unit, but later went into the forces. My own contact with him started in a minor way by assisting him to co-ordinate the work of various authors on the proposed *Snowdon South and West* guide-book; this gradually expanded until I found myself writing guide-books for him, and eventually took over his job as Guide-Book Editor when he was too busy to continue. He had the ability to conduct guide-book affairs efficiently almost entirely without paper work. After I took over he gave me much personal encouragement and assistance; his death was not only a great blow but a serious inconvenience, since I could no longer go to him to clear up difficulties, and he had passed on to me hardly any papers on guide-books.

One personal recollection, which perhaps was typical, remains vividly. We had proposed to repeat some of Paul Work's routes on the main face of Moel Hebog, and two of us decided to camp in the upper cwm, almost immediately under the face. Wilf, however, stayed overnight at Helyg, saying he would join us in the morning. It was a cold night, and in the morning we were slow to get out of our sleeping-bags to cook breakfast. At 10 o'clock there was no sign of Wilf, so we went up to the crag, to find that he had already been climbing on it for some time, having missed our tent and gone direct to the crag, and seemed displeased that we had lost so much climbing time.

Others who died during the year who were once prominent in the Club were C. W. Nettleton and M. G. Bradley. Nettleton joined the Club in 1899, served on the committee from 1904 to 1907, and was Hon. Librarian from 1902 to 1908 and Vice-President from 1923 to 1926; he was recently made an Honorary Member. For much of his life his home was in London or at Tunbridge Wells, but after the death of his wife a few years ago he went to live with his daughter at Sidmouth. My own dealings with him were in connection with mountaineering books, and some of my most treasured possessions were obtained through him. I still have many long and enthusiastic letters in his almost undecipherable hand, describing finds he had made at auctions and elsewhere.

M. G. Bradley was elected to the Club in 1909. He served on the committee from 1924 to 1928, from 1930 to 1933 and from 1934 to 1937; he was Vice-President from 1937 to 1940. He resigned his membership about 1949.

Of Lt. Col. L. W. Rolleston, C.B.E., who died in 1962, I have found no member able to write. He was elected to the Club in 1901 and was recently made an Honorary Member. An obituary of him by our ex-President Longstaff, who climbed with him in this country, the Alps and the Caucasus, appears in the *AJ* for May, 1963.

Other members who died in the last year were J. G. Thompson and Lt. R. M. Kennedy, R.E., and recently Col. G. Ackerley, C.B.E., and A. C. Edgar, M.C. Geoff. Thompson will be remembered by many members who met him during his frequent weekends at the R. W. Lloyd Hut, often with parties from Nottingham. His niece Jill once worked at Pen-y-Gwryd and is now married to Dennis Davis of the Rucksack and Wayfarers' Clubs. Thompson had been married for under three years and left a wife and two young children. He was in charge of the computer at Messrs. Boots which was being programmed at the time, so I'm told that his death caused chaos in his department.

Kennedy was elected to the Club in 1952. Stallybrass writes of him: "He left Sandhurst in 1952. At Sandhurst he was a keen member of the Mountaineering Club; led an expedition to Arctic Norway in February '62 and a caving expedition in Yorkshire at Whit '62." Ross writes: "Kennedy was one of the dependable and imperturbable variety, who always enjoyed himself visibly and never worried anyone; as a result he made the whole party enjoy themselves, even when uncomfortably wet or otherwise perturbed!"

Outside the Club, a familiar figure has disappeared from the climbing world with the death of Graham McPhee. His name will always be associated with Ben Nevis, but he was very active in North Wales and took part in several first ascents on Clogwyn Du'r Arddu and elsewhere. My first encounter with him occurred when a discussion arose in Helyg as to whether a certain Scottish mountain was a Munro, when from a dark corner a voice with a marked Scottish accent said: "It so happens that I always carry with me a copy of Munro's Tables," and McPhee emerged and produced from a Gladstone bag the evidence to settle the argument. Many meetings with him followed, whether it was during his frequent solitary excursions in the hills, or receiving Russian climbers in his capacity as President of the B.M.C., or at dinners of other clubs; he was a member of many clubs and an assiduous attender at dinners, but had the reputation of rarely paying for his dinner as he could always arrange to represent another club.

Another loss, in North Wales, is that of E. Rawson Owen, for many years landlord of Pen-y-Pass and a friend of many climbers. Before using motor transport for conveying his guests about the district he was well known as a skilful whip, and some of his vehicles still remain in the outhouses of Pen-y-Pass.

Among the officers of the Club the only change is in the presidency, now filled by Sir John Hunt, the fourth member of the Club to have been President both of the Club and of the Alpine Club. C. T. Jones has taken over from Moulam as custodian of Helyg. John Poole has returned to the committee after 26 years, and is presiding over an *ad hoc* group which is making strenuous efforts to improve the condition of the Club's Welsh huts. As another part of this campaign hut dues have been raised and restrictions applied to use by large outside parties, so that members may not feel strangers in their huts, so being encouraged to use them more.

Sales of the Club's guide-books continue to increase rapidly, and reprinting is necessary at shorter and shorter intervals. The opportunity is being taken on reprinting of including detailed appendices of new climbs, of replacing the less satisfactory diagrams by better ones, and of using a plastic binding, after suc-

cessful trial of this on one guide. The latter involves an increase in price, but this is probably justified in view of the greater utility it affords.

Because of these matters, and of ever-rising printing costs, it is proving ever more difficult to find the cash for the initial capital outlay required for keeping our guides in print and producing new volumes of the series. Negotiations are accordingly in hand whereby our guides would be distributed wholesale by a commercial firm, using their sales promotion facilities. This firm would buy the complete stock of each volume from us immediately on publication, thus eliminating our difficulties over the initial capital outlay. A further increase in price would however be necessary to cover the firm's expenses, and we must face a probable selling price to the public of 12s. 6d. to 15s. (with of course a rebate for members).

Last year the interim *Moelwyn* guide was published, and this year *Clogwyn Du'r Arddu*, which in spite of its high price (which may have to be increased further with the proposed selling arrangements) has been extremely successful and has sold better than any previous guide-book—which causes doubt as to whether there will be room on the cliff for all who have bought the guide! In its excellent natural history notes Evan Roberts puts forward the attractive theory that the climbing parson commemorated in the name of the Parson's Nose was none other than the Rev. P. B. Williams, rector of Llanrug and Llanberis, who ascended the Eastern Terrace of Clogwyn Du'r Arddu in 1795 with Bingley. Reference to Cliffe (*Notes and Recollections of an Angler*, 1860), the original source of our knowledge of the parson, shows, however, that this cannot have been the case; the parson was active in the 1840s and 1850s, and made a visit of a week or ten days to the district each year.

Other guide-books are in course of production. A revised edition of *South-East England*, with an extensive appendix of new climbs, is nearly through the press and should be published shortly. Reprints of *Tryfan and Glyder Fach*, and *Llanberis North*, with short appendices of new climbs, and a completely new edition of *Cornwall*, are almost ready for the press. Reprints of *Cwm Idwal* and *Snowdon South*, with appendices, are scheduled for later in the year, and it is hoped to publish *Llanberis South* and a revised edition of *Carneddau* early in the New Year.

Both in the Alps and at home 1962 was a great climbing year. Our members were widely active further afield. In the Himalaya Glentworth, Bertram and Wylie took part in a combined botanical and climbing expedition to the Langtang Himal. The British-Soviet Expedition to the Pamirs largely originated from the activities of a small working party set up by this Club's committee, although it was finally organized on the British side as a joint Alpine Club/Scottish Mountaineering Club venture; it was led by Sir John Hunt and included Bull, R. F. Jones, Lowe, McNaught-Davis, C. W. F. Noyce and Wrangham. The peaks climbed were Pik Kommunizma (formerly Stalin), Pik Garmo (on the descent of which Noyce and Smith were killed) and Concord (first ascent). Banks led a combined Services expedition to Alaska and ascended Mount McKinley and Peak 9260 north-east of Explorers' Peak (first ascent). Also in Alaska B. M. Biven and Smythe climbed the west peak of the Moose's Tooth and Mount Dan Beard (first ascents). In Greenland Tilman climbed Agssausat and three other peaks in Evigkedsfjord, also Mount Raleigh and a false Mount Raleigh. Busk led a party to the Sierra Nevada de Merida, in Venezuela, which

climbed Pico Bolivar; while with this party Band made first ascents of El Vertigo and Pico Jahn, and of the south-west face of Pico Abanico. In Patagonia Page led an expedition including Bonington, Bray, G. J. Streetly and D. W. Walker which made the first ascent of the Central Tower of Paine and repeated the ascent of the North Tower. Deacock was with an Australian expedition to Heard Island which attempted Big Ben unsuccessfully.

So many good climbs were done by members in the Alps that only a selection of the finest and most unusual can be given, in tabular form:

Mont Blanc Massif

Grands Jorasses: Walker Spur—Bonington.

Petit Dru: North Face—C. H. Taylor and Wedgwood.

West Face—R. B. Evans.

Bonatti buttress—Crew; Ingle.

Dent du Géant: South Face—Bonington; James.

Aiguille du Midi: South Face—Witham.

Aiguille du Moine: East Face—Witham.

Aiguille du Peigne: North Ridge—C. H. Taylor and Wedgwood; Ingle.

Grand Capucin: East Face—R. B. Evans.

Aiguille Noire de Peuterey: South Ridge—James.

Ratti-Vitali Route—Bonington; R. B. Evans.

Pennine Alps

Lenzspitz: North-East Face—Nicol.

Oberland

Eiger: Eigerwand—Bonington.

Bregaglia

Piz Badile: North-East Face—Bonington; C. T. Jones and Swallow; Dowlen.

Dolomites

Monte Civetta: North-West Wall, Solleder Route—Crew; C. T. Jones and Swallow.

Quota IGM, North-West Wall, Philipp-Flamm Route—Crew (third ascent).

Cima della Busazza: South-West Face direct—Crew (third ascent).

Punta Civetta: Fessura Andrich—Austin.

Torre Trieste: West Ridge—R. B. Evans; Crew.

Torre Venezia: Fissure Tissi—Crew.

South Face—R. B. Evans; Crew.

Roda di Vael: Rotwand Direct (Maestri)—R. B. Evans.

Cima della Madonna: Scarf Ridge—R. B. Evans.

Tofana: Pilastro di Rozes—Fuller; R. B. Evans.

Cima Grande di Laveredo: Cassin Route—Crew; James.

Kaisergebirge

Fleischbank: East Wall—Fuller.

South-East Route—Fuller; C. Davies.

Predigstuhl: North Summit Direct—Bonington.

Karwendel

Lalider: North Wall, Krebs-Schmid Route—Bonington.

Climbing events in North Wales are summarised in "New Climbs and Notes" in this number. The North Wales Committee of the British Mountaineering Council has been active in various matters affecting the interests of climbers, and has collaborated with the planning authorities of the National Park, the National Trust and the Vaynol Estate. Plans for camp sites in Nant Peris and in the Llanberis Pass have received a check. The former site was rejected as a result of an official enquiry, not unexpectedly as the application was for accommodation for caravans as well as tents. It is hoped that a new application will be made for a general site for tents only. In addition a site has been found not far from Ynys Ettws, for the use of climbers only, which seems promising if suitable parking and sanitary arrangements can be made; the present proposal is that this site should be run by the B.M.C. for members of constituent clubs, who would in turn provide wardens for it. A promising start has been also made in the forbidding task of arranging agreed routes of access to the open mountains through enclosed land. A Nature Conservancy scheme for constituting as a Nature Reserve most of the Snowdon area is still under negotiation, the stumbling block being access area agreements with the local landowners. Under the proposed arrangements a warden service would ensure proper standards of behaviour among visitors to the Reserve, but there would be otherwise no restrictions on walkers or climbers.

A success on the amenity front has been the decision that the Central Electricity Generating Board should put underground a considerable length of high tension transmission line in the south-west part of Snowdonia.

Last year I made some reference to the name of the climb "Extol" or "Entity" on Dove Crag. A letter on this subject appears in this number, but perhaps does not give the whole story. My previous remarks were based entirely on information from Mortlock, who seconded Whillans on the first ascent of the climb. He now tells me that they did indeed agree on the name "Entity" when they made the climb, but that later, when giving details of the climb for inclusion in *JFRCC* and being asked to supply a name for it, Whillans apparently forgot this agreement on "Entity" and devised or agreed to the name "Extol," which duly appeared in print. Mortlock accepts that the leader of a new climb has the first choice of a name and therefore that the name "Extol" should be adopted.

A note in this number resuscitates the hoary question of numerical grading of climbs. The most forceful arguments in favour of a numerical system seems to involve an assumption that a system of absolute objective standards of climbing difficulty, to apply to any climb and to any guide-book writer, can be evolved; the apparently logical character of a numerical system tends to foster this belief—which I regard as mistaken, though not all members of the Club will agree with me. At least with our adjectival system we avoid the present difficulties of the Americans with their numerical systems. The American climbing world is deeply divided over a proposal to replace their present "Decimal" system, in which free and artificial climbs are lumped together in a system of numbers ranging from 1 to 5 then 5.1, 5.2, etc. to 6, by a National Climbing Classification System in which free climbing is graded from 1 to 10, artificial climbing separately from A1 to A5 and separate symbols I to VI used to indicate the degree of seriousness as a mountaineering expedition. One would think

that to devotees of numerical grading the NCCS, which bears points of resemblance to the French system, would seem more attractive than the less logical Decimal system, which, like the original numerical system used in the Eastern Alps, gives hard free climbing a lower grade than easy artificial; but even the guide-book writers cannot agree on this, and some of the American guide-books due to appear shortly will use the Decimal system. For ourselves we propose to continue to use the adjectival system (up to Extremely Severe, with Exceptionally Severe and numerical artificial grades when necessary) for our guide-books, and do not hope for complete agreement on standards between one guide-book and another. But I should be glad to hear from any member who has views on any of the matters mentioned in Yeoman's note.

An article in this number is written in what the Hon. Editor of the *SMCJ* has described as "that tiger's prose, the New Delirium." Pace Rogers (see last year's *Journal*), it has been found impossible to delay any further the appearance of this style in these pages—perhaps now we've got it over with. I trust, however, that older members of the Club will see the point and not jump to false conclusions.

This year M. J. Cunnington has taken over as Business Manager of *Journal* and guide-books, and I am most grateful for his energetic handling of distribution and advertising. J. N. Slee-Smith continues to give very valuable help with the technical side of *Journal* and guide-book production. The Cloister Press maintain as ever their very high standards of work; their never-failing patience has been particularly necessary this year.

CORRESPONDENCE

Sir,

Extol—Entity

The suggestion in your Editorial in the 1962 Climbers' Club Journal that the name Extol for the route made on Dove Crag in April, 1962 by Don Whillans "was invented by someone with no *locus standi* in the matter" invites correction.

It is now well known that the climb was named Extol by the leader, as correctly reported in the 1961 Journal of the Fell and Rock Climbing Club (of which I was then Editor), and that Entity is therefore apocryphal, as noted in the Journal of Sheffield University Mountaineering Club.

Northern papers lead, they don't just copy.

Yours, etc.,

MURIEL FILES.

Obituary

C. W. F. NOYCE

Wilfrid Noyce was killed on 24th July, 1962, at the age of 44 years. The accident happened while he and Robin Smith, who also died, were descending Garmo Peak in the Pamirs.

Noyce was an outstanding man by any standard: head of the school at Charterhouse; scholar of King's College, Cambridge; firsts in Classics and in Modern Languages; a capable all-round athlete; a superb climber and a writer of some renown.

There are always men who stand out among their fellows, but Wilfrid's qualities went far beyond the distinction which comes from mere ability. An impression of a shy, almost diffident manner, absent-minded at times, masked a man of great intellect and outstanding physical and moral strength. This was no façade of false modesty, but a genuine kindness and humility which would never allow him to realise that he was the better man.

He had a rare gift of understanding which made his company a pleasure at all times, even under trying conditions. Wilf's courage was not mere foolhardiness born of lack of imagination, but of the very essence of superb confidence which made weaker men forget unreasonable fears in the pleasure of shared achievement. He never shamed one into doing what was beyond one's normal scope and willingness — he did everything so easily and without fuss that normal reactions of fear and laziness receded far enough to allow weaker men to follow meekly — and often gladly. His quiet matter-of-fact enthusiasm was infectious, whether he was putting up a tent in the rain late at night, going out for a pre-breakfast climb in the morning sun four hours later, scrubbing the kitchen floor of Ynys Ettws, or doing the inevitable walk over the tops at the end of the day.

The climbing history of Wilfrid Noyce is widely known. In its dimensions it may well be unique among British climbers — more than 25 years of continuous effort and achievement and always a sustained high standard of mountaineering. It should be restated briefly at this time in this *Journal*.

He was first introduced to British rocks 30 years ago by his cousin, the late Colin Kirkus, and by Alf Bridge. Since then the number of known routes in the Lake District, in Wales, and elsewhere in Britain which he never climbed must be heavily outnumbered by those which he climbed, among them numerous first ascents. He started his dozen or more Alpine seasons with major routes, usually done at high speed to do as much as possible in whatever time he had. Before he was 20 years old he had done the traverse of the Verte from the Charpoua Glacier over the Aiguille Sans Nom, the Grépon by the Mer de Glace face, the Old Brenva on Mont Blanc, the traverse of the Dent d'Hérens from the Schönbühl Hut by the east ridge, the north-east ridge of the Jungfrau and the north face of the Wetterhorn. In the next 20 years he must have covered more than half the great ridges and faces of the Alps. His last season in the Alps, in 1959, may well have been his best when, with Mortlock and Sadler, he made ascents of the Furggen Ridge of the Matterhorn, direct, the north face of the Dent d'Hérens (Welzenbach route), the north-east face of the Lyskamm and the north-east face of the Signal Kuppe on Monte Rosa — at least two of these being first British ascents.

In the Himalaya he played, of course, a very major part in the successful Mount Everest expedition of 1953. Among other great Himalayan peaks he climbed Pauhunri (23,385 feet) during the war, and got within 150 feet of the summit of Machapuchare with David Cox in 1957. As leader of the Anglo-American Karakoram expedition in 1960 he climbed Trivor (25,370 feet).

During a hurried visit to the Atlas in 1961 he crowded, in the best Noyce tradition, four weeks' hard climbing and walking into less than half that time, although due to his companion's illness he did most of it alone.

It was a foregone conclusion that Wilf would be invited to join the British-Soviet Pamirs expedition last year, and it was probably inevitable that he would accept the invitation. On 24th July, 1962, with two Russians and Robin Smith, he climbed Garmo Peak. They descended in two parties and the British pair did not return.

By his understanding, his sympathetic interest in people, and in simple terms of hard work, Wilfrid did much for British mountaineering. His books were widely read; he was in touch with climbers of many countries and was respected by a very wide cross-section of the climbing world in this country. This was appropriately shown

when, in the last year of his life, he was both President of the Alpine Climbing Group and a member of the Alpine Club Committee. He ran the Mallory Group at Charterhouse and introduced many young people to the basic principles and the joys of climbing mountains.

But among all the climbing organisations, the Climbers' Club owes him by far the greatest debt. He had been a Vice-President and would undoubtedly have been President had he lived. Two of the major guide-books, *Lliwedd* and *Tryfan*, were written by Wilfrid Noyce and Menlove Edwards. For 14 years he performed patiently and tenaciously the unrewarding tasks of Guide-Book Editor. As such he revised several old guides and gave us many new ones. His rare, quietly spoken comments at committee meetings were invariably factual and constructive, and at times provided a welcome respite from the verbosity of others.

Lecturing was becoming quite an important factor of Wilfrid's life and he had a heavy programme booked for last autumn and this spring. His lectures were skilful and lucid and he enjoyed giving them.

In 1960 he gave up his work as a schoolmaster to take up writing as a full-time occupation. He had a very real need to write, and no matter how long and crowded the day there would usually come the moment when he settled down somewhere with pencil and paper. His books were unlike other mountain books because he was always concerned with the reactions of men to mountains and their settings, and later on to a wider field of adventure (*The Springs of Adventure*) and endurance (*They Survived*). There is tragic irony in the title of this, his last book, which was published posthumously. It is likely that here, too, is a grievous loss because, as his writing had been gaining in stature over the years, Wilfrid might well have written his best in the times to come.

I knew Wilf well for only about 10 years. I could wish that they might have been 30 years, in which case I would be a more competent climber; or, far better still, that there were another 30 years of his friendship to come so that he could continue to exercise his beneficial influence by restoring firmly and unobtrusively — and quite unknowingly — my sense of proportion at regular intervals with little or no effort on my part. Now I shall too readily forget that it is wasteful to start a day in the hills late and to come back early; that a tin of sardines taken neat, including the oil, can provide

a good meal for two; and that it is a foolish piece of self-denial to make do with a comfortable bed under a roof when there is a perfectly good wet mountain-side available for pitching a tent. I shall miss the long drives up to Wales when Wilf would talk knowledgeably about many things and, above all, listen patiently to all I had to say. I shall miss, too, the pleasant meals with Alf Bridge and other friends at a small Soho restaurant, where Wilf vainly tried to dissuade the proprietor from treating him as the most distinguished of his patrons; and, in retrospect, even nights in a tent which was never entirely rainproof seemed eminently worthwhile, with Wilf snoring amiably while I tried to convince my pampered frame that it rarely took more than two hours before I realised that this was the ideal situation for a perfect night's sleep. Never again shall I quite see the simple logic of climbing Pinnacle Wall at dusk after a long day, and walking due north over the top in order to make the long trudge back to Helyg due south really worthwhile.

These are a few of my own recollections. There must be many who have known Wilfrid well and will always remember him with affection and gratitude. We might reply to the much-worn question why people climbed mountains that, for one reason at least, it is because we may be lucky enough to meet a man like Wilfrid Noyce.

Above all, let us have no futile talk about the consolation of "dying in his prime as he would have wished to die". Wilf was too truly alive to be interested in such considerations, and he was much too valuable to his wife Rosemary, to his sons, to his friends and to the world in general. Every day and every year longer that he might have been allowed to live would have been worthwhile — whatever the final ending.

J. M. KRETSCHMER

There are two kinds of climbers, those who are happy in motion and those who are happy when still. The first and much smaller category comprises the naturals. You can tell them by a kind of supple, relaxed, flowing movement on rock, which seems to demand little thought. They take easily to skis or crampons. In my experience they reach their top standard early, and they complete a long route much faster than the other sort. The second and larger group is made up of those who have consciously had to overcome a lack of aptitude. Their motions are deliberate, not rhythmic, and they take little rests between hard moves to calm themselves and

work things out. Their one real advantage is precisely that their underlying discomfort forces them to think. You get great climbers of both kinds. I have been lucky enough to observe some of the best climbers of several countries in action, and I have no hesitation in saying that Wilfrid Noyce was as good an example of the first category as I have seen.

One's main impression in climbing with Wilf was of ease and lack of tension. His carelessness of danger was sometimes breathtaking, and sprang from his exceptional sureness of foot — or was it the other way round? I could never work it out. It seems indisputable that he was the greatest British mountaineer of his generation, yet he consciously limited his achievement to exclude the great modern Alpine rock routes he could so easily have mastered. I think this was partly because of a lingering distaste for the large-scale use of pitons, born of his pre-war association with Menlove Edwards and his cousin Colin Kirkus, and partly because the slow toilsomeness of artificial climbing removed the wings from his heels.

All this dynamism released itself smoothly and quietly, without any fireworks. He was painstaking of detail in all work and tenacious in pushing things through, always ready to do more than his fair share and let others take the credit. Though I think he basically preferred to keep his own council (he never in any sense *confided*) he was conscientious in keeping others in touch with all that concerned them. In daily life he was quiet, modest, amusing, but by no means shy or stumbling when called upon to speak publicly. When we were collaborating on *Snowdon Biography* Geoffrey Young and I disagreed over the question of whether climbing progress is smooth and imperceptible or goes by jumps, and Wilfrid revealed himself a peacemaker. Indeed he seemed to carry a pot of peace inside him which he could spread on others when required, and loyalty was not so much a principle of his mind as of his inmost nature. When you were with him you could talk or be silent with equal companionableness.

Whether or not Wilfrid was accident-prone, I do not think he consciously took more risks than are unavoidable in mountaineering. A certain insouciance of gesture is at once the strength and the Achilles' heel of the superb natural climber. At the time when he returned to Himalayan mountaineering, because of Everest, he must have made certain conscious decisions about the meaning of life,

common perhaps to many who continue in dangerous sports after the age of thirty, which preclude conventional sentiment after his death. "Man is great in that he is a bridge and not a goal", said Nietzsche, and perhaps the emotion of dread resolved in ennoblement which comes from tragedy is more appropriate. The whole thing is much discussed in his novel, *The Gods Are Angry*, with which I once disagreed in print. I no longer do so. Under the layers of the public school master, the man of culture, the thinker, the poet, one divined a knight at arms, simple in himself and unwilling to dissemble, not born out of his time because his time is the whole struggle of humanity to define its essence.

G. J. SUTTON

TIM ARON

To all who knew him the death of Tim Aron last summer was a terrible tragedy. He lost his life in the sea at Aber Fraw on the West Coast of Anglesey when, with disregard for his own safety, he went to the assistance of someone in difficulties in the surf only to be carried out by the tide himself. At the age of 42 he had recently returned to agriculture, and had a flourishing farm at Moelfre, on the opposite side of the island, which his wife is continuing to run while raising three very young children.

Tim was a great lover of mountains, and they became a major interest from the time when, after leaving Gresham School, he continued his education in Switzerland, where he developed a passion for skiing. Graduating from Trinity College, Cambridge, in Geography and Agriculture, he held various posts at home and abroad between 1942 and 1945, and farmed in Shropshire until 1953. Tim was a member of the Climbers' Club from 1941 and walked and skied regularly in the Alps; until the end he had plans for mountain holidays further afield.

He became interested in Mountain Training while helping with courses at Glenmore Lodge, a residential centre in the Cairngorms, and in 1955 accepted a full-time post with the Central Council of Physical Recreation on the opening of Plas-y-Brenin, at which both of us were employed as instructors. For the next three years he gave an immense amount in knowledge and experience towards the teaching of others and contributed greatly to the activities of the Centre with his enthusiasm and his far-sightedness in everything he

did. During his service at Plas-y-Brenin, among many other interests, he was responsible for, with his very full qualifications, the development of Mountain Field Studies and Skiing. He founded the North Wales Ski Club and was the originator of sand-dune skiing for summer practice.

He enjoyed most seasons in the mountains, but was transformed in the winter, and would consider it worthwhile walking up to ski on a patch of snow on top of Carnedd Llywelyn. His tremendous zest for skiing was infectious and many of us benefited from it. It was unfortunate that we were not able to be together in the Alps this winter, our first ski holiday abroad.

His greatest dislike was camping and the discomfort involved. I shall long remember returning through his camp on the shores of Llyn Llydaw after an early morning ascent of Snowdon to find him sitting in his sleeping bag in a tent reading *The Times* while his students served his breakfast.

In 1958 Tim left Plas-y-Brenin to attend a course in Holland and for six months studied the interpretation of Aerial Photography; after qualifying in this particular sphere he returned to search for a farm, eventually settling in Anglesey from which he continued whenever possible to help at the Centre.

We extend our sympathy to his wife and wish her every success with the farm.

R. ORGILL

GEDLING BRADLEY

My wife and I climbed fairly often with Gedling Bradley in North Wales in the 1930s, when he was living at the Bryn Tyrch Hotel, Capel Curig, and was always glad of a day's rock-climbing in good weather. He was a free-and-easy character—happy in the company of friends, fond of the pleasures of life and blessed with a competence which enabled him, at least in youth and middle age, to indulge his fancy. When I met him in the Alps during my first season (1920) he was climbing with two AC men, Newton and O'Malley, and had had many previous seasons of experience both with and without guides. He was kind enough to take me on a charming rock-climb from the Saleina Hut, the Petit Clocher de Planereuse. My wife and my sister-in-law, Brenda Ritchie, climbed with him in the Engelhörner, a district which he grew to like more

than any other. He was a very sound all-round mountaineer, as good as they came in those days (up to the ordinary Severes). He enjoyed climbing with the ladies, provided they climbed well and could lead if he wanted them to.

His private income failed him after the second war; he had to give up living an independent life among the hills and we saw him no more. At Pen-y-Gwryd there is a good photograph of him leading on the Terrace Wall, taken on a day of April sunlight. It was so that he would wish us to remember him. If only the springtime of life did not pass so soon.

H. R. C. CARR

REV. J. E. GROSVENOR

Few men can have had a more full and varied life than Ernest Grosvenor, and one of his few regrets was that he did not begin to climb until he was about 38. He joined the C.C. in 1925, served on the Committee in 1944 and was elected a Vice-President in 1945. He was for many years a member of the Alpine Club and at one time President of the Midland Association of Mountaineers.

After leaving Harrow he joined the family carpet manufacturing firm in Kidderminster, and was its Chairman from 1923 to 1946 when he retired from business. During this period he entered the public life of Kidderminster and was Mayor in 1926. He was a Magistrate for Worcestershire for 25 years and High Sheriff in 1939, in which year he was made M.B.E. for political and public services.

During the 1914-18 war he served with the Worcestershire Regiment in France and Flanders, and was promoted to the rank of Major in 1917 and commanded the 181 Brigade Machine Gun Company in Palestine. On his retirement from business, at the age of 60, he was not prepared to be inactive. He began his theological studies and two years later was ordained. He served as Curate in his local parish until shortly before his death at the age of 75.

Grosvenor never had any ambition to be a climbing "tiger", but he nevertheless enjoyed many visits to the Swiss and French Alps, climbing with or without guides. He had also climbed in the Dolomites and Corsica.

When over 60 years of age he did the Dent Blanche from Arolla. He climbed a lot in North Wales and was a very sound leader on

routes up to V.D. or mild Severe standards. He usually stayed at Helyg, and his first visit was memorable. I well remember the sight of his tall figure in the door of the old cottage, holding in his arms a 4½ gallon barrel of Joule's Ale, his favourite beverage. When he brought in his case of food it was found that his butler had packed a variety of delicacies but no bread, butter, sugar, etc.!

From the first Grosvenor was completely happy with the Helyg life of those days, and proved to be a most amusing and entertaining companion. The novel experience of cooking his own meals and helping with hut chores appealed to him immensely. He also liked the evening parties at Cobden's Hotel.

Only once did I see any sign of ill-humour. I was representing the C.C. at the M.A.M. Dinner in Birmingham, Grosvenor being President at the time. I was invited to stay at his house with L.S. Amery and General Bruce. There was a most entertaining conversation between the three old Harrovians till the early hours of the morning. Next day Bruce demanded to be taken to the Malvern Hills which he had never seen. Except during a stop for refreshment he slept soundly throughout the trip. His host was not amused.

When his daughter, Mary, was still at school, Grosvenor introduced her to the mountains and I was usually asked to act as second. We had many happy days on Snowdon and Tryfan. Later on she was to develop into a very sound leader and became a prominent member of the Pinnacle Club, a matter of considerable pride to her father. He will be remembered by his many friends in the Club and greatly missed.

STUART CHANTRELL

C. W. NETTLETON

It was in the late 1890s that I first met C. W. (Charlie) Nettleton. This was at Zermatt and he was spending a holiday there with his wife. He approached me on the question of climbing, and as a result he and his wife joined our party in the ascent of the Riffelhorn by the direct route up the face from the Gorner Glacier. He had climbed on the homeland mountains, but this was his first expedition in the Alps among intricate crevasses and really steep rocks. After that climb he became a very keen cragsman and especially revelled in the icy heights — the Matterhorn, Monte Rosa, the Weisshorn and all those wonderful peaks surrounding Zermatt.

Many of these giant peaks he climbed in later years; but perhaps his favourite region was the Bernese Oberland, where he met Christian Jossi, the famous guide with whom he climbed for many seasons and got to know the Grindelwald mountains almost as well as he knew the high places around Pen-y-Gwryd.

He became a close climbing friend of my brother and myself and spent many happy hours climbing in Snowdonia with Welsh enthusiasts, including one of the greatest climbers of the day, O. G. Jones.

Although Charlie Nettleton climbed in the Lake District and visited other British crags, he probably liked most of all the mountains of North Wales and especially the area around the Carneddls including the Black Ladders and Craig-yr-Ysfa. He much enjoyed the rugged crags of Tryfan and the Glyders where he joined in many first ascents. The ultimate success of the Climbers' Club was partly due to his keenness.

He often came to Cumberland and his favourite mountain here was the Pillar Rock, where he did some pioneering climbing on it and its surrounding cliffs.

He was a very likable, friendly and kindly man, and invariably on his visits north he called to see me at my Keswick home. When my brother and I went on our yearly visits to the Alps in June, he, living in London, would meet us at Victoria Station, where we broke our journey to spend a happy hour or two with him before we continued on our way.

He was also a motoring enthusiast and had a full knowledge of most of the high Alpine passes.

Latterly his visits were much concerned with his large and valuable collection of Alpine and Mountain books, and also archery of which he and his wife were keen supporters.

I shall always have the happiest memories of Charlie Nettleton.

GEORGE D. ABRAHAM

JOHN GEOFFREY THOMPSON

The sudden death of Geoff Thompson on April 2nd, 1962 at the age of 45, following an operation, has brought great sorrow to all his many friends.

Although he had scrambled from boyhood on the Derbyshire gritstone edges and climbed in the Alps before the war, his most active climbing period followed his release from the R.A.F. in 1946. For several years most of his holidays and many of his weekends were spent in the hills, where he became known and loved by an ever-widening circle of friends for his cheerful, kindly disposition, unfailing sense of humour, and constant readiness to help everyone with whom he came in contact. He joined the Climbers' Club in 1949 and was a frequent visitor to the Welsh huts. I was not privileged to join him on his summer holidays abroad during the next 10 years, when he climbed with many other members of our club in Norway, the Dauphiné, the Dolomites and the Alps. I will remember, though, how he returned each year tanned and fit, laden with maps and photographs, bursting with enthusiasm and full of plans for the next season's climbing.

Geoff was a careful and safe leader on steep rock who inspired confidence in all who climbed with him. Never rattled in any situation, a slight twitching of his friendly moustache was the only evidence of emotion within. He possessed great stamina and could climb all day on a handful of raisins and dried prunes. He had many other interests in the hills besides climbing; everything in the mountain world seemed to arouse his curiosity and wonder, and a day spent in the hills with him usually produced a keen discussion about, for instance, the history or people of the region or even, sometimes, just the weather. Such discussions could become heated, for Geoff was relentlessly logical and no respecter of "experts", whose explanations seldom fully satisfied him!

Of recent years his work interfered more and more with his outdoor activities, but he still retained a keen interest in every aspect of mountaineering, and was especially active in encouraging young climbers. A one-time president of Nottingham University Mountaineering Club, he was also a member of the Oread Club and of several caving clubs, for caving was second only to climbing among his interests.

He will be missed by people in many walks of life, by his many friends, his colleagues in business, his neighbours, but most of all by his family, to whom we express our sincere sympathy.

D. C. McKEE

GUIDE BOOKS

I should like, to make a plea for the re-arrangement of our guidebooks. The proliferation, both of very hard (I studiously avoid the words "difficult" and "severe" because of their special meanings) climbs, and of new crags on which such routes are to be found, is rapidly producing a situation in which one will need a trailer to carry guidebooks.

Of course this is the cue for the cry, echoing down the corridors of time from the nineteenth century, that we shouldn't have guidebooks at all; that they merely encourage undesirable competition; that half the fun is in finding one's own way; and so on. Equally of course these are not adequate reasons for not having guidebooks. Those who want the fun of finding their own way can have it very simply by not reading the books. But the price which they must pay for every hour of really enjoyable climbing of this kind is many wasted hours of boredom or frustration spent either on rocks which are much too easy to provide them with any fun or on rocks which are much too hard for them to get up. For myself, I usually prefer to spend my very limited time on climbs which I have good reason to believe are of the character and standard which are likely to give me a lot of fun without frightening me; and judging by the sales of guidebooks the majority of climbers feel the same way about it as I do.

To return, therefore, to the problem of the proliferation of guidebooks, I suggest that the solution is to be found by dividing them horizontally into two parts which would include, respectively, the easier and the harder climbs. Of course the two parts would have to overlap; if they did not an arbitrary and most undesirable "rock curtain" would be created. But only by some such device can our guidebooks be reduced to manageable numbers and proportions.

The kind of division I have in mind is that the guides for easier climbs should cover all climbs up to and including 5B while those for harder climbs should include all climbs graded 4A or over. I think this would give an adequate overlap and provide a reasonable boundary between the requirements of the beginner, the fortnight-once-a-year amateur, and the decrepit old-timer on the one hand, and the every-weekend-four-letter-anglo-saxon-or-bust professional tiger on the other hand. In other words, if my suggestion were adopted, since all climbs in which I might conceivably be interested would be in the easier book, I should be all right, Jack!

It will be seen from what I have said above that I am one of those fuddy-duddy squares who yearn for the out-of-date rationalism of a numerical system of classification. The futility of the verbal system is perfectly illustrated in J. A. Austin's article in the 1961 *Journal* about climbing in the Lake District, which culminates in the assertion that some climb is "Not over difficult either, just about Extreme"; and a little further on "... these climbs though not easy, rarely exceed Hard Very Severe standard". We also have the ludicrous situation in which the Fell and Rock Climbing Club (and also the Scottish Mountaineering Club?) refuses to recognize any category harder than Very Severe, so that in their guides climbs of that grade are getting ever more numerous and the grade less meaningful.

The suggestion that numbers give a false sense of accuracy is manifestly nonsense. You can, with them, convey just as much or as little sense of accuracy as you feel is justified in any particular case. When sure of your ground you can say firmly "4A" or "6B" as appropriate. If less precision is possible you just say "4" or "6" respectively. To be even more vague you can say "3/4" or "6/7", and so on. On the other hand if you want more precision, you can, with considerable economy of words, say "6B+" instead of "Hard Very Severe" (op. cit.). However, this is another digression; let me again return to the idea of double-decked guidebooks.

Such a division would also help us to rationalize the systems used to describe climbs, which at the moment are somewhat mixed. (These remarks are made with the greatest respect to those gentlemen who undertake the monumental and thankless task of writing these books). At the moment guidebooks are scattered along a continuum from the F.& R.C.C. "system" at one end ("... a tiny, narrow spotlight moving in a single line ...") to Menlove Edwards' *Lliwedd* style at the other, with every kind of intermediate style between. Nearly everyone praises J. M. E.'s style as the ideal although few seem capable of attaining it. (Or is it merely that they lack the literary self-confidence to try? I suspect that this is so and urge them to have a bash!) The S.M.C. authors come nearest, I think, W. H. Murray's *Glencoe* and Dr. McPhee's *Ben Nevis* being in my opinion very good guides cast in the J.M.E. mould.

Now I would suggest that if we adopt this two-tier system of guidebooks we might well aim at a different general style in the two. The easier books should be, in the main, in the J.M.E. style and only occasionally should it be necessary to revert to the pitch-by-pitch "system". The harder climbs, on the other hand, I think possibly (though I cannot speak from personal experience) demand the more detailed pitch-by-pitch—indeed almost, on occasions, move-by-move—descriptions. This however should not preclude a general description at the beginning giving a broad view of the climb and the line it takes; and it would not prevent this being all that was needed when a climb follows an obvious natural and unmistakable line.

A further considerable advantage of a two-tier system of books is that it would make the problem of keeping guides up-to-date much easier. In the old-established climbing areas it is rare, nowadays, for a new climb to be discovered which is grade 5 or easier. Hence amendment of the easier guidebooks would seldom be needed; a small appendix in reprints would cope with the occasional new discovery. Clearly the harder guides would need more frequent revision, but the ground to be covered would be much smaller than at present. Furthermore a division of labour among the overworked guidebook writers would be possible, since it would be possible for different authors to write each of the two books for a given area provided they co-operated on the climbs which are to appear in both books. And finally the field of possible authors would be widened thus enabling the load to be spread.

At present authors of guides must be chosen from the small group of climbers who are capable of doing the hardest climbs. Of course climbers of this class would still be needed to write the harder guides, but authors of the easier guides could be chosen from the wider field of climbers who are not quite so expert. Indeed they might do better in so far as they might more readily appreciate the

difficulties of the humbler climber. The occasional failure of Menlove Edwards in this respect, which sometimes caused him to dismiss difficulties too casually, was the cause of the one weakness in his guides—a weakness conspicuously absent from those of Colin Kirkus and Tony Moulam.

Let me add one final suggestion on the preparation of guidebooks. It is that drafts of descriptions of climbs should be made available before the guide is published. Climbers could then submit comments on the draft which should aid the author in deciding whether his description is satisfactory. I know from the experience of trying to write Artillery Training pamphlets during Hitler's war how easy it is for an author to imagine that his writing is a model of concise lucidity only to find that it is completely misunderstood by its readers. The best safeguard against this danger, and indeed defects of any kind, is that which was (and no doubt still is) applied to Artillery Training pamphlets and is today applied to British Standards: to submit them in draft for the comment of as many potential users as possible. It should help to obviate the kind of mistake which has been perpetuated in the guide book description of "Hope" for the last quarter of a century. Menlove Edwards inadvertently left one pitch out of his description and the mistake has never been corrected. Admittedly it was an easy mistake to make: on two consecutive pitches you go more or less straight up on good holds and end at a restricted stance with a mediocre belay in the corner by the right-hand wall; but it is none the less disconcerting for someone who doesn't know the place—who is the person who needs the guide!

No doubt this last suggestion will be derided by many who will say that it would make the whole business of guidebook writing too elaborate and ponderous. But actually I think the reverse is the case: by spreading the load over a much larger number of people the labour of the author could be much reduced. Given sufficient co-operators, he could write the book without bothering to leave his armchair!

D. D. YEOMAN

REVIEWS

THEY SURVIVED: A Study of the Will to Live. By Wilfrid Noyce. (Heinemann, 25/-)

When John Morris reviewed this book in one of the Sunday papers last year (it was published about three months after the death of Noyce) he began by saying that any reviewer who knew about the author would be anxious to praise it. It will be accepted that this reviewer is of the same opinion. But, although exciting enough and highly interesting as a series of accounts of men and women in frightful situations, the book fails when the time comes for conclusions. As an example Noyce equates the spiritual behaviour of two Eastern mystics, taking themselves out from the world of reality, with the "sitting" capacity of a low intellect Scottish coalminer of the eighteen-thirties. The experiences of the latter, trapped in his pit, chill the blood, but are in no way comparable to the voluntary releases from the body sought by the *sadhu* and The Hermit.

But who would wish to chop logic with a dead friend? What matters to us, now, is what Noyce himself believed about bodily survival under stress, and here the book is specific. By the time he had finished writing it Noyce had learned a good deal about himself and was shying away consciously from excursions into physiology and theology, medicine and psychology. He had become attracted to the idea of the tangible and actively helpful "second self" — at no point does he refer to the ancient Christian belief in Guardian Angels — and to the repose brought by prayer. He himself, he tells us, "beat down" any prayer "rising in the throat in a tricky position on a mountain". He felt that such a prayer was a request rather than a communion and "that it made nonsense to ask for things in a crisis unless one's whole life was of a pattern into which such a prayer naturally fitted". It will be seen that Noyce belonged to that wonderful breed of men who even at the point of death will not attempt to make a bargain with God. Such men are not well equipped to examine the motivations in the rest of us.

The Bibliography shows that Noyce had read widely in preparation for this book, and yet the omissions are startling. The African explorers and missionaries are not mentioned and there is nothing about the horrors endured by prisoners of Red Indians who kept their victims alive for weeks. The Desert Hermits survived on their pillars and in their caves long enough to become public scandals; and it is not many years since a Lord Mayor of Cork offered from an English prison a fully documented case history of the time which may be needed to kill the human body. Some experiences of that kind considered in detail would have given weight to this book, as would have some thinking on paper about the Shavian theory of the Life Force.

All of us are aware that Christians can survive indefinitely the torments and vicissitudes of the human condition. But so can, and as frequently do, the Buddhist, the Mussulman and the Pagan; the lunatics of old, chained, like wild beasts, in their Bedlams; the slaves on the long road from the Congo to Virginia; the forgotten political prisoners of every civilization. Were they all or any of them sustained by "second selves" or prayer? Our Lord was dead after three hours on

the Cross, but the legs of those crucified with Him had to be broken until they died. These are matters from which Noyce, perhaps rightly, turned away, but they lie at the heart of any serious work about survival.

It is assumed that every member of the Climbers' Club will buy and read this, the last book of one of our greatest members. It is with that conviction in mind that the slightly critical views in this notice are set down with diffidence and affection.

KEVIN FITZGERALD

HIGH IN THE THIN COLD AIR. By Edmund Hillary and Desmond Doig.

(Hodder and Stoughton, 30/-)

The writers of this book have put it together in the wrong order. They had a tremendous story to tell of high and desperate adventure on great mountains and they devote the first hundred and fifty pages to romantic nonsense about the Yeti. Undoubtedly this was to give the sponsors (World Book Encyclopaedia) value for their money—and they deserved it, they seem to have been most generous—but there has been so much boring journalism on this unrewarding subject in the last twenty years that Mr. Doig's contribution, through no fault of his other than a poor literary style, is almost unreadable. This reviewer for one can no longer take any more descriptions of brick tea, Sherpas' decorated boots, rancid butter, and disquisitions on reincarnation and the Buddhist philosophy.

Among the principal objects of the expedition was the wintering of a party of scientists at 19,000 feet. The account of how this party was established is consistently interesting and it is clear that the work done in the Green and Silver Huts will be of great value to climbers and to Medicine in general. We are told little enough about it in this book, but presumably scientific papers are already appearing in many specialised journals.

The ascent of Amadablam and the nightmare happenings on Makalu are extremely well described. This reviewer was sweating in his armchair at the sufferings and heroisms of sick and exhausted men overwhelmed by a whole series of misfortunes on Makalu, and it was with relief that he came to the delightful coda which describes the building and opening of World Book's gift school in the high Sherpa village of Khumjung.

K. FITZGERALD

THE CLIMB UP TO HELL. By Jack Olsen. (Victor Gollancz, 21/-)

This can be placed upon the shelves of unnecessary books. It tells the story of the Corti-Longhi-Nothdurft-Mayr attempt on the Eigerwand and its aftermath. Climbers will find in *The White Spider* all they want to know of this affair; the present work supplies some further details, particularly of the more unsavoury aspects. Perhaps future Alpine historians may find it useful, but one's confidence in its value in this respect is immediately undermined in the first few pages when one finds the Bernese Oberland described as the heartland of the Alps, the Jungfrau given as the highest peak of the Oberland and the word "Alp" used to mean "mountain peak" (in the invented term "Alp-watching").

But the book is probably intended neither for the climber nor for the Alpine historian, but for the general public, and in this market it is likely to do a considerable amount of harm and injustice to the climbing fraternity. The book is full of sensationalism; and, if one can overcome the initial repulsion to its subject and the author's approach to his work, it is quite a compelling story to read.

C. W. Brasher says in his introduction: "... nobody had ever properly researched or documented the story of that great rescue attempt of 1957 ..." — why should they?

J. NEILL and J. N. SLEE-SMITH

CLIMBING WITH JOSEPH GEORGES. By Dorothy E. Thompson. (Titus Wilson, Kendal, 25/-)

The publication of these reminiscences was undertaken by the friends of the author, who died in 1961, as a tribute to her achievement in the Alps during the 1920s. Her climbs were outstanding for a lady in those days and included the great ridges of Mont Blanc, the Aiguilles and the traverse of the Meije. Miss Thompson was indeed fortunate to be able to command the services of the best of the Arolla guides, a man admirably fitted to put a woman of fine courage and stamina at some of the best courses of the period. Mountain books nowadays are devoted to expeditions to remote ranges and to marvellous and prolonged acrobatics nearer home. Ordinary routes which thrilled us long ago are mentioned only in apologetic asides, and one doubts whether these simple stories will interest modern climbers; the shoe-strings of their holiday budgets are rarely long enough to fee a professional guide. The few who will enjoy the book on the basis of shared memories of the golden age of their youth are dwindling in number as the years move on. The writer is grateful to those who shouldered the burden of publication. They have enabled him to revive the picture of the charming little lady in whose climbing boots (largely displayed in the frontispiece) he would at times have dearly liked to have been. The illustrations, by well-known experts, are few but chosen with skill.

H. R. C. CARR

THE WELSH PEAKS. By W. A. Poucher. (Constable, 18/-)

CLIMBING WITH A CAMERA: THE LAKE DISTRICT. By W. A. Poucher. (Country Life, 35/-)

These two books are very different. *The Welsh Peaks*, subtitled *A Pictorial Guide to walking in this region and to the safe ascent of its principal mountain groups*, is organised on the same lines as our member's previous book *The Lakeland Peaks*, reviewed in the 1961 *Journal*, and suffers from the same fault as that work of having routes and other insertions put in on the marked photographs (the special feature of the book) in a rather untidy and unprofessional manner. But it is, this time, based in part on the 1-inch Ordnance Survey (though the text uses outmoded spellings of place-names, failing to use the corrected nomenclature of the Seventh Series) and there is no Welsh equivalent of

Wainwright to steal its thunder. Indeed, it fills a gap, in that there has recently been no good comprehensive book on walking in Wales in print; Monkhouse's pre-war *On Foot in North Wales* is by far the best which has so far appeared, and it is a pity that this has not been reprinted. Poucher's book covers the whole of Wales, including Plynlimon, the Brecon Beacons and the Black Mountains, which Monkhouse omits. The choice of routes described is a reasonable one, and their description is adequate. Any vagueness in the text is counterbalanced by the detailed manner of marking the routes on the photographs and maps. Such exactness is perhaps undesirable when the whole question of access to the mountains through the lower ground is under negotiation; and, indeed, trouble may be expected if an attempt is made to follow some of the lines through the lower ground marked by the author in the Nant Ffrancon, Nant Peris and Rhyd-ddu areas.

There are a very large number of spelling or typographical errors in place-names, which one hopes will be corrected if the book is reprinted.

Climbing with a Camera: the Lake District is to my mind the best picture-book Poucher has yet produced. The standard of reproduction is high, particularly of the colour photographs which he includes for the first time, and does better justice to his pictures than his previous books either from the same publishing house or from Messrs. Chapman and Hall, his other publishers.

J.N.

MONTAGNES DU HOGGAR. By Jean Marc Lhoste and Claud Aulard.
(Club Alpin Français, 18 francs)

Much sand has blown over the Sahara in the ten years since Bernard Pierre produced *Escalades au Hoggar*, which included the first climbing guide to the Hoggar mountains. Situated on one of the two main land routes across the Sahara, mid-way between Algiers and Kano, the Hoggar takes the form of a plateau about five to six thousand feet high, sown with strangely-shaped volcanic peaks varying in height from a few hundred to a thousand feet above the plateau.

In this lunar landscape French climbers (with occasional intrusions from Britain and Italy) have been increasingly busy since the year 1935 saw the conquest of Garet el Djenoun, Ilamane and Iharen. Bernard Pierre's excellent book, which contains a wealth of information about the area, had only a handful of climbs to record, whereas the present work devotes 133 pages to descriptions of routes.

Most of the obvious peaks within easy reach of Tamanrasset, the main oasis of the area and centre of French military control, now boast several routes. This is not to say that these peaks are worked out, since their organ-pipe formation gives a great many possible lines. The snag lies in the quality of the rock, especially on the South faces where it is fragmented by the fierce sun (even in winter the temperature ranges from over 100° in the non-existent shade to 20° of frost at night). Those looking for virgin peaks will have to travel (by camel) further afield, perhaps to the East where the elegant Immerrous has had as yet only one ascent and many of the neighbouring pinnacles are still unvisited.

Those surfeited with the cold and wet of European winter, who plan a visit to the Hoggar, will find this book invaluable. It is a pity that its format should

fall between the handy pocket guide-book, with diagrams but few photographs, and the large well-illustrated fireside volume. Rejecting the former, it yet fails to measure up to the latter. Instead it is of a size awkward to carry about, and is illustrated with photographs that fail to take advantage of the large format, and are of a quality far lower than that acceptable by present day standards: half the number of photographs twice the size would have been twice as good.

But perhaps this book has anyway come too late. It seems all too possible that the objective dangers inherent in the quality of Saharan rock may be augmented by the bullets of marauding Touaregs, now that Algeria has been freed from the yoke of French colonialism.

E. A. WRANGHAM

SELECTED CLIMBS IN THE PENNINE ALPS. Edited by J. Neill (Alpine Club Guide Books, Vol. 2, obtainable from Thomas J. Gaston, 21/-; or 18/- to members of the A.C. and A.C.G.)

The Alpine Climbing Group guidebook in English to the Valais Alps is basically a compression into one volume of the four volumes of the Kurz guide. The best climbs are there or nearly all there, and there is much elimination of dull screes. In it one will not find out how to ascend the Colle delle Pisse from Alagna, but not many of us will want to. This concentration on a few good routes makes the book very easy to read and follow, and much less research is needed to find and follow one's climb than in the parent volumes.

The actual route descriptions are translations from Kurz, but with added detail, and some clarification, which makes the translation an improvement on the original. The climbs are all graded, using the French system which is familiar to most English climbers, and this in the Valais Alps is an excellent innovation. The Kurz guide will have to follow suit, and then perhaps we shall see the end of that splendid phrase "ceux qui s'attaqueront a cette paroi n'ont pas besoin de conseils", which in 1963 is becoming a little dated.

There is not much to quibble at. One could wish that the best climb East of Saas Fee, the N. ridge of the Weissmies, had been included. Perhaps it is all too easy now. One misses the research, and the slow translation, dictionary in hand, of the Kurz days. It would be a pity if the English guide encouraged the already marked detachment of the English climber in Europe, but, because it is so good, and so indispensable, it is bound to, even if only a little. Every English party that I saw in Zermatt last year had the guide, and none of us ever had to ask the way.

H. G. NICOL

CLOGWYN DU'R ARDDU. By H. I. Banner and P. Crew. (Climbers' Club, 12/6; available direct from The Cloister Press to Climbers' Club members for 10/- plus postage.)

MOELWYNION. An Interim Guide. By J. R. Lees. (Climbers' Club, 3/-; available direct from The Cloister Press to Climbers' Club members for 2/6 plus postage.)

These two guides are as different as the areas they describe, but are both good of their kind. They come in time for the 1963 season; and it is certainly time that the mis-spelling "Clogwyn D'ur Arddu" was put right.

Ten years before the guide to Moelwynion appeared in the *Journal* the ascent of Chic started the Club's interest in these cliffs, but much of the ground had been explored earlier. Great credit is due to Johnnie Lees for unravelling the various conflicting descriptions to produce such a clear account. He keeps the latest nomenclature but also mentions previously followed lines and the responsible parties. The complicated history has been worked out by John Neill, and the third variant—the names of the cliffs—settled by local investigation.

Now with separate publication as an interim guide the area is ready for a final assault before *Snowdon East* is written. The rock-climbing is not great, but it is a valuable addition to the North Wales playground, where the moderate party can enjoy most of the climbs. At last the descriptions are available, and so some of the heavy traffic in the more traditional areas can be channelled away.

The guide to Clogwyn du'r Arddu is now about three times the size of the section given to it in Harding's *Llanberis*, but this is not surprising as 30 new climbs have been made in the 13 years since it appeared. In fact there are more new climbs than existed in 1950, a silent testimony to the ability of Joe Brown and his companions, and the impetus they gave to Welsh climbing. This guide-book is in the new style to be adopted by the Club in future, which is I think very good indeed. Practical plastic covers, and clean easily-read print and layout on the page, all make one wonder why it wasn't done before.

As to content, interesting geological and natural history notes add to the volume's value. The sketches by R. B. Evans are excellent and—dare I say it—even better than those in the F. and R.C.C. guidebooks. Descriptions by Banner and Crew tell one plainly what to expect and where to go, if a little dryly, and my only criticism is that details of first ascents have to be sought in a separate list at the end of the guide.

A. J. J. MOULAM

ROCK-CLIMBER'S GUIDE TO DONEGAL (Irish Mountaineering Club)

A provisional guide to Donegal, the first section being based on the typescript guide to the Poisoned Glen by our member Wathen. Much good climbing is described.

I still have a photograph of the cliffs in the Poisoned Glen which I took in 1936, while still at school. The first climb recorded in this guide-book was made 14 years later. As the authors of the guide say, it will be many years before the Donegal cliffs are fully worked out.

J.N.

ROCK CLIMBING. By Peter Nock. (W. and G. Foyle, 4/-)

INSTRUCTIONS IN ROCK CLIMBING. By Anthony Greenbank. (Museum Press, 15/-)

ARTIFICIAL AIDS IN MOUNTAINEERING. By Geoffrey Sutton. (Nicholas Kaye, 9/6)

Three more books in the recent flood of publications giving instructions in climbing technique. Both Nock's and Greenbank's books are intended for the beginner in rock-climbing and do not deal with the technique of harder climbing. Greenbank's book is comprehensive, and admirably written, and difficult to fault.

Its main drawback is its price, which is appropriate to a work covering a much wider field. Nock's book, although with some minor faults, is also very sound, and says all that is necessary briefly and pointedly, at a very low price; in fact it makes all other elementary textbooks seem superfluous. While both books indicate that there are other pleasures in mountaineering besides pure rock climbing, I prefer Nock's book for its greater emphasis on the desirability of a hill-walking apprenticeship.

Sutton's book in its very different field — that of artificial technique — is equally sound and almost faultless. But although it was published only last year it is already beginning to date — cf. its treatment of materials for ropes and of crash helmets.

If members wish to use copies of Nock's book in quantity for training purposes they may obtain them at special cheap rates; application should be made to the Hon. Secretary of the Club for further details.

J.N.

CLUB JOURNALS

THE year's crop of complimentary Journals shows, if nothing else, the large and growing number of clubs that feel it right and proper to produce a Journal. In a heap, they are seventeen inches high, weigh around forty pounds and vary from virtually illegible duplication to first-rate letterpress. S.A.C. members get sixteen publications in the year, while those of the S.M.C. have to make do with a meagre six articles.

Browsing through at an average of three inches a week has its punchdrunk moments; impressions fall pretty neatly into two slots, one of similarity and the other of atypicality. The latter are more rewarding than the former, though no one in his right mind (except a reviewer under orders!) should read the lot.

If you are crackers (or a reviewer) you will join in proposing a ban on any party or expedition with members from more than one club. The Nuptse expedition were a polyclub lot, and the fourth or fifth account adds little to the others. Also you will notice how certain routes reflect their status by becoming milestones in a club's progress. You will search in vain for anything new about the Badile or the Dru—except that yet another club has made it and will be on the Capucin or the Cima Grande next year.

Remaining on a premise of multi-bibliographical insanity, you will notice that Editors tend to be a conservative breed. With notable exceptions, they stick like P.A.s to a now regrettably hallowed format, roughly as follows:

- (a) Frontispiece, nothing to do with contents; 1 per cent.
- (b) Editorial appeal for contributions, usually forlorn, with threats to write it all himself; 4 per cent.
- (c) Articles of polyglot standards, often mostly from a small selection of authors ((b) above); 45 per cent.
- (d) Obituaries, mostly interchangeable; 5 per cent.

- (e) Parochial accounts of parochial meets, loaded with indigenous allusions; 25 per cent.
- (f) New routes—proud badges of club virility, probably mathematically related to (d) above; 20 per cent.

However, if you are not the kind of nut who reads the lot in the library, but can be selective, there are rewarding moments. Here and there a writer has read Geoffrey Young's appeal and let feeling show though the traditional mask of reticence. The *MAMJ* has an account of leading a Kelly route on Scafell which makes a staggering contrast with anything in the *ACG Bulletin*, where terse understatement is a virtue and subjectivity eschewed. The latter's misprint, one hopes, of 'Regufat' makes nonsense of at least one tale of West Face mythology.

For anyone who has had cold feet, Brad Washburn's account of frostbite in the *AJ* is a must, including, for the morbid, horrifying before-and-after colour pictures.

Tragedians can mug up in the S.A.C. review of 1961 accidents and trace 87 dead and 45 hurt, but who will not covet as an epitaph the line from an Appalachia accident report: "He was properly dressed and had good boots." Appalachia also advertise, in jolly style, courses and treks including one "over the summits of Mount Horrid"—Miltonian mountaineering?—and a session on "general hygiene for climbers", useful for our custodians? In this vein, the G.H.M. have an article by Magnone called "Should the Huts be burnt?" though obviously he is a good committee man and answers "No".

The L.A.C. have a delightfully chatty volume, packed with information, though the mind rather boggles at visualising the tag of "can write most mountaineering authors under the table" given to Gwen Moffat, or anyone else for that matter.

Scions of the British way of doing things and latter day imperialists will be fortified by Kenya M.C. whose criteria of grading appear exclusively geared to Cloggy, which is held in awe like a barely attainable Mecca. In parallel, the cult of personality is rampant in the *Year Book of the Ski Club of Great Britain*, where an Hon. Member of ours runs virtually a one-man show—probably with justification as he invented the thing, but it seems less justifiable to use it as a platform for political views and solutions to the ills of the world, which tend to be subjective and contentious.

The University lot range far and wide. Sheffield seem to write in a local dialect; maybe I'm not with slang, but they do produce the prize adjective, when the reply to an appeal for advice is labelled "taxidermistic". Cambridge give the personality-cult a wide berth, perhaps too wide, as one would welcome another writer of the calibre of McDonald to raise the standard a bit. Their Journal also confirms that the C.U.M.C. has gone ambi-sexual at last.

In conclusion, losing my ubiquity of reading for a desert island with an allowance of two, I would take the *ACG Bulletin* to light my first fire and the *GHM Annales* to read.

JOHN LONGLAND

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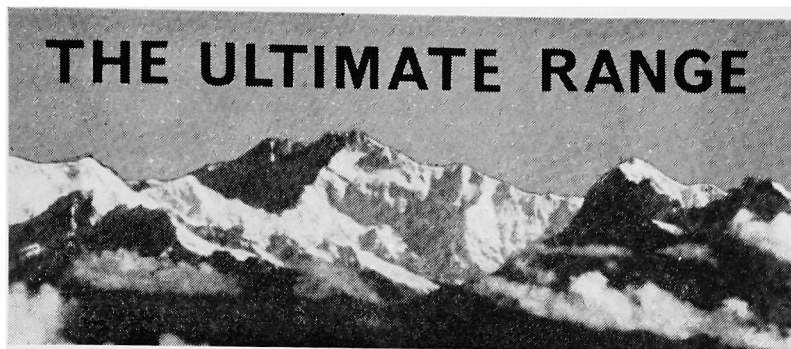
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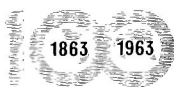
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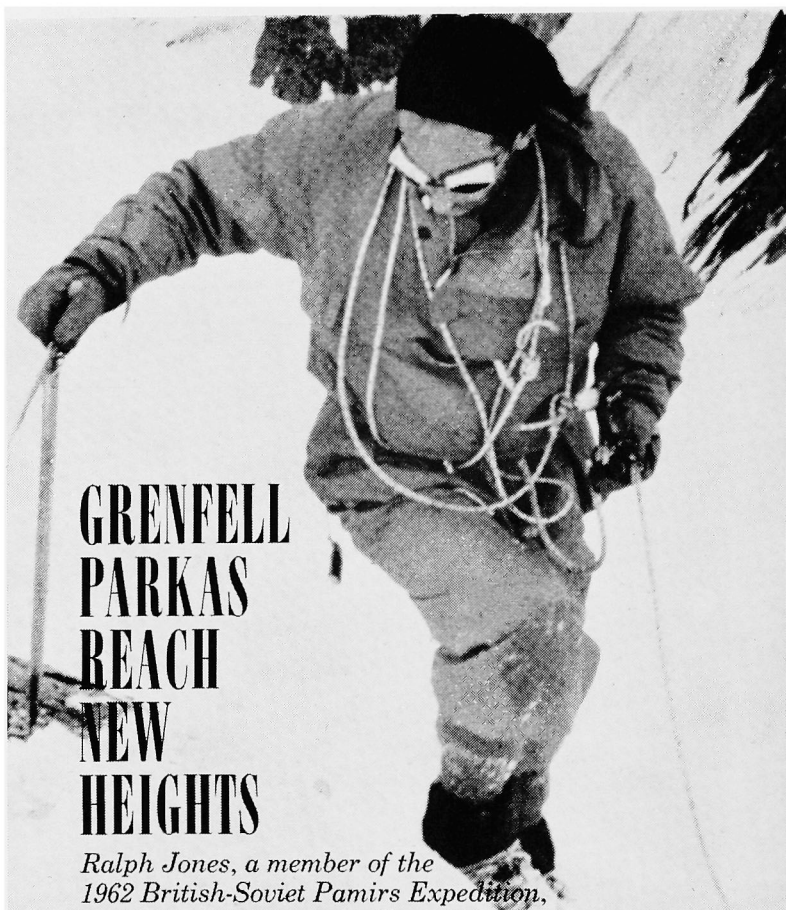
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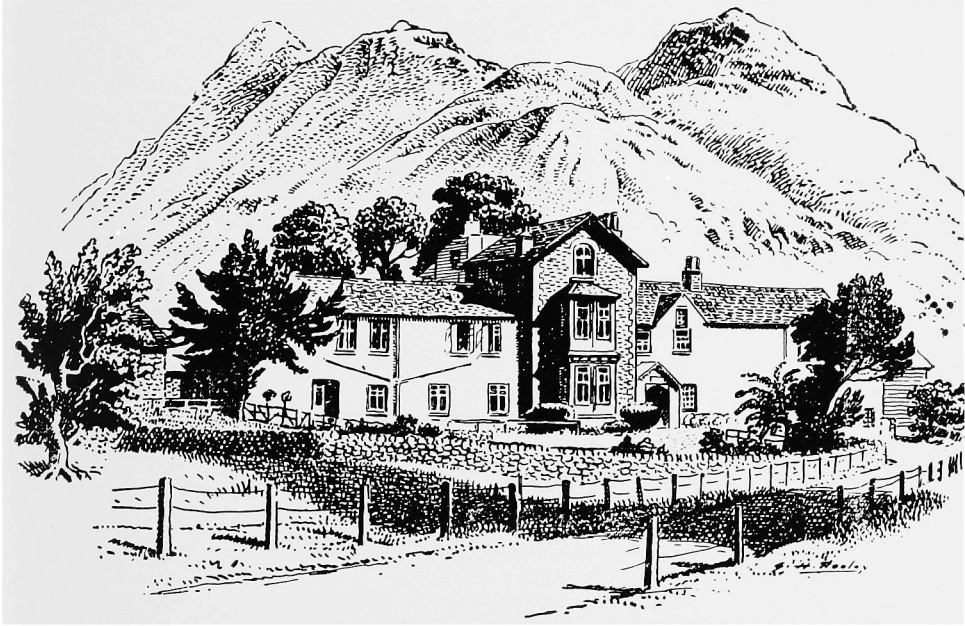
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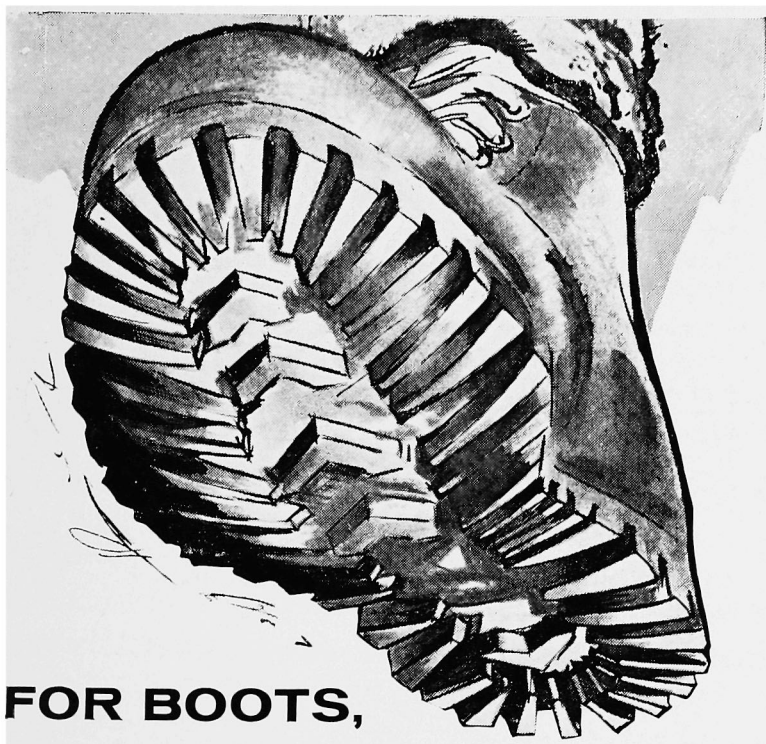
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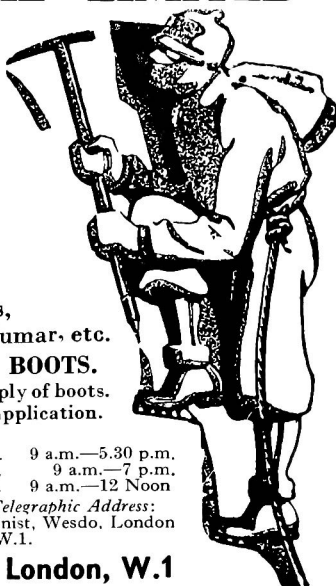
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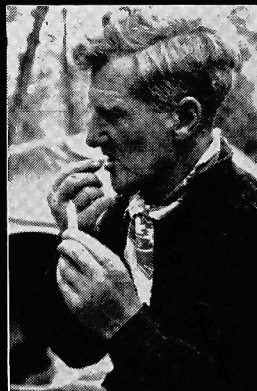
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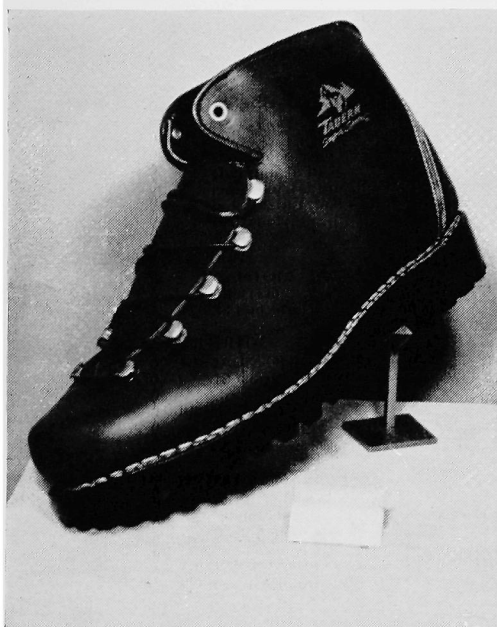
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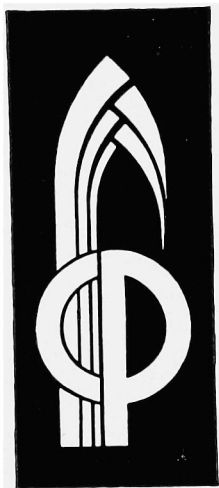
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