

THE
CLIMBERS' CLUB
JOURNAL

1978

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Edited by
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A BOX OF TRICKS AND A TOWER OF STRENGTH

BRIAN WYVILL

Lying in the upper berth of our one up, one down sleeper, I reflected on the preceding four weeks that had got Ben-Campbell-Kelly and myself to this dangerous eyrie half way up the East Face of Cerro Torre. It was the second of March 1978.

HONEYMOON

It all started when my girlfriend Joanne agreed to marry me. As she was an air-hostess with British Caledonian Airways I became entitled to cheap travel to useful places such as Buenos Aires. In the end the company sponsored the whole thing and so Ben brought his Norwegian wife Ida. The four of us spent a gruelling six weeks carrying gear into the Torre Valley, a somewhat unusual honeymoon.

Eventually all was ready, the girls left for home while Ben and I started up the East Face of Cerro Torre. Eschewing the traditional fixed rope approach we planned to move up the mountain in stages dragging all the necessary big wall equipment with us. At each stage we would erect our latest secret weapon, the Campbell-Kelly Box. The box was our living quarters, six foot high and six foot long it jutted out from the wall by less than two feet giving the appearance of a double decker coffin. In fact there was enough room for one to sleep on the floor and the other in a hammock suspended from the roof. When folded the contraption looked like a door and weighed about 30 Kg. The box would hang on a vertical wall and needed no ledge. Thus we had the advantage of a metal frame tent combined with that of a hammock.

WEEK ONE Labours under a snowfield.

Our first week on Cerro Torre passed off fairly uneventfully. It took all day to move box and five haul bags up a stage and the

hauling was about as easy as dragging a fishing net over a bed of nails. However we felt confident while the weather held.

A series of grooves and chimneys led a damp course to a large snowfield, a thousand feet above the glacier. There were signs of previous invaders to this alien vertical terrain. Pieces of rope and pitons dating back to Maestri's tragic attempt in 1959 when Tony Egger had been killed in an avalanche. There were also ropes left by the Americans, Donini, Bragg and Wilson when they climbed Torre Egger via the Col of Conquest. We greedily gathered all useful gear and hauled it up with us. The mountain was far from silent. All day long a steady stream of ice crystals bombarded us. Now and then a vast avalanche would crash down Torre Egger or the West Face of Fitzroy sending echoes all round the valley. Ben swarmed up into a chimney and was promptly attacked by a dense hail of ice crystals. Locked in the chimney's icy grip he could do little but yell and try to make progress when the worst had passed. Ben was in a black mood which was little helped by problems with a haul bag and a 200 foot snow plod which turned out to be two inches of slush over hard ice. Ben ("why didn't I take an ice screw") Campbell-Kelly at last reached the safety of a rock island and we learned not to underestimate even the easy bits on Cerro Torre.

The next day was the second big haul. The sun rose in splendid isolation in a blue sky that meant hell from the ice streaming from the summit mushroom. The ice crystals filled every available orifice, prevented movement and even thought. It was like a Chinese water torture. "O.K. I'll talk" I yelled, but the mushroom kept sending its gift.

We erected the box; it was at a most peculiar angle leaning casually on a slab at 70 degrees, this being the steepest piece of rock we could find.

WEEK TWO Learning to live vertical

The weather turned bad for a couple of days and we fell about like circus clowns while we tried to cook and live in our confined space. To add to our discomfort Ben threw one of the two water bottles into the box only to watch with silent tears as it bounced out of the other end and with a plastic death rattle disappeared over the edge of the ice field. Stepping out of the box next morning, my bladder bursting from the excesses of tea and watered down food, I casually

let go of the safety rope and slid towards the edge of the snowfield and a thousand feet of prayers to join the water bottle in the happy hunting ground at the foot of the East Face. Fortune smiled at me and I cheated my untimely demise by grabbing a trailing bunch of slings. A lesson in harness wearing at all times had been learned.

To the right of the snowfield a steep nasty gully spat boulders and lumps of ice when it erupted periodically as if the Torre was sneezing its displeasure at our intrusion. Did Maestri really climb up there? To the right again a narrow buttress snaked up to the dominating feature of the North Eastern edge of the mountain, a giant corner leaning drunkenly against the summit ice bulges. It took us two days of slippery slabs and tottering toe traverses to reach the groove. Mid-week rain and gloom held us prisoners in the box, writing letters to our wives and watching hopefully for the Cerro Torre abominable postman.

St. Valentine's day came and went with a deluge of ice crystals and on the next day we hauled the box over the dangerous gully, by means of an exciting Tyrolean traverse. The bags came up to the tune of drunken sailor and with high hopes we slept at our new box site ready to tackle the groove.

WEEK THREE A lesson in Euclidean geometry.

The box was perched at a more sensible angle by a tiny ledge. Above, the groove dominated the skyline and beckoned us to an early start. After two hundred feet of straightforward steep climbing, Ben led a wild traverse moving diagonally up rock leaning at an angle of thirty degrees over vertical. My pitch turned out to be equally steep; sometimes it was difficult to tell up from down. Jutting overhangs and huge, horrible flakes slowed progress but we revelled in the enjoyment of technical climbing in this awe-inspiring position. We finished the day when Ben took a flier as a skyhook move pulled away a tiny flake. Abseiling down was an unforgettable experience swinging out for thirty or forty feet as we shot over the lip of the steepest section. On the way down the silence was shattered when, in Ben's words, "the great granddaddy of all avalanches came past like a downward bound Saturn rocket".

The next day the climbing stayed difficult despite a slight relaxation of the angle. Ben's progress was snail-like up the slightly overhanging chimney, the mist was round us and the gloomy silence

did little to raise our spirits. I yelled up some encouraging words but all I could think of was fish and chips and Bradford curries.

The 18th was my birthday, we woke late and Ben gave me a special treat, a handful of raisins in the breakfast cereal. It was not an inviting day. The ropes hung ominously out of the mists like giant bell pulls to the gates of heaven. Eventually Ben suggested a rest day and we passed the time with domestic chores.

On the 19th the weather grew worse still and we started the ritual of 'how long is it possible to lie in bed before being forced by nature to point Percy out of the box'. The day dragged slowly by and we read a chapter from the one remaining book. Somehow the other had been dropped along with my head torch and personal goody bag some days ago. The next day we felt better as we went back up the groove and some easy cracks brought me speedily to an impasse where they petered out. Ben cursed as I spent an age trying to sort out a complicated pendulum solution to the problem and ended with forty feet of enforced protectionless A3 climbing. An angry Ben swept past and reached the first ledge in 600 feet. That night our last torch bulb gave out and we were left to cook in the darkness and contemplate our bad luck.

WEEK FOUR The days of the long nights.

A brief but fierce storm kept us box bound for four days when we gladly came out to stretch cramped muscles and I stretched my neck up a crumbling crack to a belay in an outrageous position wedged across the chimney. I froze while Ben battled with an uncooperative nine inch crack through an overhang. I'd never seen him so intimidated before. It wasn't just the technical difficulty, the reality of over three weeks in the vertical was wearing us both down. With the top of the groove in sight, the cold and deteriorating weather got the better of us and we slipped down the now familiar rappels to face more days of storm. Our efforts at energy conservation consisted mainly of lying in bed planning eating orgies of Roman magnificence. Ben had charge of the cooking and after each meal we would eagerly take turns in using the stove as a foot warmer until the last vestiges of heat had been sucked away. The all pervading damp ran in rivulets down the walls of the box and we constantly sponged away in a half-hearted attempt to keep our home dry. The problem was solved when the cold froze even the inside of the walls.

On the 27th February we agreed that our rations could be stretched until the ninth of March, just eleven more days; a good thing it wasn't a leap year. Time crawled. We sat back to back, each of us in his own private reverie. On the first of March my sincere wish to climb Cerro Torre faded in the agony of the loss of my tooth brush. The next day I finished reading the book ('V' by Thomas Pynchon) and realised that enough was enough. During the night the snow eased and even the perpetual wind fell to an arrogant whisper. The temperature perceptibly rose and about 2 a.m. I was further awakened by a deafening roar – we were in the path of the Cerro Torre Express. The box trembled beneath big whooshers number one and left us both quaking in fear of another snow avalanche. Two more big whooshers left their mark on our already tired nerves and we were thankful when on the 3rd of March the temperature dropped back below zero and we took the opportunity to make our escape from the waking giant.

Summary:

An attempt on the East Face of Cerro Torre by Brian Wyvill and Ben Campbell-Kelly during February/March 1978. The high point was about 1,200 feet below the summit.

MAN BITES LION

TREVOR JONES

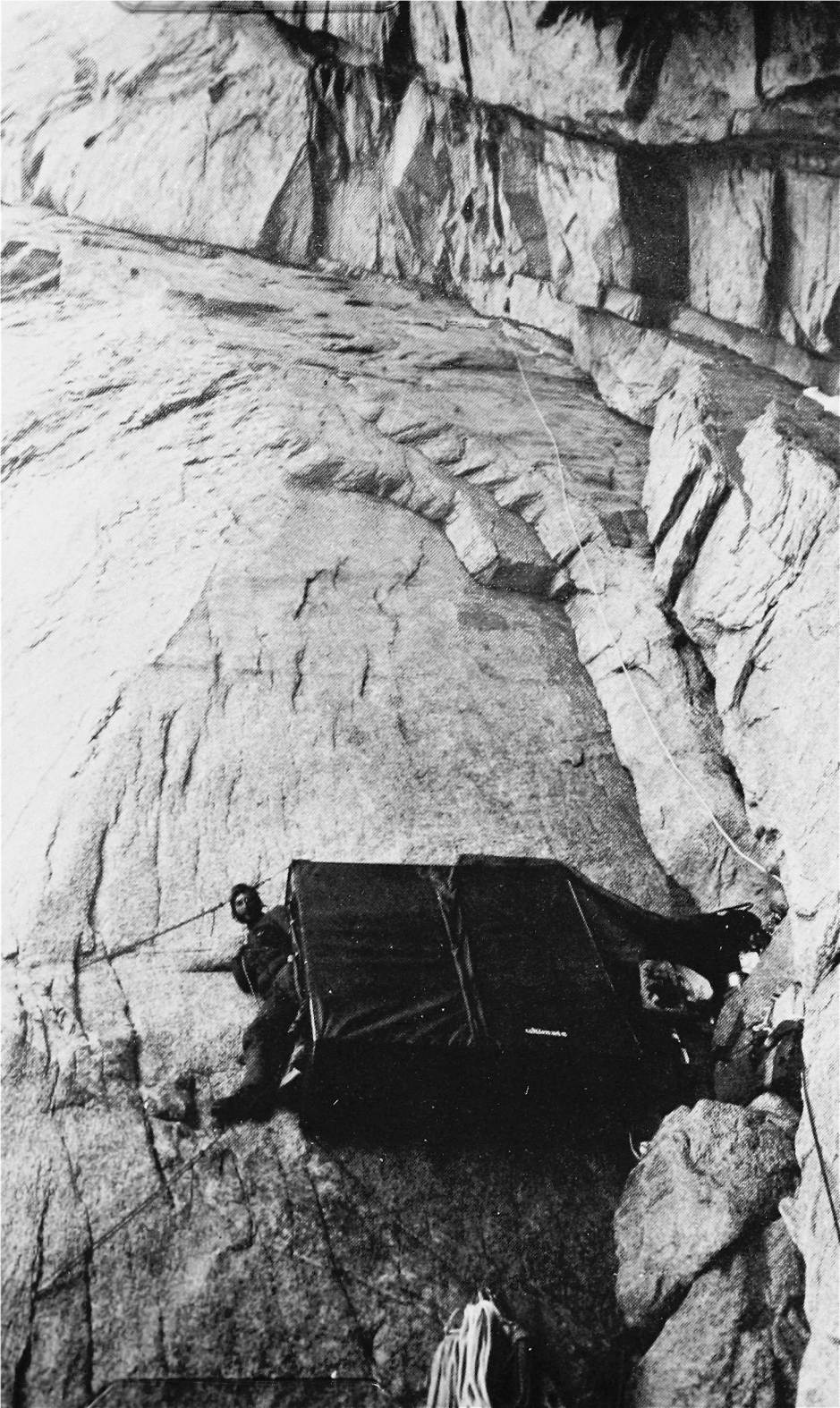
It was getting dark on the Kenyan border with Tanzania and as Anna put the tent up, as usual, I made certain that there were no animals anywhere in sight – that is as sure as you can be with half a million wild animals in one quite small Game Park and all quite intrigued by the scent of one over-ripe Climbers' Club Vice-President. At twelve o'clock we were woken by a deep growling outside and peering through the flap we saw a pair of enormous eyes, about five feet away – eyes like crinkly hut wardens who have discovered you asleep in bed after failing to sign in. Now years of Ynys Ettws camping had not prepared me for three lionesses which were 'playing' in the tropical night.

Unfortunately I had just read the Victorian Classic 'Man-eating Lions of Western Kenya' by Colonel Gilmore and an interesting story of one Superintendent Ellis who had been taken from the top bunk of a stationary train by a lion which put a large paw on the occupant of the lower bunk.

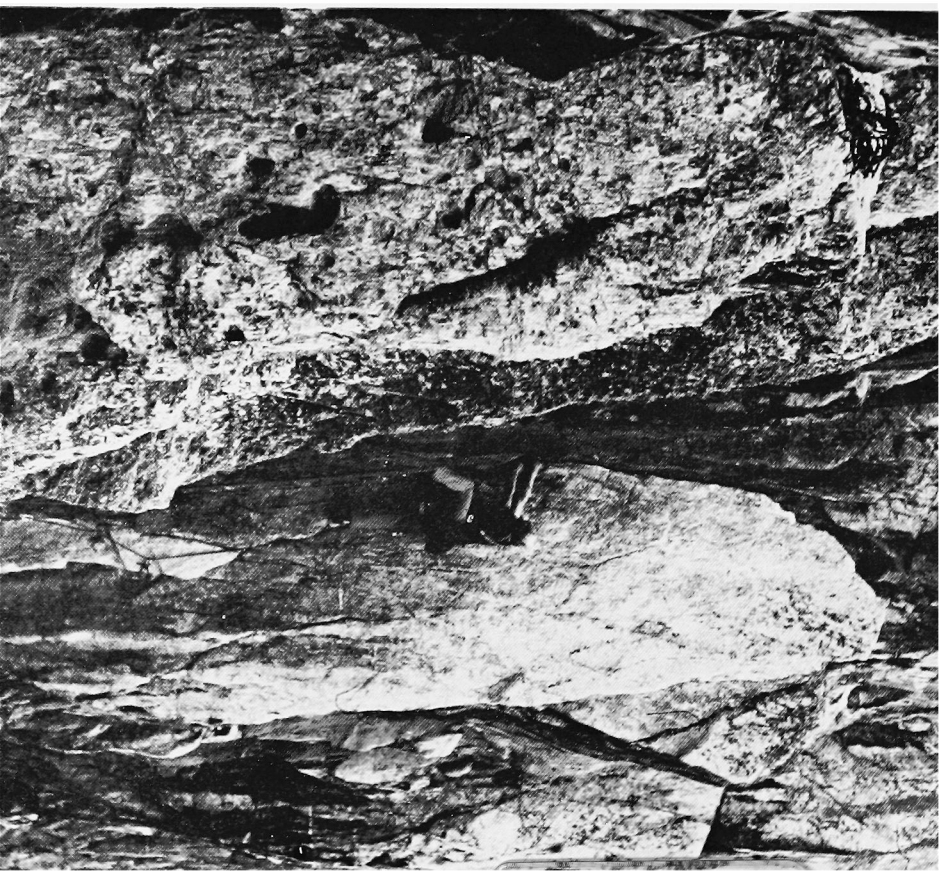
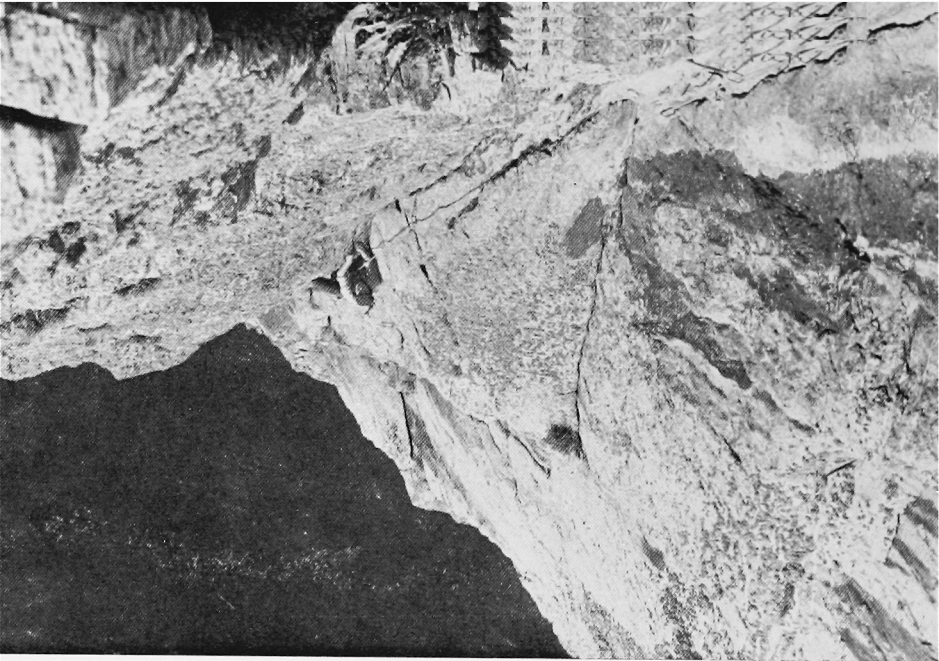
Gripping an ice-axe firmly, and trying to feel brave as one does before going down a free abseil I fortunately fell asleep again, much to Anna's annoyance as she had to stay awake all night until the lions finally went away much later.

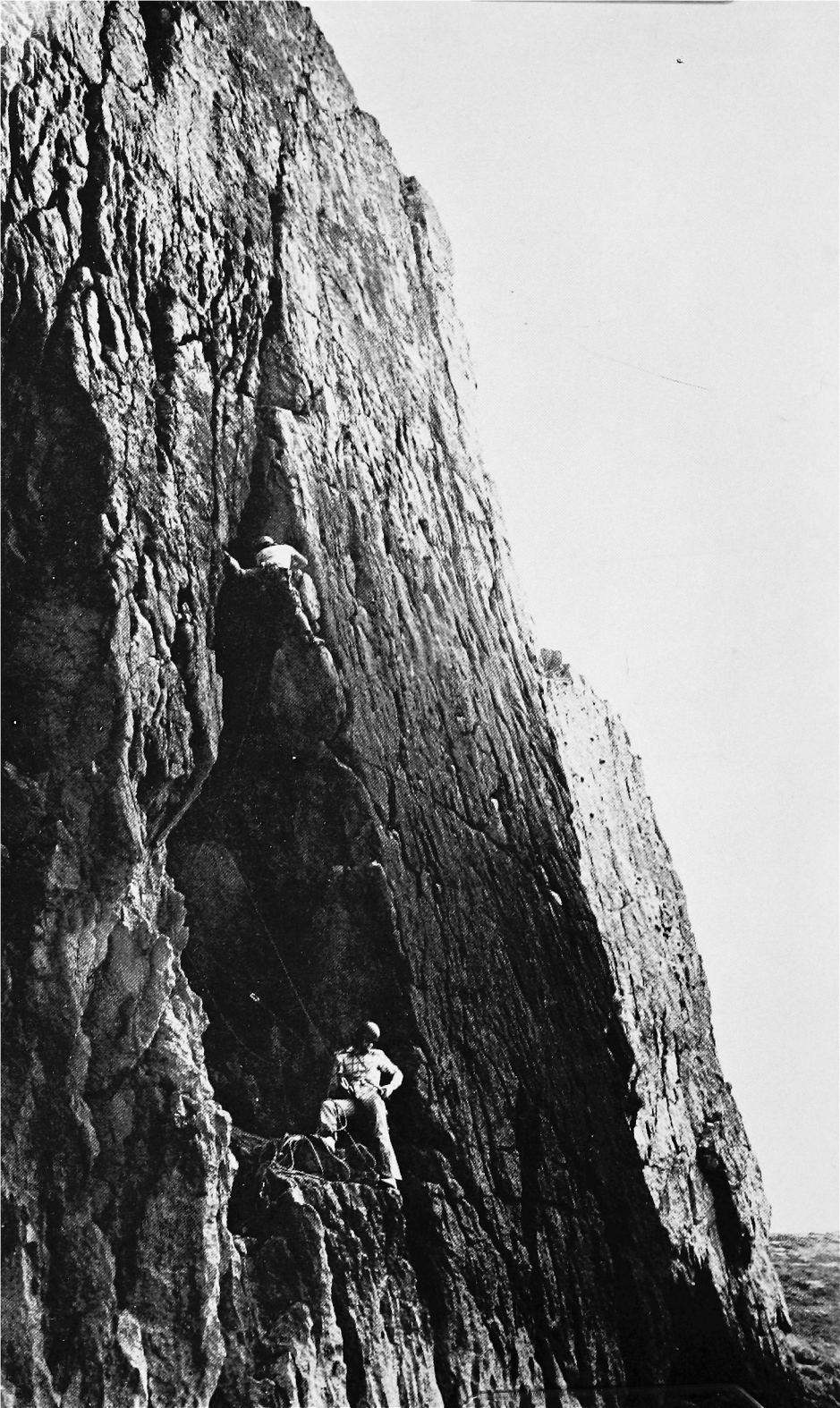
Next morning we drove very fast back to Nairobi to meet Mark Savage with whom I had arranged to climb on Hell's Gate, a superb crag in the Rift Valley, which is quite like three Gogarths on top of each other but is fifty degrees Fahrenheit hotter and with snakes in the grass instead of water.

I'd already had a bad time with Savage. We had gone up to Mount Kenya to the Top Hut – 10,000 feet of ascent and ten miles, in half the time that Doug Scott had done it. Mark seemed to think that as I









was in the Alpine Climbing Group I must have got winged feet, but Mount Kenya is another story.

"I'm going to dive and look at the crag, Trevor," Mark idly commented as he casually flicked the Cessna sideways and dropped from the sky into the valley of Hell's Gate, like a Kamikaze pilot. "Why don't you open your eyes and look at it?"

Eventually I opened them fractionally and read an old copy of Mountain which had a letter to the Editor from Pete Livesey:-

'... all kinds of silly jobs who bumble their way up Welsh Extremes with big wire runners above their heads.'

At last I had found my true description, 'a silly bumbly job'. Much to my surprise and great delight we landed on the bumpy airstrip by the side of Lake Naivasha with its tens of thousands of pink flamingoes which were obligingly waiting to be photographed by a still shaking Manchester tourist.

Ten minutes later we were bumping along the road, with both of us on his 250 c.c. *FUKYUKI*. It was twenty five years since I had been on a motor bike, when I was very young, and made contact with a tiny English tribe in North Wales – *ZINJANTHROPUS ROCKAND ICEEYE*, discovered by Dr. Louis Leakey to be still using straight stone axes.

There in front of us was Hell's Gate – two miles long and seven hundred feet high – and as we propped the bike under the only tree for miles Mark warned me, "Watch out for the snakes". Having already seen Black Mamba in Nairobi Snake Park and the printed information that a bite causes complete paralysis and death within four minutes, the vice-presidential pace slowed abruptly.

Our route was Olympian, 'one of the finest and most strenuous in Kenya' stated the guide book. As it was ninety in the shade and I had been unable to purchase my normal diet of dry Blackthorn cider and Mars bars I felt somewhat apprehensive.

The previous fortnight had been spent on the beach at Mombasa where I spent most of my time wandering along the coral reef half a mile out in the Indian Ocean. The view was nothing but waving palm trees and other boring tropical plants. It seemed ridiculous to be standing half a mile out in the Indian Ocean – a non-swimmer who hated such places, and at least four hundred miles from Hell's

Gate. Eventually I trod on a stone fish which died in agony thirty seconds later.

The route was seven hundred feet long and the first two pitches were superb gritstone cracks which gave out on to a big ledge where Lammergeyers had their nests. Lammergeyers are like feathered Boeing 747's and eat bone marrow after dropping bones onto rock. In fact Pliny the Elder was killed by a Lammergeyer which dropped a large bone on to his bald head. Just as the parent bird swooped over us I cringed nervously then quickly moved on to the next pitch, which brought us to the crux.

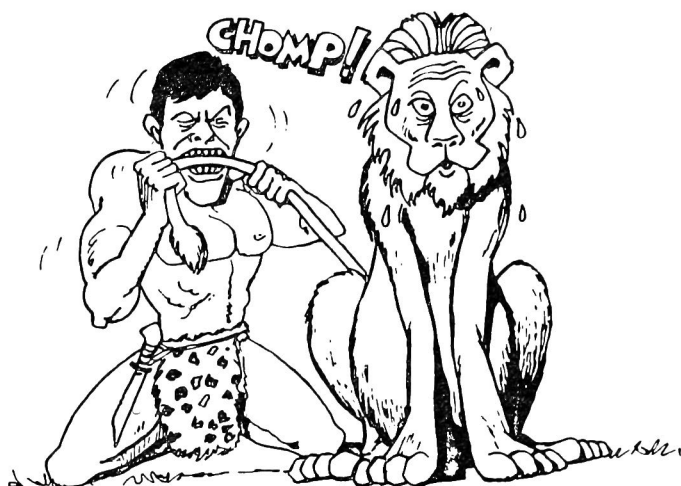
It was a forty-foot off-width crack which had only had three free ascents up till then. It was just like a Yosemite crack where you reach inside, turn and twist the locked palm and feel unsure, then look away just like J. Brown taught me, until it feels right. But it was Mark who finally made the fourth ascent of Olympian, E3, 5c, and ninety five in the shade – and a powerful performance it was, from a lad who has got no gritstone and can't go out at night because it always gets dark at 6 o'clock on the Equator.

The crack above was mine, tremendously exposed like Big Groove on Gogarth, but here the dark recesses with their repulsively slimy sides were full of evil bats which were squeaking and rustling too. The smell was awful and although the crack was a perfect sensuous hand jam crack it was a unique slot of wriggling, stinking squeakers all scuffling to get further back. Eventually I had to climb it but as I am used to crystalline non-bat Ramshaw Rocks cracks it was an unpleasant experience. Perhaps I had seen too many Frankenstein films when I was a child. Would I need a silver stake? (Note: silver stakes are not now considered ethical! Ed.) Anyway at least it was daylight.

The stance was microscopic with a Kilnsey-type roof jutting above it and I had lingering doubts about its safety. Were the belays really sound? I plucked at them, as one does in such situations; one came out and I immediately envisaged being thrown out in a great arc and thudding into the dusty ground with such a crash that the ensuing dust cloud would quite reach Bosigran.

After tiptoeing out right Mark said quietly, "I may come off". I could only mutter ten Hail Mary's in a row and then as if in answer his feet miraculously stayed on.

With the crux behind us there was only an easy summit gully, a prickly top and the heavy hum of Kenyan insects. On the way back to the aircraft we hit a rut and fell headlong into a ditch, much to the intense delight of the natives (!) who were working in the fields. As I lay there prostrate in the dust I could not but help notice what lovely white teeth they all had.



THE HANGMAN'S NOOSE

RON FAWCETT

To go it alone on the crags is seen by many to be a foolhardy risk of one's life, like those people who made the wearing of motorcycle crash helmets compulsory and endless laws and rules concerning the use of hang-gliders.

To me it is the prime method of climbing – to be free of the snagging rope, rack of runners and the weight they both combine. As a youth I used to potter about on small gritstone boulders gaining strength and confidence; the latter grew and I soloed higher, harder things. It just seemed the natural thing to do; cram in as much climbing the weather, daylight and my fingertips would allow. Going out on the gritstone mid-week on my own just seemed the best way to improve my climbing ability. When I say alone it was not because I preferred it that way, it was just that few people were around at that time, but on occasional forays to Almscliffe and Caley I would bump into Al Manson and his erstwhile sidekick Pete Kitson. Both were specialists on grit boulders and many hours were spent burning me off on the intricate problems they had perfected to a fine art.

I also used to solo the classic aid routes on the limestone crags around the Dales which provided good sport on wet winter days. On one occasion I had just completed the Superdirect over Kilnsey's main overhang and to save me the hassle of completing the final chossy pitch in the gathering gloom I abseiled off from just over the lip. Unknown to me the rope didn't reach and I ended up about twenty feet from the deck, spinning around on the hawser-laid ropes wondering what to do. I decided that the only way was to jump as I hated spinning round, so I tied a knot in the end of one rope let it catch in my descendeur and the other end shot up as I went down. About half way through my flight the abseil sling

melted through and not expecting such a rapid descent I hit the steep banking with a heavy thud and rolled down into a heavily swollen beck with the two ropes cocooned around me. I could just see the headlines in the local rag, "Climber drowns in beck whilst being throttled by his own ropes".

As I climbed further afield I soloed bigger, better things often because the people I was climbing with have had enough after two or three routes and I class a good day out as one when I feel totally wasted at the end. It was a day like that when I soloed November and Shadow on Clog. We had done Great Wall, Silhouette and Medi and Gibby wanted a doss in the sun so he wandered off round the lake. As I hadn't done either Vember or November I plodded up the drainpipe crack onto the big ledge where the routes divide. Tom Jones had just strolled up November so I went for that.

I really surprised myself by not blowing my cool; every move seemed well within my mental capabilities and luckily there seemed to be a good jam or fingerlock after every hard move. I find it very reassuring once I can cram my meaty digits in some crack or other.

The worst fear I had was wondering if there was going to be a hard move high up which might require the use of a doubtful hold. When one is using a shaky fingerhold with a runner by your waist it is no sweat but when you are looking at a 200 foot ground fall it is totally gripping. I find the worst situation to be in is one where you have to totally commit yourself on a series of moves that you couldn't reverse, doing a move that you couldn't get down off and being faced with a similar move above; man, that is when soloing gets really scary. Luckily November was nowhere near like that. It was just very satisfying – a real buzz-route.

On another occasion I happened to be at Gogarth on my own, a stupid situation to start with, so I wandered along the sea level traverse wondering if I dare solo Big Groove. I had only done the route once before, about six years ago in fact, and I remember finding it desperate with the top peg for aid.

At the ledge below the crux pitch I recalled the last time I was there with a friend who tragically lost his life whilst climbing alone at Gordale Scar when a thin prussick sling failed. Other people were on the route so I couldn't sit around pondering all day. The first wall

went with no bother but the little traverse right seemed really slippery. I don't like trusting my feet when soloing but there was no other way but to teeter across to the good crack. Up this, no sweat, then at the top I was in a quandary; which way now? The crack continued up to the right but would I be able to get back left onto the stance. The thin little corner above was where I had my past grip so I knew that it did 'go' in that direction. I teetered up into the corner; the rock seemed so smooth and I was really sweating – would my feet stick? I committed myself to the move and went for it . . . Right foot in the groove, left foot out on nothing. I was sure there must be a good crack in the back because there was no peg in now, but no way. I could hardly get my finger nails in never mind a digit. I kept trying to bridge up, gain a little ground, but my foot was slipping or so I had convinced myself. Luckily my left hand groped out onto the rib in the usual piano player's panic and manna from heaven, a super little fingerhold appeared; a quick pull and I was on the ledge wondering if the Acapulco high divers could stand a dive from here.

The last pitch went easily but my legs ached with the bridging. When doing such a route in 'normal' style one has a rest on the belays but when soloing 'on sight' it's just go for it; to linger on hard ground I find gripping. The mind starts playing games, telling you that hold is loose or the E.B. is going to roll off that tiny edge, but that is all part of the game – to have one's neck in the noose and manage to pull it out at the last moment. But will the trapdoor ever open below my feet, I often wonder.

Whilst soloing the Voie de la Demande in the Verdon this summer I thought I had pushed the boat out a little too far. After a glance at the topo I decided that once I located the bottom of the route it should be no problem; just follow the crack for 1,200 feet. The first two-thirds were really enjoyable, mainly finger and hand jamming with the odd groove thrown in for variation. I then came to this evil looking off-width slot about sixty feet long and overhanging. Stopping for a quick blow below I assumed that it must be the route so I ambled up, well up the first thirty feet because there were grips which then ran out. The crack was smooth, leaning and a vicious width; jamming half a cheek in I struggled up, made a desperate move and decided that I could never reverse that without taking to space. I urgently tried to jam myself further into the bowels of the crag but it wouldn't accept even my meagre frame. In

desperation I cranked my right elbow across and clawed at a minute rugosity with my left hand; it was just enough to wrench my buttock out and jam it in a foot higher. I fondled the ground I had so painfully gained, a flake came to hand and it was all over. The final chimneys were a stroll by comparison. I later found out that the route moves right up an easier groove. What a sickener, nearly creaming myself on a variation.

Obviously soloing is a very personal thing, I love it, many hate it, those people make it quite obvious when I solo past them. But does the soloist make sarcastic comments about their pulling on runners placed every ten feet whilst carrying more gear than you could use on a 150 foot aid pitch? I doubt it.

("I am afraid I have no good pictures of me soloing, usually I am on my own.")

I GET HIGH

MARK VALLANCE

Starting up in business is like having 120 feet of rope out, no runners, and a 5b move in front of you. Sometimes it feels like that for weeks on end.

I prepared to jump. The weather was perfect; clear sky, hard frost, a scattering of snow. The camera team was in position and waiting, the radio mike turned on and recording. I climbed past the top Friend, feet above it, climbed a bit higher - "Hell, I'll give them a real show," and I climbed a little higher still. Then I jumped. As the rope tightened my belayer was jerked upwards onto his Friend and the breath was knocked out of me. I was lowered to the ground - no need for 'a retake'.

The five minute episode on B.B.C's Tomorrows World Programme went out at the end of January 1978 and a six year secret was out.

I first met Ray Jardine in the summer of 1972 in Colorado on my way back from the Antarctic. We were both working for Outward Bound at the time and between courses we climbed together. Though I did not know it then, he was carrying the first prototype Friend around with him - four cams on a shaft with no stem and no trigger - it needed four hands to get it out!

We climbed quite a lot in Rocky Mountain National Park and Eldorado Canyon. In Eldorado I particularly remember having a hard time on Yellow Spur in a very battered and toeless pair of Robbins boots. The 5.10 face climbing beside Kor's old bolt ladder, 6,000 feet above the canyon floor, for someone who had just had a two-year lay-off from rock was a joke. Climbing in the Robbins boots, I soon discovered, was just a Yanky ploy to give the 'know-all' British a hard time - trouble was I couldn't find any E.B.s.

I soon learned the technique of 'off-width' cracks, (Ray was really into 'off-width' at the time). Having learned the technique all I had to do now was build up my strength to be able to apply it. For this,

frequent visits to the gymnasium and 'the wall' at the beautiful University of Colorado campus in Boulder were called for, followed by bouldering at Flagstaff Hill below the Flat Irons.

Another lesson I had to learn was 'ethics'. Being a know-all Brit. I thought I had ethics off to a fine art, (using aid was O.K. so long as nobody saw you). I was belayed to the bolts at the end of the first pitch of George Hurley's route on 'The Book'. We were doing an early free ascent and Ray climbed down, around and couldn't get back into the crack. "Why don't you just stand on my shoulder," said I stoically, (Ray weighs 13 stone). "You're attached to the bolts. If I so much as touch you that'll make it A1."

My first experience of Friends was much later, in 1975. Ray was very secretive at this time, carrying a blue nylon bag around which clinked and rattled. It was another hot day and we were below Washington Column. I was sworn to secrecy before being shown the contents of the bag.

Ray's prototypes were an odd selection, some beautifully made, polished aluminium, carefully filed edges, sophisticated trigger attachments, 'J' slots for holding the triggers in the closed position ready to fit straight into cracks; others just slung together to test out a new idea but retained in the armoury because they worked.

A climber, John Dill, whom I shared a drink with one night, on hearing that I had been climbing with Ray said, "Have you climbed with any of his Friends?" "What do you mean?" I asked – it seemed like an odd question the way he said it. "Oh – I just thought you might have climbed with some of his Friends". Then it clicked – I was talking to one of the initiated. Even the name Friends arose out of the secrecy. Kris Walker wanted to ascertain whether Ray had the bag of Friends with him whilst they were with a number of other climbers. "Have you got the bag of Friends, Ray?". The name stuck.

That day's climbing on the Column we made the first ascent of Power Failure and I learned a good deal about the Friends. One of the belays was from two No. 4's in a vertical crack. As I hung there in my slings the Friends seemed to move – my God they did move! I kept absolutely still – sweating. Then I started to get cramp and had to shift my position. They moved again. I watched, fascinated. If I

moved upwards they swivelled to point at me. However I moved they aligned themselves with the load. We had to go back next day to finish off the route and I got a really dirty 5.8 pitch and Ray got a beautiful little finger crack but we spotted a really big straight-in crack over to the right, which we climbed the next day and called Dwindling Energy. The big crack was a mind-blower with a 100 feet of – but for Friends – unprotectable jamming, followed by a layback to a stance under a roof which provided the crux at 5.11 to land us on Sudden Comfort ledge.

Next day it was my turn for a hard lead and I chose Gripper down on Arch Rock – great to be able to just climb and leave the protection to the Friends. Later on it was really frustrating climbing with other people and not having the Friends – seeing the opportunities and not even being able to talk about them. I'd hoped to do Nabisco Wall but by the time I'd got up the long layback of Waverly Wafer, having forgotten my chalk on what was an exceptionally hot day and nearly fallen off at every move – we roped off; but if we had had Friends.....

We talked at length about getting the Friends on the market and Ray said he'd got various plans. I gave him some money to send me a set as soon as they were available and even suggested that it might be possible to make them more economically in England – the big problem was getting them on the market at a realistic price. When you think that a wired nut costs from one to two pounds and it is just a lump of aluminium with two holes, wire rope and a swage – Friends with their twenty-seven parts, as many holes to be drilled and scores of assembly operations were going to be very expensive. About a year later Ray sent me a letter to say that if I personally made the Friends he would give me a world wide licence to produce. Six months later Ray was in England and we spent a hectic two months working on the details and doing a lot of climbing. Ray really liked gritstone and did a lot of routes.

I couldn't find anything hard enough for him. Jim Moran commented to me later that Jardine just eats cracks. This followed a day at Cratcliffe when we did all the routes and Jim had been most impressed by the protection point he'd seen in the layback of Five Finger Exercise – "I've never seen anyone get a nut in there before," said Jim. "Was it any good?" "Oh yes – pretty good" said Ray non-committally.

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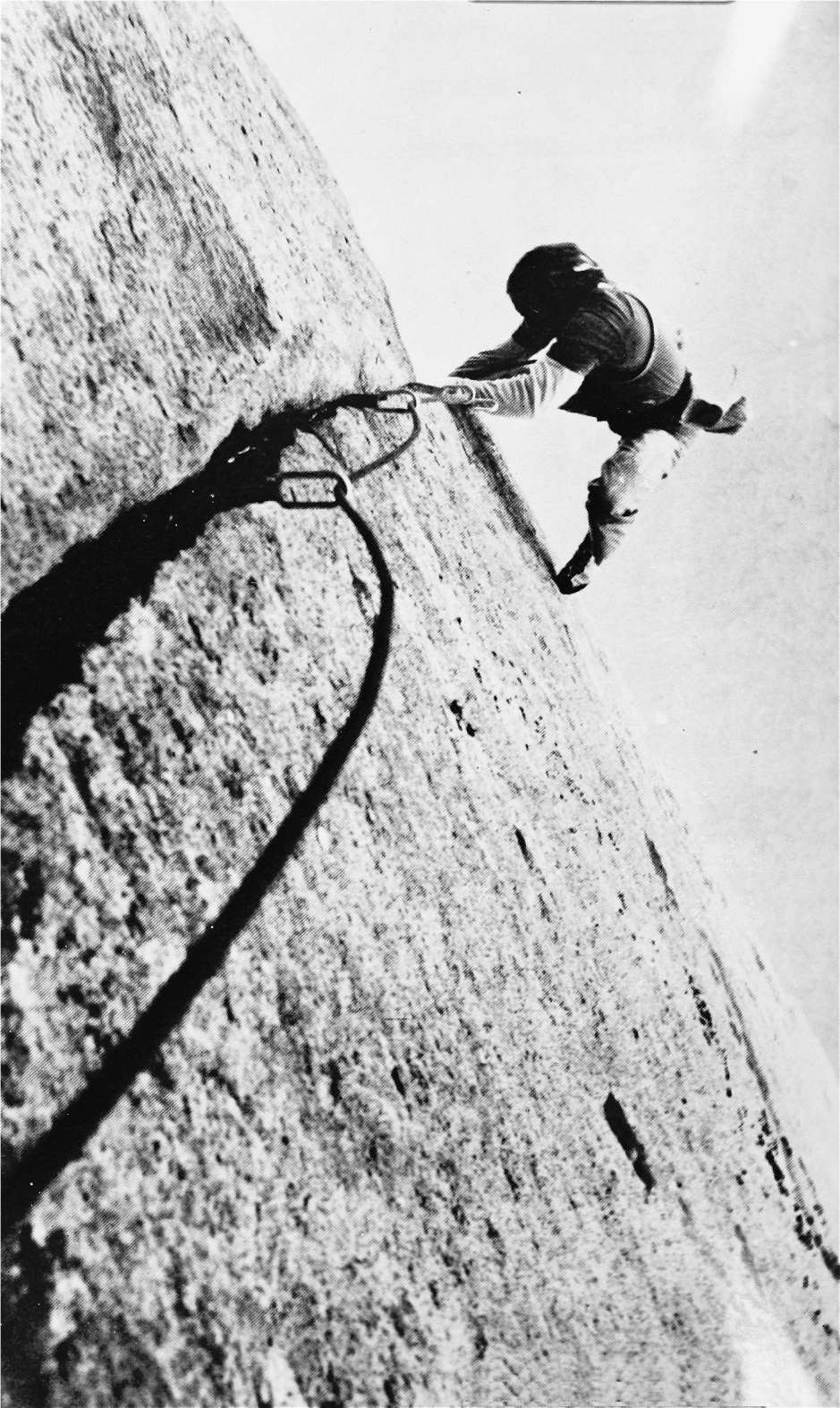
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At the Roaches we did Sloth as our first route – “Fantastic” said Ray and promptly climbed it again – I think he’d have carried on climbing it all day if I hadn’t told him that there were some hard climbs nearby.

Eventually Ray did find a problem to work on – The Baldstones Roof – a climb which involved every trick in the book and which Ray finally graded 5.11c. After our second evening working on this problem we’d packed it in and gone over to do Ramshaw Crack, which Ray climbed in less than a minute muttering “5.10b!”

We spent one evening looking at colour slides and I was most impressed with a series of a huge roof in Yosemite – ‘Separate Reality’. The slides were of exceptional quality and very impressive. I mentioned that he ought to send one to Ken Wilson for Mountain Magazine. “Do you think they’re good enough?” said Ray innocently. Less than two weeks later Mountain 56 came out with possibly the most impressive free climbing picture ever taken on the front cover.

A year later when the business was well under way, I sat below this huge roof hoping that Ray would fall off because I really didn’t want to second it. He got almost to the lip and reached for the stopper that he knew would fit in at the lip. It didn’t fit. He tried again and fiddled about – it still wouldn’t go in. He tried the move swinging his feet down and levering up to hook his foot round the lip and fell off. Thank God – now we could go back to camp. “The crack was wider,” was Ray’s excuse. I marvelled at such ingenuity. This was a new one on me. I’ve studied all the ways of climbing down gracefully and thought I’d heard every excuse. But there *had* been a fair sized earth tremor a few days previously.

Much of the work that we did on Friends during the summer of 1978 was inconclusive. We couldn’t find anyone to extrude the hard cam alloy or a supplier of suitable high tensile bolts. Everything seemed to be too expensive. When Ray left for the States I’m sure he must have been thinking that another attempt to get Friends off the ground had failed.

About two weeks after Ray left I started getting replies to the scores of letters we had been sending out, and suddenly everything started to fit into place. Now I had to go for it, the start of the long 5.10. I borrowed all the money I could and got the bank to give me a

second mortgage on the house, I had some notepaper printed and started to place orders for components. I then took a deep breath and gave up my job – no runners on this climb – either success or a big fall.

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LEISURE?

MARJORIE ALLEN

After three years of climbing at the blunt end of a guide-book writer's rope I began to examine the criteria of a leisure activity. These criteria just didn't seem such a good fit anymore but they did go a long way to explain why my enthusiasm for the sport was in a decline. This seemed to be worth putting into print to alert any aspiring female climber to the disadvantages of being used as a sacrificial, movable belay for the dubious cause of service to the climbers of the 80s! An appropriate message could be — This way you won't make it. "Make what?" you may ask. Take your pick — credibility, equality, success, recognition in the glossies (or even on T.V.) but most important of all — experience the real joys of a good day on the crags.

I reckon there's only an expendable amount of time in this life to get fit, stay with it and maximise your climbing potential — and guide-book checking is a bum steer on all three counts. To return to the criteria of leisure — freedom of choice; contrasting environment; sense of achievement; and control; seemed significant ones which I had formerly associated with my commitment to climbing.

Freedom of choice I put high on the list. Think of that hour — or maybe two, that is spent after breakfast in the hut, mentally doing a magic tour of all the crags we *might* climb on to-day — but, eventually we *don't* for all sorts of reasons like — too far from the road; haven't brought the right nuts; sure to be dripping wet; exposed to those arctic, northerly winds; will have to waste time rescuing that sheep from a ledge; peregrines/auks/ostriches nesting season; tides, queues, crinkles, nig-nogs etc, etc, will get in the way.

Well, there's none of this procrastination about guide-book work because it's 'do or die' this weekend. As we toil up to the crag for the fifth time to check routes that have been impossibly wet on previous visits I wistfully speculate on how long it will be before we can visit Anglesey and do a sound, dry, clean line again. Some eager youth

hungry for recognition in 'Crag's' has plucked a plum of a route (for years completely overlooked) and described it in such glowing terms, comparing it with Vector, Void and Vulcan, that it must be worth the effort. Strange – I see no obvious crack leading from the toe of the buttress! At least, not beyond seven feet and then it joins Archer Thompson's original route for the final three hundred feet.

Contrasting environment – spells space, beauty, and isolation to me. How often have I offered these as reasons for rushing away every weekend in my flight from suburbia. Two crags which took up a great deal of time had none of these assets and I wondered at the dedication of the pioneers. One crag was described as 'best approached through the slag heaps of the slate quarry, take a short cut through the drainage pipe from the disused workings' and 'the crag can be identified as overlooking the bacon factory'!

The other was a famous quarry – dank, dark and a death trap to any tourist walking beneath our rope. Hideously loose blocks appeared to give some semblance of a route. Most of my day was spent tied to a fence post (of dubious anchorage) to provide a top rope. Across the valley I could just make out the features of Tremadog, bathed in sunlight. It seemed unbelievable that anyone would choose this place. You can tell a good crag from the number of dead sheep on the scree below. Think of Cloggy, Cwm Glas, Pavey Ark – the screes are littered with 'em. None to be found on this quarry floor – no self-respecting sheep would waste good grazing time here; no bilberry or natural exercise ledges – just tot.

Sense of achievement (to boost your flagging self-esteem).

Whilst friends are gaining the glory of new routes, freeing aided ones or soloing the impossible we find ourselves a decade or two back in time sorting out the network of lines on a classic buttress. Only the purists need such precision. It is possible to check two at a time by having right hand and foot in one route and left in the other!

Just occasionally we thought we'd spied an unclimbed line. This could make it all seem worthwhile. Inevitably there was a drawback – after hours of gardening a rusty peg appears – it had been climbed but dismissed as not worth recording ten years ago!

If you need the exercise, I'd recommend bush-whacking to give some sense of achievement. A number of new routes only touch

rock for a few feet, the rest of the ascent would be more appropriate for a gibbon – up vegetated gullies where brambles give way to short, bushy, holly trees and you spend the rest of the day winking thorns out of your fingers.

If we couldn't climb all the routes at least we could classify them. Circulate a graded list and ask for comments from the hard lads. A great deal of heated discussion and aggro was achieved here and it was impossible to have a quiet drink in the pub without the E grading interrogation giving everyone a chance for a private ego-trip. An incredible number of mid-week routes described as E1 by the 'professionals' were promoted to E3s by their unfit weekend ascensionist friends. I found myself privately wondering if I'd recognise an E1 if I was lucky enough to get near one for the bramble, holly and tottering quarries. I recollected 'was it really necessary to check this route to-day, now, on Bank Holiday Monday?' Apparently it was, so that we could collect a cross section of opinions on numerical gradings. How reliable would these opinions be in the midst of such frustration from tangled ropes, dropped runners, jammed nuts and abuse?

Control. – Assuming that the cherished freedom to choose this exhilarating leisure activity is there, some element of control has always seemed a desirable pay-off. The satisfaction and breath-taking suspense of finely co-ordinated moves gives that elusive ingredient to climbing. The last chance to check Hyll-Drem before the manuscript is submitted. Bad weather is unlikely to be a deterrent as the evil overhanging crag could be depended upon to stay dry – all but the last few moves. Fine, as long as you're equipped with Fawcett fingers and forearms – but if not there's a certainty of dangling in space, out of sight and out of communication, with your partner above. Control seems minimal and I concede to the superior strength of the opposite sex. At the prospect of such an experience I suggested Mike found a different partner. "Why not ring up Ken this weekend – he'd appreciate a change and a free trip to Wales." "I can't ask Ken, you need a woman for guide-book work, no man will waste a good weekend checking routes." At last I'd discovered my mission in life! Was this progress? From kitchen sink to movable belay! Our submissiveness was even exploited here.

There has been a three dimensional approach to leisure – anticipation, experience and recall. To qualify as a true leisure activity the actual experience should have pleasure extending in time both before *and* after the event. So much can be tolerated throughout the week as fantasies of the weekend drift across the mind. I soon learnt that there were fantasies and fantasies and some are enough to convert you to a workaholic. It's very easy to blot the embarrassing scenes of dangling in space from the mind, but that leaves the void of no 'bullshitting' material for the recall period in the pub. An essential dimension missing. How boring to be pinned in a corner of the 'Pad' with your eye-witness to the sky-diving scene. O.K., so he only did the classic girdle of the crag and you provided the bonus entertainment. A combination of no ascent, feeling foolish and no reciprocal bullshit puts you in a very inferior position and no amount of muttering about 'checking routes for the new guide book' seems to compensate.

Perhaps recognition will come when it's published and the glowing reviews will make up for three years of deprivation.

The latest review says "the worst guide book I've ever seen; the best of the new routes haven't even been checked". Even worse – the Guide-book Editor rings up to say that sales are soaring. Prepare for the next edition and check all routes done since the manuscript went to press. I couldn't believe it – you mean this is an 'on-going guidebook writing situation'. Are we stuck with it? There was no contract, no whisper of such commitment to these vultures three years ago. Where is the line of demarcation now betwixt leisure and work?

Ironically, the latest report of new routes from our favourite enthusiastic critic includes 'Avengeance' and 'Last Gasp'!

N.B. My dictionary's definition of leisure states – 'freedom from pressing business'.

THE EVIL EYE

DON ROSCOE

I can see them yet in my mind's eye, their faces clearly etched against the long corridor of time: Count Fred Nedigoff, the Russian ace, 'Tater' Taylor, Eric Price of the Rock and Ice, Bob Pettigrew, later to rise to fame and fortune in the ranks of the B.M.C., and others whose names escape me. All were gathered in and around the Count House to enjoy sun, sea, surf and occasionally rock. Among those to whom I can affix no names were one or two who deserve special mention, for they live in my memory of this saga although not directly related to it. There was an officer of the sappers who insisted on taking us fishing with plastic explosive and, as we afterwards lay soaking up the sun with rucksacks heavily laden with pollack, discussed their strange lack of success with the local fishermen who later arrived on the scene with more traditional tackle. Also in residence was a family which we christened The Grumbles as they invariably took a dim view of our often noisy nocturnal hut games. They obviously realised that we were all good chaps at heart despite the brashness of youth and as a gesture of goodwill one day offered us the remains of their enormous stew for the dog. This was gratefully accepted and as soon as they were out of sight was rewarmed and consumed by the voracious multitude.

The dog? Ah, yes. At that time I was strongly attached to a young lady called Aileen who owned a big, unpleasant Welsh collie called Roy. Like many of his species he was too thick to realise that I am not fond of dogs and became an inseparable companion and unwelcome chaperone as he always insisted on his right to sleep in the tent.

The Count House, as you know, is a bit of an eldritch place, particularly when the sea-fret lies thick and wet on the moor and the lighthouse foghorn sounds its doleful warning. 'Twas on just such a night as we rested from a typical day of plastic fishing, burying each

other in the sand at Porthcurno or testing motor bikes at frightening speed on the narrow, crowded coast road, that the talk turned to the Count House ghost – the legendary ‘Captain’ whose tread still disturbs the slumbers of those bold enough to sleep there alone. The supernatural was a popular topic, occasioned by the atmosphere of the hut and ranking equal in entertainment value with the gory tales of an orthopaedic surgeon who was also resident at that time.

Being deeply engrossed in our theme we hardly registered the fact of Roy entering the room and making his usual friendly overtures to everyone. A little while later a somewhat distraught Aileen appeared and asked if I would help her look for Roy. When I explained that he had preceded her by about ten minutes she burst into floods of tears, a distinctly unusual occurrence for Aileen was as tough as teak and not normally given to displays of womanly weakness. When calm had been restored she told us that she had seen a single green eye staring at her in the darkness of the camping field by the cliff. Roy, doing the faithful hound bit, had gone to investigate and had then fled precipitously, tail between legs, closely followed by the owner.

Some incredulity greeted this tale. “You’ve seen a tin can shining in the torchlight” suggested someone. “No” said Aileen, “It was a small, bright green eye just like the ignition light on a car and it was staring at me”. Well she was obviously upset and it was an eerie place; hadn’t we just been discussing it? A posse of brave souls was quickly assembled and we set forth into the night armed with torches and a selection of hastily improvised weapons.

Down by the tents all was quiet and pitch black. “It was here” said Aileen. “Whereabouts exactly?” “Just over there,” pointing. Nothing. “Switch the torches out” I said. The blackness closed around us as we stood and strained every sense. Something was wrong, there was a distinct feeling of unease enhanced by the soft moan of the wind over the moor and the muted roar of the breakers in the cove far below. Suddenly there it was! Apparently crouched in the grass and just as Aileen had described it, staring at us, malevolent and unblinking. We stared back. Tater jumped behind Nedigoff and gave him a push in the right direction. “There it is Fred” he hissed. “Don’t bloody push me” he retorted. With great sweeps of a sickle, which he had picked up when leaving the hut,

Pettigrew began to quarter the ground well away from the apparition. Only great dexterity and presence of mind saved Eric from amputation of both legs just above the ankle. Nobody seemed at all keen to approach too closely to the thing, whose unwavering cyclopean gaze never left us during this brief charade. It looked as though it was up to me, after all it was my girlfriend. Reluctantly and slowly I approached on hands and knees, and for the first and only time felt the hackles rise on the back of my neck. What the hell was it? The team was silently poised, gripped by fear for my mortal soul and rightly impressed by my efforts above and beyond the call of duty. The glow-worm remained undisturbed.

FRANCIS EDWARD HICKS

(Member Circa 1928/1936)

A. B. HARGREAVES

When the Great War was over the first revival of rock-climbing in Britain began in the Lake District and Scotland. From 1919 onwards many new climbs were made and, significantly, that great climb, the Central Buttress of Scafell, first done in 1914, began to be done again. For several years activity concentrated in the Lake District, mostly by members of the Fell and Rock and Rucksack Clubs, with Climbers' Club members not much in evidence, except for C. F. Holland, F. Graham and C. G. 'Ferdie' Crawford.

The revival of climbing in North Wales came more slowly as the Climbers' Club took much longer to recover from the Great War. But soon people such as Herbert Carr, Maurice Guinness, John Poole and others began to revive the Club; and the 'Liverpool end' of it (Wayfarers) – Robertson Lamb, J. M. Davidson, W. R. Reade, Charles Marshall – helped considerably with this, as also did that remarkable enterprising pioneer Stewart 'C.H.S.R.P.' Palmer, who amongst other things did the first ascent of the Devil's Cellar.

In 1924/25, inspired by the great success of the Rucksack Club's hut, Taly-y-Braich, the Climbers' Club decided to acquire 'that miserable hovel' ('George Borrow') Helyg and turn it into a climbers' hut. This turned out to be a crucial development for it greatly helped young climbers to generate a revival of rock-climbing in North Wales.

While the Helyg project was being brought along by the C.C. an almost volcanic burst of climbing activity was developing at Cambridge University... From about 1924 onwards the University Mountaineering Club began to attract a number of men who eventually became notable rock-climbers or mountaineer-explorers – Jack Longland, Ivan Waller, Charles Warren, the Wagers, the Bicknalls, Wyn Harris, Rennie Bere, William Dyson, Spencer-Chapman, Bobby Chew, Basil Goodfellow, Gino Watkins, Peter Lloyd and others; they began to use Helyg and many

of them joined the Club. Amongst this extraordinary emergence of climbing talent within the C.U.M.C. there was one F. E. Hicks . . .

This brings the story roughly to the years 1928 and 1929, during which Colin Kirkus and Menlove Edwards appeared on the North Wales scene, coming from entirely different environments. This proved to be a very good 'mix' and the two groups of personalities soon began to appreciate each other's qualities.

Ted Hicks was not a very good club or Meets man; it is said that he was rather a loner though he did occasionally join in. He had, however, been moving about on hills since he was a boy and had a very adventurous streak in him, inherited, mainly I believe, from his mother whose maiden name was Hubback. Her family had a cottage down the Nant Ffrancon Pass – known as Maes Caradoc – where he spent boyhood holidays. He was a strongly made, middle height chap with one unusual physical characteristic – that as he walked along erect his hands could be seen dangling below his knees. This gave him the advantage of a very long reach. He was a natural athlete who could do anything; climb, ski, row and swim all very well, and do anything that could possibly be done adventurously with boats.

From days at Cambridge University, Rennie Bere recalls:

“Although he was not so big he was immensely strong and on one occasion he was having a fairly amiable wrestle with a huge rugby player who ended up sitting on Ted's head. Receiving a punch in the face, Ted threw the giant aside, picked him up bodily and dropped him out of the window. Luckily the incident happened at ground floor level.”

While struggling to get a degree, which did not come easily to him, Ted managed to become an expert roof climber:

“One night Ted was leading a fresher back across the roofs of Cambridge to St. Catherines and crossing a skylight roof of a garage with ease, Ted warned his companion to take great care. With a great crash his companion promptly disappeared through the glass roof and Ted quickly descended to ground level by more orthodox means. Entering the garage full of fear for the safety of his friend, he discovered him sitting dazed but unhurt in the seat of an open Buick sports car – exactly where he had landed.”

Ted first came to notice within the rock-climbing fraternity (a very small body of people nearly all well-known to each other at that time) on May 6, 1928. On that day he and Warren, and Bere and Spence, had been climbing all over Gimmer, doing the Alphabet etc. and in the afternoon they came down to have a look at the 'gentleman's side' – for more climbing on known routes. There they observed a Fell and Rock party doing the first ascent of Gimmer Crack, led by A. B. Reynolds who had previously (as was customary in those days) explored the upper half of it on a top rope. After witnessing this they asked Reynolds and Co. if it was 'interesting' and they said, "Yes, very!" This in fact was probably the hardest climb in Langdale! (Indeed it held that reputation for several years). So Ted and his party, 'the fledglings and innocents abroad', said, "Right, we'll have a go". Now the sartorial fashion then was to wear Oxford Bags – voluminous trousers with masses of material flopping around the feet. The Fell and Rock were able to observe, with something like horror, Ted proceeding up their new climb, rather nonchalantly, from time to time lifting the folds of his Oxford Bags from under the tips of his rubbers – which was hardly the seemly sort of procedure then followed by the Fell and Rock! Anyway Ted and Co. got up The Crack, casting down on their way a chock-stone which the first party had used on their ascent, much to their annoyance as they watched events from across the gully. This hilarious story soon began to travel around.

Ted's next appearance on the climbing scene was towards the end of 1928 when he did a direct start to the Terrace Variant, Tryfan, followed by a direct start to the Holly Tree Wall in March 1929 and the first free ascent of the Piton Route in April 1929. During this period he also climbed a lot at Helsby and visited Gritstone edges such as Hen Cloud and Black Rocks.

In June 1929 Ted Hicks and Colin Kirkus met each other for the first time; this was on Tryfan's East Face, where Hicks was climbing some normal route with Warren, and they observed climbing alongside them, solo, this rather strange looking young man. So, being responsible people fearing for his safety, they commanded him to join their rope. It then transpired that he had the night before cycled down to Helyg from Liverpool! Coming near to the Terrace Wall Kirkus suggested that the party should do Belle View Bastion, that excellent and difficult climb done a year or two previously by Ivan Waller; and he proceeded to lead them up it (!) thus tremendously impressing Hicks and Warren.

They were not to know however, that he had just previously been climbing in the Lake District with me when we did the third ascent of Esk Buttress, Scafell (after Bower and Frankland), as well as quite early ascents of Eliminate B and Eliminate C on Dow Crag; and we had also done several of the Pinnacle Face routes. Hicks had begun this day by going up to the Heather Terrace in bare feet and bivouacing there for the night, which was something that Kirkus himself might well have done. After doing Belle View Bastion the party went over to Glyder Fach where Kirkus indicated Lot's Groove as a possible line and after being given a look at it on a top rope he promptly led it – with only Hicks able to follow.

This extraordinary encounter opened up a new dimension of rock-climbing to Ted, evidently encouraging him towards pioneering. He started operations on the Idwal Slabs by doing that fine climb, Ash Tree Wall, which had a very exposed and precarious crux. For the last pitch Hicks' second had no belay.

I came to Helyg to join up with Colin Kirkus with whom I had then been climbing for about a couple of years, and on June 29 we did the second ascent of Longland's on Clogwyn du'r Arddu, Colin leading, with a very good Wayfarer, E. A. Stewardson, as our number three. I came again to Helyg on July 19 and there I met Ted for the first time. We began talking about Clogwyn du'r Arddu and its wonderful opportunities. I had brought with me a crib (from the Rucksack Club log book at Tal-y-Braich) of Pigott's Climb on the East Buttress which Kirkus and I had already thought of having a go at after his second ascent of Longland's. Ted became enthused with this idea and we said, "Let's go tomorrow". This we did – walking over the Glyders and Snowdon, again with Stewardson. We found the climb difficult, and time consuming, particularly in its lower reaches, and I thought fit to thread a new sling round Morley Wood's artificial chock-stone of two years before. It was not only the first climb Ted and I had together but was very nearly the last climb for all three of us When Ted and I got to the the grass ledge at the top of the crack it was raining and blowing. The original finish was up the steep wall of about fifteen feet at the right-hand end of the ledge, and the Pigott and Morley Wood instructions were for the second to go round the corner to the right and from there flip the leader's rope over the top of this wall, where there was a notch. Thus the party would be secured and the leader could use the rope as a handhold when getting up the holdless part of the wall at the top. The crack in the corner at the left-hand end of the ledge had not

then been cleaned out and we were not to know that there was a perfectly good chock-stone belay at the foot of it; so the party was dependant, for security, on the rope manoeuvre prescribed by Pigott and Wood. After many attempts we did succeed in getting the rope over the top of the wall and it seemed to have caught securely. Ted set off up, but the moment he started pulling on the rope as a handhold the thing came off and it was only by a split second's adjustment and grab for the top that he escaped falling off. If he had done so we would all three have been at the foot of the crag within seconds. This was one of the narrowest shaves I ever remember in more than forty years of climbing with many hazardous incidents. On subsequent ascents I found the crack in the corner much easier and, of course, there is the security of that chockstone. As this was the first lead after Fred Pigott's two, I think it virtually ranks as a second ascent.

This was quite a day because, by the time we had finished, it was getting dark and we were very wet and tired so we went down to P.yG. to consider how to get back to Helyg. There, in the bar, we had the good luck to meet with one J. E. Grosvenor, later to become a Vice-President of this club – particularly notable for coming to Helyg in a chauffer-driven car bringing hampers full of delicacies for the party. On this occasion, when he realised what we had done, he kindly offered us a lift to Helyg, thus saving us a tiresome further walk.

A word here in praise of our third man, Stewardson, who, as was the case when he had been with Colin and me on the second ascent of Longland's had been subjected to a constant bombardment of turf mixed with stones as we gardened our way up. Present-day climbers can hardly appreciate what Cloggy was like in those early days, literally covered with turf. In the C.C. Bulletin of April 1930 anyone interested will find three photographs, taken by Stewardson, showing Hicks and me going up the long crack.

After this event Kirkus, Hicks and I teamed up and we did a lot of climbing together, mostly in the area of the Idwal Slabs where Ted began a very thorough exploration of all possibilities. He was leading strongly and confidently by now and Heather Wall was yet another poorly protected route:

'An apparently weak spot was attacked light-heartedly in boots: after about an hour's hectic work, in which the Helyg poker played its part nobly, and during which the leader changed into

rubbers, a heaven sent belay was reached....after several abortive attempts on the holdless corner above an inspired lead across a rickety traverse and up an impossible-looking bulge gave us Heather Wall.'

And then in September came the hardest of them all – Rowan Tree Slabs – which still holds its rating as V.S. even though it may now be possible to get some protection on it, which Ted did not have. The route is now considered as being an even harder proposition than Central Route on Tryfan, a Kirkus route which Hicks had failed to follow. (At that time the only route in that area that was considered to be as hard was Longland's direct finish up that flake edge at the top of Javelin Buttress.) On the same day as having done Rowan Tree Slabs, Hicks went over to the Holly Tree Wall and did the first Girdle Traverse of the cliff.

At about this time Ted also had a really good go at Suicide Wall and very nearly got up it, but he would not risk the extremely difficult moves near the top with no protection except for me hitched to a little spike above that tiny ledge 20 feet below. So I got down, ran round to the top of the Slabs (quite a run that was!) and got a top rope down to him so that he could finish it, which he did without aid. At that time we also had a good go at the West Wall Buttress of the Slabs, Homicide Wall, and he got quite a long way up it before having to retreat from where it becomes very steep and difficult, and again I had to run round to give him a top rope.

Modern climbers, with their artificial aids to protect them on such places, should realise how good were such climbers as Ted Hicks who very nearly got up them climbing 'free'.

At that time the Central Buttress of Scafell was still the greatest ambition of all young climbers – the 'Eliminate'. Hicks had already had one go at this with Warren and Bere but because of unfavourable conditions they had had to retreat. On September 6, 1929, Ted, Colin and I got a lift to Langdale from another very kind man, R. O. Griffiths, a Wayfarer and a Senior Lecturer at Liverpool University, and on the following day we did C.B. Not without incident (!) as Colin slithered off the lower part of the crack, which was wet. We fielded him on the Oval! It was then Ted who led to the chock-stone, after which Colin, having recovered, did the upper part of the flake. Accurate counts of ascents of C.B. had been then lost, but I then made this to be about the seventh or eighth and it was certainly the first ascent by an entirely C.C. party (who were

also Wayfarers). On his form that day Ted was probably capable of leading the top part of the flake without aid at the chock-stone but we restrained him from trying to do so because we wanted to do the climb in the then orthodox fashion. It remained for Menlove Edwards a year or two later to be the first to perform the feat of leading the upper part without aid or even a thread at the chock-stone!

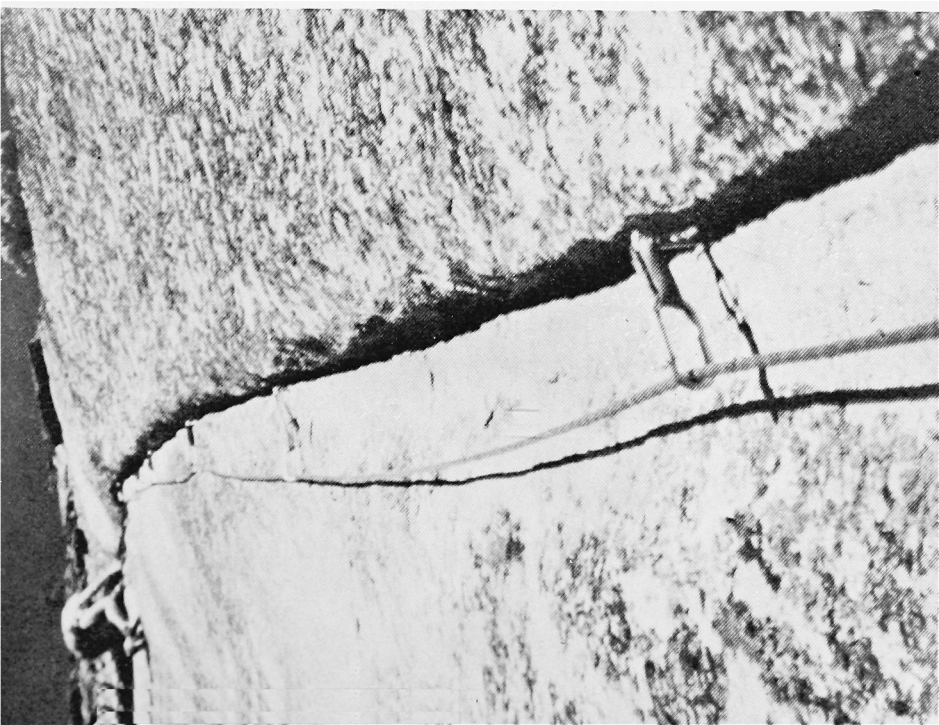
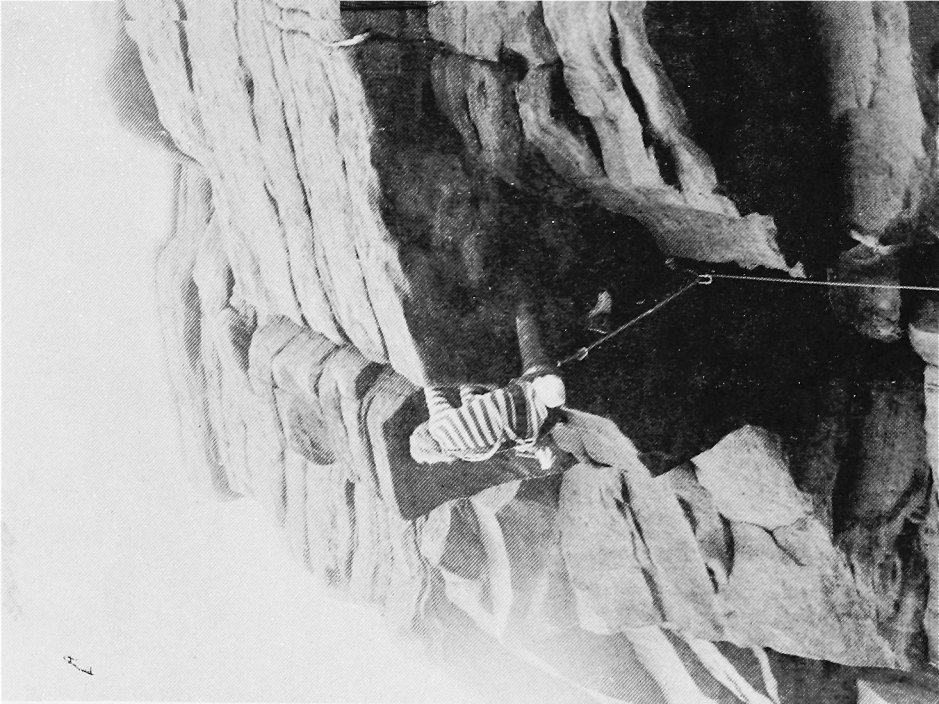
On September 1, 1929, we did the second ascent of the Devil's Cellar which it may be remembered was the first breakthrough on the Twyll Du cliff since the two original gully climbs which made it of some importance, though it became much more important when Edwards put a direct finish to it following the line of the crack instead of traversing out. Later that Autumn Ted did the fourth ascent of Longland's, putting a direct start to it which was decidedly harder than the original start.

Ted and I climbed a lot together in the late 1920s and early thirties, in the Lakes and Scotland as well as Wales, and on numerous occasions at Helsby where he led all the hardest climbs up to that time, including Eliminate 1 which was one of the hardest. We became great friends and he was my best man and Godfather to my first born.

At Easter in 1930 Ted even sampled the delights of 'bouldering' on the chalk cliffs of the Isle of Wight and as well as climbing on Culver Cliff did a traverse from Sandown Bay to Bembridge.

In 1933 Ted was chosen by Marco Pallis to join one of the very earliest lightweight Himalayan expeditions to the Gangotri Glacier area along with Colin Kirkus and Charles Warren. Ted was not on the first ascent of Satopant'h (now called Bhagirat'hi) but, with Richard Nicholson, he made the first ascent of an unnamed 21,000 foot peak which they christened Dolmetch Peak.

A few years later Ted had a very unfortunate accident on Scafell which sadly put him off climbing and he did not do very much after that. According to his own account of it to me, what happened was that he had climbed the Pinnacle with a novice student of Durham University who had been entrusted to his care. When they got to the top of the mountain Ted had to decide which way to go down, so he went to the top of Deep Ghyll which was full of snow. There he told his charge to wait while he went down the steep bit at the top to see if the snow was soft enough to justify venturing down the ghyll. He had only got about two or three steps down and already decided to





alpine sports



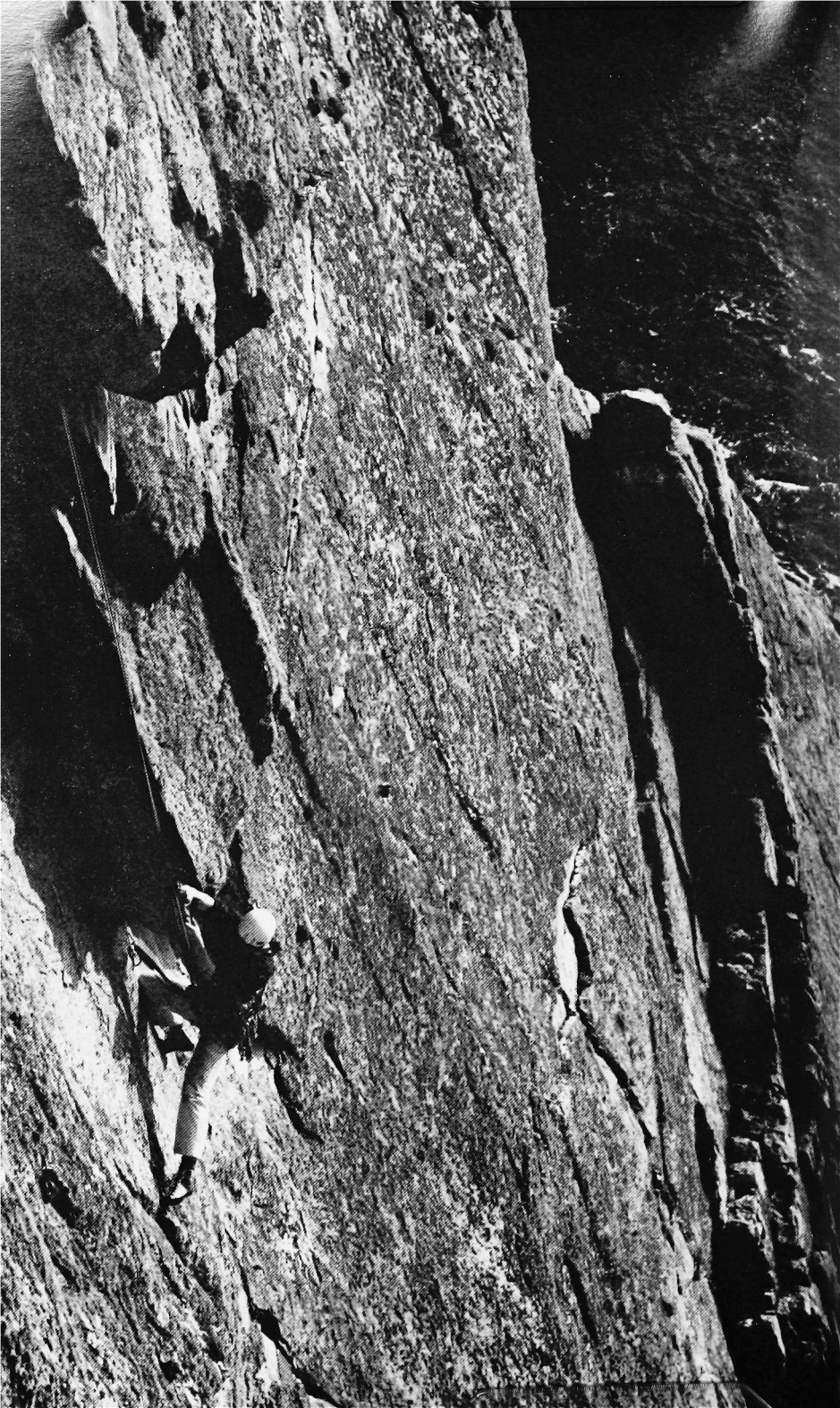
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Richard Turnbull on the 5b crux of Chlorophyll Cluster (HVS) at St. L

Photo: Ross Wills





turn back because it was too hard when the student instead of waiting for him to give a decision quickly followed down, came off, cannoned into Ted and both of them fell down the ghyll. Luckily for Ted he had the presence of mind to snatch at a piece of scree and use this as a brake so that he stopped his fall about half way down. But he suffered severe bruises and abrasions and had a most frightening experience. The other fellow, who went the whole length of the ghyll and landed in Lord's Rake, was more badly hurt and there had to be a considerable rescue operation for both of them. Not surprisingly, this put Ted off climbing and he did not do very much after that except walk about the hills and, of course, ski.

When war broke out Ted enlisted in a Light Infantry Regiment which was sent to France early in 1940, just before the retreat to Dunkirk, where his unit was captured. This meant that he was a prisoner in various Offlags for the remainder of the War. But he by no means submitted quietly to captivity and went on studying for his profession of teaching. He greatly encouraged many young fellow prisoners to take correspondence courses and keep cheerful. It is said that he was the life and soul of some of these P.O.W. camps – helping would-be escapers and pulling the legs of the German guards. His talents extended to repairing over 1,000 watches and when prisoners from the Dieppe raids came handcuffed into his camp he speedily found a means of unlocking the handcuffs with an adapted sardine tin opener.

After the War Ted went back into teaching and got a job as Assistant Master at that prestigious Prep. School, The Dragon, Oxford, where he found himself absolutely in his element, soon becoming Housemaster under the Lynam regime. Many generations of boys at The Dragon (quite a number of them now Members of the C.C.) admired Ted for his unfailing energy, wide enthusiasms and versatility, as well as his inspired teaching of Classics and Maths.

After 31 years at The Dragon, at an age (56) when many people would have been thinking towards retirement and not increasing activity, Ted made a complete change of profession. He had for long been very interested in sailing as a hobby (indeed he had won the British Moth championship some years before and had made very many crossings of the Channel in small yachts). Now he joined with Ron Amey, owner of the yacht *Noryema VIII*, as Sailing Master, Skipper and Navigator, and this assignment took him on

Humanitarian on People's Cliff, Pembroke.
Photo: Chris Griffiths.

many voyages far abroad. At one stage his great strength brought him through a severe coronary attack while at sea and he later returned to the sea which had become such an important part of his life, despite being dogged with ill-health including the asthma which eventually killed him.

In 1972 he had his greatest year when he drove Noryema VIII through a great storm from Newport, Rhode Island to Hamilton, Bermuda a distance of over 600 miles, and won the Bermuda Cup; this being the first win by a non-American boat and crew. For this feat he was given the Yachtsman of the Year award. Later he joined up with another well-known yacht owner, Owen Aisher, and made many notable voyages for him.

He continued to compete successfully right up until his sudden death in 1978 at the early age of 70, when he was in the course of preparing for his 13th crossing of the Atlantic. It is recorded of him that he was not only an excellent sailing master but a really brilliant navigator.

In May 1978 there was a party at Pen-y-Gwryd to celebrate the 50th Anniversaries of the first ascents of Pigott's on the East Buttress of Cloggy in 1927 and Longland's on the West Buttress in 1928. It would have been most appropriate if Ted had survived to attend the celebration, being the first to lead Pigott's after Fred and he also did the fourth ascent of Longland's.

Getting it into perspective, Ted was one of the very best rock-climbers of his day which stretched from 1927/28 for six or seven years. This was a time when people such as Jack Longland, Colin Kirkus, Menlove Edwards, Ivan Waller and Maurice Linnell were in their heyday, and on his day Ted was able to hold his own with any of these. Our mutual friend, Marco Pallis, wrote this of him:

'F. E. Hicks; a schoolmaster, notable rock-climber and ski runner, one of the strongest and gentlest of men, owner of physical and mental gifts blended in such a nice proportion as to make him, to my mind the very ideal of an all round mountaineer.'

ADDENDUM – A.B.H. apologises for any mis-statements of fact or other discrepancies that may be found in this article but he has

the good excuse that because of failing eyesight he has not been able to check all his references. He also apologises for such a lot of reminiscences about climbing in the late 1920s early 1930s but has been given to understand by the Editor that many young climbers are very interested in what went on then.

A.B.H. acknowledges much help with this from Charles Warren, Rennie Bere and Jack Longland as well as the Editor himself. He is also much indebted to the Dragonian school magazine for their enormously informative articles about their renowned 'Ticks'.

DOWN TO THE GORGE AGAIN?

MIKE BROWELL

Nine days and the nerves are thin on the razor edge of early spring. Nine days of contrast with the English winter left behind. Blazing sun, sharp frost, snow, rain and clag, and the ever present nagging uncertainty. Will it be fine tomorrow, and will I have to do the abseil again?

So powerful the fear that a litre of the local plonk serves only to blunt the ever present Damoclean sword. It must be tomorrow; I've avoided it for two days consecutively and luck's running out. Perhaps it will rain/snow/ be time to leave. But the team (youth knowing no fear) impetuously insists that it must be Luna Bong, and the other twelve members of the party nod wisely. They've already done it, and for spite, given a total of a trillion stars. It can't be that good.

Abseil of all abseils, fear of all fears. Abseils have always been my nightmare; a nightmare of pulled anchors, failed gear, careless incompetence and failed nerve. Now faced with the big daddy of them all, the fear compounds and reason flies out the window. All the best people die on abseils.

On the edge of the Gorge, deep down in France, two pegs are cemented in rock. The Verdon river silently thunders 1,200 feet below, it's noise lost in the depths. Two chains hang from the pegs, and cautiously towards these I crawl, while others stroll nonchalantly past, oblivious to the drop. A quick six hundred feet to the terrace, a bounce and a further six hundred feet to the river. Of course they stroll nonchalantly. What else? One doesn't fall off a kerb, so why here?

But reason refuses to rationalise, and so moving non-the-less towards the chains, heeding no reasonable subconscious. Fighting the conscious mind which says, "Fear, that's reasonable".

And now, grasping the chains, two concreted in pegs, and only

two, and only concrete, and only chains. And now clipping the black metal noose into the flimsy nylon ropes, and slipping slowly, so slowly, into the void, pale-faced and fearful.

Adrenalin surges as the rock slips away, leaving feet pawing in space. And now, peering through half-closed eyes, half-closed mind, I gaze unfocusing at the cotton-wool trees so far below, and the ends of rope so near.

The mind closes and reopens to the problem in hand, or rather not to hand; a tree. Not a tall, stately forest tree, more a bonsai, a stunted and gnarled, half study of the real thing. But a tree, a nesting site; the only homely landmark in an ocean of rock. But it's not out here with us birds in this fresh, this very fresh, open air. It's in there, ten feet away, and I'm out here, pirouetting like some crazy music-box dancer. Now I see it, now I don't!

Only one objective, mind locked off, rope locked off, and I start to swing, mind frozen in monomaniacal incessancy. And so, straining to gain a toe hook on its knackered branches, swing . . . swing . . . swing . . . and yes, got it, home at last and grab the nice, strong, safe chains and what's that hammering noise in my head?

We'd been in Verdon for nine magnificent days, done some magnificent routes, had some magnificent epics, and a change of scene was on the cards. This was hastened by the arrival on the seventh day of the European Climbing Scene, for their Easter vacation. For six days we had the Gorge to ourselves, and there was plenty to go round. But on the seventh we were caught out, and arrived on the crag at rush hour. Only no-one was rushing, and besides, it became dangerous, with falling rocks and rescues, just like Chamonix. So it was time for a change, and I escaped the abseil. It's still there in my nightmare, watching patiently over it's trillion star route.

Vive le difference

Even deeper down in France are Cannes and Nice, and nearby on a hill, the Baou of St. Jeannet. And below on the steeply-terraced hillside, the campsite with a view. The view! Rumours of thirty swimming pools in nearby houses suggest something of the affluence of the area, yet none had the view we had for free. Go down from Verdon through Castellan, to Grasse, Verre and the village of St. Jeannet, and you won't regret it.

The crag is a boulder compared with Verdon, but big compared with High Tor, and is real fun after the more committing Gorge routes. You can relax and take it easy on nice, short, back-home-sized routes, or multi-pitch, whichever you fancy. The south-east side of the Baou comprises three tiers of crags, each a hundred feet, while the east face is 600 feet. But there are no abseils, and so St. Jeannet immediately becomes a better proposition.

Having spent only two days on the Baou, I can't hope to be authoritative about the crag. And it seems unlikely that we should have chosen by chance to climb the best routes. So in saying that Peril Jaune with the Directissima is absolutely fantastic shouldn't be interpreted as saying that it is the best. But if it isn't, then the best must be amazing. Yellow Peril Direct takes a diedre (5a) left of The Mafia, then a superb wall (5b) before arriving at the Yellow Peril itself, The Chimney. But no chimneying is needed, just hauling up on superjugs, up an impending wall, over impressive ground at reasonable HVS (5a).

Meanwhile, on The Mafia, whimpers and moans tell a tale of tragedy – J.C. placed the bolts too far apart, and so the climber must touch rock occasionally. "Free at E3 (5c)" – but not this way – take a local expert along for the inside story on the free variants.

Topping out at the top of the Baou and the view leaps up and grabs you. France looks so French, the paysage so different, distinctly Gaelic and the sea unlike Gogarth.

Descent is via the three tiers of the south-east and you can't avoid being impressed by the steep wall on the second tier. Black Wall, E2 (5c), is possibly the best wall climb in France. Give Darius three stars, Great Wall four, Black Wall five. Livesey traded 'Several Great Walls for one Nicronomicron'. I'd swap two Nicronomicrons for Black Wall.

Other routes on the tiers are really excellent. Hongrois, E2 (5b), is top quality; Phenix, HVS (5a), Canari, HVS (5a) and Mallet, HVS (5b) are equally classic, all short one pitch routes. The rock is solid, situation unbeatable, and in early spring, beautiful.

So next Easter, don't languish in the Lakes, get wet in Wales, cold in Cornwall, or suffer in Scotland. Vacate in Verdon or bask on the Baou. Vive le temperature difference!!

THE GOLDRUSH

GEOFF MILBURN

Two years of guidebook work in The Pass had brought enthusiasm to a low ebb and a change of scenery was desperately needed to rekindle the flame. Not surprisingly the inland cliffs had temporarily lost some of their subtle attractions and with spring only a stone's throw away Gogarth's sea cliffs called from afar. Could it really be so long since we had last regularly visited the cliff on a ticking spree?

The new Gogarth guide had stimulated the interest of several teams over the winter and things were stirring as we approached the island for a closer look at some of the more obvious possibilities. Ken Wilson had unwittingly donated us an enlarged set of fine photos of the major sections of the crag and these proved to be invaluable over the next few months when it came to spotting potential lines, especially so since at Gogarth, unless one can walk on water, it is impossible to stroll underneath the Main Cliff.

By the time we arrived on the scene late in March, Ben and Marion Wintringham already had Bitter Days behind them and Al Evans was trundling away eagerly on Castell Helen, backed up by Sid, 'The Karachi Kid'. Perhaps of all the early new routes of 1978 Al's Freebird was the one which made us most aware of what could be in store for us. That same Easter weekend Pete Whillance with Dave Armstrong, and Dave Knighton with John Tout, who were also prospecting, added routs to the Upper Tier. We all met thanks to the friendly hospitality of the C.C. (Holliehead Catholic Club that is!) and comparing notes we soon became aware that we were all interested in similar lines. Knighton in particular struck me as being highly enthusiastic and needed careful watching to make certain that he didn't go near any of our big lines.

In April just as we were beginning a close scrutiny of the crag starting with the wings and subconsciously working our way in to the more serious possibilities on the Main Cliff, news reached us that

Mick Fowler had joined the assault. Even more astounding was the bush telegraph story which rocked everyone back on their heels; the Baron himself had re-emerged from hibernation to claim his share of the spoils starting with The Flytrap. He had been going well and recently had done several of the newer routes in The Pass and his keen nose had detected where the action was to be found. While on Swastika with Smiler Cuthbertson he had spotted Jim (Moran) and me on Tumbling Dice, and seeing us close to an unclimbed line which we had also got our eyes on he nipped in two days later to polish it off.

Some of our earlier short routes and variations received a fair degree of sarcasm and humour from the wits of the climbing world and we were accused of doing mindless variations where one could step left or right a couple of feet onto existing routes. This was not only untrue but very lucky as it left us free to pick off many of the choicest lines which were just waiting to be done.

On a foul festering day Al nobly gardened the big tower to the right of Atlantis but his hard work paid dividends the next day when the weather cleared up. Jim led the immaculate first pitch between Rap and Pel and we were amazed that it only touched 5a on a couple of moves. The second pitch was to give Al one of his best leads. Having traversed right along the hard bit of the Girdle he stormed up an airy pillar in a wild position. The short groove at its foot slowed him down a bit but after that it was jugs galore. Both Sid and I raved about the route especially as it was both longer and better than Freebird. We talked Dave Roberts and Paul Williams into repeating North West Passage shortly afterwards and they confirmed that it was an instant classic. Without a description Joe and Smiler got lost further right and evidently finished up the mythical Atlantic Wall.

Moving steadily towards the big stuff Jim and I knocked off Merchant Man and then while I nobly attended the C.C. booze-up at Stoke Hall in Derbyshire Jim and Al grabbed Rock Island Line (kindly giving it my name! Cheers lads.) as well as The Third Man. Moral – never attend club social events during the climbing season. Shortly after, Joe repeated the latter route thinking it to be new but thorough cleaning of the top crack told its own story. Jim was tickled pink to think that he had grabbed one of Joe's lines and it kept him amused for all of one afternoon.

As in the Brown/Crew era two routes were completed in a day on several occasions and in particular two routes in a day on Central Park wall was a notable event. Jim's line Tequila Sunrise has been repeated by several teams who have thought it to be E2 unlike Dave Knighton who thought that it was about HVS. Smiler for once lost his grin when he was brought to a halt on the upper crack. The reason why several of our routes were originally undergraded was because they seemed so much easier after doing some of Jim's desperates, which made us lose our sense of proportion. The other route of the day, Manor Park, was named after our local climbing wall (where a passing horse dislodged Jim from his holds). It was really Dave Knighton's route but he readily stood down when he realised that it was going to be harder and more vicious than the other routes so far.

After knocking off Where Puffin's Daren't on a blistering hot day (can that really be the summer of 1978?) we got into coasteering with the solo sea level girdle from Penlas Rock to the Road Junction. As usual Al had got his routes wrong and had convinced us that it was an easy V.D. route so consequently we took no gear and climbed in casual shoes. Sid who had only once completed a breadth at the shallow end of his local baths ended up by just managing to swim across a zawn to avoid a tyrolean traverse . . . only to be faced with an even longer swim just round the headland with no other escape route. He was coolly gripped out of his skull but to be fair he did have aid in that the four of us promised faithfully that we would dive in and pull him out if he couldn't make it on his own. Thoughts of under-currents and giant conger eels also provided an incentive. The traverse across Smurf Zawn at high tide is particularly exciting especially if a few playful waves are lapping at one's feet.

Undoubtedly Al's optimism comes in very handy at times especially when he takes it into his head to brush off blank bits of rock such as the impending wall right of Bloody Chimney. Jim certainly did not believe that it would go at first but Al convinced him that it really was on, especially if he pre-placed a peg on the first unprotected section. This route was bouldering with a vengeance as Jim went up and down each sequence of moves in turn. As the sun came round onto the face things got even worse and on the deck we were content to lounge about wherever there was shade. Chalk

cascaded down in handfuls and Jim got really angry as the heat sapped his energy slowly but surely. After a whole series of short falls he finally had to admit defeat and was lowered off somewhat bruised and bloody. The runners were all removed by abseil but next day he was back in the cool of the morning and quickly powered up the wall with total physical and mental commitment. Bouldering out a bit pitch on Gogarath was now the new cult and this ascent merely served to point out a whole variety of big blank walls which were just screaming out to be done.

Several abseiling sessions on the Main Cliff yielded a few more secrets but most of the possibilities seemed pretty horrifying and we spent more time talking than in laying siege. One exception however was the big, blank wall right of Scavenger which seemed on from the word go. While doing the grossly undergraded Scavenger, Simon Horrox and I spotted a first crack pitch which would link up with the big headwall. Later without knowing that Jim was actually inspecting the line by abseil at that very moment Ben Wintringham told us about the line as both he and Ray Evans had tried it without success. Jim, who had been down the wall, was strangely non-forthcoming about the pitch and would only say that, "It's really something. Its going to be a right tit-ender all the way up." Eloquent is our Jim! The first steep crack turned out to be wet and greasy but we soon got established on the ledge of Hypodermic. All three of us were somewhat edgy about the big pitch; Al was muttering about not liking belaying for a long time at sea level, while I was worried that the wall was so overhanging that in the event of a fall regaining contact would be a real problem. Jim who was sharp-ending was moving about on the restricted stance and generally getting in the way while we sorted ourselves out and his usual impatience before a big pitch was causing a lively exchange of unprintable insults. Eventually however he got under way and disappeared over an improbable looking bulge between two grooves. Although very steep the wall has good, positive, downward holds, yet a succession of tricky 5b moves led us to the conclusion that it ought to be graded 5c to be on the safe side. The last pitch of The Assassin takes a belting little crack which would make an excellent finish to Scavenger.

On the day my Whit. holiday finished the first storm broke out at sea and for the next week, while I worked and wondered what was

happening, Jim and Al sat out the torrential rain and only managed a couple of short routes before I rejoined them the next weekend. Readers of Alec Sharp's article in Mountain will appreciate the macabre naming of Cartwheel.

As part of our clean-up both Al and I felt that it was a great pity that there were too many chossy finishes up steep vegetation above the Main Cliff. Consequently it seemed logical to be noble and spend a wet day digging out a decent pitch. I pointed Al at the most obvious corner and left him to burrow for a few hours until he emerged black as the ace of spades and utterly exhausted. From Minnesota Fats, one of the easiest pitches on the crag, we went on to what turned out to be one of the hardest. The Horrorshow, to the right of Crowbar, ended up as a real gripper and until this route Jim kept insisting that he couldn't lead 6a – whatever that means! (In his personal philosophy he doesn't think that there are any 6a pitches on Cloggy yet as the rock has too many holds.) It is a whole string of boulder problems up the wall gradually getting harder and harder. On the first day Jim failed despite placing an aid peg while climbing, although it is only fair to say that his advance and retreat tactics, to learn each sequence of moves, got him very high up the pitch. On the second day when he finally succeeded just before the rain stopped play he was adamant that although the route was not as steep and strenuous as Barbarossa it was however more technical and a harder lead. The next day when the rock dried out Jim abseiled down to his high point at the belay above the first pitch. After Al, while following the first pitch with a twanging tight rope and three enforced rests on runners (Ssh . . . Ssh . . . sh!) (it amused the audience anyway) I had ample time to appreciate how 'training', 'climbing walls', 'chalk', and 'daily climbing' in addition to 'little chocks on wire' have taken the modern young climbers into a new super league of their own. This was rock gymnastics without a doubt and in no way can such routes be compared with the old Welsh Extremes of the 1950s and 1960s. For the chosen few the floodgates are now open

By July new route fever had really set in and the mad scramble for new lines was in full swing. Dave Knighton had disappeared off the scene for a while to do his final exams and the only leaders who took our routes seriously enough to warrant joining the clean-up were Wintringham, Brown and Whillance. Ben in fact joined forces with

us for Aardvark which was so called because it would be the first route in the Index. For most of the day we had smart conversations (you don't tell me your lines and I won't tell you mine) and with some of the barriers down, to round the day off I, as the non-match-fit member of the hit-team, was delegated to fraternise with the enemy and accordingly joined Ben for an ascent of the poorly protected Dropout to the left of Acid.

Although Jim had grabbed two of the lines on Central Park Wall he was distinctly dis-chuffed when he discovered that Ben, backed up by Joe, had got to work on his other potential line to the right of Park Lane. He was even more rattled when he learnt that Ben had used a peg for aid on each of the two pitches to give Mayfair. Jim smugly suggested that the opposition should call it Summer Holiday on account of the time that Ben had spent on it. Just round the corner Jim and I were on The Grim Reaper, an eliminate line, which gradually got harder the higher we got. The highlight of the route for me was the monster trundle of a huge flake right at the top of the route. The noise as it struck the ground was deafening and as a great orange cloud mushroomed up the crag we could just make out the fragments bounding far out to sea. It gave Joe a nasty moment as having finished their route he was standing above the descent gully and in that split second he got the distinct impression that the whole of the descent gully was collapsing under his feet.

New routes on the wings were pretty satisfying but the Main Cliff provides the real kicks and we were pretty frustrated as the long spells of bad weather during the so-called summer had kept us off for over five weeks, apart from one casual attempt when Ben took an interest in Jim's antics. Luckily I was around and able to convince him that Jim was merely trying to find out the difference between Peepshow which was badly shown in the guide diagram and the adjacent Jaborandi. When we eventually returned both Jim and I were apprehensive about the first crack to the right of Pentathol which was greasily wet as one often finds at the foot of the Main Cliff. At first sight it looked as if the flared crack would yield little in the way of protection for the first section (we had no 'FRIENDS') and Jim seemed reluctant to get to grips. While changing his trousers (that's the polite version) a large wave caught him fair and square and being sufficiently gripped up already his adrenalin took him up the first pitch easily while I sweated it out below as the extra

high tide drove me up from one belay to the next. Where Pentathol breaks out left from a corner we had to bridge up a steep little corner/groove which was still slightly wet from the rain of the day before. Seconding the pitch I lost control near the top and did a spectacular semi-controlled fall onto a good hold well out on the right arete; a good start to the day. The big pitch left of Puzzle-me-Quick provided good jugs for some distance until the steep wall which Jim had happily described as a slab (after an abseil inspection when he placed a peg runner). On closer acquaintance he got a hell of a shock when he found out just how steep it was. The small wires which he got in seemed just about adequate for protection but it was a hard and sustained lead until the junction with Puzzle-me-Quick. A short corner then brought a swing round a flying arete to reach a belay in Big Groove. The arete on its left gave a very fine finish to The Wastelands and as we scrambled off a Peregrine Falcon and the three resident families of Choughs gave us a victory roll, by flying by in formation.

While Joe and Ben explored in the rediscovered Smurf Zawn we had a field day on the almost virgin wall to the left of Parliament House Cave. Sitting on the old cannons in the zawn we just couldn't believe our luck. Why hadn't Joe been there long before? Even the coastguard was pleased to see us and provided ace brews to keep us going. Nice'n Sleazy, Talking Heads, South Sea Bubble, Not Fade Away . . . the routes just kept coming one after the other. While on the latter route a rumour went round the Main Cliff that a body had been dragged up the wall at North Stack. The explanation was that above the cliff it was freezing cold but at sea level it was quite hot. After abseiling down we tied several layers of clothing to the abseil rope; later when hauling this in the bundles looked like a lifeless body jerking about when seen from far away.

During mid-August a family holiday in Scotland kept me away from the action but even the rampant midges couldn't keep my thoughts away from Wales. Jim however kept on going and freed Television Route amongst other things. For a while I provoked him to rename it Land of the Blind to show contempt for what seemed to me to be a major act of rock rape by the original team. If ever a route deserved renaming this was it for my money. Not only was it done originally as an aid route but it was also done for commercial reasons – perhaps not rape, more like prostitution! Eventually Joe

made me see reason on the grounds that a route name is for identification and not to cause confusion, so to preserve common sense I scrapped all renaming at a late stage just before the Supplement went to press.

September brought 'Big Ron' on the scene and my telephone was hardly on the hook as news flooded in of his ascent of The Cad, bolts'n'all; and that's to say nothing of Blackleg which sounded even more horrifying. How the hell could we grade Jim's hard routes after this latest development?

One good laugh came when Jim and Pete Whillance met and realised that they were after the same route on Left Hand Red Wall. Frantic debate ensued and Jim agreed to leave the route for Pete as long as Pete in turn would leave route X (another mutual line) for Jim. Once the pact was finalised Jim departed elsewhere, but the crunch came when Mick Fowler sneaked in to grab the former route. Mick got the line but also had to suffer adverse publicity from Livesey in 'Bumbler and Stumbler' when Mick got accused unfairly of using aid which was not declared. Jim was also given the same treatment for his ascent of Khmer Rouge. Why do people sling mud so easily without first getting their facts straight?

By October when Dave Knighton had resumed his onslaught, Al and I had the idea to whip out a supplement to record the year's developments. At a C.C. Publications Committee meeting a similar suggestion was put forward and I really put my foot in it by suggesting that they would have to be quick if they wanted to beat our guide. Ken Wilson took off and hit the roof especially when I said that we were doing it to make 'a fast buck'. The storm died down eventually and the supplement was duly written for the C.C. in a two week blast of enthusiasm.

Luckily I held the script back from the typist for a week, as two final routes were squeezed in. Marion Wintringham took a flying lesson on King of the Swingers – I'm certain that Joe had his tongue in his cheek when he named it and should really have called it Queen of the Swingers. Anyway Jim and I, along with Paul Williams, got the last word of the season with The Cree on Red Wall. Mind, the way that Paul and I climbed the crux I suppose that only Jim got the laugh. It is time that the younger generation was given a handicap – it's not polite to laugh when your seconds fall off a crux which you have just strolled up with ease.

Eventually the bad weather set in during December and back home in Glossop it seemed sad that the end of the season had come at last. In addition to the 75 new routes on the cliff there were also 4 major freeings and the total haul gives a good indication of what a memorable year 1978 has been. We will undoubtedly go back to fight over what is left but it is unlikely that the crag will ever again see such an intensive period of activity especially with such a friendly air of competition and co-operation between the climbers involved . . . and anyway now that it has been pointed out that it is possible to climb anywhere on the crag at 6b what fun is left?

STREET ILLEGAL

JIM PERRIN

You would say I was not well. My life was in pieces and I was too shocked to recognize the case. But this is a broader perspective, and bye the bye. I had been on Romney Marsh for a few days, trying (and failing), to get into the bed of a girl with large, sensual hands and a calm manner. We had smoked a lot of dope, touched once or twice without vibrancy, walked in greening fields, and little else.

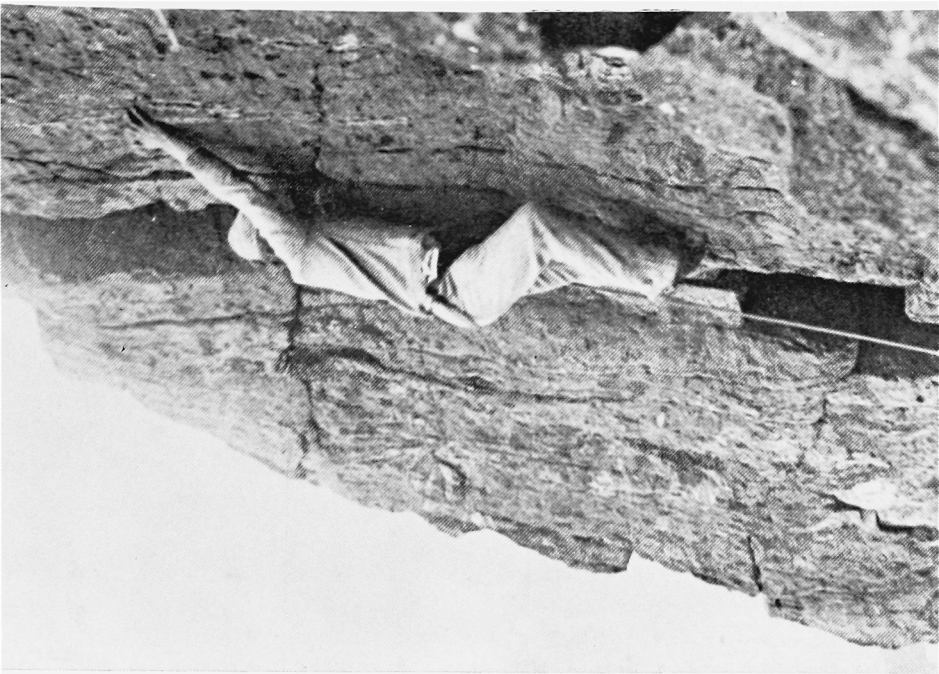
Posthabui tamen illorum mea seria ludo.

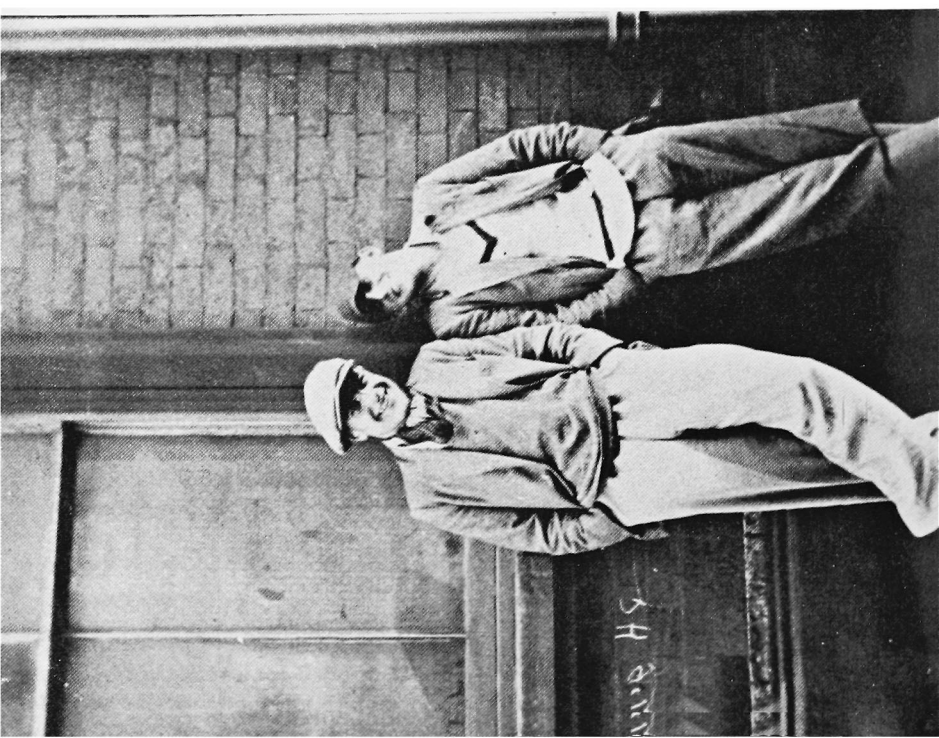
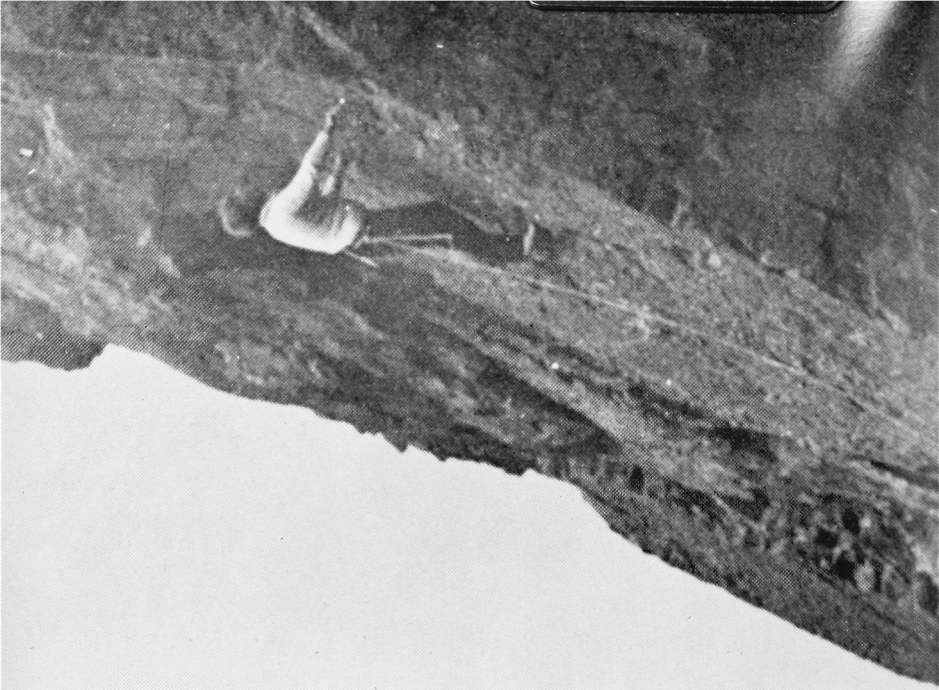
It was a willed thing. Very early on a March morning I left, drove fast along the South Coast, stopped briefly in Salisbury for tea near the Cathedral, and dreadful cheesecake, then drove on to Cheddar.

I parked at the upper end of the layby beneath Coronation Street. This I thought a wise precaution. In from the base of my ribs there was a certain thrilling tightness. As if the day for it had come. You have a thing suggested to you, perhaps even years before, and you know with a sense of terror that one day you have to put yourself on those rails. In my case it had been seven, maybe eight, years before, when I had first done the route with Frank Cannings. On top, he had said that it would be the great route to solo, and at the time he could have done it. I had just laughed, but really shuddered, really been brought up sharp inwardly by the thought.

This day there was the momentum: I was down there inside somewhere quietly weeping and all the while there was something inexorable going on. Firstly I put on my E.B.'s, and fiddled with the laces several times to get the right balance between rigidity and comfort. Then I took two double tape slings and one shorter one, put them round my neck, checked my chalk bag, put it over my shoulder, made sure the tapes were not tangled.

All this had been rather deliberately and slowly done, as if to





wear down a bit of the momentum. I now sat in the car, took out the blanking plate where the radio would have been, reached in and brought out a tobacco tin. I cut myself two lines of coke on the lid. Not too generous on this, I thought, take it easy. Also I unwrapped a piece of silver foil from a cigarette packet, which should have had some speed inside, but it had got damp and soaked into the paper, so I ate the paper.

I now sat back, shut my eyes, and breathed in and out deeply to get relaxed, Now as I said, there was this part of me subdued and very frightened, and there was a sort of manic overdub on the basic rhythm of everything. I was really zapping along now and actually couldn't have given a fuck about anything; I was laughing. So I set off and steamrollered it, pretty quietly up through the ivied bits, but then very powerful and determined, out over the two bulges. On the bolt ledge I steadied my breathing, no more, just deeply in and out as I stood facing inwards, then up the crack and out, round the Shield. It was easier than I'd ever remembered it. Across the Shield I was so relieved I thought 'Good, take a blow,' clipped in two slings, knotted, adjusted them, and sat there. It was not a wise thing to do. Up to this point I'd been motoring, really moving fast and well. And now I broke the rhythm of the thing, sat down, and the subdued me broke back with a terrorized sense of the place I was in. I wept. I mean this literally. Once in the slings, with the car park three hundred feet below, I was so scared that I wept.

Leniter ex merito quicquid patiare ferendum est.

It was something of a grey March afternoon with a suggestion of dampness about it and a little seepage from the crack in the bulge above. I was sitting there blubbing like a two year old, wanting my coke, my dog, horizontal earth under my feet, in just about reverse order.

The need was, to get a perspective on something. The hysterics didn't last long, but once they had gone I couldn't get back to being fast and loose. I was holding myself very tight, very hard, using a lot of control. I tried to focus out but there was nothing vital to focus on. The greyness – rock, sky, road, was everywhere. Even the grass had a wintergrey sheen. Not so much as a woodlouse faltering out of its crevice. This frightened me a bit because if I just relaxed, I could relate to it, resign myself to it, and not give a fuck. I was letting

Ted Hicks and Philip Allison after a day's climbing on the Roaches in June 1928. (Right), Hicks in perfect control on the South West Climb on Pillar Rock in March 1929.

Photos: R. Bere collection.

myself down gently into being the objective correlative of a dead and inert world. I rose on an inner scream, and it modulated into a vicious controlling anger. Out of my slings and working myself on to the rock again, it was all wrong. I was absolutely tight. My moves were bad, jerky, hurried, and imprecise. It was like watching a bad climber who might just make it.

I saw Chris King once on Right Unconquerable and it was the same sort of thing. His runners were coming out, he was right out at the edge of control, you were aching for him to make it, but the thing was so fine, so nearly not. Curiously, pathologically interesting, yet distasteful, as I would imagine a dung-beetle to be.

The groove and sidestep bulge were prolonged as something out of a nightmare. At the bulge my fingers felt to be slipping in the crack. I took the crack above very slowly, lumberingly, feeling almost safe. The last wall was damp and protracted. I was beginning to expect to make it, and holding back. At the top I crawled and bit grass, laughing.

Ridetque sui ludibria trunci.

After a little while I got up and made my way down to the road. I now felt desolated by it all. There was nothing cathartic in it. I felt worse than before. It seems odd to me that you, as readers, will evaluate it, say this or that about it, as though it mattered, which it did not. Just something, some sequence of psychic events, combining with opportunity, produced it. Nothing changes by it. I doubt if I could ever do it again. Except that some day the rhythm builds up, the whole crazy edifice shifts, you cut loose, don't give a fuck, and you're away.

Dulce est disipere in loco.

Note:- Even before publication the above article has been very heavily criticised, and I cannot but feel that the criticism may well be justified. Three points seem to me salient: the drug references, the use of foul language, and the apparent intellectual snobbery of the Latin quotations.

On the first of these, my use of drugs, I can plead circumstantially that the time about which I write, immediately consequent upon my divorce, was one of emotional crisis. Some

people find their outlets in drink, or travel, work, or suicide. My way out was, for a time, to become a habitual user of certain drugs. I have neither continued to do so, nor do I now excuse it; it merely was so.

With regards to the foul language, the writer has a choice – to present a version of, or to represent, the peculiar idiom and rhythm of his own thoughts. I apologise to those to whom my representation gives offence.

Lastly the Latin quotations are not there to impress – I do not consider myself an erudite person and I do not wish to be considered as such. To me, these lines of Latin poetry have a currency; they comment, ironically, intuitively, humourously, upon situations in life of which their authors might not have dreamed. And by doing so, they re-affirm the ultimate community of Man. Contextualization, not snobbery, is their purpose.

Ynys Ettws Extracts

- 25.2.78 Rained on and off continuously all weekend. Didn't do anything, just sat in the hut thinking of warm, dry rock and plenty of chalk. Phil and Gaz
- 4/6.4.78 C.U.M.C. & Hon. C.U.M.C. meet. Steam Team did all the old classics.
- 21.5.78 Lovely weather. Had a look at Jayway. Didn't like what I saw so Gaz went to do Zangorilla and nearly killed himself on the first pitch. Hold came off. Bad weekend.
- 21/22.5.78 This is the first time I have stayed in a C.C. hut as a member. Mike Mortimer has left the table in a mess and his cat food out. Hate the colour of the shower curtain. Geoff Birtles
(Note: the above entry which was fictitious (?) caused a storm of rude comments and further pointed entries. Ed.)
- June 78 There seems to be a lot of unmentioned frigging (modern techniques?) on several of the recent new routes – abseiling inspections – top-roping – nuts for aid – all make routes easier and should be mentioned. It is becoming increasingly apparent that the honesty of several climbers leaves much to be desired. This is a bad thing. Jeremy Frost (Brrrrrrr!)
- 17.7.78also soloed Suicide Wall Route 1. P.D., T.J.
- 3.9.78 Terry fell off the Corner after the crux (cos it was too wet to stay on). It seemed the right thing to do at the time.
- 15/19.9.78 Spent 4 days exploring Clogwyn Mawr Cwm Glas. Met many nice young men. Stewart Palmer
- 10.11.78 I'm getting really pissed off with the way members are treating Ynys.....
.....just to let you know that I'm reaching my limit. D.C.

OBITUARY

H. W. TILMAN

1937-1978

They held his memorial service one rainy Sunday in May: an odd, idiosyncratic little Victorian church, Tilman's own place of worship, on a hillside above the Mawddach. To the south, Cader Idris was swathed in heavy cloud. After the service a spatter of rain made uneasy the linen-suited and flowery ladies in congregation on the loggia. They dispersed, dead leaves drawn back from an eddy into the stream. A few solid, greying figures, coastguards and lifeboatmen, blazered and upright, stood, watched, and then they too were gone.

Harold William Tilman was lost in his eightieth year somewhere in a storm-swept South Atlantic. He was captaining a converted tugboat on its way to land a climbing party at Smith Island, in the Antarctic. The boat left England in the late Summer of 1977. It called at a South American port in the Autumn of that year, and was not seen thereafter. The mother of Simon Richardson, a young man whom Tilman greatly respected, and who was the owner of the craft, finally asked the Naval authorities to call off the search early this year, and only then could its captain and crew be listed as 'missing, presumed dead'.

Tilman (no-one of my generation would have presumed to call him 'Bill') was born in Wallasey in 1898. I have only the space to give a bare outline of his career here. He served with distinction in the Great War, winning the Military Cross and bar. From 1919 to 1933 he worked as a coffee planter in British East Africa. During this period he began climbing with Eric Shipton and on their second major jaunt together they made the first ascent of the West Ridge of Mount Kenya. In 1934 and 1935, having given up planting, he went on reconnaissance trips to Nanda Devi and to Everest with Shipton.

In 1936, with N. E. Odell, he climbed Nanda Devi, the highest peak then reached by man. He led the Everest expedition of 1938, which failed because of bad weather at 27,000 feet. In the Second World War he served with distinction in France, the Middle East, Tunisia, and the Western Desert. He was parachuted behind enemy lines to organize resistance groups in Albania and Italy. In Belluno, in the Dolomites, his headquarters were on the top floor of a building, the ground floor of which was occupied by the *Gestapo*. I have a letter from his medical officer of the time:

“He was a wonderful companion in difficult situations and was almost worshipped by the Italian partisans. We were, despite the danger of our situation, very happy, although I can understand the mutinous feelings of some of his subsequent companions – life then was austere enough without his added austerity – but the self-dependence which he taught us was invaluable. We owed our survival to him.”

He was awarded the D.S.O., made a Freeman of the City of Belluno, and finished the war as a Major. After the war he served as British Consul in Maymo, Burma. In the period 1947-1953 he was travelling almost continually in the Himalayas, but their increasingly crowded nature, the growing blockbuster expedition syndrome, and the betrayal of his friend Shipton by Establishment and military chicanery finally repelled him. From 1954 onwards his major preoccupation became ocean voyaging to mountainous destinations in small boats.

His boats were all Bristol Channel pilot cutters of considerable antiquity; the youngest of the three he owned dated from 1902. He sailed them, usually with scratch crews, often troubled by mutiny, across every ocean of the world. His achievements include the first ethical crossing of the Patagonian ice-cap, ascents of unclimbed peaks in the Antarctic, and a circumnavigation of Spitzbergen. His sustained record of sea travel in absurdly unsophisticated craft among inhospitable waters through nearly a quarter of a century is unparalleled in the history of sailing. The precision and success of his voyaging bear witness to an exceptional competence, or indeed genius, in seamanship and navigation.

For all that his background was public school, military, and colonial, there was nothing of the Brigadier Blimp about him. His

quest was not for rank, celebrity, or influence. He was an intensely private man whose eye was lovingly and wryly fastened on the external world. And he was a delightful companion. To sit in conversation with him over a fire for the space of a winter's morning, or to drink beer with him in a sunlit garden looking out to Cader Idris, these have been some of the pleasures of my life. He was small, frail-looking, upright, and a little deaf. But his talk was by turns animated, compassionate, ironic, witty, tentative, measured, and devout. As I write this, there is news on the radio of a disaster in the Fastnet Race and I know, as clearly as if he spoke in the flesh, what his thoughts on this would have been. He was a man of great intelligence, and he was also a humble man. I am continually reminded by him of another great Englishman, Samuel Johnson. Tilman would protest at being named alongside his lifelong mentor, and I do not mean it in any sense as an assessment. Yet about them both there is the same kind of immense dignity, such as is achieved only through a fine and strenuous intelligence focussing itself in acceptance, humility, and thankfulness upon the conditions of its life.

I have thus far said nothing about his writing. To me, his fourteen books of travel, sailing, and mountaineering, (none of them is exclusively concerned with any one of these,) rank amongst the greatest examples of travel writing. Indeed, I cannot think of another writer in this genre to put alongside him: Whympers, Doughty, Stark, Thesiger, are all minor in comparison. Yet of his fourteen titles I doubt if more than one or two are at present in print; and they grow increasingly rare.

However much is said about Tilman, so much more remains unsaid. He was an anachronism, yet he spoke for the very best of present and future generations. He was a great man, the greatest I have known, or this club has seen, "a man whose talents, acquirements, and virtues, were so extraordinary, that the more his character is considered, the more he will be regarded by the present age, and by posterity, with admiration and reverence."

Jim Perrin

ROY WHITBREAD BEARD

1932-1978

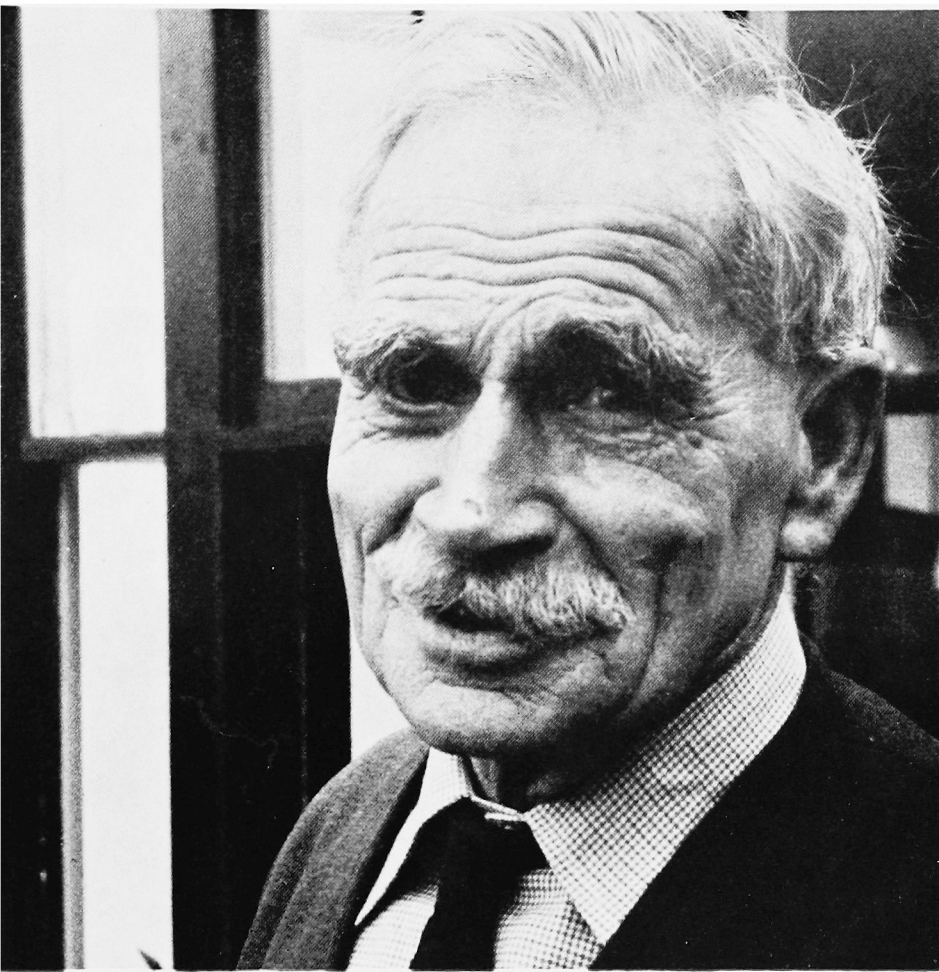
Roy Beard, architect, painter and climber died on 13th September at Copthorne Hospital, Shrewsbury after a short illness.

Roy was born in Cardiff, December 1909, and educated at Stowe. His architectural career began at Liverpool School of Architecture under Prof. Reilly where the groundwork was laid for his later work.

At Liverpool he became interested in climbing which took him to Snowdonia, the Lake District, Scotland and the Alps where he made many friends. The University Climbing Club had been founded in 1930 with Menlove Edwards as its first Hon. Secretary and by June 1931 Roy was going out to Helsby on Meets.

In 1933, the year after Roy joined the C.C., he had the fortune/misfortune to accompany Menlove Edwards who was intent on exploring a highly vegetated gully on Glyder Fawr. Grass Route, which must be almost unique, was undoubtedly a traumatic experience for the hapless second, as Edwards recorded at the time:

“Those who do not like grass will probably class it at the end of the Frankly Borings or the beginning of the Definitely Unpleasants. The first pitch is a grassy groove overhanging the old route. I do not know whose fault it is but probably the stuff was badly stuck together in the first instance, and the face remains interesting for about eighty feet. Above that the right hand branch of the gully is taken. The second was accorded shelter in the little cave below this, but he still seemed to be deriving discomfort from falling materials, and his agitation appears to have been considerably increased by the sudden loosening of several large blocks in the roof of the cave itself. But beyond getting sympathy, the second did not seem really to mind. He never really minded anything. It is perhaps



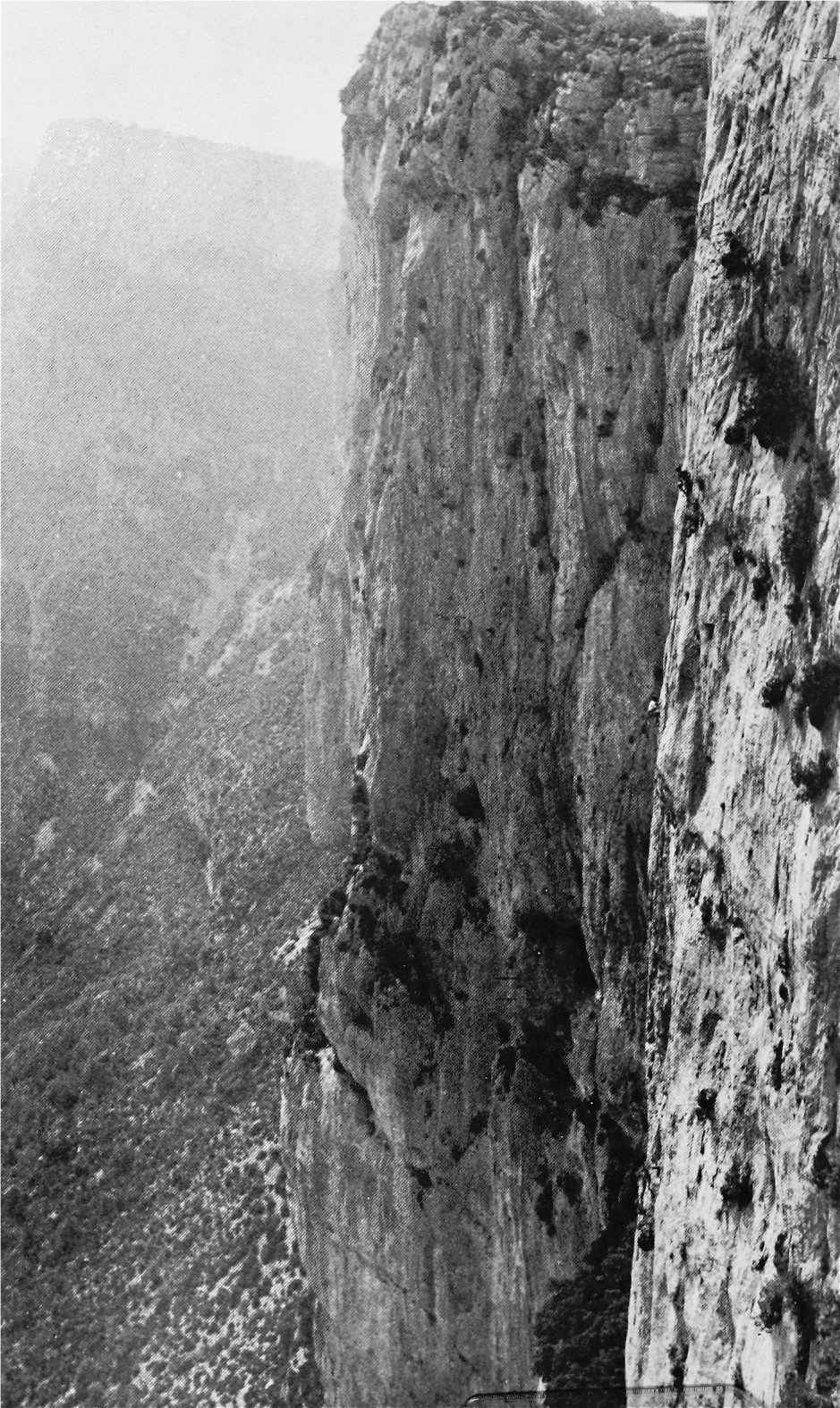
H. W. TILMAN



ROY BEARD – second from left – in a typical pose.

*(Opposite): Pete Rowat (Left) and Nick Escourt (Right) at Gogarth c. 1966.
Photo: Ken Wilson.*





not generally realised that there are in the climbing world one or two seconds who display more courage and sagacity in the face of emergencies (e.g. the aforesaid cave) than ever has been shown by even the most reckless of leaders."

Undeterred by his experience Beard accompanied Edwards a month later on the ascent of Piece by Piece on Clogwyn y Geifr. Five years later Beard again partnered Edwards on two new Severes on Lliwedd – Slanting Gully Rib and the Flanking Slabs of Great Chimney.

His architectural career was interrupted by the war when he joined the Armed Forces and spent some years in the Middle East, where he became a captain.

After the war he took a great interest in the re-conditioning of Cwm Glas Cottage and then the building of the R. W. Lloyd Hut. On its completion he became its first custodian in 1950 and held the position until 1959.

Sixteen years after Grass Route Beard and Edwards teamed up one last time for an epic ascent of the intimidating Central Gully of Clogwyn y Grochan. This wet and repulsive cleft had for many years been thought of as impossible:

'Menlove led...turning the cave pitch on the right wall though we thought a strong and confident climber might take it direct.

Roy, who was a pleasant and quiet companion, did little rock climbing after the war but he did a great deal of walking on the Welsh Hills with his many friends in the Club, although his work as Custodian did not leave him much spare time. In addition Roy served on the Northern Committee from 1950 - 51 and on both the Huts Sub-Committee and the Committee from 1951 - 53.

After a career which included working for various practices, companies and authorities, Roy started his own practice in 1956 in Shrewsbury. He quickly gained a reputation for work in conservation and his practice grew to include churches, country house repair work and medieval timber frame buildings which were his special interest. It is to his credit that he was successful before conservation became fashionable. One of his greatest achievements

was in moving the timber framed building known as the 'String of Horses' and its re-erection at Avoncroft Museum of Buildings in Worcestershire. Final recognition of his work in the ecclesiastical field came when he was appointed as a Ministry Inspector under the State Aid for Churches fund. It is sad that his appointment came too late for him to enjoy the work.

Roy did in fact serve a second term of office as Custodian of Ynys from 1964-66 and he was brought in as things were getting rather slack and it was felt that a firm influence was needed. Unfortunately this quality clashed with an emergent generation which had other ideas about social conventions, particularly in relation to the place of women in our climbing society. Perhaps it was inevitable that there would be a clash somewhere along the line. Rumour has it that an enraged Custodian returned to find a youthful Chris Bonington have a bath with three [!?] members of the opposite sex.

One Ken Wilson also suffered the Custodian's wrath one night when he returned to the hut with several female companions. The women were shown the door and from a position on the cold and dark side of the window they were able to witness a long and heated debate which at that time had little effect on the stern and unyielding older generation.

By 1966 Beard felt that the situation was impossible as far as he was concerned and eventually tendered his resignation. It must be remembered however that Beard served the Club conscientiously for well over twelve years, and was a Member for 47 years until his eventual death. Not surprisingly after his second term of office Roy was made an Honorary Member of the Club.

Roy was very popular wherever he went and will be missed in Shrewsbury where he could often be seen taking visitors round the town. Shropshire will also miss a splendid lecturer who gave talks to societies who were interested in vernacular architecture, Shrewsbury buildings or Shropshire villages. Beard, as he was known to close friends, will be remembered for a long time.

(Compiled with the help of John Watson, Bill Stallybrass, E.S. Chantrell and Geoffrey Smith, Roy's business partner. Ed.)

The memories I have of Roy Beard are not of climbing, for when I knew him his active days on rock were long gone; they are of conviviality. His house in Shrewsbury was a snug, hospitable place, and his

conversation blended together in a delightful manner the nostalgic and the sardonic. He was very liberal with what I am reliably informed was very good sherry, but this was of no interest to me since I detest the stuff. More to the point, ten yards from his front door was a pub selling the best beer I have ever tasted – dark, smooth, and aromatic, with a tang of hops. A man who could site his dwelling thus was no inconsiderable acquaintance.

J.P.

NICK ESTCOURT

1964-1978

Nick Estcourt died on June 12, 1978 in an avalanche low down on the West Ridge of K.2 in the Karakorum. Nick, with whom I had climbed sporadically ever since our first meeting in Cambridge sixteen years previously and had come to think was indestructible had been finally killed by the mountains he loved so much. With his death, his wife Carolyn, his three children and his many friends have lost something which is rare – a man who loved all aspects of life as much as climbing – and Britain has lost one of her most outstanding mountaineers.

Nick was introduced to mountains at an early age by his parents with walking holidays in the Lake District. He contracted the climbing disease in an incurable form at the age of ten when he made a guided ascent of the Aiguille de Polset in the Savoy Alps. From then on he made progressively more difficult guided climbs in the Alps. Later he went to school in Eastbourne, but despite its poor facilities for climbing he managed to assuage the itch by the occasional visit to North Wales and by cycling to the sandstone of Harrison's Rocks.

By the time I met Nick in Cambridge in late 1962, where he was reading engineering he was a competent rock climber and alpinist and Secretary of the Cambridge University Mountaineering Club. The following summer he went on his first of many expeditions to the Stauning Alps in Greenland where he made several first ascents.

A year later, after being President of the Cambridge club, he left with an Engineering degree to undertake voluntary service overseas in Sierra Leone. On returning to England he went into civil engineering building power stations, but shortly afterwards left for a more lucrative career in computing with Ferranti and moved to Manchester to be closer to the mountains.

This period from the mid- to late sixties was filled with Alpine climbs. In 1964 he joined John Harlin on one of his early attempts on the West Face Direct on the Petit Dru and in 1964 he made a very fast ascent of the Walker Spur. In 1967 he and Martin Boysen were the British representatives at the Rassemblement International in Chamonix where they made the second ascent of the South Face of the Aiguille du Fou, a rock climb with a very high reputation, and, between storms, a new route on the North West Face of the Pic Sans Nom. He made ascents of various other routes which, at the time, we considered hard. These included the North Face of the Triolet with a handicap of one and a half crampons and a blunt ice-axe. He also attempted an early ascent of the Central Pillar of Fresnay but had to retreat in a violent storm with the memories of the terrible epic of Bonatti and Mazeaud fresh in his mind.

During this period he met Carolyn and they married in 1966. Our sympathy goes to her and their children, Matthew, Thomas and Martha, in their loss.

In 1970 he went to the Himalayas on an expedition led by Chris Bonington to attempt the South Face of Annapurna. This was one of the earliest expeditions to attempt a difficult route with much highly technical climbing combined with the difficulties and dangers of high altitude. It was Nick who, with Martin Boysen, forced the hardest bit of ice-climbing on the route and then sacrificed his chance of reaching the summit by exhausting himself carrying loads up to camp 5 and then to camp 6. The expedition was finally successful but without the efforts of Nick and Martin it is doubtful if it would have been.

This was the beginning of Nick's Himalayan climbing partnership with Chris Bonington during which he contributed so much to British mountaineering. The Annapurna expedition set the pattern for his subsequent successful ones. He had an excellent talent for organisation, rare among mountaineers of his ability. This enabled

him to combine a full-time career in computing with climbing, something which many people have tried but few have managed. Nick had the energy to do both. Although he never reached a really major summit, his contribution to his expeditions was always essential for their success. He played a major role in the planning and organisation and in the actual climbing. Nick was never a prima donna and always did more than his share of the hard work ferrying loads. Although reaching a summit was important to him he never allowed his own personal ambitions to stand in the way of the ultimate success of the team.

On the British South West Face of Everest Expedition of 1972 he accepted a role which reduced his chances of reaching the summit in pushing out the route below the Rock Band. As it turned out, Nick got some of the best climbing because their high point was as far as the expedition reached. In a later, successful, attempt in 1975 Nick and Tut Braithwaite forced the key passage through the Rock Band, which was the one doubtful section. His oxygen ran out at over 27,000 feet, but Nick led on up a rightward-leading ramp of steep, rickety snow and rubble to the upper snow field. This surely must be one of the most remarkable climbing feats in history. A few days later, Dougal Haston and Doug Scott stood on the world's highest peak.

In 1973 Nick and Chris had a successful lightweight expedition to Brammah in the Kishtwar. He always talked about this as some of the most enjoyable climbing he had ever had. Unlike his other major expeditions this one did not involve so much planning and preparation and he had time to concentrate on the actual climbing. In July 1977 Nick was involved in yet another successful expedition, this time to the Ogre in the Karakorum. He himself reached the lower West Summit and later cleared the mountain after Bonington and Scott were injured.

The last time I met Nick in the mountains was in Yosemite Valley where he climbed the Nose and Salathe Wall on El Capitan. His enjoyment of this style of climbing was very marked – strenuous climbing during the day followed by bivouacs with a bottle of booze and arguments about anything and everything.

Everybody who knew Nick will miss him and his loyalty to his less talented friends. I became very ill in 1977 and was forced to give up

serious climbing. A couple of months later an irate Nick telephoned, demanding to know why he had not been told. That was the best tonic anybody could have given at the time. The whole climbing community is the poorer for his death as the Nick Estcourts of this world are few and far between. I am sure that if Nick himself could have chosen the time and place to die, he would have chosen the mountains when he still had his strength rather than in bed of illness or old age.

Mike Kosterlitz

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K. J. WILSON

EDITORIAL

After the inevitable series of problems and delays, which at least provide some excitement, the 100th issue of the Journal has at last made an appearance. Rather surprisingly this journal commemorates the 80th anniversary of the Club. At least the length of time between journals has been cut down considerably and we are closer to getting back to an annual journal than we have been for some years.

On the whole 1978 has been an outstanding year but a very high price has been exacted from the Club in that several notable Members have lost their lives. Bill Tilman, one of the greatest explorers and mountaineers of modern times, disappeared with his crew in the South Atlantic. Later Nick Estcourt who was one of the best liked characters in the climbing world, was killed in an avalanche on K.2. Closer to home John Kemsley and his wife lost their lives in the Alps on the Dent d'Herens. One of our former members, Ted Hicks, who was a very active climber in the thirties has passed on, as has Roy Beard, one of our stalwarts who has done sterling work for the club.

In the Himalayas very little seemed to go right and apart from the two expeditions which had fatalities to contend with several other expeditions involving Members suffered defeats. Doug Scott's Nuptse expedition was beaten back by high winds, Dick Isherwood and Rob Collister on Annapurna 2 reached 23,000 feet, while John Cleare with Ian Howell, John Fowler and Bill O'Connor were turned back by storms from 21,000 feet on Himalchuli. The ladies team however, which included Ann Redman and Marion Wintringham, fought valiantly on Bakhor Das but they were just prevented from reaching the top by some lethally loose rock.

The Alps were not as popular as usual and many teams headed instead for the Verdon limestone which has been the 'in' climbing ground for some time. Many Members jetted out to Yosemite and the Nose of El Capitan took some hammer. In the Yukon Chris Astill led a team up the Lotus Flower towers then rafted out on a rubber dingy.

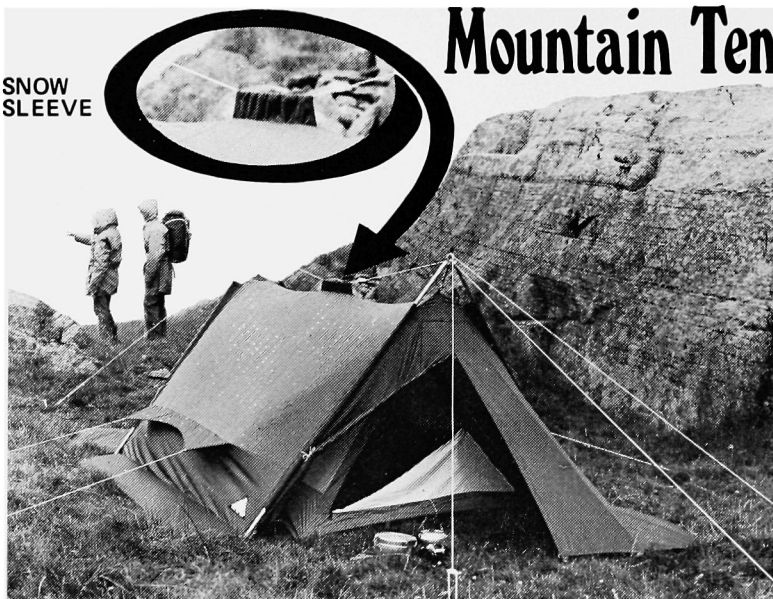
Back on home ground in Wales the latest siege of Gogarth was in full swing as teams once again raced for the most obvious remaining lines. One of the keenest competitors turned out to be the maestro Joe Brown himself, while Jim Moran, Al Evans and Ben Wintringham all showed the flag for the club and spearheaded the assault. Elsewhere Ron Fawcett staggered the climbing world with his casual soloing exploits on Cloggy and both Ron and Keith Myhill were involved with new routes on 'The Big Cliff'. At the other end of England Pat Littlejohn blazed a trail of new routes right across the South West.

The intense new route activity of 1978 led to a nationwide underground debate on



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The 'Saunders Mountain Tent' which has been extensively tested during the last twelve months is now introduced with the following specifications. The coated nylon flysheet is available in various colour combinations and the tent is supplied with an external 4-oz. coated nylon snowflap, eye-letted at all corners and conveniently placed on the inside of the two bell end doorways to act as an extra draught/groundsheet flap. The tent is supported by inclined alloy A-poles, shock cord linked and sleeved to the main body to provide unrivalled stability. The unique Saunders Snow Sleeve on the ridge takes the Snowline which links both A-poles and provides extra tension to the ridge for use in extreme conditions. The generous bell ends have a nylon zipped doorway which can be folded or rolled back to a number of positions.

The inner is available in cotton or nylon and has a deep trayed Acrylic silicone-coated groundsheet. Zipped doorways are provided at each end of the inner, plus an additional zipped mosquito net door at one end. The inner is rubber tension linked to the side pull-out flaps on the fly and can be erected after the outer has been pitched.

DIMENSIONS

FLYSHEET

Overall length 167" (424 cm.)
Overall width 70" (178 cm.)
'Body' size 87" x 70" (221 cm. x 178 cm.)

Bell ends 40" x 70" (102 cm. x 178 cm.)
Height to ridge 43" (109 cm.)

INNER

Overall length 90" (229 cm.)
Overall width 60" (152 cm.)

WEIGHT

Complete (with nylon inner) 8 lb. 11 oz. (3.94 kg.)
Complete (with nylon inner and snowflaps) 9 lb. 15 oz. (4.50 kg.)



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the ethics of first ascents and feelings are still running high. Malicious whispering and pointed fingers have not yet led to open warfare however.

Since the 1977 Journal was finished off in a great hurry and finally made its belated appearance some Members have voiced varied opinions as to whether journals are necessary in an era of very successful national climbing magazines. With an eighty year tradition behind us it would be a great pity if the Journal died a death after the hundredth issue. In addition for long standing and/or non-active Members a Journal does help them to keep in touch. One suggestion which would help to save money is to put all the new routes into a supplement which can be produced cheaply as often as is necessary. In the end we must decide whether or not we wish to preserve a unique historical record of the club's activities. For the moment, however, the Publications Sub-Committee is strongly of the view that the club needs to get back to a regular annual Journal.

Another battle which has raged during the year has been the 'Save the Cromlech Boulders' campaign to prevent the planners from demolishing one of our better known landmarks. Appropriately common sense has prevailed.

During the year there has been a steady flow of guide books with the long awaited Gogarth, Llanberis Pass (the first of the 'double' guide amalgamations) and Bosigran all reaching the climbing public. In addition the Gogarth Supplement beat all previous records by being planned, written and published in between two quarterly P.S.C. meetings.

In the background the Huts Committee has worked steadily and at Easter the Peter Biven Room was opened at Bosigran by the President.

Meets and the dinner have been well attended and the magnificent buffet produced by Pat Green at Stoke Hall (to say nothing of a lively disco) will long be remembered by all who participated.

During the year Honorary Membership of the Club was bestowed on Harry Sales, Chris Bonington, Don Whillans and Kevin Fitzgerald.

How many climbers noticed that 1978 was the 50th anniversary since the very first piton was discovered in Welsh rock? Whatever ones views are there is no doubt that pitons have played a major role in the development of Welsh Climbing since that first historic occasion so many years ago.

In 1922 I. A. Richards placed the first peg in Piton Route at Idwal and after six more years Jack Longland used a peg, which he had picked up in the Alps, to give a runner on his route on Cloggy. The Bathursts finished The Cracks in 1930 after blatantly resorting to 2 pitons, a bolt and a top rope. Even Kirkus experimented with pitons in 1932 and fell on Pinnacle Wall when his trial peg came out. He even used a six inch nail during the ascent of Birthday Crack on Cloggy. The piton controversy was at its height after the ascent of Munich Climb on Tryfan, by Teufel and a German party, but by 1942 Edwards and Barford wrote:

'But the general opinion after trial of pitons is already, and indeed all along, settled against their use, and that a climb done by their aid, except very occasionally to safeguard a stance, is imperfectly done.'

The next landmark was Kaisergerbirge Wall in 1948 when 'Nothing was barred; pegs, knotted bootlaces . . . ' In the 1950s Wales saw a spate of aid routes, mainly at Tremadog – Lucretia, Niobe, Pincushion, Barbarian, The Bastion, etc; some of these routes were done to obtain pegging practice which at the time was thought be vital for the big Alpine routes. These old aid climbs are now fine free routes. In the 1960s Tremadog saw further pegging activity with Vulcan, Falcon, Victimisation, Tiros and Via Nimbus, but other areas in Snowdonia remained fairly pure. The placing of a bolt in 1963 on The Boldest set a precedent on Cloggy and this was followed by a bolt pitch on the West Buttress New Girdle. The latter caused all hell to be let loose and is best left as a salutary warning.

Only Gogarth saw a spate of pegging activity in the 60s which compared in any way with the Tremadog sieges. Television Route is something of an oddity as it was done for a television spectacular and was on a remote and unexplored crag (!). Other routes though do come to mind: Crowbar, Blind Pew and Syringe. The justification for using aid on big leads such as Dinosaur was that they were done on sight, often taking in highly impressive areas of atrociously loose rock. Prior gardening was not then standard practice although it was used for some routes.

All out artificial routes in Wales have been few and far between but The Big Overhang and Black Rod at North Stack, Giant on Cilan Head and the big routes on the Ormes all stood out as major challenges which are unlikely (?) to go free. Some climbers have breached the accepted norm for each era but in general climbers are now thinking twice before they use pegs for aid or protection, especially since modern protection techniques are so sophisticated. As to the breaches, well the Idwal guide puts it nicely:

'Our pitonless ethic is the envy of climbers throughout the world, all of whom are striving to correct their crude beginnings and get their cliffs into a piton-free state. It is this heritage that we are in danger of throwing away.'

One can only speculate as to what the next fifty years will bring . . .

Geoff Milburn

Note: The Editor wishes to point out that the climber who 'lost his head' while leading Quasar in the last issue of the Journal is alive and well. The Printer unwittingly censored part of the photo in the later stages of production; but apart from apologising to Chris Griffiths for what started out as an excellent photograph we must make it quite clear that perhaps a trend has been started which will prevent publicity seeking climbers from receiving criticisms of ego tripping in front of the camera lens.

REVIEWS

Bosigran and the North Coast by Ed Hart (C.C. 1978)

Ed Hart's *Bosigran* is something of a good news and a bad news story. The good news is that we no longer have to suffer a decrease in our strength to weight ratio by carrying around a weighty tome crammed with interesting but (to the climber) useless information on mines, birds, natural history etc. The author has succeeded in cramming more routes into about half the space and the result is a slim volume which fits easily into the pocket. The route descriptions have been brought up to date and the developments in the Great Zawn are now fully covered. Gradings have been closely scrutinised and most of the anomalies eliminated. Thus Paradise and Boldfinger, the bete noir of the V.S. leader, are now E1 and E2 respectively and the technical downgrading of such routes as Little Brown Jug (5a - 4c) brings standards more into line with those of other parts of the country.

The bad news is that to produce such a slim, handy volume sacrifices have extended beyond the preliminary information. A guide book is by definition a book of information which should enable one to get the best out of an unfamiliar area in a limited amount of time. Strangely enough, when it comes to climbing guides, there are two schools of thought on the subject. The first insists that all climbers should have a chance to experience the sense of exploration and discovery which stimulated the first ascensionists. Consequently route descriptions are limited to this end. The second, more logically in my opinion, assumes that those who seek the joys of exploration will not buy the guide thus achieving both their aim and a financial benefit but that those who do will expect concise information, accurate descriptions and good diagrams.

From his comments in the introduction it is obvious that the author subscribes to the discovery school. This becomes evident in the brevity of the text and is emphasised when watching climbers unfamiliar with the area attempting to use the guide. Much of the skimming of descriptions is on the easier routes, presumably in the mistaken assumption made by so many guide book writers that these are unimportant. Contrast for example the descriptions of Roraima (E3) and Daedalus (H.V.S.) with that of Andrew (V.Diff.). The hold by hold detail of the harder routes completely belies the author's stated philosophy whereas it is unlikely that the correct line of Andrew, which pleasantly avoids a lot of obvious easy ground, will ever be found from the present description. It is in fact far more important that the easier routes are correctly graded and well described than those at the upper limits. Climbers performing at the 'E' grade are usually well able to look after themselves in difficult circumstances and may welcome the challenge of re-discovering the intricacies of a route for themselves but the hapless novice who find himself on

difficult ground due to misgrading or poor route description may be at considerable risk without the necessary skill to extricate himself from the situation. The misleading description to pitch 3 of Autumn Flakes; 'Climb straight up . . . ' instead of the correct 'Traverse left . . . ' coupled with the somewhat vague description to pitch 2 has already resulted in several parties finding themselves at the crux of Nameless, a much more serious proposition. Another aspect of the attempt to reduce the text is the omission of routes. This is justified if the climbs are of little worth but what has happened to Longbow and the pleasant, though easy, routes on Porthmoina Island?

Unfortunately the shortcomings of the text are further exacerbated by the diagrams. As works of art they may well be excellent but as aids to route finding 'useless' is not too strong a word. The only saving grace is that the one good diagram is that of Porthmoina Island, reproduced from the previous volume and still retaining all the routes omitted from the text. When is the club going to realise that good photographs cannot be bettered? One can always relate a photograph to the cliff. If good photographs cannot be obtained we need a good draughtsman rather than an artist if the diagrams are to serve their purpose.

Although this guide is up to date and good in many respects it is unfortunately, not a better guide than the last one. The ideal must lie somewhere between the two and hopefully this will be realised at the next revision.

D. T. Roscoe

Devon Rock Climbs by Bob Moulton (R.N.M.C. 1977)

Alas there will be no more days of stumbling over boulders clutching copies of Mountain trying to find routes on the multi-farious crags of Devon. Bob Moulton has produced his long awaited guide and the knowledge therein has opened the floodgates of development. There are approximately 430 routes in the book backed up with diagrams so at £2.50 we have very good value for our money. Everything done up to the end of 1977 is included and happily the descriptions are more human than the terse approach of Ed. Hart in his Bosigran guide. The historical section provides the fuel for legends such as Keith Derbyshire's assault on Henna Cliff. It also stresses the point that any new route on the Culm Coast will not be gotten easily which is something that these gritstone types seem oblivious to in their comments about coming down to clean the place up!

I will attempt to slide my criticisms unobtrusively into this review. The guide is flimsily produced and does not cope well with standard treatment (the cover fell off mine after three months). The 'E' grades are hidden at the back of the book almost as if Bob is afraid that they might not be correct. The diagrams are functional for the most part but the two Dewerstone drawings are pretty (awful) with black marks tracing meaningless lines through vague grey changes in shade. A typographical error I fell foul of is that the first two pitches of 'Rainbow Bridge' at Berry Head are the same description, this has led to some confusion. But I hear you say 'nit picking' and this is true because these trivialities are the only things I can find fault with. If the criteria for judging a guidebook is the amount of routes one can find and climb then this book succeeds handsomely and really that is all that counts.

Pete O'Sullivan

NOTE: The Devon guide which is edited by Bob Moulton, has sections by Pat Littlejohn, Alan Baker and Ben Wintringham, John Fowler and Chris Gibson. The guide is the successor to the 1966 guide book whose Lundy and South Devon Limestone sections have given rise to guides for those areas. This edition covers the traditional Dartmoor granite crags of the Dewerstone, Haytor and many other tors; the North Devon sea cliffs of Baggy Point and the Culm Coast (Blackchurch, Lower Sharpnose Point, Compass Point and other cliffs); and even the esoteric pursuits of stack climbing on the South Coast. Also included is an Appendix of New Climbs in the South Devon Limestone Area since Pat Littlejohn's 1971 guide book.

Gogarth by Alec Sharp (C.C. 1978)

Gogarth Supplement by Geoff Milburn & Al Evans (C.C. 1978)

Few climbing guides have provoked such massive development of a cliff as Alec Sharp's Gogarth guide. The enormous nation-wide rise in standards helped by training on climbing walls had largely passed Wales by. The sheer difficulty of obtaining descriptions to the routes done in the eight years since Crew's guide had slowed development down to a few routes a year. Conditions were ripe for an explosion of activity and the publication of Sharp's guide was the catalyst. One year later the Supplement described over 75 routes which had been added to cliffs supposedly approaching maturity. The historical importance of Sharp's guide may well lie in the gaps that it showed between routes rather than in the routes that it described.

But let us leave history aside and look at the guide itself. It is very much in the style of his guide to Cloggy: a workmanlike tool, terse and to the point. The introductions to each section of the cliff are particularly good which is important on a cliff with the variety of climbing that Gogarth offers. Although there are some mistakes the position and line of the routes are generally well described considering the complex topography of the cliffs and the lack of good vantage points for most of the crags. The brief descriptions of the sea-level traverses are welcome additions. These are the sea-cliff climbers equivalent to 'The spirit of the hills'. Tremendous fun on a sunny day with a large party they can also be serious expeditions in bad weather.

The guide is the first from the C.C. to include the now well-established 'E' grades, although they are tucked away in an appendix along with the numerical pitch gradings. Surely it is time we changed our house style and included this grading information in the text, as has been done for the first time in the Gogarth Supplement. Numerical grades are as relevant to selection of a route as the asterisks representing quality: if one can be included in the text, why not the other?

The 78 Supplement is a fascinating contemporary document of an incredible period of development. Over 75 new routes in a year compared with a previous best of 52. The Supplement reflects the intense competition and controversy of the period. Gardening versus on-sight leads, abseil inspections, top-roping prior to first ascent leads, practising moves from abseil, wire brushing, chipping holds, bolts for protection. All the heroes and villains are there, their dirty deeds and their fine achievements. The routes themselves certainly include the most technical on the cliff, but also some destined for instant classic status such as 'Where Puffins Daren't'. No Gogarth climber, whatever his grade should be without a copy. At 35p for over 75

routes it must represent the best value for money around, although I personally would have paid more for larger print.

The Supplement carries the warning that gradings should be treated with caution since many routes are as yet unrepeatable. The 6b grade makes its first appearance in a C.C. guide, but so does the 5c+ grade. This is presumably a response to the congestion caused by the false modesty (or mischievousness?) of first ascensionists to use the top grade. If a 6a was justified in Crew's Cloggy guide in 1963 surely modern routes deserve 6c?

Geoff Milburn and Al Evans are to be congratulated on the speed of production of the Supplement which was at press almost before the pace of development had slowed. Let us hope that this is a healthy sign for the future of the club's publications.

Dave Pearce

Llanberis Pass by Geoff Milburn

Climbers' Club £3.75

The trouble with modern guidebooks is that they leave you with so little to complain about. Geoff Milburn's Llanberis Pass guide is a good example of this. It is lucid, terse, comprehensive. It perfectly reflects the mood of an emergent generation. Its diagrams are generally excellent. It covers a large area thoroughly and is an immense improvement on the unmitigated disasters foisted on to this guidebook area by the last regime. So what is there left to say?

At this point, the approving reviewer is supposed to list his minor gripes, which tend, of course, to the general assertion that the reviewer knows the area at least as well as the author. Not so in my case, but I have a few gripes nonetheless. Why, for example, the dismissive description of The Intruder on Dinas Mot, which is a better route than either of its neighbours and should be described as such?

Also, there is the graded list: these are always a good source of controversy, and this one is complete rubbish. I find the concept of a graded list anyhow amusing: "This route's harder than that," "My route's better than yours", "Ours is bigger than theirs", "Let's all go and climb Snowdon"..... I feel I should register a protest as well at the peculiar prolixity of references in climbing literature to the phoenix. Perhaps climbers read too much D. H. Lawrence. Milburn comes up with a remarkable set of images centering on this theme:

Things quietened down somewhat in The Pass until Brown emerged once more, like the phoenix, to explore the wings of Dinas Mot.

This sort of thing is merely confused and pretentious. A phoenix which engages in such activities might anyway be better termed a fleanix. But phoenixes are obviously of slight importance, so perhaps we should let them Pass.

Of more significance is the quite extraordinary paucity of verbal imagination in the modern guidebook writer. The rhythm is staccato, the vocabulary is repetitive, and the effect is tedious. Oh, for a draught of vintage J.M.E. These guidebooks of the new generation are technical manuals for technical masters, or would-be masters.

Which leads me on to a more serious point of contention; the ethical awareness of the modern pioneer. I would like to believe that there was a time when a route, once climbed, would have been described in its physical actuality. The point would have

been to tell the truth in front of a sympathetic audience aware of the difficulties of pioneering on rock. I think many years have passed since this was anything like the case. Nowadays, (and for several decades past), you cannot trust the route descriptions of many of our major pioneers because they provide an account which is conceptual rather than actual; they describe the route, not as they have done it, but as they would like it to have been done. Thus, whereas at one time parties repeating a route had the advantage and could confine a route from its raw first ascent state, nowadays the repeating party often has a harder time than the first ascensionists, because they do not have the advantages of top-rope or abseil inspection, rehearsal of moves, chipping of holds, pre-placing of, or experimenting with and racking, protection, understanding seconds who, in full knowledge and complicity provide tension etc.

The 'Free The Pass' campaign mentioned by Milburn was inaugurated in a wave of fine, ethical activity. Unfortunately the campaign was taken over, perhaps even travestied, by some who were less than scrupulous in sticking to the highest standards, and devious representations of so-called free climbing are now, unfortunately, almost common practice. This is a very sad state of affairs, and one questions where responsibility for it lies. Several leading climbers should carry a burden of guilt, and there seems to be an overwhelming amount of evidence pointing to a heavy conceptualizing element in the reports of such routes as Resurrection, Times Past and Fingrlicker, to name just three out of a growing number of suspect routes, which may well be typical of their innovators' attitude to free climbing. Knowledge of this being widespread, rumour being broadcast, it is little wonder that this flawed approach to exploration is spreading down throughout the climbing world – high ideals unrelated to imperfect practises – what a claim for modern British climbing. In this guide Milburn had the perfect platform to state the case. Because of his refusal to deviate from a stance of almost unquestioning adulation, he has failed to do so. The reflection is a sad one. Thankfully, the opportunity was later taken by Mike Mortimer in his guide to Tremadog and The Moelwyns. But the task remains for someone, both in precept and example, to give the lead towards a code of conduct which will diminish the corrupting influences and set climbing on course as the free, brave, and *honest* activity which it should be in these days of superb fitness and near-foolproof protection.

Jim Perrin

Note: Milburn and Evans did in fact stress many of the current ethical problems in the 1978 Gogarth Supplement. Ed.

Rock Climbs in the Peak Vol. 3

Froggatt Area edited by Dave Gregory

B.M.C. £3.25

Let's face it, the Froggatt Area guide has received a bit of stick from one or two of the local lads over the past year, in my opinion unjustifiably so. O.K., so it has one or two weak points, but 99% of it does what any guide book is supposed to do – that is describe how to find the crags, where the routes go and at what grade.

So lets get the weak points out of the way. Probably the most obvious are the

photographs which look to have been reproduced on a poorly adjusted Xerox copier. One of them seems to be reversed unless Great Slab has been relocated since I was last there. A couple of gradings are a little unusual too; is Sunset Slab really HVS and Brown's Eliminate XS? Still, if they are out of step they err in the right direction; a couple of ego trips for the aspirant hardman. Being involved with route grading in the Peak District, I find the use of + and - an unnecessary subdivision, usually more than masked by subjectivity.

So much for the boos, now for the applause. The guide covers all your favourite crags; as well as Froggatt there is Burbage, Millstone, Laurencefield, Curbar, Yarncliffe Quarry and Higgar Tor as well as the dreaded Padley Quarry and Yarncliffe Edge. The diagrams are excellent, mainly the work of Pete Marks and Sue Lawty, the latter must take the prize for some of the best crag diagrams I have ever seen.

Gradings on the whole seem fair although I find the grades of one or two of the finger jamming horror shows on Millstone a little stiff in comparison with the rest of the area. Technical grades are also included. Enough fuel for a full winter of bar room arguments.

The whole guide is neatly presented in the usual weather proof plastic binding showing a rather gimmicky orange backed photo-montage of Nigel Shepherd on L'Horla. Inside the front cover is a map showing all the areas covered, followed by notes on access, geology, grading and what to do and where to go when your mate lands on his head. At the back of the text is a useful bibliography for the climbing historian.

Summing up, a good guide with a few minor shortcomings that will only be noticed by the local crag rat. So what does he need a guide for?

Chris Jackson

Borrowdale by S. Clark

F.R.C.C. £2.95

In an age when athletic wall-trained climbers are cutting down on weight in order to 'take it to the limit' it seems strange to find big, fat guide books appearing on the scene; and believe you and me, like the Langdale guide this one is pretty hefty (257 pages). A modern climber would have to go in to training merely to haul it up a long route such as Nagasaki Grooves to make certain that he did not get lost. One wonders why so much space was wasted in this guide to such a popular area. The colossal running head space at the top of every page could have been halved and every line of route descriptions taken right up to the edge of the left hand margin. (Perhaps not or it might have ended up looking more like a C.C. guide!).

Like the other guides in the series the Graded List of Climbs which takes up a colossal FOURTEEN pages provides not one single new bit of information. O.K. one can see at a glance that there are four E4 routes but if the route grades had been placed in the Index, where there is sufficient room, then it would have been only a matter of seconds to work that one out. In fact this graded list is nothing but another glorified Index which just repeats existing information. If one must provide such a list

then at least let the author put the routes of each grade in a rough ascending order of difficulty as in the good old days of the 'brown' F.R.C.C. guides. Let's have a bit of fun and controversy for the lads. After all a list of 87 Very Severe routes all in alphabetical order is utterly boring; surely the author could give us some idea as to which are an easy touch for the grade and which are at the upper limit?

Which reminds me; why has the Fell and Rock still got its head firmly stuck in the sand as regards grades? Every climber in the country says Hard V.S. and Hard Severe when speaking, so why must the F.R.C.C. persist with the stupid grades of 'Very severe (hard)' and 'Severe (hard)'? This is totally beyond my comprehension:-

"I say Mr Wilkinson might the Very severe (hard) Jaws really be Hard V.S. after all?"

So far all my grumbles are directed at the conservative attitude taken by the parent club and my sympathy goes to the unfortunate author who must have been instructed to incorporate the 100 new routes, done since the last guide, into the text of the original Nunn and Woolcock guide. At a quick glance this guide even looks like the last one. At least within a rigidly imposed format the author has done a very good and clinical job; the descriptions are all in the modern style, concise and easy to follow.

Apart from the poor drawing of Black Crag the others are just about passable but why repeat those from the 1950s yet again? The artwork is amateurish and messy as can be seen from the botched up version of the Goat Crag North drawing taken from the last guide.

Page 187 has a massive total of three labels as a key to Shepherds Crag which could easily have been incorporated into the previous page containing the drawing. The same holds for the key to Gillercombe Right Wall, and if the drawings had been reduced in size slightly they might not have looked so bad.

It was good to see that the Fell and Rock has at last been manoeuvred into using the commonly accepted E grades but they should have also taken their courage into both hands and also incorporated the even more accepted technical grades for each pitch. They could have even upstaged the C.C. by adding them to the route descriptions in the text.

Lastly my overall impression is that the guide rather lacks colour and is not a good read on a wet day; the historical notes could have told of some of the epics and controversies which the valley has seen and in the List of First Ascents a few pithy comments and apt quotes such as Ken Wilson used in the Idwal guide would have made all the difference.

At a mundane level the guide has plenty of well described routes and is good value for money which is more than can be said of its 'pirate' competitor, the wretched Lake District North guide, which is not worth reviewing even for the entertainment value.

G.M.

EXPEDITION & AREA NOTES

British Nuptse North Face Himalayan Expedition – 1978

The aim of the Expedition was to climb the North Face of Nuptse (25,850 ft.) from the Western Cwm without Sherpa support and without the use of fixed ropes. The idea germinated on the South West Face of Everest during 1975, when Dougal Haston and Doug Scott had time to observe all of the North side of Nuptse.

Unfortunately, Haston was killed in the Alps and Paul Braithwaite, who was to have replaced him, contracted a lung disease whilst on K2 earlier in the year. A few weeks before departure a team emerged, experienced in light-weight expeditioning, consisting of Michael Covington from the U.S.A., Joe Tasker and Doug Scott from England.

The team, with all its baggage, was flown out to Kathmandu by Air India (at a generously reduced cost) on the 29th August. On 3rd September, with 22 porters, a Liaison Officer, a Sirdar, a Cook and Cook-boy, they began the 180-mile approach march from the road-head at Lamasangu to Everest Base Camp. The walk took place in almost constant rain and low cloud and, on 23rd September, Tasker and Scott reached Base Camp where the German/French Mt. Everest Expedition was well established. Covington, unfortunately, succumbed to hypothermia and mild pneumonia and stayed at the last permanent settlement of Pheriche to recover. He arrived later at Base Camp, on 26th September, his pneumonia over but with a severe pain over his liver area which was to trouble him for most of the expedition.

On 28th September Tasker and Scott established their Camp II in the Western Cwm, about half a mile from the German/French Camp II and just opposite the North Buttress of Nuptse. The team had, so far, followed the Ice Fall route pioneered and maintained by the Everest Expedition, which enormously assisted their progress. (Some materials and labour were, however, put into maintaining crevasse bridges as and when the moving ice destroyed them.)

The North Face of Nuptse was plastered in fresh snow – the result of a big storm that had deposited 3 metres of snow in the Western Cwm prior to the Nuptse team's arrival. It was hoped that during the following two weeks this snow would either consolidate or be blown off the mountain, leaving ice or hard packed snow suitable for climbing.

Unfortunately more snow fell on 1st October and then again on 4th October for three days, during which eight feet of snow fell at Camp I where Tasker, Scott and also Covington were camped. (Various medicaments given by the German and French doctors appeared to have enhanced Covington's recovery).

The snow conditions on the North Face of Nuptse were now not at all encouraging, and neither were the prospects. Being a North Face, however, there was little – if any – melting, nor were there any strong winds. On 9th October Tasker, Scott and Covington arrived at Camp II with enough food and equipment to spend up to seven days on Nuptse North Face, Tasker and Scott having humped most of the provisions up to Camp II just before the storm of 4th October.

On 10th October Tasker and Scott set out on to the lower part of the Face. At first there were grounds for optimism as hard snow and ice patches were encountered, allowing for rapid progress, but soon this deteriorated into soft, waist-deep snow covering the steep rocks.

It took five and a half hours to gain 200 feet and so, with the prospect of deeper snow ahead and 5,000 ft. of climbing to go, the attempt was abandoned at 22,500 ft., in the certain knowledge that two climbers could not sustain such a climb to the top in the conditions prevailing. It was impossible to carry the provisions needed and to maintain light enough ruc-sacks to move in alpine style.

The mountain was abandoned and all the equipment (except for four pitons) recovered and taken in huge loads (80 lbs) down to Base Camp and then back to Kathmandu.

The line chosen was safe from avalanche; the problem was simply a physical one of not being able to make sufficient progress in the deep snow. The storms experienced were due to the unseasonal depressions over West Bengal, where they experienced the heaviest rainfall in four hundred years, causing severe flooding and loss of life. It was estimated that after a period of two weeks or so the Face might have been in condition. Unfortunately, the members of this expedition did not have the time to wait out this possibility. It may be that for a light-weight, Alpine-style expedition the pre-monsoon season, or towards Christmas-time, would be the most favourable where Nuptse's Face is concerned.

Doug Scott

An attempt on Himalchuli (25,896 feet) from the North-East. October/November 1978

Already attempted several times unsuccessfully, the extremely long N.E. ridge of Himalchuli butts into a final steep face. Our attempt was post-monsoon, lightweight, sherpa-less and with a minimal budget. Four of the team were Himalayan veterans and four experienced Alpinists.

Base Camp was established at 15,300 feet on October 14th, 17 days out of Kathmandu. We had had very unpleasant incidents with the belligerent inhabitants of Namrung, our trail-head village high up the Buri Gandaki gorge and some of our loads went missing. Despite woeful predictions that we were far too late in the field our timing proved perfect.

Above Base Camp scree, rocks and some snow led to Lidanda Col at 16,850 feet. Here we attained the Glacier by a steep ice pitch which we fixed with hand rails as this gave us the hardest climbing on the expedition. Camp 1 was established at 17,800 feet

on 15th October after a tiresome meandering route through the heavily crevassed glacier.

Camp 2 was situated on the crest of the main ridge at an altitude of 19,300 feet and was first occupied on the 20th October. Nearly four miles further on across a featureless ice plateau, we occupied Camp 3 (20,960 ft) on October 23rd.

The only route onwards climbs the 21,700 foot shoulder of Rani Peak (22,221ft) before descending an awkward 1,200 foot ice slope at 50 degrees to the wide saddle below the final face. Here we planned our final Camps before an alpine-type summit push up the face. By October 27th ropes had been fixed down the ice slope and everything necessary for the final climb had been carried to Camp 3 or above. We planned to place Camp 4 before pulling back to base for 'R & R' prior to our summit bid.

A short storm on October 27/28th however damaged 2 tents and put down new snow, so we took the opportunity to pull back to rest a day or two early. During the descent to Base a windslab avalanche carried Alastir Stevenson a distance of 200 yards before it stopped and left him unhurt but buried and very shaken.

At Base Camp we learnt of the death, on Annapurna, of Alison Chadwick, the wife of one of our strongest members and a close friend of most of us. The Expedition disintegrated and three days later only Alastair Stevenson, John Clare and Ian Howell were left to return up the mountain. On a route of this length, involving a major ascent on the return to Base Camp and without any back-up it seemed foolish to continue as a threesome but we were able to salvage virtually all our equipment in a series of mammoth carries before finally departing Base Camp on November 7th in still perfect weather.

The route is certainly not difficult but would appear better suited to conventional expeditions with full sherpa support than to a handful of members intent on interesting climbing.

Except for the usual minor ailments the health of the expedition members was good and due to the gradual altitude gain the members easily acclimatised.

The party: John Cleare (U.K.) and Ian Howell (Kenya) – joint leaders. Iain Allan (Kenya), John Fowler (U.K.), Nigel Gifford (U.K.), Janusz Onyszkiewicz (Poland), Bill O'Connor (U.K.) and Dr Alastair Stevenson (Kenya).

Ian Howell

K.2 Karakorum Expedition, 1978

The intention of this eight man expedition was to attempt the West Ridge of K.2 – 28,740 feet, without the use of high altitude porters. This was thought to be almost the end of the big expedition era and the continued trend in recent years has been towards light Alpine style ascents on the big Himalayan peaks.

This intimidating but beautiful giant which rises high above the Baltoro Glacier offered 10,000 feet of highly technical and challenging climbing but such a strong

team stood a very good chance of success from the outset. The Climbers' Club Members involved were Chris Bonington, Doug Scott, Nick Estcourt and Paul 'Tut' Braithwaite; the rest of the team included Pete Boardman, Jim Duff, Tony Riley and Joe Tasker.

With Camp 2 already established Scott, Estcourt and a porter were improving the trail below the camp and while Estcourt was following Scott across a snow bowl the whole snow slope avalanched, snapping the rope which connected the climbers. Scott and the porter managed to halt their fall but Estcourt was carried down by the avalanche and tragically lost his life.

As Braithwaite and Riley were ill and the rest of the team in a state of shock further progress was impossible and the expedition was brought to an abrupt halt.

British Latok 2 Expedition, 1978

At an early stage of this expedition Pat Fearnough was killed in the Braldu Gorge and another member, Pat Green, returned to England shortly afterwards. This was the second year in a row that Latok 2 (23,000 feet) had claimed the life of one of the staunch Yorkshiremen in the team. The rest of the team: Paul Nunn, John Sheard, Pete Thexton and Dave Wilkinson, all decided to carry on and salvage what they could out of the expedition.

Base Camp was eventually established at the junction of the Latok and Uzzun Blakl Glaciers and the push to beat the mountain began. After some time Camp 4 was established at 21,500 feet below a rock barrier which was obviously going to provide some very serious and severe climbing.

A high point was reached at about 22,000 feet but after four continuous days of storm the three remaining climbers finally had to make a retreat owing to the state of the weather, a lack of vital supplies and a shortage of time.

North Wales Notes

The great leap forward that has hit other areas has at last really hit North Wales, helped no doubt by the publishing of certain key guidebooks, Gogarth and Llanberis Pass in particular. In the case of the Gogarth guide this highlighted the blank spaces, and caused one of the most spectacular years of development ever seen on a single cliff, which caused a supplement to the guide to be published within a year of the main guide coming out.

To start with, the mountain areas were fairly quiet mainly because of bad weather but Cloggy saw several good new routes. Amongst these was *Pistolero* by Cleasby, Burke and Myhill, which goes directly up the Llithrig wall. Jim Moran climbed a direct line to the left of East Gully Groove to give *The Rumour*. Ron Fawcett with Foster and Livesey climbed the true arete of The Pinnacle to give *Desperate Straights*. Fawcett also had a good day's climbing when he repeated *Great Wall*, *Silhouette* and *Medi* and then went on to solo *Scorpio* and *November*. Pete Whillance with Dave Armstrong added two finishing pitches to Drummond's controversial *Midsummer Night's Dream* to give a very hard route.

The Pass has been quiet this year after last year's development for the guide, but Paul Williams seems to have filled in most of the gaps on the Cromlech. The best of his lines is probably *The Nubian*. The aid eliminations continued with Moran freeing Crossbones and Whillance freeing *Groper*.

At Tremadog, guide book work resulted in a lot of activity most of them minor variations, but a few routes stand out. On Bwlch y Moch Rowland Edwards did *Salamanda* and *Sting*, Dave Roberts did *Daddy Cool*, and Ben Wintringham climbed a steep crack right of The Neb to give *Anagram*. On Pant Ifan Rowland Edwards climbed the very steep *Groove of Horrors* and Leigh McGinley produced the spectacular *Curved Air*. some well-timed exploration on Craig y Llyn by Pete Livesey resulted in several fine routes; *Sybilla the Pun*, *Chance Encounter* and the best of the three, *Wailing Wall*.

In the Idwal valley G. Healey and T. Jones climbed the serious *Solitary Confinement*, and down at Castell Cidwm Moran free climbed *Trango* – a fine effort.

The big news of 78 was of course the astonishing 75 new routes on Gogarth. C.C. members were well to the fore with Jim Moran, Ben Wintringham, Ron Fawcett, Al Evans and Joe Brown dominating the scene. To take the sections of the crag step by step I'll start with the Upper Tier. Ben Wintringham started the year off with *Bitter Days* next to Shag Rock. Other good routes he did were *Mayfair* on the Central Park Wall and *Stimulator* next to *Emulator*. Moran climbed a fine series of routes including *The Horrorshow* a desperate route left of *Fifteen Men*, *Manor Park* an impressive line left of *Central Park*, and the superb *Barbarossa* which takes the steep wall right of *Bloody Chimney*. Pete Whillance climbed two hard routes, *Staying Alive*, a very blank wall left of *The Cracks*, and *Energy Crisis*, a very strenuous line right of *Afreot Street*. Dave Knighton had a busy time doing a fine series of routes including *The Emotionary*, a hard looking line near *Winking Crack*; *Run Fast Run Free*; *Shagorado*; *Blue Oyster Cult* and *Street Survivor*. Al Evans added *Aardvark*, a good route up the steep wall right of *Emulator*. Ron Fawcett climbed a desperate and unprotected line right of *Barbarossa* which he called *Blackleg*.

Jim Moran added three good routes to the Main Cliff with *The Wastelands*, *Assassin* and *The Third Man*. The only other development on the Main Cliff was Pat Littlejohn's superb *Hunger*, a fine line between *Citadel* and *Mammoth*, which was done on sight chalkless!

Down in Easter Island Gully Moran was busy with lots of routes, the best being *This Year's Model*, while Joe Brown used devious tactics on 3 Wandering Wall, something to do with thirty feet of fishing line and some jumaring.

North Stack saw a lot of activity with the fine wall left of Parliament House Cave being developed. Moran did *South Sea Bubble*, *Talking Heads* and *Not Fade Away* while Pete Whillance did *Blue Peter* and also free climbed *Wall of Horrors*. Ron Fawcett stuck his neck out and placed two bolts on *The Cad*, an impressive wall climb with no natural protection. Let us hope that some enterprising climber has the courage to chop them in the near future! Joe Brown with typical flair found an intriguing route in a small zawn which he called *Flytrap*.

The big news on Red Wall was Mick Fowler's *Heart of Gold*, a stunning line

between *Left Hand Red Wall* and *Pagan*. Fowler, with Phil Thomas, also climbed a new girdle of Left Hand Red Wall going right to left. Also on Left Hand Red Wall Al Evans produced *Alligator*, Moran added the serious *Cannibal*, and Wintringham climbed two good routes, *Infidel* and *Anarchist*. On Red Wall itself Wintringham produced *Fantasia*, and also partnered Brown on *Rapture of the Deep*. Moran did *Television Route* free and climbed *Khmer Rouge* and *The Cree*. Knighton climbed the obvious line of *Communication Breakdown*, which might be the line of *Brown Trousers*, a line done several years ago.

The big wall on the right of Castell Helen was quickly developed, with several fine climbs. *North West Passage*, done by Moran and Evans, was one of the best. Evans also climbed the well-positioned *Freebird*, as well as *Where Puffins Daren't*, which to most people seems to be exactly the same as the old girdle. A better climb was Knighton's *True Moments*, a low line which crosses the wall below the Girdle. Mick Fowler added two more routes to Yellow Wall of which *Ludwig* is the best.

The only other development was a small zawn near Yellow Wall called Smurf Zawn. Joe Brown and Ben Wintringham climbed six routes, the best of which are *Smurf*, *Gnome* and *King of the Swingers*.

One thing which stands out about modern developments is the changing ethics; abseil cleaning/inspection is common, top roping happened on two pitches, and bolts and pegs were pre-placed. Exceptions to this were Pat Littlejohn's *Hunger*, and Mick Fowler's routes which were climbed on sight, except for a short section on *Heart of Gold* which had to be cleaned after repeated attempts had failed. As for bolts, if these are used more generally a lot of the blank walls could be climbed now. Do we want this, or do we want to wait until someone is good enough to lead them without?

Ben Wintringham

Note: Al Evans has made it quite clear that the *Castell Helen Girdle* is a lower line than that of *Where Puffins Daren't*. Evans had to garden extensively to reveal the big pitch of the latter route which is now clean as a whistle compared to the rather chossy old Girdle.

Peak District Notes

Despite the extremely poor summer weather, the sustained activity of the past few years has continued unabated. Perhaps the most encouraging aspect of last year was the emergence of a host of new, young climbers prepared to have a go at anything and with the ability to back it up. The elitism, once thought essential for the repetition of these 'modern horrors', has gone and the status of the climbs is drastically altered. No longer do the young tea-heads (sic) in Stoney Cafe speak in awed tones of the technical complexities of route such as John Allen's, *Profit of Doom* or *Above and Beyond the Kinaesthetic Barrier* and even fierce limestone climbs such as Proctor's, *Mortlocks Arete* and Regan's *Darl* get regular ascents.

One interesting side effect of the popularisation of these routes is that it is easier to put earlier climbs into context. It is significant that ten years after its inception, and despite a solo ascent this year by Phil Burke, Tom Proctor's, *Our Father* is still rarely ascended. As it is a very fine climb lying in a showpiece situation, probably one of the

most accessible climbs in Britain, one must conclude that it is only its sheer difficulty which preserves its reputation.

In fact Proctor's long association with Stoney Middleton continues and one wonders if his current contributions will stand the test of time the way they have in the past. On appearance only it looks very likely that they will, but until someone actually manages to repeat them we can only speculate. Tom himself is reticent about their difficulty, but suggests that if *Our Father* is 5c (which it most definitely is) then routes such as *Circe* free and certainly others are in the 6b/6c category. Tom stated that *Circe* has, "several consecutive 6a moves on overhanging rock followed by a couple of really hard ones"!

Apart from the ever insular development at Stoney Middleton the other main area of limestone activity has been in the south of the region, in particular Dovedale has yielded a large number of hard (and not so hard!) high quality routes. Of particular note is the John Codling/Dave Wiggin route *The Umpire*, a long standing problem taking the wall right of the larger Dove-Hole. During the course of his guide book work Chris Calow has added many fine new lines, mostly hard, but a pleasing exception being his *Ten Craters of Wisdom* just left of *Simeon* which offers good climbing on supposedly 'enormous holds' and went at M.V.S. – Chris climbed this one solo!

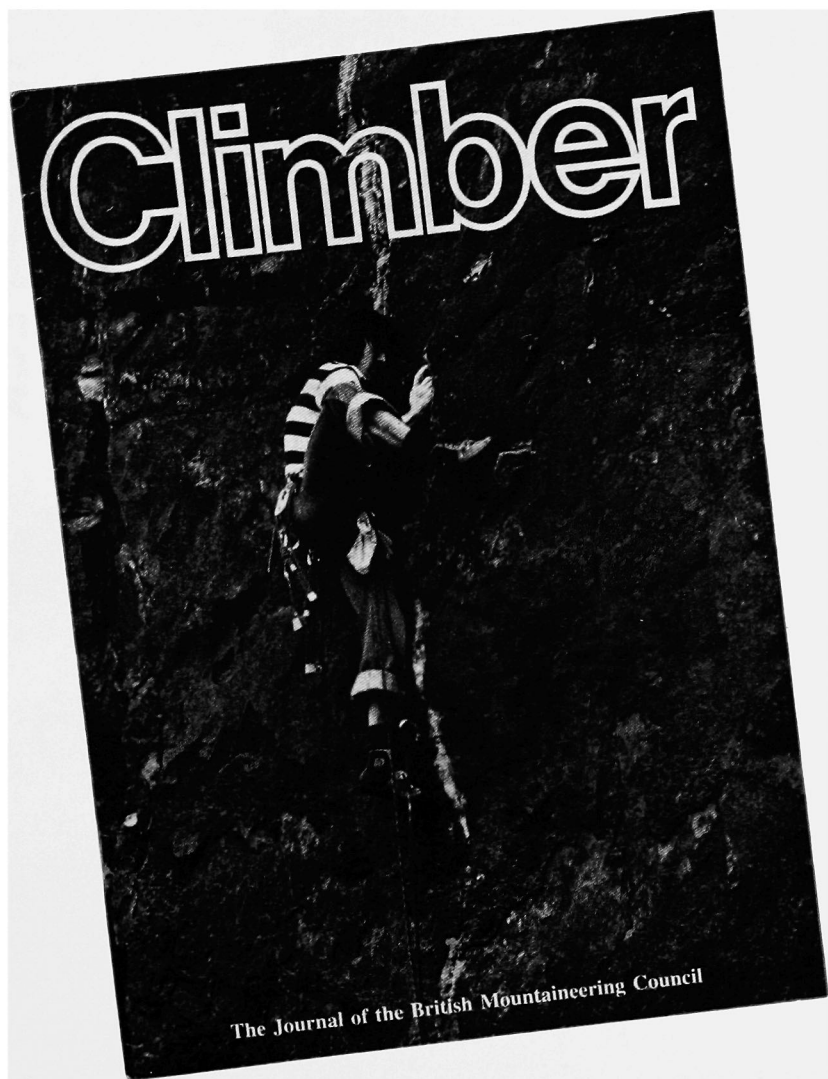
Development in the northern dales of Chee and Water Cum Jolly has strangely slowed down in pace but it is reasonably safe to predict that with the imminence of the new Northern Limestone guide an explosion of activity is only awaiting the fuse to be lit in these areas.

On the gritstone the production of three of the new guidebooks has inevitably shown up various blank spots and numerous good climbs have been found on the established edges. Stanage in particular has provided several new routes of quality as well as difficulty. The proof of this statement can be underlined by the remarkable activities of Al Parker. Al did his first new route on Stanage over twenty one years ago and since that time has added eighty new routes to the edge (to date!). Since he regards his latest route – *King Kong*, X.S. – as one of the best he has done on the crag it is fairly obvious that good lines are still to be found for those with eyes to see.

An interesting development has been the renewed interest in the Kinder Area, again Al Parker was responsible for numerous good new routes in the higher grades and succeeded in inspiring several other people to contribute to the development. In particular Dennis Carr's, *The Beast*, just left of *Bloody 13th* and *Dark Side of the Moon* on the buttress left of *Extinguisher Chimney* are two of the best new gritstone routes around.

The Roaches and surrounding area have seen so much development that it is difficult to really put things into perspective. The ubiquitous Woodward Brothers, a couple of very young climbers with a devotion to the area verging on the paranoid, have recorded literally hundreds of previously undocumented problems and routes ranging from the ferociously thin *Piece of Mind* on the Roaches Lower Tier to variations barely five feet in length – a real problem for the guide-writers. Other people have made valuable, though more normal contributions. On Hen Cloud, Jim

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Moran's, *The Râid* and *Borstal Breakout* among others are fine difficult routes and the Berzins *Caesarian* looks excellent, and hard. Dave Jones and Al Simpson have also made several notable contributions. In fact the latter pair are responsible for dozens of good routes and can really be considered the major contributors to the boom in this area. Jones' *Apalloosa Sunset* on the Third Cloud is a superb gritstone climb and Simpson's desperate *Icarus Allsorts*, on the same crag, is another of the many fine new climbs making these isolated and neglected buttresses well worth a visit. Work on the new guide is well under way, but this area must be a guide-writers nightmare in its present state of flux.

One pleasant fact to report is that the epidemic of wholesale chipped holds on grit appears to have ceased.

One wonders if the decision by certain young climbers to cement up the manufactured hold on Froggatt's *Great Slab* is really the correct way of handling the situation, but it does seem to have cured the problem for the moment. In spite of the criticism from outside and the controversy within, I can't help but feel optimistic about the future of the area's climbs and its climbers.

Al Evans

South West Notes

The South-West has been riding a new route boom for over a decade; even so the level of activity in 1978 was uncommonly high, mainly due to the large number of keen and talented climbers in the Bristol area and also a leap forward in local standards amongst certain Devonshire and Cornish teams.

The publication of a Wye Valley guidebook led to a whirlwind development and 'clean-up' of Wintour's Leap, which is beginning to rival Cheddar for the length and quality of its climbs. First lines to fall were *Jackal* (330 ft, E4, 6a) and *Hyena Cage* (300 ft, E3, 5c) by Pat Littlejohn with Pete Boardman and Chris King respectively. Both are superb routes on the most impressive part of Go Wall. King led free ascents of *Kangaroo Wall* and *Kaiser Wall* and went on to partner Arnis Strapcans on the very exposed rising traverse of *Vulture Squadron* (320 ft, E2, 5c). Other notable additions by Strapcans include *Empire State Experience* (E3, 5b) on the buttress to the right of *King Kong*, and *Joe The Lion* (E3, 5c) which free climbs an impressive roof taken by the aid route *Parasol*. About a dozen new routes of surprisingly good quality have been added to Fly Wall by teams led by such people as Frank Cannings and Gordon Jenkin, whilst the fine arete to the left of *Big Brother* was climbed by Andy Sharp and Steve Lewis to give *Strawberry Dust* (E2, 5c).

At Avon, the recently quarried facets of Unknown Buttress continued to yield high-grade routes. The impressive wall above the buttress was climbed by Littlejohn and King to give *Them* (80 ft, E3, 6a) and the same pair were also the first to breach the front face of the buttress with *Titan's Trail* (E3, 6a). This was soon joined by an even finer route just to the right (*Ladder of Desire*, E3, 6a) led by Nipper Harrison. Harrison went on to head an aid-point purge of the cliffs and among his successes were completely free ascents of *Amanita Muscarina*, *Think Pink*, and *Magic Theatre*, all Tony Wilmot routes and among the best of recent years. Other additions by Harrison include the superb *Changeling* (E3, 6a) which takes the blank groove

Ian Howell crosses the 'Shoulder' of Himalchuli at about 21,720 feet between Camps III and IV; a long descent into the cwm lies ahead. The final wall is well seen here. The planned line to the summit ridge goes from the shadowed cwm to the sunlit spur just to Ian's left (bivouac Camp V?) and then straight up the couloir above to the ridge at the little triangle of sunlight - then left to the top.

between *Peril* and *Pink Wall Direct*, and *Mirage* (E2, 5c) a fierce thin crack right of the top pitch of *New Horizons*. Gordon Jenkin filled an obvious gap on the Sea Walls with *Exterminating Angel* (E3, 5b), and Strapcans made some important repeats and added the exciting *Atmosfears* (E4, 5c) on Main Wall.

The new Cheddar guide generated a considerable amount of traffic on the established routes in the gorge and stimulated some important developments. Most significant was a free ascent of *West Route* at E5 by Steve Monks and Arnis Strapcans after a long siege, resulting in one of the longest (350 ft) and most sustained routes on limestone. The same pair also added *Vanguard* (200 ft, E3, 5c) on the wall right of *Sentinel* and reduced the aid on *Schizoid* to one point. Dick Broomhead found a new pitch leading into the Amphitheatre – *Forced Entry*, E1, 5c – while Nipper Harrison created a hard pitch (E3, 6a) by climbing *Mordor* with only one point of aid.

The Swanage sea-cliffs have had little to attract people climbing at the top standards for some time, but this situation was rectified in 1978. Harrison climbed the impressive face crack of *Warlord* (E3, 5c) with just one aid point (previously A2), while in Black Zawn George Hounsom led the witheringly steep *Melpomene* with two rest slings, later freed by Littlejohn at E3, 5c. At Blacker's Hole an impressive groove line soaring straight out of the sea was climbed by Strapcans to give *Polaris* (E3, 5c) and much else was achieved by various parties in the way of aid reductions. The strangely neglected Portland Bill began to yield a trickle of routes, perhaps the best being Bob Shepton's *Fond Farewell* (E2, 5b) on the impressive face to the left of Big Corner.

The Devon scene has been dominated by local climbers, in particular by Pete O'Sullivan from Plymouth. He transformed the relatively obscure crags at Morwell on the edge of Dartmoor into one of the major inland cliffs of the county, with a series of routes from 100-150 feet long and mainly in the upper grades. Most impressive are *Palace of Skulls* (E3, 5b), *Aerial Ballet* (E3, 5b/c). O'Sullivan was also active along the North Coast of Devon (the 'Culm Coast') with several first ascents at Hartland Quay, Dyer's Lookout, and the first recorded route on the imposing headland of Damehole Point, a low level traverse entitled *The Wine-Dark Sea* (E1, 5c). O'Sullivan also made impressive contributions to the Dartmoor cliffs. Eliminate lines were found on the Dewerstone, including *Extendable Arms* (E2, 5c, 5b) on the right arete of *Leviathan*, a new girdle traverse of Devil's Rock, and an extremely fierce direct start to *Gideon* named *Energy Crisis* (E3, 6a) which will stand as a local test piece. His best contribution to the Tors was to solve the problem of the 150 ft slab on the South face of Vixen Tor, producing *Feasibility Study* (E2, 6a). Other Devon climbers to make an impact include Steve Bell with an impressive route between *Aviation* and *Rhinoceros* on Low Man (*Igneous Pig*, E3, 5c) plus important repeats in Torbay and a free ascent of *Neophron* at E3, 5c. Andy Gallagher and Brian Wilkinson hit the nationals with a new route on Long Rock Slab at Baggy Point entitled *Slip Sliding Away* (180 ft, E1, 5b) and also added several shorter routes on the Torbay cliffs. Torbay also provided various 'lightning visitors' with good entertainment. Pat Littlejohn and Chris King made a free ascent of *Barbican* after hearing a rumour that Mick Fowler had done it, which indeed he did after reading that he had done it in the national mags! Littlejohn and King also made a free ascent of *The Hood* (E3, 5c) but their best effort was to climb the soaring arete to the right of

Last Exit at Daddyhole to give Devon her hardest route to date – *Zuma* (140 ft, E4, 6a).

Back on the sombre North Coast, Blackchurch addict Mick Fowler climbed *Blunderbuss* (260 ft, E2, 5b) the big groove to the right of *Savage God*, and *Stopford* (220 ft, HVS, 5a) a buttress and steep red corner to the left of *Sexton*. The most impressive addition to Blackchurch was undoubtedly Pete Whillance's *Godspell* (150 ft, E3, 5c) on the face to the right of *Archtempter*. It was a quiet year for Lundy compared to 1977, but new finds were made by Leigh McGinley and Roger Hughes. *Dark Power* (150 ft, E3, 5c) in Phantom Zawn, 250 yd South of Arch Zawn, was a fine discovery; *Redspeed* (130 ft, E1, 5b) solved an obvious problem by climbing the groove in the centre of the red buttress between Fluted Face and Devil's Slide.

The north coast of Cornwall saw more development than ever before. It was mainly centred on Carn Gowla but major lines were done elsewhere in the form of Mick Fowler and Mike Morrison's *Vagabond* (290 ft, E4) at Tintagel, which climbs the imposing face to the left of *Il Duce*, and Littlejohn and King's *Sick Rose* (E3, 6a) at Doyden Point. The Carn Gowla boom was dominated by Cornish teams led by Rowland Perriment, Simon Harry and Andrew Tobin, and at a later stage by Rowland Edwards (now resident in Cornwall). About 20 routes were added to the half-mile or so of cliffs from the Red Walls southwards, all HVS and above. *Midnight Rambler* (290 ft, E1, 5b), *Killing Time* (130 ft, E1, 5a) and *Halcyon Days* (130 ft, E2, 5b) were excellent contributions by Harry Tobin to the Vault Wall, while Perriment concentrated mainly on the previously virgin Triple Buttress Cliff south of Mercury, producing half a dozen routes from HVS to E2 and a fine girdle traverse – *Journey to Ixtlan*, 460 ft, HVS, 4c. Later in the year Edwards and Harry opened up the area between Mercury and the Diabolist cliff, discovering several more high-standard routes around 250 feet long.

Moving West, the greenstone revival continued in West Penwith, with Littlejohn and King climbing *Black Sapper* (E3, 5c) on the steep wall left of *Tuco the Terrible* at Robin's Rocks, and O'Sullivan with Cathy Woodhead later girdle traversing the crag. Gurnards Head received an onslaught from Edwards, resulting in a cluster of hard routes around *Behemoth* which Rowland claims compare to the Great Zawn routes for quality.

At Bosigran, several shortish but significant routes appeared towards the left side of the Main Cliff. Littlejohn and King climbed *Evil Eye* and *The Leer* (both E3, 6a) in an afternoon, while Jim Moran brushed up the steep face to the left of *Patience* and was rewarded with two fine climbs – *Pump it Up* (E2, 5c) and *Saddle Tramp* (E2, 5c). He also added two climbs further right, the best being *Western Hero* (E3, 5c). Ron Fawcett had a fruitful visit burning off everything in sight and downgrading it, two of the highlights of his trip being the long-awaited solo ascent of *Bow Wall* and a new route breaking left over the overhangs from the *Bow Wall* niche – *New Medium* (E4, 6a/b). Fawcett, Steve Foster and friends also added several short routes on the South Coast crags, including *Grit Exiles* (HVS, 5b – but looks harder!) taking a crack to the right of *Terrier's Tooth*, and the fine *Southern Belle* (E1) up the groove to the right of *Longships Wall* at Land's End. In the same area Peter Blackburn and Nigel Holliday explored the small zawn west of Urinal Zawn, producing *Hoss* (VS, 4b), *Flakey Bill*

(VS, 4b) and *Turdsville* (Severe). At Pordennack Point Littlejohn led the fierce bottomless crack to the right of *Sea Fury – Cain* (100 ft, E3, 6a) whilst on Carn Les Boel the long-standing problem presented by the wall to the right of *Scabbard* fell to Littlejohn and King, giving perhaps the best high-standard route on the South Coast – *Burning Gold* (140 ft, E3, 5c/6a). The top climbers in the South West continue to reject chalk, and as well as the aforementioned first ascents, such modern gems as *Darkinbad the Brightdayler*, *West Face* and *Liberator* received clean-handed ascents. Two new guidebooks to the region appeared; *Devon* (Dartmoor and the N. Coast) edited by Bob Moulton, and *Bosigran* by Ed Hart. This leaves only North Cornwall in a state of hazy documentation.

Pat Littlejohn

NEW CLIMBS

NORTH WALES

CLOGWYN DU'R ARDDU

A Midsummer Night's Dream 250 feet Hard Extremely Severe (E5)

Start off a small grass pedestal midway between Great Wall and Vember. Pitch 1 approximately follows the line of Drummond's aid route.

1 80 feet. 6b. Step up and move up and leftwards to ledges. Peg runner. Climb up rightwards then go up to a bolt runner. Go up and slightly leftwards for ten feet (peg runner hidden in corner on the left). Go up trending leftwards to arrive five feet above Great Wall belay. Step down to belay.

2 70 feet. 6a. Follow the groove of Great Wall for forty feet. Move left to an obvious hold on the wall. Climb up until moves left can be made to a stance on Daurigol/Diglyph.

3 100 feet. 6a. Climb up and leftwards to the arete. Follow this direct to the top.

First ascent: P. Whillance, D. Armstrong.

Pitch 1 July 28, 1977

Pitches 2 & 3 May 28, 1978

Pistolero 230 feet Extremely Severe (E4)

Takes a direct line up the East Buttress left of Capricorn. Start at the right hand side of a narrow grass terrace above pitch 1 of The Leech.

1 80 feet. 5c. Climb directly up the wall for 15 feet to a short flake crack breaking rightwards. Follow this right for a move then go straight up the wall for 15 feet to a ragged crack. Follow this to its top and traverse 10 feet left to the stance of Llithrig.

2 150 feet. 6a. Follow Llithrig for 30 feet until it is possible to traverse right to large flakes beneath a very thin crack. Climb the thin crack for 25 feet to an aid peg. Continue up the crack to the top.

First ascent: 30 May, 1978. E. Cleasby, P. Burke, K. Myhill.

Desperate Straights 130 feet Extremely Severe (E3)

Takes the obvious groove which follows the arete of Pinnacle Arete direct. Start below the groove, pull over the roof to gain the first groove, up this until it is possible to pull right on better holds and up to Pinnacle Arete. Continue in the same line, poor protection, to a horizontal crack, move left and up ledges to the top.

First ascent: R. Fawcett, S. Foster, P. Livesey.

The Rumour 170 feet Extremely Severe (E2)

On The Pinnacle this 5b, 4c route follows East Gully Groove to the roof, then attacks this direct and takes the wall above on excellent holds, in the manner of Shrike. Unfortunately escape is possible in a couple of places, but the climbing en route is good.

First ascent: 20 May, 1978. J. Moran, A. Evans.

CLOGWYN Y GROCHAN**Strapiombo Direct** 205 feet Mild Extremely Severe (E1)

This series of variations on Strapiombo is graded 5b 5b 5a 5a.

First ascent: W. Hurford, S. Ryecroft, P. Williams.

Quixote Hard Very Severe (5a 5a)

Start below and left of Phantom Rib. An eliminate.

- 1 Climb the rib on the left to the stance on Phantom Rib.
- 2 Traverse left to a foothold on the rib. Climb a blind crack to a short open groove, up this and a rib on the right to belay.

First ascent: August 27, 1978. G. Gibson, J. Perry.

Divinity Hard Very Severe (5a)

Thin crack left of S.S. Special.

First ascent: August 30, 1978. G. Gibson (solo).

Pump 70 feet Extremely Severe

The obvious hanging groove and crackline to the right of Brant Direct. Rather strenuous but short.

- 1 70 feet. 6a. Climb the groove, swing right to good holds, then use an obvious undercut to gain the crack. Climb it to the Brant ledges.

First ascent: June 5, 1978. R. Fawcett, C. Gibb.

First Amendment Mild Extremely Severe (E1)

The route takes a thin crack 10 feet left of Slape Direct then an obvious hanging groove in the wall above. It is graded 5c 5b.

First ascent: D. Roberts, P. Williams.

Advert 100 feet Extremely Severe (E3)

Start just right of Wind. A serious pitch.

- 1 100 feet. 5b/c. Climb the wall, past some flakes to the flared crack. Enter this with difficulty. Follow the slabs above to belay on Lords at the tree.

First ascent: July 31, 1978. A. Sharp, S. Lewis.

CRAIG DDU**The Heretic** 100 feet Extremely Severe (E3)

- 1 100 feet. 6a. Climb the groove in the middle of the overhanging wall left of Yellow Wall to a horizontal crack. Move left and finish awkwardly.

First ascent: August 18, 1978. J. Moran, P. Williams.

DINAS CROMLECH**Corky** 130 feet. Mild Extremely Severe (E1)

Take the short wall and the groove in the arete of the buttress 50 yards left of Cromlech Grooves.

1 40 feet. Climb the short wall directly below the groove to belay at a block on the left.

2 90 feet. 5a. Climb the groove and an obvious pinnacle on the left, runner. Move back right on undercuts across the top of the groove to an awkward move onto a sloping ledge. Take the shallow leaning corner to the top.

First ascent: October 13, 1978. P. Williams, W. Hurford.

The Nubian 180 feet Mild Extremely Severe (E1)

Climbs all the way up the arete left of Holly Buttress.

1 100 feet. 5b. Start four feet left of the arete and climb diagonally right to join it at the overhang. Pull back left strenuously (crux) to good holds and follow the arete (loose) and the little continuation to belay half way up Holly Buttress on the tree.

2 80 feet. 4c. Step left and follow the arete to the top. The proximity of Holly Buttress does not detract from the enjoyable nature of this last pitch.

First ascent: October 22, 1978. P. Williams, T. Walkington.

The Mystery 70 feet Mild Extremely Severe (E1)

The obvious corner near The Monster has at least one very old sling in situ. This 5b route was recently ascended by D. Walker and C. T. Jones but Smiler Cuthbertson also did it some years ago.

Gross Encounters 70 feet Mild Extremely Severe (E1)

1 70 feet. 5b. The loose wall and good jamming crack left of Horseman's Route.

First ascent: P. Williams, D. Roberts.

Pegasus 90 feet Hard Very Severe

1 90 feet. 5a. The arete right of Horseman's Route.

First ascent: D. Roberts, P. Williams.

Kamikaze Finish Very Severe

A direct finish to Flying Buttress.

First ascent: D. Roberts, P. Williams.

The Puerile Ticker 100 feet Very Severe

(Ref. Crag 14 – Wilson interview)

1 100 feet. Start as for Rene at the tree. Climb the obvious groove to the right of that route. Pleasant climbing.

First ascent: October 7, 1978. W. Hurford, P. Williams.

The Quaker 100 feet Hard Very Severe

Start as for Rene at the tree.

1 100 feet. Climb the rib on the right to a ledge at 20 feet below the groove of Puerile Ticker. Move up a slab then layback diagonally right on a dubious flake to a small ledge below an overhang. Climb up and move left below the overhang, then pull up to a resting place on the arete. Move right and up on good holds to finish – loose.

First ascent: P. Williams, W. Hurford.

VIVIAN QUARRY LLANBERIS

Legs Akimbo 100 feet Hard Very Severe

A fine route on good rock which is often dry when there is rain up the Pass. Approach up the left side of the quarry from the old quarry offices between the two lakes, Past half height there is a ledge with telegraph poles. This is the only step on the left side bearing such poles. The route starts 100 yards or so along this ledge towards the back of the quarry, below an impressive looking slab bearing a tree at half height.

1 50 feet. Start a few feet left of the arete bounding the slab, then step back right gradually to make a horizontal traverse to below the tree. Go up to the tree.

2 50 feet. Either go up diagonally left from the tree using high sidepulls to reach a good ledge or step across horizontally on small holds to reach bigger ones. The line is now obvious, finish up the slab bearing left at the top.

First ascent: April 1, 1978. R. Dobs, P. Smitton.

DINAS MOT

G.B.H. 270 feet Extremely Severe (E2)

1 4b. Climb the rib right of The Cracks to belay as for the latter route.

2 5b. Climb straight up between Lorraine Variation and The Direct to a good ledge. Now slant left up a line of shallow grooves, pockets and cracks onto the good ledge at the top of Lorraine Variation after a few moves up a wet layback crack. Huge spike belay.

3 5c. Climb the crack just left of the arete above the huge spike. Vicious.

4 4b. Climb the arete left of the last pitch of The Cracks.

First ascent: G. Gibson, D. Beetlestone, R. Hewitt.

Famine Hard Very Severe

Start right of Diagonal at a short groove above the overhang.

1 4b. Climb into the groove and go up this and the slab above to belay on the 'unstable' block of Diagonal.

2 5a. Climb direct up the wall above to the slab. Climb the slab above roughly in line with the rib right of the Direct Route and left of the Super Direct route, joining the Direct Route just before the hand traverse. Go up this to belay. Quite independent and a good pitch.

First ascent: G. Gibson, J. Perry. August 28, 1978.

Blink! – Don't! Hard Very Severe

Start as for Western Slabs.

1 4c. Climb Western Slabs for 20 feet then climb directly up to a good stance on a large spike left of West Rib.

2 5a. Climb up a diagonal crack which leads to West Rib then climb the groove left of West Rib then break out diagonally left to belay in the crack just above The Link.

3 4b. Climb the thin crack in the slab which leads to the belay of The Chain.

First ascent: August 26, 1978. G. Gibson, J. Perry.

The rib between The Chain and West Rib was also climbed (5c) but was found too hard as a finish to this route.

Speeding Fine 230 feet Extremely Severe (E2)

Start 35 yards right of the steps in the fence.

1 4c. Climb direct to a grass ledge and belay on Western Slabs.

2 5b. Climb to a sloping ledge between Western Slabs and the right hand arete of the nose. Climb a short groove above the ledge, step right and climb the slab just left of the arete to belay at a good ledge.

3 5a. Traverse left and finish up The Chain.

First ascent: July 29, 1978. G. Gibson, R. Hewitt.

(The same day as a new route called Tank at Tremadog!)

Black and White Extremely Severe (E3)

Start as for Black Shadow.

1 5c. From the start of Black Shadow climb the wall left of Black Spring direct to a peg. Traverse left into an obvious line of shallow pockets. Follow these into a shallow groove and exit left at its top to belay as for Black Shadow. The best pitch on 'Black Wall'.

2 5b. Climb over the overhang on its gully side then climb a shallow groove to finish at a very grassy crack (needs cleaning). Go up this to a ledge. Continue up the obvious quartz ramp/groove.

First ascent: August 28, 1978. G. Gibson, J. Perry.

Girdle of The Nose Extremely Severe (E2)

This gives good climbing and is taken at half height.

First ascent: P. Burke and Bangor University team.

Groper now free at E2, 5c.

A variation was added which climbs the thin crack in the arete and then finishes up The Lymph to reach a belay.

First free ascent: August 26, 1978. P. Whillance, D. Armstrong.

Crossbones now free at 6a.

First free ascent: J. Moran (with A. Evans). May 21, 1978.

CASTELL CIDWM

Trango has now gone 'free' to J. Moran but he had one yo-yo. He re-graded the route from E3, 6a with aid to E2, 5c (free)! June 1, 1978. (G. Milburn and S. Horrox also performed after a fashion).

CWM IDWAL – SUICIDE WALL

Solitary Confinement 80 feet Mild Extremely Severe (E1)

5b. Climbs the blunt arete left of the Garotte's final groove. Climb the arete towards the shallow leftwards slanting groove high on the wall. Climb the groove then pull over the bulging wall on the right to continue to the top.

First ascent: July 17, 1978. P. Davidson, G. Healey, T. Jones.

CRAFNANT (S.H. WALL)

Skylark E2, 5c. Free climb the old aid route but follow the obvious crack until it stops and 'lunge' left to finish direct.

First free ascent: R. Fawcett, S. Foster.

Connie's Crack E2, 6a. Now free, avoiding the tension traverse by moving slightly higher.

First free ascent: R. Fawcett, S. Foster.

CRAIG Y FORWYN

Hedera Wall 110 feet Extremely Severe (E2)

The wall and arete left of Ivy Sepulchre.

First ascent: R. Fawcett, C. Gibb.

Human Menagerie Hard Very Severe

5b. Takes the area left of Knightsbridge.

First ascent: M. Owen, P. White.

ORMES – UNNAMED CRAG

The Crack Very Severe 4b, takes the huge chimney crack at the far left end of the crag, just past the obvious sea stack.

First ascent: J. Frost, C. Lyons.

ORMES – OBSERVATORY BUTTRESS

Josey Wales Hard Very Severe 5a, 4c, takes the arete and cracks midway between The Teal and Phalanx.

First ascent: C. Lyons, D. Lyons (A.L.).

(The above team also climbed an A.3, V.S. route – details withheld. Ed)

GREAT ORME – CRAIG Y GWYNT

The Fosse Way 335 feet Extremely Severe

A superb lower girdle of the crag. The climbing is harder than Appian Way and of a more open nature. Start as for Demos.

1 75 feet. 4c. As for Demos to the belay.

2 65 feet. 5b. Step down slightly onto the line of foot holds leading leftwards. Using small flakes traverse left, making some strenuous moves to get onto a loose sounding flake. Step down and go round into a niche and then descend to a traverse line which leads to the belay of 'New Dimensions'.

3 50 feet. 5c. Traverse left to a niche left of the prow. Climb round this prow and make another long reach to a peg and use this to get onto the ledge on the left. Follow this to belays as for Central Pillar and Appian Way.

4 120 feet. 5b+. Move left and go down to a small scoop, peg runner. Climb to the fault line and follow it to the arete. Move round to a spike at the foot of a steep wall. Climb this then move left into a grassy groove on the left which leads to the top.

First ascent: June 24, 1977. R. Edwards, G. Perry.

Alternative Three 215 feet Extremely Severe

Start at the large boulders at the foot of Demos.

1 90 feet. 5b/c. Climb onto the steep slab on the left of the break which descends down to the foot of the crag. Ascend this leftwards to a small handhold on the very edge of the slab, thread runner. Traverse left on good holds to a steep crack (New Dimensions). Go up this to belay on the left.

2 90 feet. 6a. Climb across the steep slab on the right and go up into a niche. Swing right onto a loose sounding flake then climb up into the steep groove above to a bolt for protection. Continue climbing strenuously up the groove to a peg and go up to the bulge. Pull strenuously over this into the groove above and another thread

runner. Climb to the roof and then traverse left to belay on small ledges and thread belays.

3 40 feet. 5b. Climb up the corner above then traverse right using the lip of the overhang. At the end of this traverse some strenuous moves lead to a small ledge. Climb onto this then a short section of grassy rock leads to the top.

Direct Finish On the first ascent the roof directly above the steep groove and the slab were climbed. This led to a grassy finish and was done as one pitch. The climbing is harder than on pitch 3.

First ascent: June 26, 1977. R. Edwards, G. Perry.

Space Walk 120 feet. 5b/c, is a steep line left of Psychic Threshold and was first climbed by R. Edwards.

ROUTES ON THE UPPER TIER OF ST. TUDNO'S BUTTRESS.

Traverse left along the obvious path until some large blocks below large roofs.

Goliath 75 feet Mild Extremely Severe (E1)

1 75 feet. 5b. Climb the steep crack in the right wall of the corner. This crack ends at forty five feet in steep rather loose rock which is climbed to the top.

First ascent: March 1971. R. Edwards, and party.

Limestone Lemur 75 feet Mild Extremely Severe (E1)

1 75 feet. 5b. Climb up the steep wall to the first roof, go past this, then climb left and up to the larger roof, peg runner. Move right strenuously to get onto a ledge over the lip of the roof. Climb straight up to the top.

First ascent: February 7, 1978. R. Edwards, P. Williams.

Gritstone Gorilla 75 feet Mild Extremely Severe (E1)

1 75 feet. 5b. Climb up the steep wall left of the corner to the first roof. Move left and climb up to the big roof, peg runner. Traverse left across the roof to the lip and make some very strenuous moves over this to get into a crack. Climb the crack to the next roof and traverse left into a narrow chimney. Finish up this.

First ascent: February 1, 1978. P. Williams, R. Edwards.

Paws 75 feet Hard Very Severe

This route is the arete left of Gritstone Gorilla.

1 75 feet. 5a. Climb the steep wall on the left to get onto the arete. Climb this and move right at the top to get into the narrow chimney. Finish up this.

First ascent: February 14, 1978. R. Edwards.

NOTE: It has been reported that **Psychic Threshold** was ascended with 1 resting point and 1 aid point on the big pitch (Not artificial as stated in the last Journal).

The 1978 routes for the Snowdon South area all appear in the 1979 'Tremadog and the Moelwyns' guide, and the Gogarth routes are to be found in the '1978 Gogarth Supplement'.

PENMAENMAWR MOUNTAIN

Most of the climbing on this crag is on three big ribs where the difficulty is on the lower sections. Approach the cliff by a path from Redmill, which is the old mill at

Penmaenmawr Quarry. The path goes round the mountain towards Llanfairfechan. The crag is above the A55 Road just after the tunnels between Penmaenmawr and Llanfairfechan.

Small Wall 65 feet Mild Severe

The left hand wall of the two to the left of the main ribs; a poor route. Cross from the flakes on the left to the big crack; on to the edge of the right wall, climb to the top.

First ascent: A. Bowman.

Big Wall 85 feet Very Severe

Poor and very loose. The right wall of the two. Climb the slab to the left, pull on to a ledge, up to the top.

Wellington Rib 350 feet Difficult

The left hand rib.

- 1 35 feet. Climb the very edge of the slab on the left.
- 2 40 feet. Crux. Start on the right and climb an exposed chimney to a slab.
- 3 300 feet. Easy rock to a wall.
- 4 75 feet. Climb the wall, then traverse the horizontal arete cowboy-style.

First ascent: C. Goodey.

Evening Rib 200 feet Difficult

The next rib to the right.

- 1 50 feet. Climb the slab on the right, traverse left around the overhang to a crack, up to a stance.
- 2 150 feet. Climb a loose block wall on the left, then scramble to a traverse into the gully.

First ascent: C. Goodey.

Coco Rib 400 feet Very Severe

The next rib. A good route.

- 1 60 feet. Reach a block below a corner. Climb the corner and finish to the right.
- 2 50 feet. The wall and rib above the stance to a belay.
- 3 290 feet. Finish easily.

First ascent: C. Goodey.

Node 100 feet Very Severe

Start in the gully right of Coco Rib, about 400 feet up from the path.

- 1 50 feet. A crack to a ledge on the slab. Delicately to a peg belay, below the wall.
- 2 50 feet. Move left on to the gully wall; protected by a peg high on the wall, reach some flakes and so to the top.

Mash Rib 200 feet Severe

A good route, starting at the foot of the rib that is in the gully right of Node Buttress.

- 1 100 feet. Pass a tree to attain the centre of the rib, follow it in good position to an ivy ledge. Nut belay below the overhanging crack.
- 2 50 feet. Climb the corner right of the crack to a peg; traverse right to a detached block. Climb the block and a wall to a stance.
- 3 50 feet. Easily to finish.

First ascent: A. Bowman, V. Griffiths.

Black Slab 200 feet Very Severe

A good climb on the crag below the quarry incline at the end of the path below the ribs. Start at the foot of the slab with a fin of rock on it.

- 1 40 feet. Thin cracks to a poor stance on the right.
- 2 60 feet. More of the same, to below the first overlap.
- 3 100 feet. Take the first overlap by a corner and the second by a sapling. Up to a belay.

First ascent: C. Goodey.

Xmas 100 feet Difficult

This climb is on the CRAG OVER LLANFAIRFECHAN which runs inland from the main crag. Start right of the two V-chimneys.

- 1 55 feet. The steep wall right of the chimney; belay pegs.
- 2 45 feet. Left for 6 feet, right over a block, up a slab. A good belay at the top of the slab.

First ascent: A. Bowman, E. Parry.

An edge lower than the last climb has been done – 70 feet, Difficult.

End Slab 70 feet Severe

At the foot of these rocks is a small slab, climbed from centre to right.

Groove and Traverse 110 feet Hard Severe

This last climb is on a crag at the top of the first quarry incline after Redmill.

- 1 50 feet. Climb the first groove left of the main face to an overlap. Mantleshelf left into the second groove. Go up to a stance.
- 2 60 feet. Traverse right to a slab with a block; over this and loose rock to the top.

First ascent: A. Bowman, R. Wilson.

PEMBROKE

There has been extensive development along the Pembrokeshire coast and as a new guide is well under way not all of the new routes have been included.

ST. GOVAN'S HEAD

The cliff runs from the St. Govan's Chapel cove to a point below the coastguard station. Access to this very extensive area of cliff is by descending the chimney beside the broad stack about 400 yards towards the headland from the car park. The area is very little affected by the tides and the rock is good. The area is closed during military exercises and climbing is not officially permitted at present, although climbers have not been asked to leave in recent times. The routes are described from north to south.

Test Case 140 feet Extremely Severe (E2/3)

The leftwards slanting groove about 30 yards right of the descent chimney. Start at a short wall below and right of the groove.

- 1 20 feet. 4a. Climb the wall and move left to belay below a wide pedestal crack.
- 2 120 feet. 5c. Climb the crack then move right along the top of the pedestal to beneath the groove. Move up into the groove and climb until good holds on the left are gained. Continue diagonally left to an overhang split by cracks. Pass this then climb a shallow groove to the top.

First ascent: January 21, 1978. P. Littlejohn, C. King.

Flanker 130 feet Very Severe

Starts 10 feet left of Cupid's Bow.

1 130 feet. Climb the lower wall to a ledge then go up left to the foot of a corner. Climb the crack/chimney on the right, then go up and left over large blocks. Finish up the groove.

First ascent: January 2, 1978. D. Armstrong, P. Whillance.

Ricochet 130 feet Hard Very Severe

Start up Flanker.

1 130 feet. Climb the steep wall then go straight up to the steep wall below an obvious groove. Climb the wall and groove to its top. Traverse left then go up and left over large blocks and up a groove to the top (as for Flanker).

First ascent: January 2, 1978. P. Whillance, D. Armstrong.

Cupid's Bow 120 feet Hard Very Severe

The conspicuous flake crack in the centre of the buttress, 50 yards right of the descent chimney and left of the ramp.

1 120 feet. 5a. Go up the lower wall to the ledge and continue to enter the groove. Layback two steep sections then climb the groove trending left to the top.

First ascent: December 31, 1976. P. Whillance, D. Armstrong, J. Lamb.

The Arrow 130 feet Mild Extremely Severe (E1)

The rightward trending cracks in the wall right of Cupid's Bow.

1 130 feet. 5b. Climb walls to reach the cracks and follow these over the bulge on to a slab. Go up right to the overhang and climb up left to the top.

First ascent: February 19, 1977. P. Whillance, D. Armstrong.

Hangover 77 100 feet Mild Extremely Severe (E1)

The large hanging corner at the left hand end of 'The Ramp'. Start below the corner.

1 100 feet. Climb onto the ledge and go up the corner. Pull out right into a shallow groove, go up, then step left onto good footholds. Move up to the overhang, swing out right and enter the crack/chimney which leads to the top.

First ascent: November 1977. J. Lamb, D. Armstrong, P. Whillance.

Tactician 110 feet Hard Very Severe

The right-facing corner in the centre of 'The ramp'.

1 110 feet. Climb the corner on to a slab, step right into the main corner and climb this to the top.

First ascent: December 31, 1976. J. Lamb, D. Armstrong, P. Whillance.

D. Day 120 feet Extremely Severe (E2)

The overhanging groove to the left of the cave on 'The Ramp'. Start below the overhang.

1 80 feet. Climb the overhanging wall rightwards below the overhang (past a loose block) to a groove. Climb the groove to the overhang and pull out left onto the slab. Go up right to a stance.

2 40 feet. Step left and climb the groove. Pull out right then go up left to the top.

First ascent: January 2, 1977. J. Lamb, D. Armstrong, P. Whillance.

Lookout Arete 140 feet Hard Very Severe

The overhanging wall, groove and chimney near the arete at the right hand end of 'The Ramp'. Start 10 feet left of the arete.

1 140 feet. Climb the overhanging wall going up and left to a flake crack and go up to the overhang. Traverse right and mantleshelf onto a ledge. Climb the groove and chimney and pull out right onto a slab. Move up and step left into a chimney/crack and go up to the top.

First ascent: February 19, 1977. D. Armstrong, P. Whillance.

Zero Hour 120 feet Very Severe

The stepped corner in the first bay beyond the right hand end of the ramp. Start at the left hand side of the overhang.

1 120 feet. Climb up and left, step back right above the overhang and climb the corners and grooves above to the top.

First ascent: December 31, 1976. D. Armstrong, J. Lamb, P. Whillance.

High Explosive 130 feet Hard Very Severe

The corner and grooves above and right of Zero Hour.

1 130 feet. Climb the crack to the left-trending flake and climb it to the central one of three grooves. Follow this to the ledge. Move left round the rib into a jam crack and climb this to a small ledge. Climb the crack above to the overhang, step down right into a chimney/groove and climb this to the top.

First ascent: January 2, 1978. J. Taylor, R. Parker.

Sentinel Corner 110 feet Hard Very Severe

The large corner 40 yards right of the lower end of 'The Ramp'. Start below the corner.

1 110 feet. Climb the corner over several bulges and pull out onto the ledge. Climb the corner to below an overhang, pull out over this and continue to the top.

First ascent: February 20, 1977. D. Armstrong, P. Whillance.

Face Value 150 feet Extremely Severe (E2)

The first break right of Infiltrator is a chimney which ends at 40 feet.

1 80 feet. 5b. Climb the chimney for 15 feet then traverse right using the horizontal crack and move up to a resting place below the groove. Climb the groove and continue to a small overhang before moving right to a good crack. Climb for a few feet then gain the face crack on the right and climb it to the main horizontal break. Pull up right to a good stance.

2 70 feet. 5b. Climb the groove above the right hand end of the stance and when it ends make a difficult high step to reach better holds. Move left then climb the wall right of the loose break to the top.

First ascent: May 11, 1978. P. Littlejohn, C. King.

STACKPOLE HEAD – WEST FACE

Seasonal restriction – March 1 to July 31.

The West Face of Stackpole is fast becoming one of the major cliffs of Pembroke for higher grade climbing. It is serious as the foot of the crag is only accessible for about two hours around low tide. Descend via the ridge at the North-west end of the face and scramble/boulder hop to the intended line. When the tide is too high there is little point in trying to abseil in as one generally lands away from the base of the crag owing to its profusion of overhangs.

The Whaler 210 feet Extremely Severe (E2)

Interesting and enjoyable. Just beyond the bay beside the descent spur are two large sea caves. The route takes a line through the overhangs above the right hand cave. Start below a chimney on the right hand side of the cave. This is about 80 yards from the descent spur.

1 70 feet. 4c. Climb the grooves to the chimney and ascend it to the overhang. Swing left and go up to the cave.

2 40 feet. 4b. Climb out above the chockstone and traverse left on good holds to the base of a shallow chimney. Go up slightly to belay.

3 100 feet. 5b. Go up to the large roof and traverse left beneath it for 40 feet to the base of a flared crack. Climb the crack to a scoop then go diagonally right to finish.

First ascent: May 3, 1978. P. Littlejohn, C. King (alt)

The Big Sleep 115 feet Extremely Severe (E3)

The thinner crackline on the face right of Heaven's Door.

1 35 feet. 5a. (in wet). As for Heaven's Door to the stance.

2 80 feet. 5c+. Move over the overhang above the stance towards its right hand side, and climb to an obvious undercut crack. Climb the groove on the left to a ledge then go directly up a thin crack above to the top.

First ascent: September 25, 1977. P. Littlejohn, J. Harwood.

Swordfish 130 feet Extremely Severe (E2)

A very fine route. 30 yards right of Heaven's Door and The Big Sleep is a striking groove line guarded by overhangs. Entry to the groove is effected by an obvious leftward traverse. Start beneath a rugged corner below and right of the big groove.

1 130 feet. 5b. Go up the corner to the overhang then go left across an undercut wall into the base of the groove. Climb to a small ledge on the left, make one move up the shallow groove to a good hold, then step right into the main groove. Climb on good holds to a ledge then continue up the corner to the top.

First ascent: May 2, 1978. P. Littlejohn, C. King.

Silver Shadow 130 feet Extremely Severe (E2)

This route basically takes the large open corner right of Swordfish. Start as for Swordfish.

1 130 feet. 5b. Climb the rugged corner to the overhang then move right and go up a steepish wall to a second roof. Traverse left to gain a small ledge below twin cracks in the left wall of the main corner. Climb cracks for 15 feet then bear right into the main corner and follow it to a blanker section. A hidden hold on the right wall enables a horizontal break above to be reached. Move up right to a ledge then climb the continuation corner to the top.

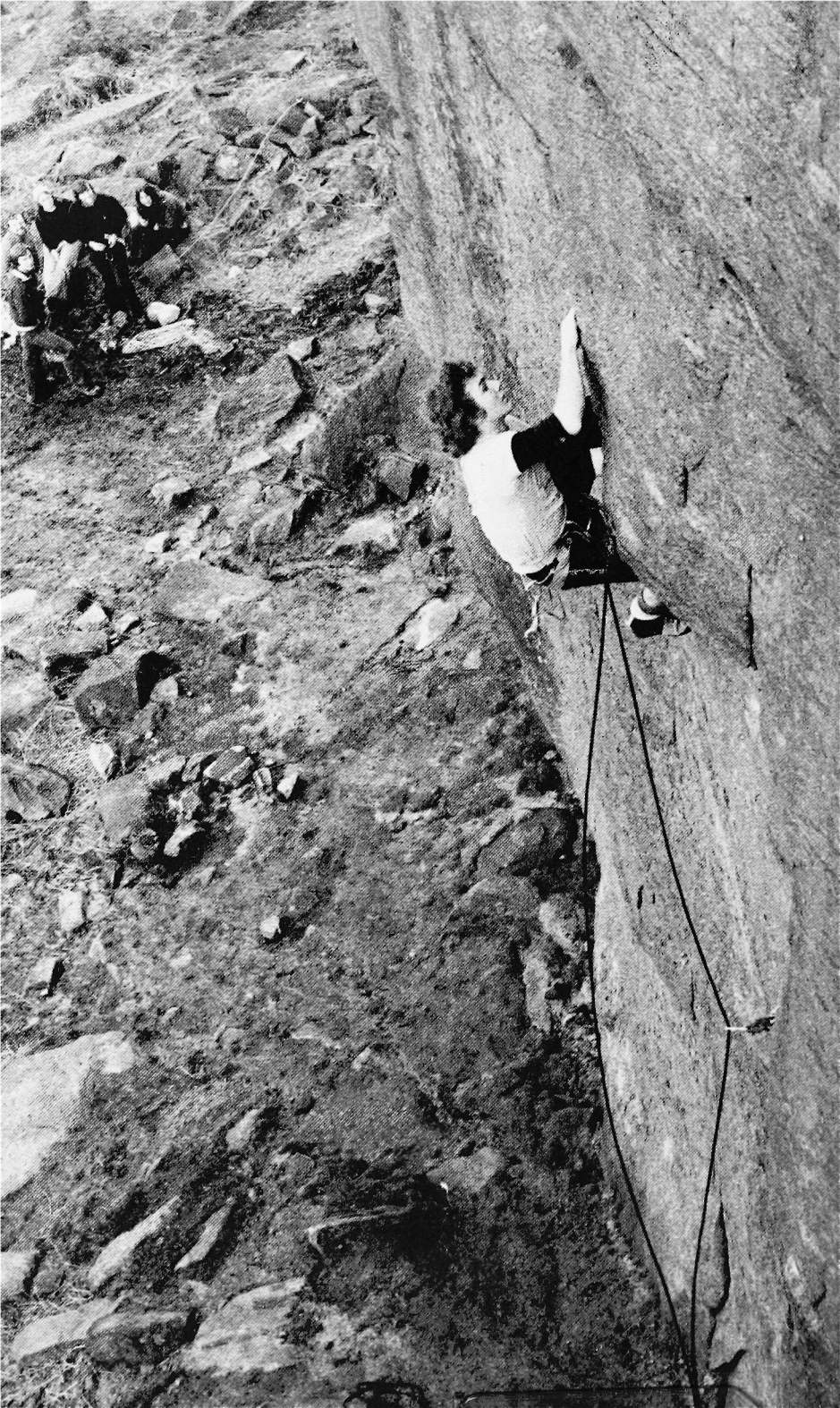
First ascent: May 2, 1978. P. Littlejohn, C. King.

MOTHER CAREY'S KITCHEN – BRAZEN BUTTRESS**Brittle Nerve** 150 feet Extremely Severe (E2)

This route takes the East face of the buttress. On the opposite side of the great cleft to the start of Deep Space is a steep crack curving left slightly to the arete. Start below this.

1 70 feet. 5a. Climb a smooth groove and move right into the crack. Climb the





crack, keeping right near the top, to a stance level with the overhang of Deep Space. 2 80 feet. 5b/c. Pull round left into a hole and shove a leg in to rest. Move up then climb leftwards to the arete (crux) before moving right again. Climb the face to more broken ground leading to the top.

First ascent: September 26, 1977. P. Littlejohn, J. Harwood.

Deep Space – Fresh Air Finish 80 feet E2/5b

More strenuous and exposed than the original. Climb straight over the overhang above the cave stance and traverse right just above the lip to reach the hanging arete. Climb the arete, passing the small overhang on the left, and continue up the face to the top.

First ascent: December 1, 1977. P. Littlejohn, C. King.

Mother Night 170 feet Extremely Severe (E3)

A central line up the impending wall (the 'Space Face') which forms the Eastern extremity of the Kitchen. At about mid-tide start at the foot of Warp Factor etc. At low tide start on boulders 30 feet further right.

1 50 feet. Traverse right for 30 feet just above the sea then go diagonally right on good holds (at low tide climb direct to these holds from the ground) to some ledges and a larger flake below a series of rightward-veering ramps.

2 60 feet. 5c. Go up easily to below a small overhang. Turn this on the left then climb leftwards into a small scoop. Move up and left again then climb direct to the base of the obvious overhanging corner.

3 60 feet. 5c. Climb the corner to a small cave. Traverse left for 10 feet to a slight niche just past the huge thread then climb the wall above to the top.

First ascent: April 7, 1978. P. Littlejohn, C. King.

LYDSTEP POINT – BRIDGE ZAWN

Approach as for Pinnacle Buttress – traverse toward the point until progress is stopped by the zawn.

Munga 110 feet Very Severe

Interesting and unusual. Belay on the edge of the zawn some 50 feet above the sea.

1 70 feet. 5a. Move round the corner into the zawn and climb rightwards until 10 feet from the back wall. Climb some cracks to a short overhanging groove and go up this (crux) to a good stance.

2 40 feet. 4a. The corner chimney behind the belay leads to a ledge, then easy ground to the top.

First ascent: April 7, 1978. D. Roberts, P. Littlejohn, C. King.

Outsider 80 feet Hard Very Severe

The right hand corner of Bridge Zawn. Scramble down or abseil to the edge of the Point side of the zawn.

1 80 feet. 5a. Climb into the corner and follow it pleasantly until it steepens sharply at its top. The last 10 feet provide the interest.

First ascent: April 15, 1978. J. Harwood unseconded.

SOUTH WALES

OGMORE (Routes described West to East)

Oedipus 60 feet Extremely Severe (E3)

An interesting and gymnastic pitch taking the blunt arete between Leprechaun and Fools Fantasy. Start beneath the rib.

1 60 feet. 6a. Climb just left of the arete to the bulges, move up right then pull leftwards to gain a small ledge above the roof. Move onto the face above and climb direct to the top.

First ascent: May 25, 1978. P. Littlejohn, A. Sharp.

Griffin – FREE by original line. E2, 5c.

First free ascent: May 25, 1978. P. Littlejohn, A. Sharp.

The Kickin'side 90 feet Mild Extremely Severe (E1)

Climbs the left wall of Bishop.

1 90 feet. 5b. Climb easily to a short chimney (as for Brimstone) and from the top of this climb steeply to the right hand of two grooves in the wall. Follow the groove for 15 feet then traverse across the left hand groove and move round the arete to finish as for Brimstone.

First ascent: October 4, 1978. S. Lewis, J. Harwood.

The Hunchback 100 feet Mild Extremely Severe (E1)

A technically easy but impressive climb with alien situations. Takes the set of huge overhangs right of the wall of Twist. The overhangs are split by two vertical 'faults' – start in the recessed corner at the base of the left hand fault.

1 60 feet. 4c. Climb to the break leading across the overhang and follow this, unnerving, to a rib on the lip of the first roof. Hanging belay.

2 40 feet. 5a. Traverse right to beside the overhanging prow. Climb strenuously round the prow and up the short wall above to a good stance. The hideous terrain above is best avoided by abseiling from the fixed belays.

First ascent: April 28, 1978. P. Littlejohn, C. King.

Mitzy 50 feet Extremely Severe (E3)

Climbs the obvious split in the smooth, horizontal roof some 80 feet right of Hunchback. A very strenuous and entertaining test piece.

1 50 feet. 6a. Climb a short wall and continue to the roof. Move out with difficulty to positive jams on the lip and struggle around to gain the wall above. Belays higher up are also used to abseil off.

First ascent: October 28, 1978. A. Sharp, P. Lewis.

NORTH CORNWALL – CARN GOWLA

This information more than doubles the number of route descriptions for Carn Gowla, whose documentation is now spread over a confusingly wide range of publications: primarily the original (1973) *Climbing in Cornwall* and the 1974 supplement to that guide. Descriptions of Mercury and Andromeda Strain may be found in Pat Littlejohn's *South-West Climbs* and in the 1977 CC Journal respectively. Note: Un-named routes 1, 2 and 3 in the 1974 supplement are Ruby, Chicken Flesh and Dark Lady.

RED WALLS**Nowhere Man** 125 feet Mild Extremely Severe (E1)

The climb follows the prominent thin crack to the left of the recessed area left of the start of Ruby. The crack starts at a height of about forty feet. Start directly beneath the crack.

1 125 feet. 5b. Steep climbing up and left to gain a good ledge. Go up left then back right to small ledges. Peg runner in place. Climb up to reach the crack and follow it to more broken ground just below the top. Poor belays at the top, earthy thread, loose spike and peg (removed) on left.

First ascent: September 18, 1978. R. Perriment, S. Harry.

Broadside 190 feet Mild Extremely Severe (E1)

Start as for Ruby and Chicken Flesh.

1 70 feet. 5b. Climb to the resting place as for routes 1 and 2 (crux) then climb easily left and up to belay in the large depression in the face.

2 120 feet. 4c. Climb easily up to the apex of the depression. Swing up right to a good hold. Follow the line of holds to the top – pleasant open climbing – and belay well back on a large boulder.

First ascent: July 3, 1976. A. Strapcans, C. King.

Ocean Grey 160 feet Mild Extremely Severe (E1)

Above and to the left of the Ruby start is a large recessed area of cliff. The climb follows the right hand edge of this recess and then more or less directly up the wall above to a prominent nose seen on the skyline at the top of the cliff.

1 70 feet. 5a. Follow Ruby to a resting place then go diagonally left up the wall on good holds to gain the groove at the right hand end of the recessed area. Follow the groove until it ends at a leftward sloping roof. Nut belays.

2 70 feet. 5a. Step down from the belay and traverse right across the top of the crack of Chicken Flesh to reach large holds. Climb diagonally rightwards to gain a faint leftward sloping groove, delicate. Climb directly up the wall above for 30 feet then traverse right to nut belays beneath the groove formed by the nose. It is advisable to take this belay because belays at the top are decidedly lacking.

3 20 feet. 4c. Follow the groove to the top.

First ascent: May 27, 1978. R. Perriment, C. George (AL).

(It is possible that Broadside and Ocean Grey might be nearly the same.)

Downward Bound 180 feet Very Severe

The route follows the groove directly above the start of Rotwand.

1 140 feet. 4c. Follow Rotwand for 40 feet and then continue up the groove directly above to reach a large sloping ledge. Poor peg and nut belays at the right hand end of the ledge.

2 40 feet. 4a. Move right to gain a short groove. Climb this and move back left to regain the original groove line. Follow the groove and the short broken wall to the top; good belays near the cliff top.

First ascent: May 27, 1978. R. Perriment, C. George (AL).

Here and Now 185 feet Hard Very Severe

A strenuous, well-protected first pitch followed by a more open pitch with sparse protection. Start 20 feet right of Rotwand at the obvious groove capped by a triangular overhang.

1 65 feet. 5a. Climb up to a small overlap, pull over it and continue up a crack line to the overhang. Move left beneath the overhang to good holds round the

corner. Continue up and slightly right for 30 feet to belay in a small niche on the line of Happy Hunting Ground. Good belays.

2 120 feet. 4c. The pitch takes a direct line up the slab above to the top of the cliff. Good belay 20 feet back from the cliff edge (150 foot ropes are adequate).

First ascent: July 29, 1978. R. Perriment, C. Owen.

VAULT WALL

Midnight Rambler 290 feet Mild Extremely Severe (E1)

This excellent route takes a line up the slabby wall left of The Vault, then passes the overhang on the left before traversing along its lip in a fine position. Start a few feet right of Dark Lady beneath a smooth-looking groove.

1 30 feet. 5b. Climb the groove to belay in the large corner where the angle eases.

2 80 feet. 4c. Climb the corner to a point where the rock above deteriorates. Step left onto the slabby wall and follow the line of a crack diagonally left, to the stance at the end of pitch 2 of Dark Lady level with the overhang. Peg belays.

3 90 feet. 5a. Climb into the short chimney above the stance. After a few feet step right onto the lip of the overhang. Traverse right for about 30 feet until the slab narrows as it merges with the bulge above and ends abruptly. Climb the bulge on good holds onto the large black slab above. Continue up until a crack in the slab offers poor peg belays below a quartz covered bulge. A fine pitch.

4 90 feet. Climb the bulge and continue up the slab to the top. Peg belays. (It might be possible to belay higher at the end of pitch 3 and then solo to the top.)

First ascent: July 30, 1978. S. Harry, A. Tobin (AL).

Killing Time 135 feet Mild Extremely Severe (E1)

Follows the two disconnected red-sided grooves at the right hand end of the Vault Wall just left of its junction with the large red quartz covered wall rising up from the Black Slab. It virtually follows the line of the abseil. Start just left of the arete. A good steep route.

1 135 feet. 5a. Climb steeply up and left into the bottom of the first groove. Peg runner. Climb the groove, step right at its top then go back left into the second groove. Climb this to a ledge then climb steep rock on the right above the ledge, on good holds, for about 10 feet before stepping right round the arete. Climb just right of this to the top. Belay on the abseil bolt.

First ascent: July 21, 1978. A. Tobin, S. Harry.

Halcyon Days 135 feet Extremely Severe (E2)

A poorly protected pitch but with excellent climbing. It takes a line just to the right of the arete between the Vault Wall and the orange, quartz wall. Start a few feet right of Killing Time, just right of the arete.

1 135 feet. 5b. Climb up and slightly left on small holds to a small triangular slab on the arete. Move back right and continue up, keeping near the arete to a ledge on the left. Move right again beneath a small overlap (or miss out the ledge). Climb over the overlap, bearing slightly right to the sloping shelf of Demerara. Climb a crack in the wall above, trending back left to finish some 15 feet right of the top of the arete. Belay at the abseil point.

First ascent: July 23, 1978. S. Harry, A. Tobin.

DIABOLIST CLIFF

Aprez Vous 250 feet Mild Extremely Severe (E1)

An exposed traverse between the cave and the main overhang then up the steep slabs left of Baptist.

Start at the peg for the fixed rope descent on the seaward edge of the black slab.

1 80 feet. 5b. Descend steeply right for 30 feet to the lower line of overhangs. Move right round the corner and traverse the steep slab on small holds to a very small ledge. Peg and nut belays.

2 70 feet. 5a. Traverse right beneath the overhang to make a sensational swing across the overhanging corner on large holds. Continue traversing right on very steep rock until the angle eases. Traverse the orange tinted slab to a poor belay on Diabolist.

3 100 feet. 5a. Traverse right for 20 feet to just before the niche of Baptist. Zig-zag through the overhangs directly above, first left, then right and left again to gain a steep orange slab below an obvious diagonal roof. Follow the line of roof to the top. Good belays well back.

First ascent: August 6, 1974. R. Perriment, D. Gough.

Contintental Retreat 120 feet Mild Extremely Severe (E1)

Sustained steep climbing in an airy situation. Start between the niche right of Baptist start and the start of Nativity.

1 120ft. 5a/b. Climb up to 15 feet then make a rising traverse to the right to join Nativity. Go back left above the initial overhangs for 10 feet then go straight up to gain the steep slab beneath the top overhang. Go diagonally left until beneath the overhang (peg runner not in place) then step right and climb the overhang direct to gain the upper slab. From above the overhang trend slightly left then back right to finish. Adequate belays at the top of the cliff.

First ascent: August 18, 1978. R. Perriment, D. Marvin.

Soma 90 feet Hard Very Severe

Steep exciting climbing on large holds. Start 20 feet right of Nativity beneath a leaning groove on the left hand side of an overhanging buttress.

1 50 feet. 5a. Climb directly to the leftward-leaning groove over two small overhangs. Follow the groove and exit right on large holds. Good belay.

2 40 feet. 4b. Climb the short steep wall above the belay to reach a crack which is followed to the top of the route. Good block belay 40 feet above (the abseil point).

First ascent: July 30, 1978. C. Owen, R. Perriment (AL).

N.B. The belay at the top of this climb would provide a good anchor for an abseil into Diabolist/Baptist cliff. There is a small cairn built near the block.

MERCURY AREA

At the left end of the Mercury walls, bounded near the top by a large rake sloping up to the left is a steep wall in the middle of which is a cave. A prominent feature of the wall is a sill of excellent rock sloping up to the right from the cave. Access is either by abseil or an easy sea level traverse from the bottom of the easy way down that serves the Baptist/Diabolist cliff. This traverse is possible at all states of the tide unless there is a strong swell, in which case a lowish tide would be advised. The rock is good although the protection is quite well spaced on some of the pitches.

Black Knight 280 feet Hard Very Severe

The first obvious line right of the 'Sewage Wall' goes up the narrow black wall and slabs above. Start at a short corner below the wall.

1 80 feet. 5a. Climb part of the corner, step onto the wall and climb the bulge above on excellent holds. Go up to a small ledge on the left – just below a narrow overhang. Move round left and go up to a larger ledge with assorted belays.

2 80 feet. 4c/5a. Climb the rightwards trending crack above the stance to a wide horizontal crack. Climb over this to the right end of a long narrow foot-ledge. From the left end of this climb up to a ledge beneath a bulge. Peg belays.

3 120 feet. 4c. Move a few feet left then go back right over a large grass tussock and continue diagonally right to more broken ground then follow a vegetated line diagonally left to the top or follow a vegetated groove up and slightly right. Belay well back. Good except for the top 25 feet which is grassy.

First ascent: August 27, 1978. A. Tobin, S. Harry (AL).

Silver Dollar 260 feet Hard Very Severe

A very good route taking the easiest line up this very impressive piece of rock. Start just left of the big cave at the foot of a leftwards slanting black slab.

1 100 feet. Climb up to the steep slab. Climb this following the line of the roof rightwards until a traverse left can be made onto a good ledge in a niche. Peg and belays.

2 130 feet. Traverse right and climb the wall above until a traverse left can be made onto a large piece of quartz (the silver dollar). Climb to the top of this and onto the slab. Go up this making for the left side of the large block on the sky-line. Climb into a small cave and exit on its left to a ledge above. Belay.

3 30 feet. Climb the wall behind the belay to the top.

First ascent: August 25, 1978. R. Edwards, P. Renouf.

Crystal Voyage 280 feet Hard Very Severe

A superb route with some very impressive positions for this grade of climb. Start to the right of the large cave.

1 70 feet. From the right side of the cave, climb right up to the roof on its right. Traverse right past a peg runner. Climb over the small roof into a crack. Follow this for a few feet then traverse left to a good ledge just above the lip of the cave. Peg belays.

2 50 feet. Climb straight up then ascend leftwards on good holds to a hanging belay in the middle of the face. Peg and bolt belay.

3 130 feet. Climb straight up then slightly right to a shallow depression. Climb delicately left using pockets filled with quartz crystals. Make for a small quartz ledge then move leftwards (ascending) to the overhang. Turn this on the left to belay on a small ledge on the right.

4 30 feet. Climb the wall behind the belay to the top.

First ascent: August 28, 1978. R. Edwards, S. Salmon

Alpha-Beta 260 feet Hard Very Severe

Start at the right side of the cave.

1 110 feet. Climb easily up the right side of the cave to the roof, traverse right passing a peg runner, then climb over the small roof into a crystal filled crack. Follow the crack to just below its top and just below the large ledge.

2 150 feet. Climb slightly left and get onto the wall behind the belay. Climb towards the 'V' in the skyline and once in the 'V' which is really a groove, exit right. Go straight up over steep loose rock and grass to the top.

N.B. This pitch is rather loose but should clean up after it has had a few ascents. If one does not want to do this pitch a traverse left of 50 feet can be made to the bolt and peg belay of Crystal Voyage and then this route can be followed to the top.

First ascent: August 26, 1978. R. Edwards, P. Renouf.

Crash Landing 120 feet Extremely Severe (E2)

A pitch finishing at the stance of Life on Mars. A matching pitch of similar standard does not seem possible on the wall above, so either finish up the pleasant second pitch of Life on Mars or abseil off. Just left of the prominent short groove of Magic Fly low on the face is a short impending wall. Start below this.

1 120 feet. 5b. Climb directly up the wall. Go straight up for a few feet then slightly left to finish on step-like ledges above the wall. Traverse right for a few feet then go up to a peg below the overhang (junction with Magic Fly) then traverse 15 feet right. Climb up to the overhang where quartz side pulls allow the blank looking wall above to be gained (good peg runner beneath the overhang not in place). Climb the wall on small 'finger jugs' to a small sloping stance just below the rake (junction with Life on Mars).

First ascent: August 28, 1978. A. Tobin, S. Harry.

(Top 20 feet were top roped prior to leading)

Magic Fly 260 feet Extremely Severe

A superb route with excellent rock on the first pitch. Start to the right of the large cave and just left of an obvious groove in the centre of the wall.

1 110 feet. 5b/c. Climb leftwards up to the groove. Climb up this to the top and then continue up the steep wall above passing a peg runner to the small overhang. Climb rightwards and up into a good jamming crack. Climb this then go up again to just below the large ledge. Belay as for Alpha-Beta.

2 150 feet. As for Alpha-Beta.

First ascent: August 26, 1978. R. Edwards, P. Renouf.

Life On Mars 250 feet Very Severe

Start about 30 feet right of the cave below a prominent short recessed groove of Magic Fly.

1 120 feet. 4c. Step onto the wall and climb rightwards on quartz holds to slight sentry box. Climb out of this and go directly up on large holds to where the character of the rock changes. Above the overhang is a small sheet of quartz with a few large pockets giving good jugs. Climb up and slightly left on excellent holds to a sloping stance just below the large rake. Nut belays.

2 130 feet. 4a. Above the stance the wall is covered with large holes giving enormous holds. Climb this and yellow lichen covered rock right of vegetation to a ledge below a small overhang. Climb round to the right of this then go up to an overlap. Climb through this at its narrowest point, then follow a vague groove to the top. Nut belays.

First ascent: August 27, 1978. A. Tobin, S. Harry (AL).

Quicksilver 140 feet Hard Very Severe

An alternative first pitch to Mercury. Takes the bottom half of the arete taken by pitch 2 of that route.

1 140 feet. 4c. From the ledge at the bottom of the corner move left to the arete and climb it with a slight detour left after a few feet to an easing of the angle. Continue to a groove in the arete. Climb this and pass a good spike to poorer rock and a junction with Mercury.

First ascent: August 28, 1978. A. Tobin, S. Harry.

NOTE: Andromeda Strain lies on the wall right of Mercury and not on the left wall as stated in the 1977 C.C. Journal.

Terra Nova 240 feet Hard Very Severe

About 40 feet right of the corner of Mercury is a large boulder separated from the cliff by a narrow 'trench'. Make a 250 foot abseil to the top of the boulder.

1 50 feet. 5a. From the top of the boulder climb boldly up the wall past a large handhold (psychological spike runner) to easier ground. Poor peg and nut belays on the left. Possible better belays on a ledge on the right.

2 80 feet. 4b. Climb up towards a vague groove slanting left. Climb this and exit right to a small stance and peg belays.

3 110 feet. 4b. Climb up to another groove trending right. Follow the line of this to the top. Peg and nut belays.

First ascent: August 25, 1978. A. Tobin, S. Harry (AL).

TRIPLE BUTTRESS CLIFF

South of Mercury and the sewer pipe is a prominent headland/buttrese. This is the northern end of Triple Buttrese Cliff, which extends for some distance to the south. The cliff is divided into three distinct buttresses, diminishing in height from left to right. The buttresses are referred to as A, B and C Buttresses; A Buttrese being the highest and northernmost buttrese.

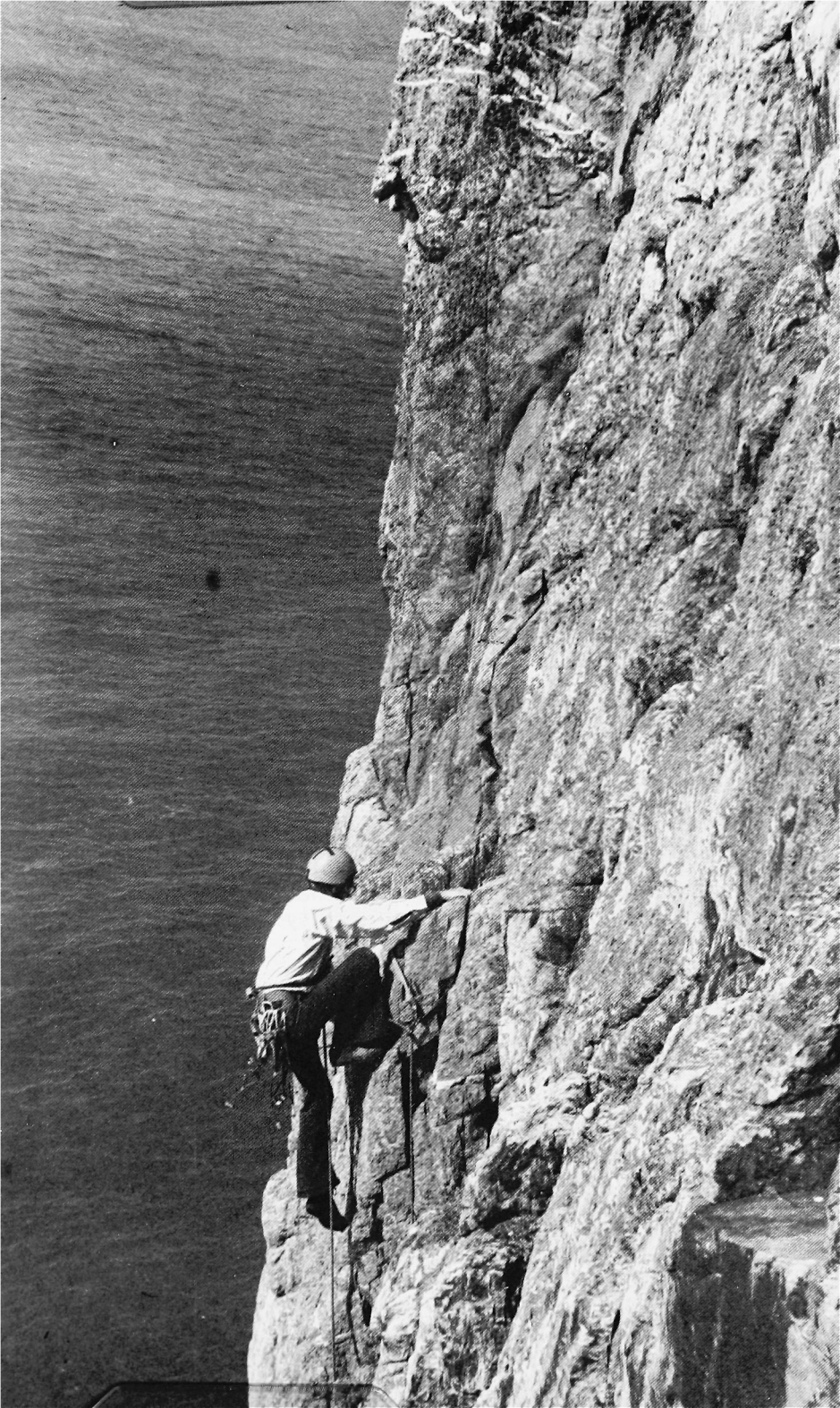
A BUTTRESS

Approach to the narrow north westerly face of A buttrese is by an abseil from a metal spike at the top of the cliff and a block on the cliff edge. A length of rope at least 40 feet long is needed to rig abseils so that the ropes can be retrieved from below. Abseil 100 feet onto a slab. Good ledges and belays are found along the lower edge of the slab about 60 to 70 feet above the sea.

Bohemian 150 feet Extremely Severe (E2)

The climb takes the prominent corner crack in the N.W. face of A buttrese. Steep and strenuous climbing to gain the overhang followed by an easier corner in a fine position. Start at a good ledge and belays at the lower right hand end of the slab at the base of the abseil.

1 150 feet. 5b. Climb the slab to an enormous block beneath an overhanging section. Traverse left to the foot of a pillar which leads to an obvious corner crack above. Climb the right hand side of the pillar to an uncomfortable, contorted resting position on a small ledge, peg runner in place. Very steep climbing on good holds leads to the foot of the corner. Follow the corner until just below the top then traverse right to belay on a block and abseil anchors.



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First ascent: August 31, 1978. R. Perriment, C. Owen.
(Peg runner was placed by abseil)

Euthanasia 65 feet Hard Very Severe

This takes the prominent overhang in the narrow north west face of A Butress. Start on the slab, below the centre of the overhang at a large pinnacle leaning against the overhang.

1 65 feet. Climb to the right side of the pinnacle and then climb the crack to the roof. Pull over the roof into the crack, peg runner, and follow the crack to the top.

First ascent: August 24, 1978. R. Edwards.

Cascading Crystals of Quartz 180 feet Hard Very Severe

This climb basically follows the arete between the north-west and seaward faces of A buttress for the first pitch and then goes diagonally left across the north-west face. A good climb on unusual rock with a particularly exposed but well protected top pitch. Start at good ledges and belays on the lower right hand side of the slab at the bottom of the abseil as for Bohemian.

1 115 feet. 4c. Climb the right hand side of the slab until forced round onto the seaward face. Trend diagonally rightwards for 25 feet then traverse left to gain the arete. Follow the arete bearing slightly left to nut belays on top of some small blocks.

2 65 feet. 4c. From the stance follow a diagonal line left across the face to finish with a steep pull onto a small ledge just below the top. Good belays on a block and metal spike at the top of the cliff.

First ascent: August 18, 1978. R. Perriment, D. Marvin.

The Arete 165 feet Hard Very Severe

Pitch 1 is similar to that of the last route.

1 100 feet. Climb the right arete to the roof, move right into the steep groove, then climb this until a move left can be made onto the steep wall. Climb this up to the slab. Belay.

2 65 feet. Climb the right edge of the slab and move right onto the wall on the right side of the tower. Climb this wall until level with a red section of rock on the left. Cross this and move upwards onto the arete. Climb just left of the edge to the top.

First ascent: August 24, 1978. R. Edwards, P. Renouf.

Blue Meany 180 feet Hard Very Severe

Start as for the Arete.

1 130 feet. Climb the right arete to the roof and move right to a steep groove. Ascend this then climb to the line of overhangs. Follow these right to the large crack. Belay on a small ledge.

2 50 feet. Follow the crack to the top.

First ascent: August 24, 1978. R. Edwards, P. Renouf.

B BUTRESS (SEAWARD FACE)

Approach to all of B buttress and the seaward face of A buttress is an abseil down the corner at the junction of A and B buttresses. Climb down the first 10 feet of the corner to a good ledge. Abseil from spike and nut belays for 120 feet to small ledges on the N.W. face of B buttress. These ledges connect all along the base of B buttress at about V.Diff. standard. Although the ledges are above the high tide level they

would probably be a most disconcerting place to be in heavy seas. Access to the seaward face of A buttress is from the bottom of the abseil.

Fourth Dimension 130 feet Hard Very Severe

The prominent feature of the route is the short steep groove at the left hand end of the main overhang in the middle of the face. A fine climb with very good protection. Start; from the bottom of the abseil traverse right along ledges to block and nut belays directly beneath the left hand end of the main overhang.

1 80 feet. 4c. Climb the initial groove and a short wall to below a bulge at 25 feet. Pull over the bulge at its left hand end then climb diagonally right on good holds to beneath the main overhang. Traverse left beneath the overhang until it is possible to climb the steep groove at its left hand end. Pull out right at the top of the groove and move to an uncomfortable stance in a niche. Beware of rope drag on this pitch.

2 50 feet. 4b. Climb out of the niche on the right and go up on good holds to easier ground. Mediocre belays on grass slopes above.

First ascent: September 1, 1978. C. Owen, R. Perriment.

Wageslave 155 feet Hard Very Severe

Steep climbing on good holds with sparse protection. Start at the block and nut belays as for Fourth Dimension.

1 95 feet. 4c. From the right hand end of the belay ledge step right round the corner onto a steep black wall. Climb the wall trending right to a faint rightward leaning groove. Follow the groove steeply to gain the arete in a fine situation. Move right to a good thread and nut belays.

2 60 feet. 4b. Climb up trending right past a good protection crack. Climb the bulge above at its weakest point onto a small ledge. Follow the prominent corner on the left to the top of the cliff. Peg (removed) and nut belays on top of the block.

First ascent: September 1, 1978. R. Perriment, C. Owen (AL).

Starbound 125 feet Hard Very Severe

A sustained and well protected first pitch followed by a poorly protected and serious finish. Start from the start of Fourth Dimension, go to the right hand end of the ledge and jump or climb across a deep crack and move right to gain a good ledge at the base of a prominent slanting groove.

1 75 feet. 4c. Follow a groove to a quartz bulge. Move right and climb to easier ground and spike and nut belays where the ramp flattens to give a ledge.

2 50 feet. 4c. Directly above the belay is a steep reddish wall. From the right hand end of this wall climb directly to the cliff top. Nut belays at large quartz block.

First ascent: September 2, 1978. C. Owen, R. Perriment.

Journey to Ixtlan 410 feet Hard Very Severe

A very good climb which traverses the whole of B and A buttresses in a very exposed situation. No nerve racking abseil to reach the start and it is sustained at a reasonable standard. Start on the cliff top above the narrow easy-angled ramp at the junction of B and C buttresses. Block belay.

1 70 feet. Climb down to gain an obvious easy ramp. Descend the ramp until it steepens at a good ledge with nut belays.

2 70 feet. 4c. Continue down the ramp for another 15 feet then move onto the wall on the left. Climb diagonally leftwards to gain a small ledge level with the belay.

Move up left then traverse at that level on steep rock to the arete. Peg (removed) and nut belays just the other side of the arete.

3 70 feet. 4c. Descend slightly and continue traversing across two groove lines into a corner. Move across the corner and descend diagonally left to nut and spike belays on the arete.

4 120 feet. 4c. Traverse horizontally left into the corner at the junction of A and B buttresses and continue left across the wall rising slightly. Exposed moves lead to the arete then follow this for 20 feet to a block (high up) and peg (removed) belays.

5 80 feet. 4c. Continue up the arete and slightly left then follow the last pitch of Cascading Crystals of Quartz along the obvious weakness diagonally across the wall on the left. Steep climbing to finish just short of the corner. Climb the left hand side of the block at the top of the cliff. Block and abseil spike belays.

First ascent: September 2, 1978. R. Perriment, C. Owen (AL).

C BUTTRESS

Sundance 110 feet Mild Very Severe

Approach by abseiling (a 40/50 foot length of rope used as a sling around the top of the left hand end of the seaward face gives a good abseil anchor) down an impressive pinkish wall to a good ledge just above the high water mark. Good nut belays on the right hand end of the ledge.

1 110 feet. 4b. Climb the black slab to the right of the impending quartz covered wall. The slab narrows near the top to form a blunt rib. Follow the rib to its junction with a large quartz vein running up to the left. Steep moves up the vein to reach a notch. Follow the quartz vein to the top. Belay on the abseil anchor.

First ascent: September 19, 1978. S. Harry, R. Perriment.

Nightride 90 feet Hard Severe

Approach by the same abseil the same as for Sundance but move right on the abseil rope to ledges at and just above the high water mark. Start at a short corner at the right hand end of the largest ledge. Good nut belays.

1 90 feet. 4a. Climb the wall directly above the short corner to gain the slab above. Climb the slab and the main groove to the top. Good belays.

First ascent: September 19, 1978. R. Perriment, S. Harry.

Daydream 90 feet Hard Very Severe

Approach as for Nightride. Start just left of the short corner of that climb. Climb the wall direct to a narrow ledge. From the left hand end of this ledge climb directly to another ledge 10 feet above. Follow the crack on the left past another ledge to an obvious groove line. Follow the groove to the top. Spike (well back on left) and nut belays.

First ascent: September 19, 1978. S. Harry, R. Perriment.

CORNWALL - WEST PENWITH

GURNARD'S HEAD

The next two routes are approached by abseiling down the corner of Right Angle, to the large stance of Behemoth, or if the sea is too high, down to the last stance of Right Angle.

Nemesis 170 feet Hard Very Severe

Start at the ledge of the cave of Behemoth.

1 50 feet. 4b. Climb straight up the wall to the groove of Right Angle and belay 10 feet further on.

2 120 feet. 4c/5a. Climb up to the second overlap. Traverse right across this to a crack and follow this passing a groove at $\frac{2}{3}$ height. Continue straight up the steep wall above to the top.

First ascent: September 20, 1978. R. Edwards, S. Salmon.

Pure Juice 180 feet Mild Extremely Severe (E1)

Start as for Nemesis.

1 30 feet. 4a. Climb the narrow chimney to the roof. Belay.

2 30 feet. 4a. Traverse across the wall and go up the crack to belay 10 feet further on.

3 55 feet. 5a/b. Traverse across the right wall passing a square topped pinnacle to a shallow groove. Climb this with difficulty then go right and back left to belay on a good ledge.

4 65 feet. 4c. Climb straight up the groove to the top.

First ascent: August 30, 1978. R. Edwards, S. Salmon.

Mastodon 180 feet Extremely Severe

A really superb route which takes the main challenge of the cliff. Start at the foot of Shark when the tide is out.

1 65 feet. 5b. Climb left into a scoop, then go left again into another scoop. Make a longer traverse into yet another scoop at the foot of a long crack. Climb this crack direct to its top and traverse left to belays. Pegs.

2 75 feet. 5c. Swing left onto a ledge at the base of a crack. Climb the crack to just below a peg runner then move right on small fingerholds. Go back left into the crack again. From the top of the crack traverse right into a pinnacle belay.

3 40 feet. 5b/c. Climb the crack behind the belay to the top. Strenuous jamming.

First ascent: September 3, 1978. R. Edwards, S. Salmon.

Black Magic 110 feet Extremely Severe

Steep, sustained climbing. Start at the foot of Shark at low tide.

1 110 feet. 5b. Climb left into a scoop and then left again into another scoop. Climb up into a smaller one higher up. Go up for a few feet then left to a flat topped spike. Continue straight up to the traverse of Behemoth then climb straight up the shallow groove to the steep crack which is followed to the top.

First ascent: October 2, 1978. R. Edwards, S. Salmon.

(Done in the wet so it may be overgraded.)

Tropospheric Scatter 95 feet Extremely Severe

Start at the base of a steep wall with a crack in it, to the right of Shark.

1 95 feet. 6a. Climb the overhanging crack to a small overhang, peg runner on lip. Climb right and then go straight up to the right of the next roof. Pass this on the right by a long reach onto a flat ledge (or by a leap!). Once on the ledge traverse left to a thin crack in the wall. Follow this to the top.

First ascent: October 2, 1978. R. Edwards, S. Salmon.

ROBIN'S ROCKS

Black Sapper 110 feet Extremely Severe (E3)

A good wall climb up the face to the left of Tuco the Terrible. Steep and solid. Start 25 feet left of Tuco at the obvious entry.

1 110 feet. 5c. Climb for 20 feet then move left to the start of a left-slanting break. Climb diagonally left then move up into blind cracks above the left end of the roof. Straight up for 20 feet then move a little right before climbing directly up the steepening wall past a small roof to the top.

First ascent: May 18, 1978. P. Littlejohn, C. King.

BOSIGRAN – THE MAIN CLIFF

Jolly Green Giant Extremely Severe (E2) 5c/6a

Takes the obvious buttress right of the top pitch of Anvil Chorus. Start at the pinnacle below below the layback pitch. Move up right past an old peg into a niche. Go up to a small roof, climb a thin crack on the left (hard) to a horizontal crack then go direct up cracks to the final roof. Exit slightly left.

First ascent: R. Fawcett, M. Rhodes, S. Foster.

New Medium 180 feet Extremely Severe (E4)

A bold line through the roofs across which Ghost traverses. Start at Bow Wall's first belay.

1 180 feet. 6a/b. Climb straight up past an old peg trending left to a corner. It is best to belay here to avoid drag. Move left to a crack which leads round the roof with a hard move to gain the slab. Move right on Ghost a few feet then go over two overlaps (poor peg runner placed while climbing) to gain the final flake/groove with difficulty. Finish up this.

First ascent: August 1978. R. Fawcett, S. Foster.

BOSIGRAN – THE LANDWARD CLIFF

Crazy Man Michael 140 feet Hard Severe

1 65 feet. 4a. Climb the second pitch of Simple Simon then climb the vertical cleft at the end of the overhang to the top of the block. Walk up to the ledge directly below the V-shaped arete separating Simon and Pauline.

2 75 feet. 4b. Climb on to and up the arete to the wide crack. Finish as for the last part of Simon. Interesting.

First ascent: C. Lawther, belayed M. Dodd.

BOTALLACK HEAD

Close Encounter 80 feet Severe

Start 45 feet left of Noddy Esquire at a small open book corner below a slightly leftward-slanting crack.

1 80 feet. 4a. Climb the short corner to gain a slight niche. A steep move left gains the leftward-slanting crack which is followed to the top.

First ascent: C. P. Gibson, L. Vrbova.

Big Ears 70 feet Very Difficult

Between Close Encounters and the obvious chimney to the right is this pleasant little

route. Climb directly to a wide crack which slopes diagonally right. Climb this and ascend direct to the top.

First ascent: June 23, 1978. T. Carver, D. Brown.

LAND'S END

In the zawn between Longships Wall zawn and Urinal Zawn are:

Turdsville Severe – the corner in the left arete of the zawn.

Hoss Very Severe 4c, 4b – takes the corner on the left of the back wall of the zawn.

Flakey Bill Very Severe 4b – starts up the corner of Hoss then takes the obvious rightward-trending flake. Finish with a step left.

All three routes on 30.5.78 by P. Blackburn, N. Holliday.

Bongo Wall 75 feet Extremely Severe (E2)

Takes a line left of Longships Wall. Start left of Longships at a hanging rib.

1 75 feet. 5c. A problematical start leads to better holds. Trend left up the wall to gain a vague crackline. Follow this to a prominent crack just below the top.

First ascent: R. Fawcett, 1978.

Southerne Belle 80 feet Mild Extremely Severe (E1)

Start to the left of Yankee Doodle.

1 80 feet. 5b. Climb the corner to a hanging handjam crack. Pull out left to horizontal cracks. Follow the corner until the rock becomes poor then break out left below the overhang to join Longships Wall at the top.

First ascent: S. Foster, M. Rhodes, R. Fawcett, 1978.

Rockin 60 feet Hard Very Severe

In the abseil point area this takes the pillar down which one abseils.

1 60 feet. 5b. Mantleself onto the obvious ledge. Move left to a thin crack and follow it finishing direct.

First ascent: R. Fawcett, S. Foster, M. Rhodes, 1978.

PORDENACK POINT

Cain 100 feet Extremely Severe (E3)

Takes the bottomless crack in the wall between Sea fury and Nothing Much – a striking line. Start as for Nothing Much.

1 100 feet. 6a. Climb the groove for 20 feet then traverse left below the overhang to obvious holds at its left hand end. Move up to the next overhang and pull over into the crackline. Follow this until it eases then climb the wall on its left on good holds. Finish by the thin crack just left of the summit nose.

First ascent: June 17, 1978. P. Littlejohn.

CARN LES BOEL

Burning Gold 140 feet Extremely Severe (E3)

A superb, strenuous and sustained route taking the rightward-slanting weakness in the face then a groove through the final overhangs. Approach via the first pitch of Excalibur and continue traversing along ledges etc. to the base of the wall. Belay below and right of the right-slanting rounded groove (probably wet low down) near the left edge of the wall.

1 90 feet. 5c/6a. Climb up to a niche then traverse left and move up into the groove. Poor bolt runner. Climb to a flake on the left side of the groove then go up and slightly right to gain the rightward-slanting weakness. Follow this to a stance with bolt belays beneath the overhang.

2 50 feet. 5c/6a. Move right and go up into the groove splitting the overhang. Climb strenuously until a hard move gains easier rock above.

First ascent: May 21, 1978. P. Littlejohn, C. King.

FOX PROMONTORY – North Face

The Huntsmen 80 feet Very Severe

Start five feet left of Reynard's Revenge.

1 80 feet. 4c. Climb the twin cracks then the wall direct to the top.

First ascent: October 28, 1978. A. Gallagher, B. Wilkinson.

CHAIR LADDER

Grit Exiles 140 feet Hard Very Severe

The smooth crack between the variation starts to Jerries Tooth. A good first pitch.

1 70 feet. 5b. Climb the crack to ledges below the pinnacle.

2 70 feet. Climb the hanging flake left of the chimney to a ledge. Go down right and climb cracks to the top.

First ascent: R. Fawcett, S. Foster, 1978.

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