

**THE  
CLIMBERS' CLUB  
JOURNAL**

**1983**





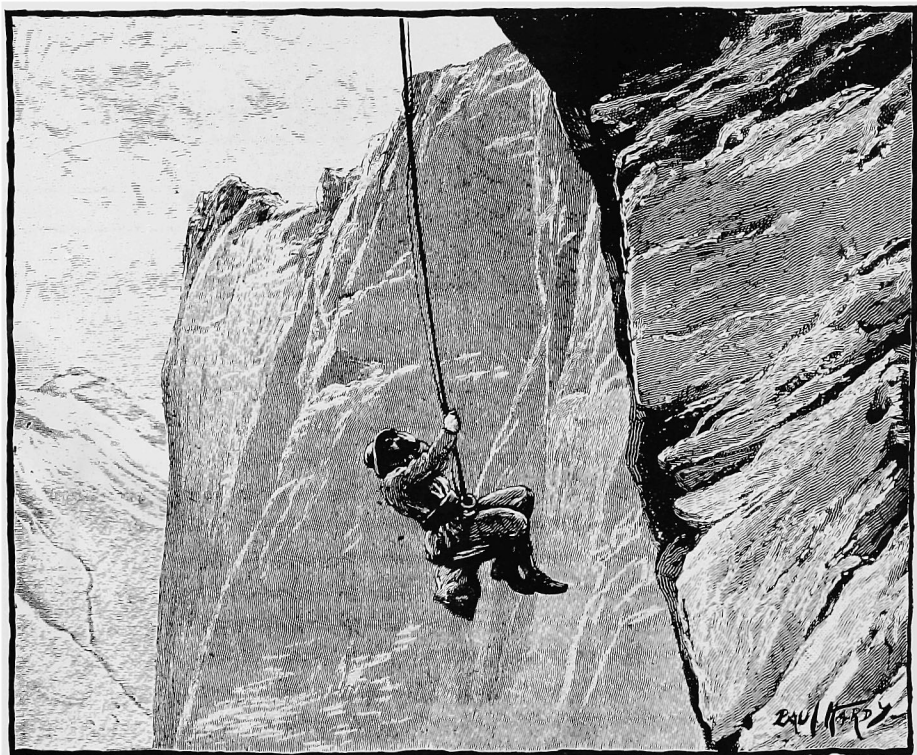
# THE CLIMBERS' CLUB JOURNAL

Edited by

GEOFF MILBURN



1983  
THE CLIMBERS' CLUB



*'Free' climbing*

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### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

In September we were at panic stations once more and at one stage it looked as if there would be no 1983 Journal. In addition to thanking the contributors I should particularly like to thank: Nick Longland for adopting a role as Sub-Editor and reading the proofs; Ken Vickers for acting as Business Manager; and lastly, but not least by any means, photographers such as Chris Jackson, Ian Smith, Keith Sharples, Andy Brazier and Graham Hoey—without their help the Journal would have been a far inferior publication. By the time you read this it will be your turn to put pen to paper . . .

‘Editors are notoriously shameless. They put their friends’ contributions into their wastepaper baskets, their own into the Journals.’ J.D. Hills in an article entitled ‘Yet More Corsica’ in the 1931 C.C.J. Editor, J.D. Hills.

‘The Main Committee is resolved to limit the cost of the Journal and emphasised that the Editor should not go over the budget unless additional revenue from advertising was first obtained.’

‘The Committee wishes the Editor good luck and gives him their backing on any pruning or editing which may be necessary.’

‘We are currently looking at over 150 underpaid members who won’t be getting a 1983 Journal.’

1983

# FIVE MILES HIGH WITHOUT OXYGEN

PAUL MOORES

I followed the yaks over the glacier ice to the moraines. They were slow but even beneath the 60kg of equipment that each of them carried were surefooted. I could see Adrian Burgess and Peter Hillary ahead, already levelling out tent platforms among the grey morainic rubble and expedition debris of Everest basecamp. This would be our home, our base for the next two months—a magnificent spot surrounded by jagged peaks and on one side the tumbling whiteness of the Kumbu icefall. This expedition was destined to be rather different from most, not just because we were making a lightweight attempt on Mt. Lhotse, the world's fourth highest mountain, without oxygen or high-altitude sherpas, but because we would be sharing the lower part of the route with a 5 million dollar Canadian Everest Expedition.

For our first night at basecamp we were invited to the large Canadian camp for dinner. The Canadian camp was expansive with nearly sixty men living there and, as we found later, had a clearly delineated social structure—even suburbs. There was the Sherpa quarter with its own cook tent on the eastern side of the town; the doctor's residence on the northern perimeter; the most senior members including Bill March, the leader, and deputy leader, Kiwi Gallagher, in the western suburbs; and all the Canadian 'young guns' dwelt on the south side. A long off-white tent was where we were bound—the sahib's mess tent. Bending low, we entered feeling ravenous—and apprehensive. There was hardly a word being said. We had a pleasant evening with the Canadians but it did impress upon us the problems inherent on a large expedition.

Five days later as the sky became light there was a rumble from high above our cloud-besieged basecamp. The rumbles grew to an intimidating roar and unlike the 'common or garden, everyday variety' it did not fade to inaudibility but continued for several minutes. We all lay in our sleeping bags inside our tents listening to the distant roar when a blast of wind struck the tents and deluged an inch of snow over the camp. The avalanche had been about a kilometre away and yet the ferocity of its wind-blast had carried the snow down the icefall to our camp . . . and beyond. Fred From got up and went over to the Canadian camp as we know they intended to carry loads up the icefall this particular morning. Their walkie-talkies were jammed with the voices of paired and frightened men—three

sherpas could not be accounted for. Later one body was recovered.

Just two days later we made our first trip through the treacherous icefall up to the Western Cwm (Upper Kumbu glacier) which would lead us to Lhotse's West Face. We carried about 14kg of fuel, tents and equipment each and planned to dump this gear at about 6000 metres, just above the icefall. The four of us departed at 3.30 a.m. Adrian was in front with myself behind and Fred and Peter bringing up the rear—from specks of light moving steadily in a sea of moonlight whiteness. For three hours we plugged steps along the Canadians' icefall route, passing through some horrendous sections of the icefall; twisted ladders spanning dark abysses and giant blocks of ice the size of two-storeyed buildings slowly tipping over as the icefall progressed down the valley. Then the avalanche site where two bodies were still unrecovered. I pitied the Sherpas who lay there—an ignominious grave.

I clipped my jumars on to the section of fixed rope that led up a steep slope at the top of the icefall. It was hard going as I was feeling tired, but I also felt happy as the four of us had gone well on our first day on the mountain. At the top of the slope I looked up the glacier and there, huge and defiant, was Lhotse, still another 2743 metres above! The sun would be on the icefall in two hours and we wanted to be well clear of it by then owing to the increased avalanche danger that would accompany it. We raced down the fixed ropes, rushing past groups of Canadians and Sherpas who were on their way up. Some of them were working on the ladders that spanned large crevasses through the 'traverse', the most active and potentially dangerous section of the icefall. Shortly after 8 a.m. we were down and feeling very pleased with our effort. All of us had gone well, we had succeeded in getting a substantial proportion of our equipment above the icefall and more than anything else, our adventure with Lhotse had just begun.

It was 9.30 a.m. and we were all muddling about in the camp. Adrian was reading and Peter was sorting equipment. Fred was putting his sleeping bag outside to air in the sun and I was lying in my tent giving some thought to what I should do. Again there was a rumble in the icefall, although it was a muffled one. Fred shouted to us. I poked my head out of the tent. Fred stood looking intently up at the icefall. I followed his gaze to a large cloud of snow that rose above the tottering ice pinnacle of the 'traverse'. The Canadians' cameraman was dead, killed by a massive serac collapse. Miraculously, three others were retrieved from the chaos of ice blocks with only superficial injuries. The icefall remained untrodden for two weeks as the aftermath of the spate of Canadian tragedies sorted itself out. A time for meditation, rationale and decisions. Seven Canadians decided it was time to go home. It was a demoralising time and one of tension.

The Canadian team wanted to share our route on the Lhotse face to attempt Everest by the original ascent route, the South Col, as they knew they were not

strong enough to attempt the technically very difficult South Pillar of Everest as they had planned. We were concerned that we would be forced into a subordinate role by this large expedition, but after some initially difficult discussions and negotiations, an air of friendliness was re-established among us. All we needed was an improvement in the lingering monsoon weather conditions that plagued us. During mid-September the weather changed. We bade farewell to our Nepalese liaison officer and our basecamp Sherpas and headed off into the darkness back into the icefall. The icefall route had fallen into a state of disrepair and it took us eleven unpleasant hours to reach our gear dump above the icefall. Here we pitched tents and spent four days. Each day we carried loads up to our advance basecamp site at the foot of the South-West Face of Mount Everest before we moved up there to stay. The new camp was at 6554 metres and still Lhotse rose before us more than 1830 metres above.

It is an extraordinary experience living at high altitude—and we lived at 6500 metres (21,500 feet) or above for three weeks. All physical activity is tiring and keeping your breath is not always easy even when all you are doing is walking from one tent to another or bending low to get into a tent. Hyperventilation is the norm rather than a potentially hazardous respiratory act. We couldn't rush our summit bid as we needed these three weeks to acclimatise sufficiently to the high altitudes before making our attempt on Lhotse without oxygen. We established a camp at 7000m (23,000 feet) and then, working with the Canadians, established a route to near the South Col at nearly 8000m (26,000 feet). Each time we ascended the glacier to the foot of the Lhotse face and there climbed the fixed ropes we had placed we felt stronger.

It was during this time that the debate over oxygen or no oxygen was more or less solved. Fred and myself were going up to establish a site for our final camp from where we could attempt the summit. Ahead of us, on the fixed ropes, was a Canadian using oxygen from 7000m to the South Col at nearly 8000m. We moved at the same rate up the steep snow face, any benefits from the oxygen apparently negated by the weight of the oxygen apparatus. But our feelings on the topic went beyond merely the cumbersome oxygen equipment. There were also ethical considerations. Simplicity of approach; an acclimatised climber with minimal paraphernalia was an attractive concept and lent itself to a more enjoyable overall experience on the mountain, it reduced logistics with fewer things to go wrong.

The weather deteriorated again. This time the problem was not one of cloud and snowfalls but high winds. Winds like I've never heard before. A constant roar, a dull monotone that was inescapable. The sound filled the whole of the upper Kumbu Glacier and great plumes rose from the summits of Everest, Lhotse and Nuptse. Scarves of white that writhed in the blue sky. It became desperately cold. Then the winds dropped and we were all action. We ascended to the Lhotse

Face camp at 7000m and spent a cramped night on the narrow ledges that had been excavated for the box tents on the face, before moving on the next morning with about 11kg of food and personal gear each. October 7th was destined to be a long hard day. No sooner had we reached the site of Camp IV at 7835m than we had to dig a platform in the precipitous flanks of the Geneva Spur and erect tents. Peter plugged steps another 325m up the face towards the narrow couloir that leads to Lhotse's summit. He returned exhausted to rest the remainder of the day in our tiny tents.

Early the next morning after an uncomfortable night we laced up our boots, pulled on the neoprene overboots then the crampons; now we were ready for our summit attempt. With no more than a pocket camera and another pocket filled with sweets we set off up the face. It was alarmingly cold despite our one-piece down suits and we were all having difficulty keeping fingers and toes warm. We moved quickly across the upper slopes to the couloir where we began belaying, swinging leads up the 45-degree wind-packed snow. The gully became more narrow until it was barely three metres wide at a rock step halfway up. We were constantly wriggling our fingers and toes to keep them from freezing. "When will the sun come up?" I asked myself, looking down upon the South Col and across at the South-East Ridge of Everest. We were at over 8231m (27,000 feet) incredibly high—and only about 250 metres from the top.

Again the weather was deteriorating; the winds rose and in came cloud. Before long it was snowing heavily and we worried about the possibility of an avalanche down the couloir. On both sides rock walls rose steeply so that if there was an avalanche at all it would certainly come down the narrow couloir, collecting us on its way to the glacier over 1524 metres below.

Fred led on, up into the blizzard—up the rock step and around the corner towards the final gully to the summit. Three or four steps and you stop, gasping . . . then breathing deeply, leaning upon the slope. I didn't like the dramatic increase in wind; it was beginning to roar. Adrian and I had a brief discussion; it seemed prudent to turn back. It was midday and the sun was blotted out by cloud and falling snow; we couldn't warm our fingers or toes. The avalanche risk, the high winds . . . We Called Fred, who returned to where we were belaying him at the rock step. We reluctantly agreed to turn back. With fingers and toes intact, we descended numbed; and silent.

The following day, back on the Kumbu glacier, I looked up at Lhotse and marvelled at our adventure. We had climbed to just below the summit breathing that thin, cold air. It was an inhospitable environment where our presence could only be but fleeting—more than five miles above the winter mountains I looked forward to at home. We had ventured into this icy, oxygen-deprived environment—another world—and we had returned unharmed!!!







# SOMEWHAT SPEECHLESS

PETER HARDING

*At the Derbyshire Dinner several Members asked that we should use Peter's speech for the Journal and consequently it is reproduced here in full. Ed.*

Mr. President, Climbers and Guests,

I'm delighted as well as honoured, to respond on behalf of my fellow guests and to propose this toast to the Club. I had thought of using a well-tryed speech format like analysing the vigorous virtues of the Club or scandalising those of its President, then telling some dubious stories which you would all have heard before. But there were snags with such a plan. Although I have read about many of your exploits, Mr. President, I couldn't find any spicy details about those unchronicled adventures and I couldn't think of even one dubious story which such a gathering as this, of clean living rock athletes and omnipotent mountain mandarins, would ever have heard before. When I last attended a C.C. dinner I found myself sitting between two complete strangers, or so I thought. On my left was Jack Longland's guest and on my right a vaguely familiar white haired gentleman who proceeded to regale me with fantastic tales of strength and sinew, of gymnastic bars fitted in his office and how, every morning, he would usher out his secretary, lock the door and then do fifty pull-ups, with each arm, before coffee! God knows how many afterwards! Why he couldn't lock the door and do it with his secretary in the office, like any normal executive, I don't know! Wondering who such an eccentric could be, I squinted to read the name on his place card: C.T. Jones . . . I thought, "This fit looking old devil has taken Trevor Jones's seat and him a Vice-President and all!" Then I recalled that Trevor's father was a gymnast and thought he'd come in Trevor's place. Shifty side-glances confirmed that my snowy-locked companion bore a slight resemblance to the 'Tiger of Tremadoc'. He'd been eyeing me rather strangely and suddenly, peering down at my place card, he said, "P.R.J. Harding—that's a name to conjure with". Then, fixing me with one of those stares, he asked, "Are you his grandfather?"

Well, ladies and gentlemen, for my speech tonight, in case some of you thought that was it, or perhaps hoped it was, I decided finally, to avail myself of the recently extended service of that old firm Hertz; Hertz Rent-a-Speech. I was told

they had some good writers working for them . . . (produces long concertina of computer print-out), . . . and here it is, but I must ask you all to be tolerant, none of those ribald interpolations for which this Club's dinner is infamous, or I'll never get through it, because the damn thing is written in Fortran, or some such infernal computer language, and it's going to take a bit of translating into English. I was hoping it would be written in English, like some of that stuff of Jim Perrin's, and by someone with Jim's anacreontic ability, his panegyric prowess with pen, popsies and precipices. However, having scanned through it, though the style is Perrin's, it's certainly not James, more like Lea and Perrins! And it's too long, I'd better leave it and rely on my own notes, hastily prepared during the last three months!

Before coming to this dinner I looked up the date when Trevor Jones joined the Club; 1958, a quarter of a century ago. That takes us back to the days before rock climbing became a bit like wrestling, with the winner often decided by the best of three falls, and sometimes a good many more! I remember reading about a very hard climb up a now treeless wall on the Milestone Buttress, where the leader was said to have taken eleven tumbles before ultimately succeeding. In my day, any leader who had that many tumbles on the Milestone, could only have been on Sylvan Traverse, where there are, or at least there used to be, exactly that number of suitable secluded and swarded stances! A former member of this Club, talented rock climber and even more expert in those activities which are horizontal rather than vertical, seconded me on the first Girdle Traverse of Carreg Wastad, during which he claimed to have had five tumbles. You see, we abseiled off to return next day, and whilst I spent the night on my own in the chaste solitude of Helyg, my able but randy second pedalled off on his bike up to Ogwen where he was fortunate enough to find three similarly inclined and able ladies with whom to linger. On our return to the Wastad next morning his lurid account of the night's activities, how two of his doxies had been doubly fantastic, was all I needed to send me up the Red Wall and across to complete our traverse.

Reminiscing about earlier days is helped by one or two familiar faces around the room. Mike Ball, my stalwart second on Glyder Fach's Final Flake Variant, who used to climb in a pair of boots with their almost detached clinkered soles held in ancient uppers by pieces of wire. And a later friend, Sherwood Wiseman, from that other C.C., the Cromlech Club. Sher used to be the Cromlech's answer to Don Whillans; small, tough, good with rock in his hands and even better with a motor bike!

Another incident I recall was when Gordon Dyke and I, returning from guidebook chores on other cliffs, happened along at the foot of the Grochan to find the unclimbed groove of Brant Direct still beating its would-be first ascent

team by a clear ten feet. After two hard days of attack they had all but exhausted their arsenal of ironmongery, tactics and energy, so I asked if they would mind if I had a go. Without boring you with the details of some chalkless, nutless, though not completely protectionless free-climbing, I led it, having perceived that to get any pegs into the top crack would be very difficult whereas to hand-jam up it would be relatively easy. Gordon followed without too much trouble and this revitalised the originators of the climb so we brought up their captain, Pete Hodgkinson. I then fixed an abseil rope to descend and watch the others and was little more than halfway down when a sudden cry from Hodge made me stop and look up, but it was just too late to avoid being hit. You've heard the expression 'p..d on from a great height'. Well, I was, en rappel, on Brant Direct! One thing about mixed climbing parties, the women don't seem to indulge such vulgar behaviour. Even if they did it is no quick draw affair. There is time for evasory action, if it were necessary, for without a digital guidance system their accuracy is hopeless!

Controversy still goes on about the use of chalk, either on the grounds of aid or despoilation of the crags. Once upon a time it was rubber gym shoes which provided the aid and nailed boots which made our crags unsightly. Popular routes were scratched white, like picked skeletons.

I'm reminded of an amusing incident when Tony Moulam and I were instructing a group of Scouts on their first rock climbing trip. Preparing to take a party down Gimmer Chimney, I descended the top pitch to wait for the first scout. He peered down apprehensively then asked Moulam how he would find the route, the holds. Tony instructed him, "Just follow the scratches". The lad hesitated, then said, "But Sir! what if he didn't make any?" An accomplished nail climber would hardly make any marks, or noise, but if such footwear had continued many of our crags and climbs would have been ruined by the scrabbling and scraping of the multitudes. And the noise of it all! The gnashing of thousands of tricouni teeth, the clinking of countless clinkers. It would have made a tremendous din. I'm sure it would have resulted in yet another piece of protection gear which every crags person would need. Ear muffs! And with the language that is shouted about the cliffs these days they might not be a bad idea! All moves and difficulties seem to be loudly qualified by terms relating to sex and parentage so it's hardly surprising that some new route names too are offensive. We've had a few leaders vying with each other to see who could put up the hardest climb, and others to see who would give the filthiest name.

Route names on the whole these days are quite imaginative, but some are disgusting, others simply painful. Burning Sphincter! Tormented Ejaculation! With those sorts of problem no wonder we're up to grade 7 or 8! A few voracious

crabs, hexentric haemorrhoids and herpes to boot and we should be into the 9's!

Then there's been this practice of doing old routes in new ways, or eliminating any aid, then claiming and re-naming. I decided to get in on this act so I flogged up to Cloggy with all the latest aid-removing gear. For starters I descended that old aid route on the West Buttress, eliminating its two remaining points of aid, Faith and Friction by pouring a can of oil down the slab! Sorry Jack! I've renamed your climb; Longland's; it's now called Castrol Corner. It's multi-grade! But if you use enough chalk on your P.A.s, as well as on your hands, the aid-that-is just about equals the aid-that-was, so it's still only V.S. I've re-named so many of the old Clog routes that a new guide is needed. Pigott's is now called Harding's, since I removed that huge chunk of aid used by the first ascent party and everyone else since—the ten-foot corner. It took two sticks of dynamite! It's now damned loose and bloody difficult to reach the Conservatory, (what's left of it!), but don't worry I'm getting Jim Perrin to write my apology to the Society for the Abolition of Trundling. Since all the top climbers have been trying for years to get up Masters Wall or is it Great Wall, without resorting to ridiculous artificial aid, I nipped up it using rubber suckers and removed two new bolts which someone had put in it. And I found good uses for both of them. One I fixed in Little Krapper and gave it a new name: Private John. The other I used to plug up a steam leak in the Snowdon Railway Company's best engine, (Ivor I think it's called), just to prove that not all rock climbers are selfish yobbos who don't give a screw for the preservation of mountain beauty.

When grateful railway men had chuffed up all my supplies to Clogwyn station and helped me hump them over to 'The Black Cliff', I completely demolished the 'Middle Rock', (dynamite again), but never mind, I've replaced it by the 'Major Oak', secretly nicked and transported from Sherwood Forest. The transplant is doing well, with signs of new roots.

Almost everyone in the Climbers' Club seems to have been involved with the new mountain film '5 Days One Summer'. Joe Brown, Eric Jones, John Cleare, Leo Dickinson, and Paul Nunn standing in for Sean Connery. Only in the climbing bits though, not the love scenes. I'm told that Nat Allen was auditioned as the bedroom stand-in, when it was found that poor old James Bond had double O'd his seven a bit too much! Nat did very well, he only failed the physical by a couple of inches. Not what you think, he wasn't tall enough. And I mistakenly thought that one of the stars of the film was a C.C. member, (one of our quieter members), but it turned out his name was Lambert Wilson.

It's rumoured that Ken was seen roaming round Cwm Dyli recently, in drag, masquerading as a member of the Pinnacle Club. He wasn't loitering with any sinister or sexual intent, just trying to get the Pinny's to take in male members.



Another member, my old pal John Disley, has been heard to voice support for competition climbing. The media too, is heavily invested in competitive sport; I expect we'll soon be getting reports of these events on British Crag. We might switch on the radio to hear:— "Nostwaith Dda. Here is Radio Cwmru. The Welsh Masters Rock Athlete Tournament on Dinas Mot this year, proved to be a real cliff-hanger! In the final round, Ivor Gayone, the much fancied local hairdresser from Nant Peris, tied with that muscular miner and former winner from Yspitty Yfflw, Hywel Thrutchitt. It ended in a sudden death climb off against the clock, when poor Hywel met one. Nos da!" Or we might have:— "Pandemonium broke out this afternoon at the British Pairs Climbing Championship in Tremadoc, when the title holders, Olga Tuppit and Mustapha Nanjam, were beaten by that popular combination of Norma Sandfuls and Hugh Graspem. Despite Hugh's painfully bad start when he lost one of his nuts, the spectacular movement of Norma Sandfuls as she breasted the final overhang, was enough to win them the Best Pair Award!

An amazing thing to me is the ever-decreasing age at which young folk start doing serious routes. I am sure we'll soon be reading in the 'Toddler and P'rambulator' about the Under 5's Sponsored Scramble up the Eigerwand. How little Miss Roughitt came out with an ice-melting string of invective when her favourite teddy was scared out of his crampons by the White Spider. Or of the Toxteth Tiny Tots Training Trek to Nanga Parbat losing all incentive to press on when it was found that Wee Wally Dillons had supped all the buttermilk, and pee'd on the sugar puffs.

The question of training and incentives reminds me of a James Perrin article on Ogwen which told of a certain Dave Knott and the lady in the next tent who wanted to do that one-time parameter of prehensile proficiency, Lot's Groove. Dave, who'd never led anything harder than V. Diff., managed to lead her up it with that magic incentive often referred to as a promise. The tragic sequel to this fine effort came after he'd crept into the lady's tent that night to claim his reward and fell fast asleep when barely half way up the crucial pitch. At this point I must admit to a sort of mirrored reversal of this situation, not on Lot's Groove or with the lady in the tent, but on The Grimmer, on Craig-yr-Ysfa, with two nurses I'd met in Bangor. Neither of these ladies had ever done a V.S., but having watched a C.C. Christmas Day ascent of this climb they were keen on trying it. Taking good care to claim all rewards before delivering the goods, next morning, even after the walk up Pen Helgi I was almost knackered, whilst on the climb I had to retreat from the crux with shame and apology. Still, being a gentleman and a member of the Climbers' Club, I kept my promise the very next day, when although my female companions had further bestowed their ample physical charms, I galloped

up Pen Helgi and bombed up and down The Grimmitt like a yo-yo, ushering, protecting and helping them both to reach the top. There's a moral, a lesson, to be learned from these stories. It's not the incentives but the training which makes all the difference to your performance! Maybe if those nurses had stayed for the whole week I'd have made a breakthrough. Cenotaph Corner, four years B.J.

But in those days we didn't take things seriously. There were too many restraints, on time, on transport, on most things. Petrol was still rationed and one couldn't climb regularly in Wales, the Lakes, still less in Scotland, unless one happened to be very fortunately placed. Hence there started a very intensive period of development on local gritstone crags. The Climbers' Club in that era was mainly an exclusive Welsh Rock Climbing Club, although its roots had been firmly bedded in Derbyshire peat when an original member, James Puttrell, in 1900, formed that specialist group, the Kyndwr Club, with a curious Welsh spelling of its name. It was the first band of real activists in the C.C. and their reported explorations were a feature of early journals. Although the Kyndwr Club died during infancy its spirit seems to have remained within the C.C., emerging at intervals, over the years, to shape and guide its policies. When the first 'tiptoe' away from Welsh guides came in the 40's, it was to Black Rocks and Cratcliffe Tor. When a new hut appeared at the beginning of the 60's, it was at Froggatt; and when the Club decided finally, in the 70's, to admit women climbers to its membership, it did so at an A.G.M. here in the Peak. My own beginnings are strongly linked with Derbyshire gritstone so it gives me particular pride and pleasure to be your guest tonight when this Dinner is being held once again at its Kyndwr venue.

I would ask you all to join me in drinking to the health of the Climbers' Club.







# THE SHAPE OF THINGS TO COME

GRAHAM HOEY

Gritstone climbing has always had its ups and downs, periods of intense development followed by a time of consolidation and with the benefit of hindsight one can say, justly, that gritstone has heralded every breakthrough in climbing standards for the last fifty or so years. The last burst was in the mid-seventies, courtesy of Allen, Bancroft, Regan et al and since then, when it may be argued that 6b (at least as a cumulative grade) first appeared, there has been another calm, settled period. True, there have been developments initially only of a regional sense; a coming to age of the Staffordshire and Chew Valley areas and later a reappraisal of what was accepted as a new route over the whole Peak. The eliminates and fillers-in have flourished. The next surge will be with us in one or two years, but before considering what form it will take it is of interest to look at the effects elsewhere of the mid-seventies boom.

The technical grades were quickly transferred to limestone and by the end of the seventies there existed many routes on Derbyshire limestone as hard as those on the gritstone neighbours. The time was now ripe (theoretically) for a new gritstone upsurge. It didn't come—why not? The reason lies in the nature of the rock. The vast majority of **TECHNICALLY HARD** gritstone climbs were all well-protected. Profit of Doom, Nectar, Reticent Mass Murderer, Moon Crack, Strapadictomy are obvious examples. Archangel, White Wand, Hairless Heart and Edge Lane are admittedly unprotected but desperate, no. Remove the protection from the former routes and they wouldn't have been done. The next development in gritstone climbing required then (and will involve) doing moves of 6b and above with little or no protection. There being no desire to risk life and limb in this way an impasse was reached. (The only exception was Piece of Mind which required a break from accepted ethics for the time, and pointed to future attitudes of approach.)

Climbers, realising this problem, were quick to recognise an alternative area of development, stamina climbing. Not one 6a move but 5, 10 or maybe 20 one after the other with perhaps the odd 5c move thrown in, all with few or no rests at all.

American climbers had been doing stamina routes for at least a decade, purely as a result of the rock architecture, and were usually perplexed by British climbing where often every move was different to the last. Some people were

heard to say that because our rock didn't lend itself readily to continuous cracks or blank walls that stamina climbing would never arrive. They were wrong. As early as 1973 Pete Livesey had shown the way with Right Wall. Although many climbers would scorn the suggestion that Right Wall was a stamina climb, in 1975 it represented a very sustained effort. Paul Williams after following Dave Roberts on an early ascent described it as 'a series of continuous boulder problems, one after the other . . . youth'. John Allen's London Wall was also in this respect years ahead of its time.

And so, like Livesey, people trained and trained and in the early '80s the technical moves produced on grit in the mid-seventies were reproduced in profusion on the limestone crags and Welsh cliffs. There was no possibility of the gritstone stamina climb owing to the lack of height and more importantly protection, both of which the limestone and Welsh climbs possessed. And after all, who really cared if the odd peg or bolt had to be added now and again. The new 6c and 7a grades were rapidly born, being largely cumulative in nature. Do a few 5c moves, a few 6a moves and add in a 6b and its beginning to feel like 6c or 7a. The cumulative nature was demonstrated when as climbers got fitter the routes were downgraded to 6b or 'just a few 6a moves' or 'sustained 6a'.

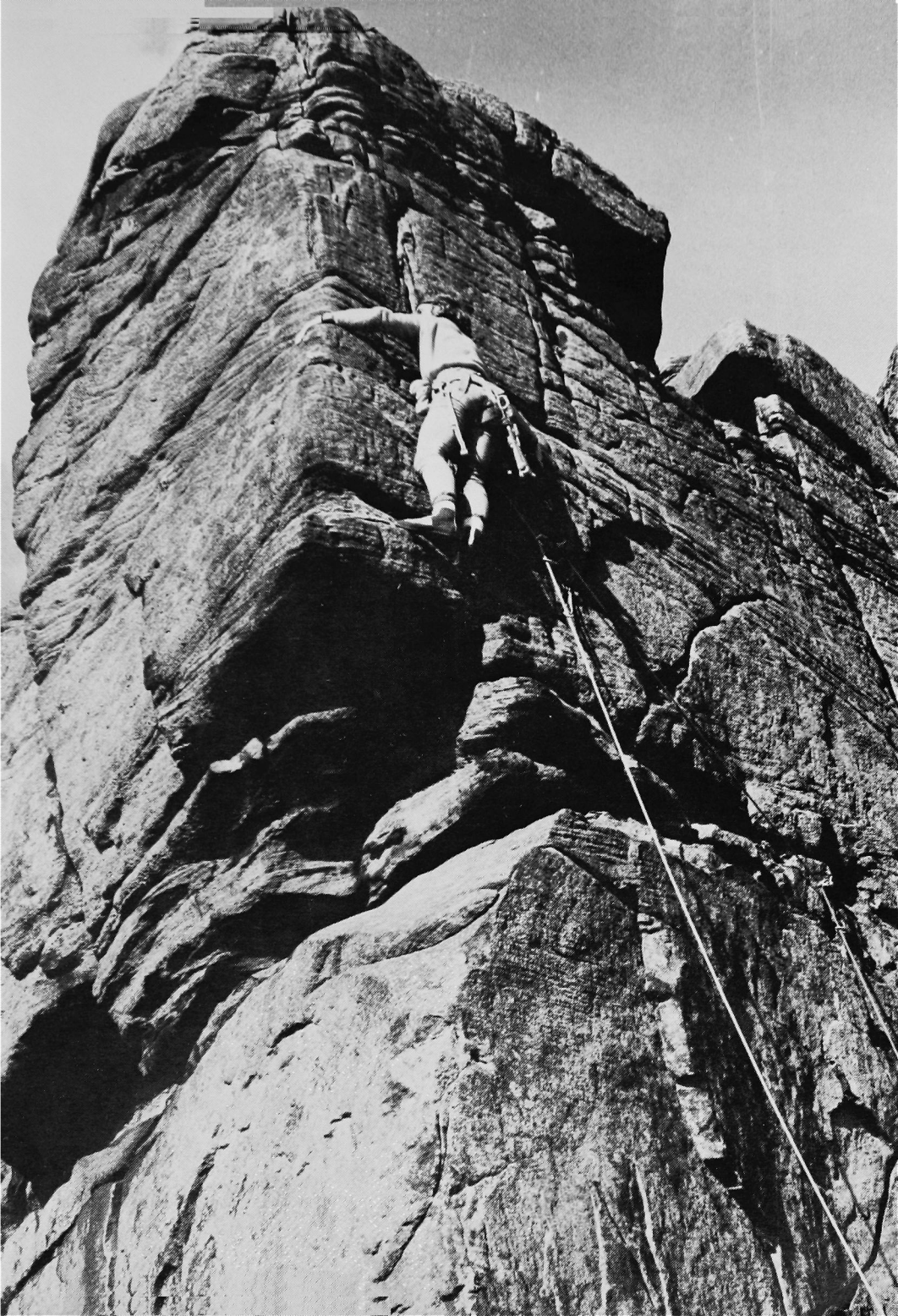
However, at least in Derbyshire the 'stamina surge' has settled down; the protectable lines have been done (Raven Tor), the extended boulder problems (Piranha) and as for the remaining, many are waiting for the bolts to go in.

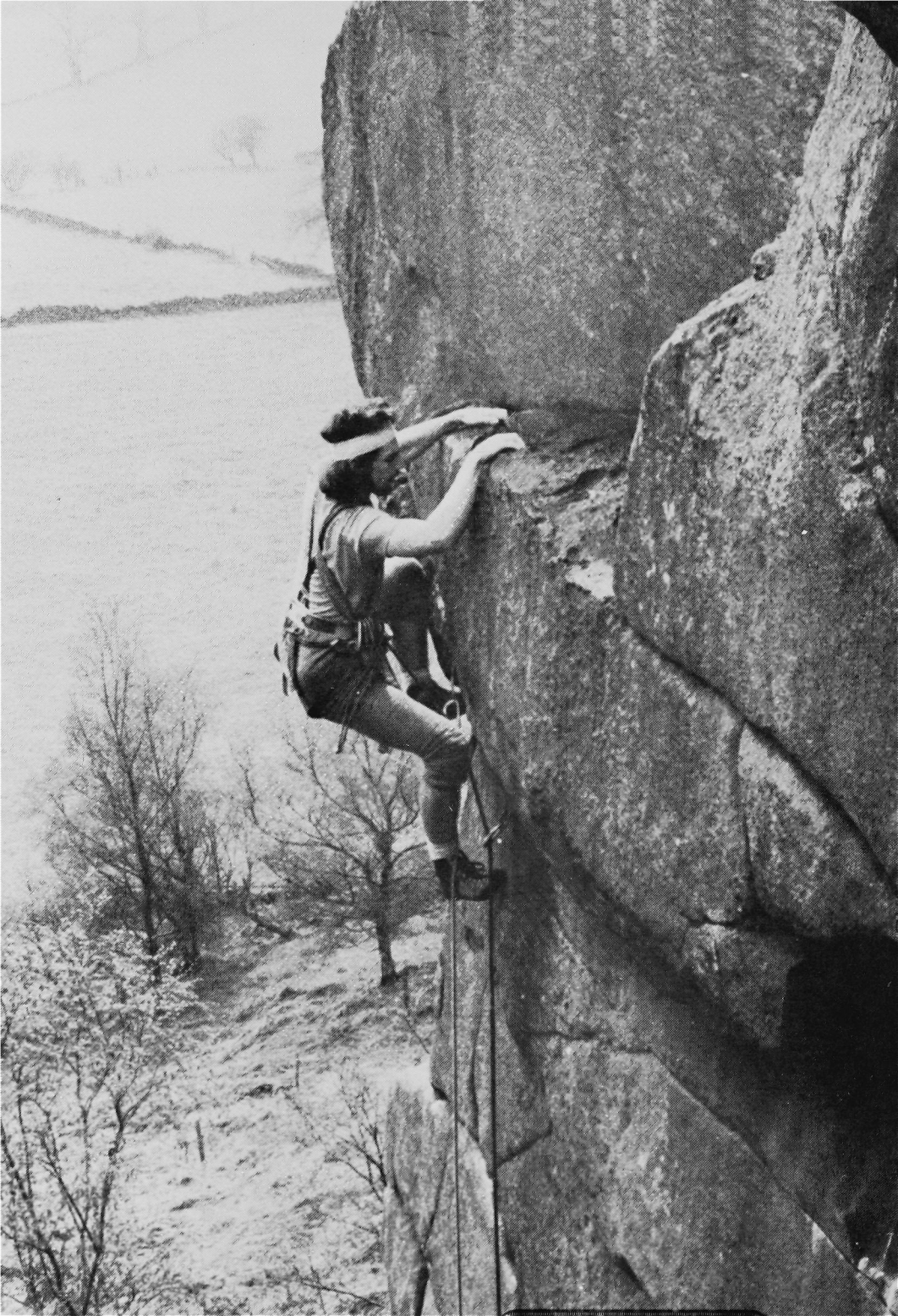
Therefore for the first time limestone and gritstone are together awaiting development. For limestone the future is in bolts producing an increased number of technically sustained routes and an increase in technical standard.

Considering gritstone, and leaving aside the unlikely intrusion of the bolt the surge will be in a mental not physical direction. The standard of the mid-seventies will be reproduced without gear. The ethical problems allied to this are obvious as the routes are almost certainly going to be top-roped heavily for the first ascent.

Examples of this trend have already occurred, One Step Beyond, Ulysses Bow, Crystal Grazer and the 'inevitable' first pitch of Great Arete. It is unlikely that these routes will receive on-sight leads for many years and top-rope practice may well become commonplace for subsequent ascents. The acceptance of such techniques will undoubtedly be long in coming, and, will be the better for it? The mystery loses all once solved.







# BOLTS ON PENNINE LIMESTONE

KEITH SHARPLES

In the good old days aid routes were ten a penny and nobody really cared about the ethics of pegging and bolting up the limestone crags. Kilnsey, Malham, Gordale, Raven Tor, High Tor, Cheddar Gorge and the Ormes were all fair game and the aid men left a legacy of routes. Rules were non-existent and eyebrows were seldom raised, but towards the end of the era Brandenburg Gate on Raven Tor got some stick for all its bolts. The era passed on.

The passing of an era always heralds in a new one and in the early Seventies climbers turned their attention to free-climbing on limestone. Yorkshire and Peak District teams led the way and used the bare skeleton of the aid routes to produce new classics. No ethical problems arose as the lines were well equipped with old and rotting ironmongery for protection. All this was fine and everybody applauded the new routes and heroes were made overnight!

After nearly a decade standards had risen to such a level and the activities had been so prolific that a large number of these old aid routes had been liberated. However new lines with free-climbing possibilities were spotted, but because of the compact nature of limestone they were not always possible to protect by natural means. Often pegs provided supplementary protection and they seemed to be accepted without any problems. Unfortunately it was not always possible to place pegs and, casting their morals and public images into the wind, leading activists began to place bolts. Usually this was limited to one per route but then spread to two on Tequila Mockingbird. Discontentment was low key and subdued; this particular route retained its boldness and is high in the pecking list.

All this was still not enough to anger the masses, but it must have set the 'second new wave climbers' thinking. There are those amongst their midst who have only come to prominence after the 'gold rush' era of the 70s and have largely missed out on the big bonanza. Ecology has shown that as a species develops, one generation takes over from where the previous one left off, and true to form some members of the 80s generation of climbers, like the homo sapiens that they are, have taken up their tools and hammered in new bolts in virgin rock. Can their argument be that they missed out on the old aid routes, but have the perception to locate new lines and the enthusiasm to transform these into routes, often giving excellent climbing on previously untouched rock and on undeveloped sections of crags?

We are deviating further and further from the solid platform of fact and now we must enter the debate! Clearly there are two schools of thought, and of course the usual 'wets'. The first school has a high standpoint of ethics and morals and advocates no bolts at any price, the so-called zero option: The second school advocates that the end justifies the means and that if some bolts are necessary to produce a good route, then so be it! There are then only the 'wets' remaining who either don't know or don't care!

As always by the time negotiations begin opinions are formed and the players' sides are set. We have now gone too far for either school to predominate the other, and a working solution, a compromise, must be sought. It is time to establish some ground rules. My impression and recommendations are thus:

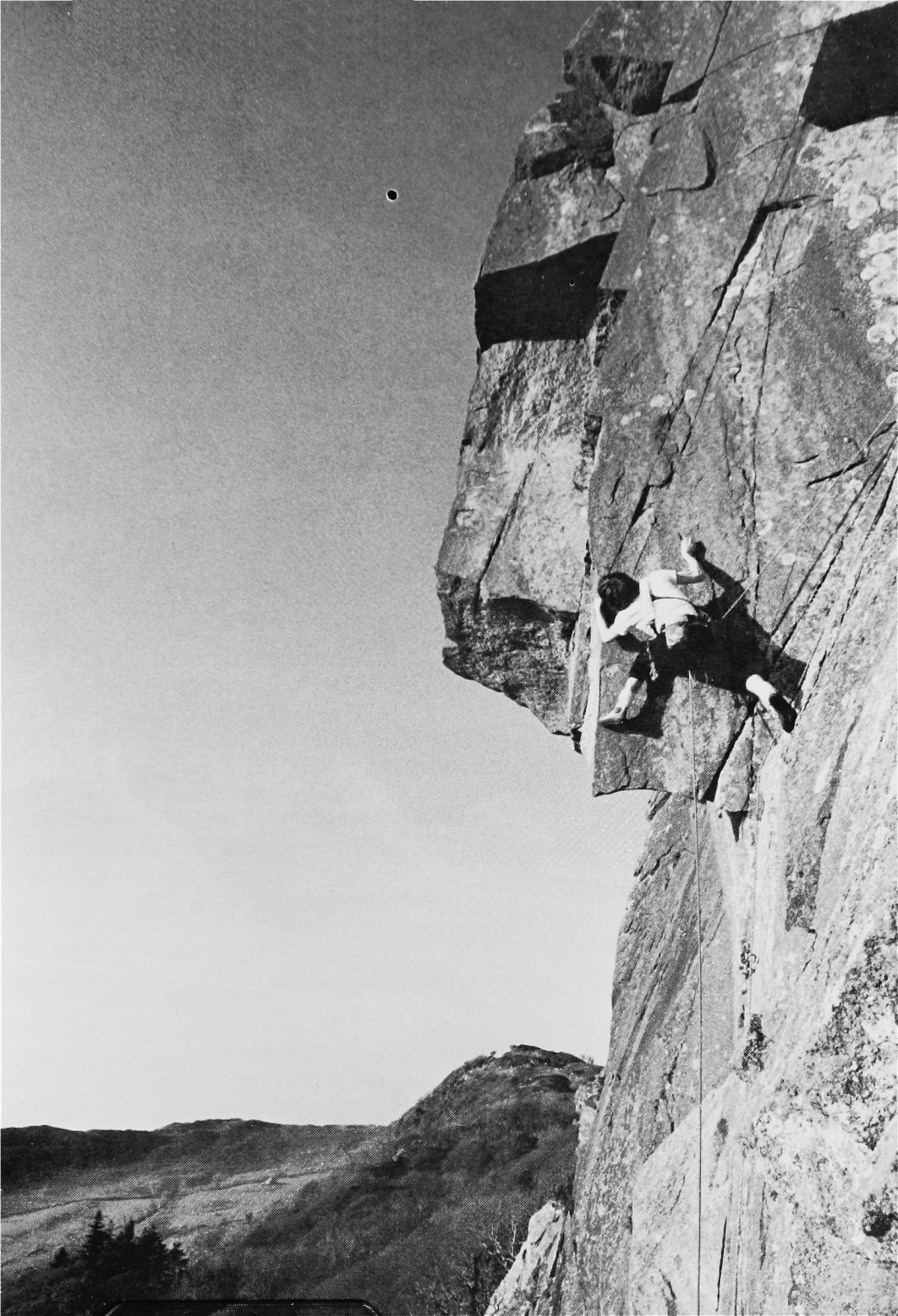
- 1) Firstly we are only discussing Pennine Limestone.
- 2) Interest is restricted to the development of new routes and crags.
- 3) The utmost attempt to place adequate protection must be made before resorting to the bolt kit.
- 4) Bolts placed must be minimal in number and must attempt to uphold the British tradition of boldness (or is it stupidity?).

Tequila Mockingbird sets an example with its first bolt a long way off the ground, and the bolts widely spaced so that the hard moves are between the placements. This will naturally limit the 'frigability' of a route and ensure a hard day's work. It would seem that on Peak Limestone two bolts per pitch has been sufficient until recently. It is ironic to recall that Brown considered two pegs per pitch as maximum!

Clearly we should search our soles (A great misprint for 'souls'. It could however indicate a 'foot-loose and bolt free' attitude unless of course the soul is on the other foot. Ed.) deeply before resorting to placing bolts and try not to be so selfish with our available rock, that we must try to achieve a result at any price. History has shown many times that what is impossible for us today, may be possible tomorrow, sometimes even for us! We should be careful—the eyes of the world are upon us—let us not lose our tradition for ethics and boldness.

Let the debate continue!







# CAMBRIDGE SPIRES

TONY HUSBANDS

1894 heralded the arrival of the first British climbing guidebook written by W.P. Haskett Smith. Volume 1 dealt with England and a year later Volume 2 covered Wales and Ireland. These were to be the fore-runners to the well-loved and keenly awaited guidebooks which go on the market today. By comparison, O.G. Jones's 'Rock Climbing in the English Lake District', 1897, was to be a far more lavish affair—a format which could not possibly last. With a wealth of crags just waiting to be explored it is somewhat surprising that the next guide, by Geoffrey Winthrop Young, was to be a cloak and dagger publication. The Roof-Climber's Guide to Trinity, 1900, which could legally be interpreted as an admission of trespass had to go out without the author's name. Subsequent volumes dealing with night climbing on the university buildings have each incorporated a *nom de plume* such as 'Whipplesnaith' or 'Hederatus'. The third guide to the pinnacles of Cambridge is now so rare that one cannot even take a copy out of the A.C. library.

Bearing in mind that at that time most climbs were of the gully rather than the slab type some of the climbs in the Cambridge Alps were of a very high standard for the time considering they were nearly all vertical or overhanging. Part of the description of the Fourth Court Climb reads:

'To grasp the ledge above the first pitch requires a reach of 8' 3" from tip-toe. As the majority of people cannot manage this, the climb must be classed as Severe because of its extreme exposure. The leader should not rope for this climb, as the weight of so great a length might drag him backwards off the first pitch.'

The majority of roof climbers were not mountaineers and in fact very few mountaineers took to college climbing. One exception, Noel Symington, the author of 'The Night Climbers of Cambridge', who had the ability to do some of the hardest climbs refers to the guide's description of the Gateway Column Climb as being the prettiest climb in Trinity—in other words 'an absolute stinker'. His description of the start is rather nice:

'We start up the window-bars to the left of the left-hand column. Above the window is a six or seven inch ledge on to which it is our first object to ensconce ourselves. Perhaps the easiest way is to face the wall, with the

ledge at chest level. Swing the left leg until it is lying on the ledge, and rolling over we find ourselves lying face downwards on the ledge. Now follows a nasty piece of balancing, the act of standing up on the ledge. Do not sneeze at this juncture, and pay no heed to your companions above or below trying to make you laugh, or you will have to start again.'

On one occasion a climber found himself in difficulties on King Edward's Tower when he noticed a rope appearing to dangle for his special benefit. He clutched at it and the clanging of the great bell above his head nearly caused him to fall to a cobbly death, but the night porter passing below appeared to notice nothing unusual and all was well.

It is worth quoting from the guide's description of the ascent of Hall:

'The slightly raised coping with edges either end provides the key. Holding its square edges with both hands and placing the feet on the narrow lead gutter, the climber pulls up hand over hand, the tension of the arms keeping the feet from slipping. The stone pilaster on the summit is generally embraced with panting satisfaction, as the height makes the strain upon the muscles considerable. A few moments can well be spared for the view, and few could be insensible to its charms. The distant towers of the Great, New and Neville's Courts, looming against the dark sky, lit by the flickering lights far below (Notice this was written before the days of electric light.); the gradations of light and shadow, marked by an occasional moving black speck, seemingly from another world; the sheer wall descending into darkness at his side, all contribute to making this esteemed, deservedly, the finest viewpoint in the college alps.'

Passing on to a climb in Clare the writer admits he would not have known about it if he had not come across it in an article entitled 'Alpine Sports in Cambridge'. With three pitches of seven feet with no foot-hold and no hand-holds except two vertical ledges, it appears at first sight impossible but there are vertical ledges two feet to each side from the corner stone which can be grasped to prevent the climber falling away from the building. The arms play the most important part since there is not the scratch of a foot-hold.

Arriving at Kings the writer considers the Chetwynd Chimney to be Very Severe and, looking at the photograph, which shows well the two overhangs, it certainly looks it. However, although we have been talking about the Cambridge Alps Kings chapel can only be described as the Everest, not only on account of its sheer height (160 feet) but the continued exposure. Some tourists disagree as to its architectural beauties, but climbers always look at it with awe and reverence.

The roof is reached by chimneying straight up in one pitch for ninety feet, but as the ledge against which the feet are placed only sticks out for four inches the

lightning conductor was necessary to keep the climber from falling outwards, although some climbers considered it would be possible to do the climb upwards without the lightning conductor but certainly not possible to come down without it.

When the lightning conductor was removed in the early Thirties one person was desperately keen to do the climb and he managed to go up the stairs without being noticed and conceal himself on the roof till it was dark. His idea was to climb down and then climb up again using a rope to stop him from falling out. Unfortunately he found he could only attach the rope to a point a yard from the side of the chimney and when he came to start the descent found he was too far away to get into the chimney. He had to descend the rope but as it was not thick enough to grip it with his feet his arms gave out after 50 feet and in sliding down the last 48 feet he burned his fingers so badly that they were in bandages for six weeks.

I imagine the chapel is not climbed now because when I examined it in 1978 every chimney was protected by a small grid of iron spikes although the writer foresaw this in 1937 and wrote:

‘The latest from the chapel front is that the authorities are planning some new abomination to make the chapel more difficult. What counter-moves have they decided upon? Are they going to put revolving spikes in the four corner chimneys? Patient generations of climbers will remove them with steel files.’

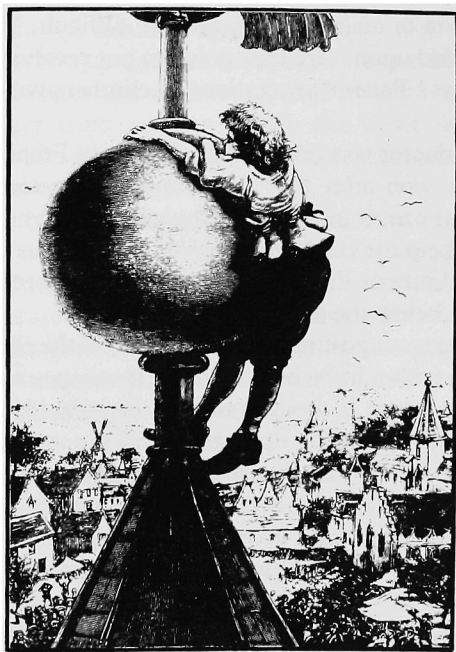
The lightning conductor was invented by Benjamin Franklin in 1752 and it is probable that it was soon after that the first lightning-rod was affixed to the chapel. It was put in the most inconspicuous place which by good fortune was the place most suited to help the climber. Could it be that it was soon afterwards that the chapel was first climbed? Earlier this century a coin dated 1760 was found on the ledge twenty feet below the pinnacle.

In addition to the extra exposure the continuation of the climb up the pinnacles is more difficult and it should be born in mind that ropes were seldom used for protection. The first ascent is thought to have been in 1922. In 1932 climbers affixed an umbrella on each of two pinnacles and the next day someone with a shotgun, known as the Admiral, was found to shoot them down. But another group of climbers who had planned an assault was annoyed to find itself forestalled so that night they went up and attached Union Jacks to the umbrella stumps. The next day when the Admiral was sent for again to shoot them down he refused to do so saying he could not shoot at the Union Jack. Some later parties were defeated by the overhangs on the pinnacles. Hours were spent trying to throw a ball with a piece of string attached through an aperture six inches wide

and forty feet up with the idea of attaching a rope and pulling it up by the string but without success. Then someone hit on the idea of finding an archer to shoot an arrow up with the string attached but even this failed to succeed.

It was not until some months later that one of the climbers did a climb on the face of the Law School and it suddenly occurred to him that he could use the same technique to overcome the overhangs on the pinnacles. Actually they can also be overcome by using a lightning conductor as a hand hold but this involves traversing round the pinnacle to get to it standing on downward sloping holds and using vertical friction hand holds, altogether quite sensational. If you fall off you still have three seconds to live, as the ground is one hundred feet below.

As mentioned above people sometimes liked to leave evidence of the fact that they had been climbing on the chapel and some naval men left a bicycle on the roof shortly after the first World War. A very distinguished former President of the Club once told me that when he did the climb, his companion, who in due course was a distinguished Vice-President, wanted to leave some evidence of their achievement and stuck an apple on top of the lightning conductor. However when he went to look at it the next morning he found that the pigeons had eaten it!



*On Flushing Spire!*



# ON FLUSHING SPIRE

G.M.

Stegophily may be defined as the art of climbing buildings for sport. In recent years there has been an upsurge in the art as many of our fraternity have taken to buildings as a means of getting finger fit. Many of us have a favourite wall tucked away round the corner of the house where an odd hour can be happily whiled away. And of course there are now many man-made walls round the country after the first prototype appeared in America back in 1941. Go even further back and you will find the art well developed in the university chimneys and spires in Cambridge. Even a guidebook appeared in 1900 when Winthrop Young published 'The Roof-Climber's Guide to Trinity'. All this is of course well-trodden ground and is well documented. Go back further through time, right back to the year 1617—that is when it all began.

Holland was a prosperous nation 350 years ago, trading throughout the world; it had many thriving ports complete with local markets and the focal point of life—a church, dominated by a lofty spire. Such a town was Flushing. On the day our story starts to unfold it was noon. Business had come to a halt and as an electrifying buzz ran through the crowd every head—man, woman and child—tilted back as eyes scanned Heavenwards.

“Who is it?” “Young Michiel Adrianzon.” “An anointed young scamp!”

“Blessed be God that I had ne’er a son o’ that sort!” “Well spoken; for ’tis dishonouring God’s house, and nothing short of it.”

And so the conversation went on. With pointing fingers and fixed eyes the attention of the crowd was rivetted on the church-spire. Soaring up into the sky it overhung the little market place and there, on the very highest pinnacle astride the golden ball that flashed in the sun’s rays, sat a tiny figure. As the crowd gasped in anticipation of the impending tragedy the little figure waved frantically down to the ever-growing multitude. It certainly wasn’t one of the workmen engaged in repairs as they had long since gone off for a peaceful dinner. Just then, as the message had rapidly spread through the town, a burly, broad-shouldered figure, strap in hand, strode purposefully into the market-place. Shading his eyes with one hand he then commenced shaking his strap ominously with the other.

Oblivious to the imminent thrashing the little figure on top of the spire continued to wave away heartily. As yet more folk arrived on the scene the front

row spectators had by now got a bad attack of neck ache and promptly took a step or two back to rectify the matter. The odd pig got trodden on and with squeals of pain dashed amongst the legs of the bystanders, thus adding to the general confusion. Some folk were baffled as to how he had got there while others were more concerned as to how he was going to get down in one piece.

‘The boy was shouting with all the strength of his lungs. Whatever the town of Flushing thought of his achievement, he for one was perfectly well satisfied with it. The townsmen began to shout to him to come down. He took the sounds for compliments and hurried in answer. They bawled themselves red in the face; he waved his cap the more. Adrian Michielson’s strap described wider and wider curves. He was silent but his foot was tapping impatiently on the flag-stones.

Suddenly a louder shout went up. The daring urchin, gripping the weather cock with one hand, was actually dancing on top of the spire. He paused only to wave again in recognition of their applause.

One or two women fainted.

“He’s standing on one leg!” “He’s going to stand on his head! Fine doings on a holy building.” And then someone with sharper wits than the rest cried out—“He got up there by the ladder—he must have! And he can’t come down, for the workmen have taken it off!”

Every face turned from red to white as the blood drained away, and Adrian Michielson dropped his strap on the pavement. One woman began to scream loudly. At once all her sisters took up the chorus and half a dozen other women promptly fainted on the spot. The boy was somewhat puzzled by now and wondered what was happening. Suddenly it occurred to him to look about for the ladder. It had gone.

‘He felt rather queerly at first. And then it struck him that after all he might just as well take things calmly. To slide down the slates of course would be certain death; for at the foot of them was only a shallow parapet that quite assuredly would not pull him up. He would shoot over it down on to the paving-stones far below.

“Very well then,” he said to himself after briefly surveying the situation, “there’s nothing for it but to sit down and wait till the workmen come back and fix a ladder.” So he sat down astride the gilded ball again.

“The poor boy’s fainting,” cried someone below. “Send for the workmen!” A dozen pairs of heels scampered off on the errand. But before the slaters could return, young Michiel had thought of a better plan. Waiting up there was dull work. He had given the people something to stare at, and he was not going to wind up the performance tamely.



At this stage of operations the boy had a bright idea. He had noticed that much of the spire was in a bad state of repair and that only a strip of it had so far been re-slated. The planned line of descent was to follow the rotten slates in order to reach the parapet.

‘Clasping his arms tightly round the top of the ball, he lowered his body down, further and further, kicking his toes in air until they tapped against the topmost slate. They just reached.

It was a horrible moment for the lookers-on, who slowly began to comprehend his scheme. And it was daunting, too, for the boy; for if he failed to kick through the slate and get a footing, it was more than doubtful if his strength would hold out to pull himself back to the top of the ball again.

His face was towards the golded surface, almost flattened against it. He began to feel glad that he could not look down. As he cast his eyes upward to where the weather-cock glittered above, he saw it swimming giddily against fathomless blue. For a short space the deadly insidious idea of falling took hold of his mind. The next moment he pushed it from him, and began to hammer his toes on the slate with might and main.’

Far below the crowd was sick with apprehension as his plan became clear to all in sight. The only thing in sight was a pair of little legs flailing wildly while the silence was broken by a persistent tap-tapping noise. Just as in many of our pit towns the young lad had been provided with shoes with stout iron toe-caps, to cut down on wear and tear. This is what finally saved young Michiel. After the first slate finally gave way, others followed, until a wooden framework of supports was revealed. There was, however, another problem:

‘... it was not only this first step that counted; he must slip his hands off the ball—it was too big to slip his arms round and down it—in order to get a hand-hold for his next step. It was a manoeuvre that required the most perfect balance. A thrust backwards an inch too far would send him, heels over head, down into death. There was a profound stillness all around him. Men in the crowd tried to shout for him to hold on as he was till rescue came; but somehow the words stuck in their throats.

Second after second rolled by, and still the boy had not shifted his grasp. Then at length they could see his hands unclasp and move inch by inch over the face of the ball, feeling it as a blind man gropes along a wall. They move slowly round till they rest close together against it pushing outwards. Then comes another pause, as they remain motionless. The boy is balancing himself.

His back is towards them, but they can see his shoulders slowly arching round, to a sharp curve, while his hands slide down, now half an inch at a time. Then he lifts one off—the right hand. Could they look nearer they

could see that the fingers of his left were shaking as it with palsy.

A moment—then the right hand drops swiftly and grasps the base of the ball; another and the left hand follows. They are clasped round it easily now. Young Michiel draws a long breathe, and lowering his right leg, kicks away merrily at a lower tier of slates.

Whether because they are more rotten, or that he has better purchase for his blows, his toe cracks these much sooner. In a trice he has a hand on the top rung of the (framework and is lowering himself easily as down a ladder.’

At this precise moment the workmen return and are promptly cursed by the angry crowd who have started to recover from the shock. Other folk remember that this escapade smacks of profanity and even the father picks up his strap as the beadle, still white as a sheet strides purposefully towards the church to apprehend the culprit. Michiel, still oblivious to his fate, kicks in the last few slates, and from the safety of the parapet waves his cap to the crowd and with a merry shout disappears down the stairway of the tower.

One would imagine that this should be the end of the story and that we should draw a veil over the finale, but not so. Time passed and the beadle on the step got impatient.

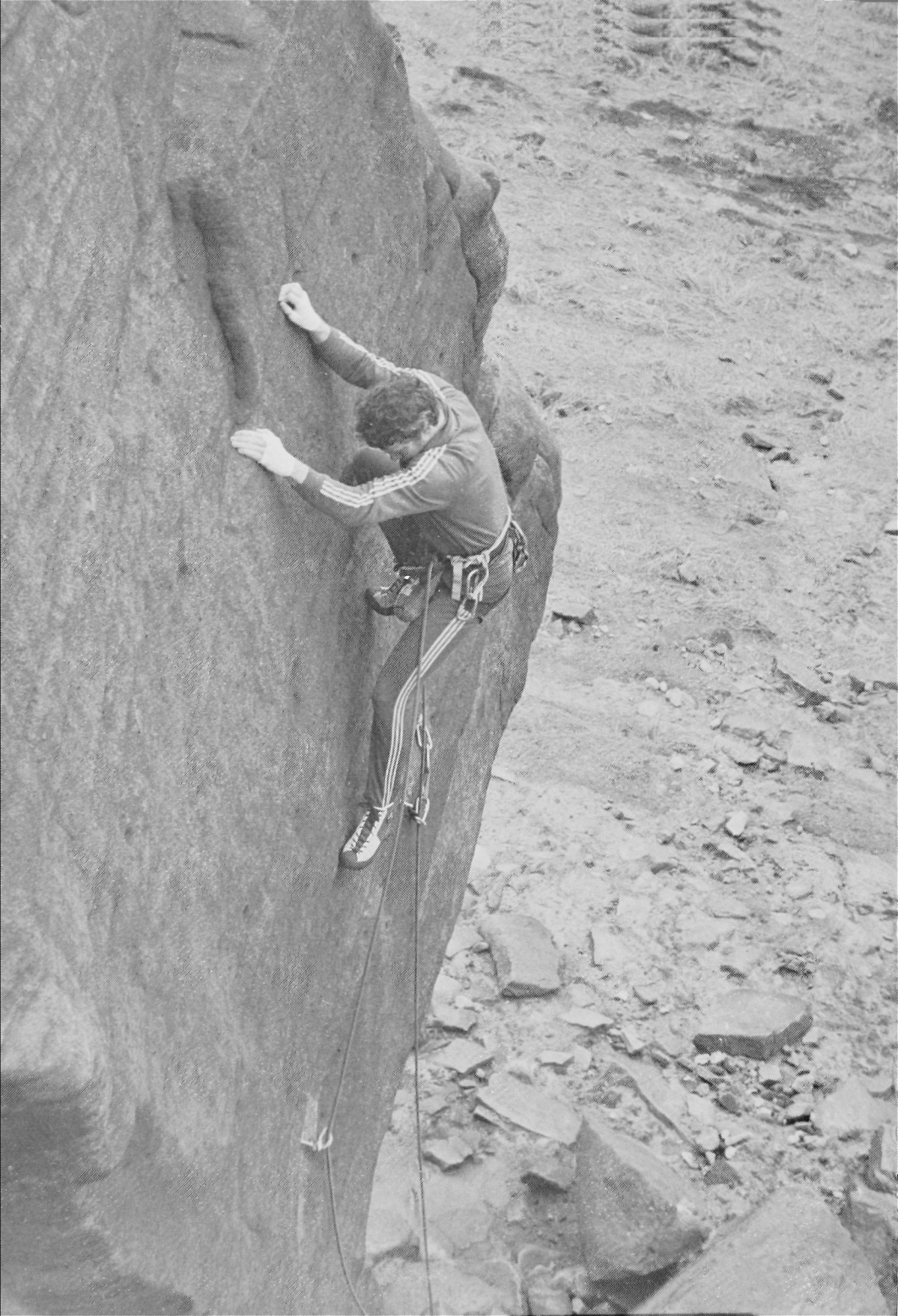
‘Suddenly a dismal sound arose within the building. Michiel had inflated the organ and then ran to the key-board in time to produce a note of surpassing melancholy. Into the church dashed the beadle; around the organ rushed Michiel, finding time on his way to give the bellows another squeeze; then round to the front to produce another horrible dischord and slip away from the avenging staff of the beadle.

This trick having been repeated half a dozen times with uniform success, the boy became weary of it and broke for the aisle, leading the beadle a dance in out out, up and down, zig-zagging and slipping behind a pillar only to deride his pursuer and dart off again at the last moment. The beadle’s face was white no longer; it was red as a turkey-cock’s gills. Finally he sank into a seat and mopped his brow.’

As the good man cursed Michiel, the latter made him a low bow, turned on his heel and scampered off. Of course he got a flogging, but that did not deter him one iota.

At school he started a revolution and dethroned the master, before leaving to work in a local rope-yard. There he failed to make the rope which his master vowed would hang him in time. Enough was enough, and despite his anxious mother’s worry that he might get drowned he was finally packed off to sea on December 26, 1618. In the end, to round off the story, history records that he did many brave and heroic deeds before becoming Admiral Michiel Adrianzon De Ruyter.





# THE TORTOISE AND THE HARE

MIKE BROWELL

“Driving like a lunatic! I’ve had more experience than you. Do you know you were doing 63 miles an hour down the Pass? You might have hit a sheep in the road!” “Yes officer, sorry officer; I was only doing 60 officer. Won’t do it again though. Good-night officer.” The driver of a jam sandwich is never wrong and there is no point in explaining that you slowed down carefully to enable him to keep on your tail for ten miles. Oh the ignominy of being ticked off outside Ynys Ettws . . . the irony of being considered certifiable so close to the asylum.

The meet begins. The game begins much earlier . . . Later strait-jackets and straight faces are donned; but not before the traditional downgrading and understating of the week’s exploits. The tortoise team, turtles even, have been to Pembroke and Gogarth. When you’ve done everything at Gogarth there is only one thing left to do . . . “How was Positron?” “Didn’t do it.” Much is unsaid. Either they are too drunk to string more than three words together, or there is a game emerging. The fully experienced deflating interrogator knows when to keep quiet and this is a good time to do so. However, throwing caution to the wind . . . “What did you do then?” “Ordinary Route.” “What else?” Observe the rapid crossfire and use of the immediate deflationary sequitur. Note also that the three word sentence has reduced to two words, and the game is winding up.

The night commences with the usual competitive bedtime banter. Most of the games play is being made by the advanced Magister Ludorum, James. He has been playing at star and E points with the tortoise team all week, and gradually softening them up for the weekend. Most of the hard routes in Pembroke take a tumble in this session. Older generations grunt wisely into their strait-jackets. Snoring begins. Snoring, of course, is a vital component in the psychological weakening of the tortoise team. It continues all night . . .

In the very early morning, electric razor treatment begins. Bleary eyes blaze malevolently at the perpetrator, but the damage is done. Tortoises rarely survive an early arousal from hibernation.

A sub-game is in progress; one for quick points. Everyone attempts to be the last in bed. Finally James, acclaimed Grand Master, makes the classic tea play. Having offered to make tea, he returns at two-minute intervals with a withering series of problems. No cups. No milk. No tea bags—he only knows how to use tea

bags. How many sugars—who's got milk? Eventually the sub-game is over as both tortoise and hare teams are tricked into getting up to chase him.

The next half-hour is spent in a sophisticated and much condemned version of the who-is-going-where-to-do-what sequence. Past masters will appreciate the skill involved in not initiating such a key game on the previous evening, when alcohol may impair judgement and the truth may be prematurely revealed. The hare team is outspoken, confident and enthusiastic. The tortoise team reticent, vague and non-committal. Maybe the Ormes, maybe Tremadog. Unsaid, but by inuendo, maybe Plas Berw or Sexual Salami. Or perhaps Cloggy. No, there are no safe megaticks on the Clog. Exodus is in progress, teams disembark in all directions. This part of the game is almost over but there are a few more points to gain.

"Cloggy will be wet . . ." The pundits have spoken, almost as if they had it verbatim from the Mouth of Free Wales. The hare team's minor plan of a return visit to S.H. Wall is tossed aside as casually as an empty light magnesium carbonate packet. Very nice, hope it stays fine for you, or similar. Meaning, of course, how insignificant compared to what the men are going to do today—which is not yet known—therefore it must be very hard.

James scores the final point. Earlier he has borrowed the Pass guide and confirmed that Right Wall is a definitive Welsh 6a. The he carefully scrutinised the book. He has, of course, thoroughly Done the Pass and no-one takes this charade seriously. Then he borrows the New Routes Supplement, and gazes skyward. Inspiration from above? Finally, the point scoring gesture as the hare team departs. He returns both books. Unsaid is the suggestion that he was just checking to see if it had been done yet. Tortoises sit outside in the sun, pretending that plans are still to be made. The hares depart—only to be tailed by another jam sandwich for most of the way.

In glorious sunshine on Clogwyn yr Eryr, the hares share the crag with another party. Merely 28 stars and 47 E points to choose from, probably the best unknown cliff in Wales. In years to come, the pundits of the day will remember these words. There will be days when 20 or 30 teams will turn up at the S.H. Wall, but information takes time to filter through. Chalking up for a sprint, the hares commence. There is no suggestion of a race or competition yet as the routes tumble, thoughts of tortoises at play are aroused. Astoroth and Snowdrop—a brilliant three star connection of pitches. One desperately thin, eventually succumbing to vintage back-and-footing at 6a, which leaves you facing outwards and reaching with the right arm over the left shoulder to clip a peg. The other oozing with jugs and verticality plus, but having the decency to give in to a rapid rush. A whooping pitch, immediately downgraded to 5b—must be some points there.



Down to the deck, and the remaining classic route of the crag calls for attention, its guarding roof sequence waving its silly little drilled sling in the breeze. Connie's Crack is quickly laid to rest after a withering ballet and some unlikely resting positions. Any normal day and that would have been enough. Seven E points and four stars (Under-starring?) give adequate excuse to return to Ynys and sunbathe; but it's only 3.00 o'clock. Conscience, and could it be competition, are enough incentive.

The final route is hare-raising. The Web, an ignominious little name, is no attraction, but it has acclaim in the Supplement in the form of 'An excellent pitch' and two stars. The first pitch should have been a warning. Tiptoeing out across space to the ubiquitous semi-detached block should have set the alarm bells ringing loudly. You've been here before. But they don't ring loudly enough, so a dynamic sequence of lunges gains the base of what appears to be an overhanging groove. Semifluid (limp) forays up the groove confirm the angle of dangle but a siren sinker in the middle says go on, go on. So on to the top and floppy arms hang pathetically from super-jugs as the final V-groove thwarts entry without total commitment. Eventually a broken foothold precipitates a downward rush at which point panic takes over and adrenalin enables an upward surge. The crag is now thoroughly ticked and the hares return home.

Tortoises are somewhat grumpy—almost unapproachable. Is it a ploy, to build up to a game point? Seemingly not. Their day was spent grappling with 'The Route'—but what a day! Great deeds were done, by all accounts.

Cockblock on the Grochan is not exactly the most impressively situated route in Wales. The continuous stream of cars, coaches and motor-bikes rather detract from the feeling of total commitment and isolation in which truly great deeds are done—but in the public eye it certainly is.

The tortoise team had spent their day wisely. Breakfasting late at Pete's Eats led to a leisurely mid-day arrival at the crag. Dipstick bears were probed out into the unknown, to place and test runners. Various serious efforts were made, resulting in micro-tumbles. At last the route is almost in the bag—but it's now 4.30 and time to retire, paws fragile and faces pale from too much chalk.

Half-time scoring is approached obliquely. Disinterest in Crafnant is at an all-time high it seems. The scenery, isolation, star quality and nature of the climbing are boring non-events compared to the raptures of a day spent on Cockblock. Somehow the setting of Clogwyn yr Eryr is shrunk to a wart compared to the grandeur of the Grochan. James scores extra points by achieving bigger and better falls from Pistolero, being altogether nastier and in a more impressive setting. The tortoises choose not to comment. James has probably done Cockblock.

The evening draws on but true to tradition only the hares divulge plans for the



next day. The tortoises are typically reticent, muttering about possible return bouts with The Route . . . or the Ormes . . . or Tremadoc. Strait-jacketed again and the psychological pressure is intensified. Snoring persists through the night. The electric razor treatment commences shortly after daybreak.

In the pale clear light of dawn, which comes late to the bunkroom at Ynys, one J.C. pays a social call. Two minutes of light-hearted competitive banter with the hares draws a blood-curdling scream of torment and threats of death from the troubled tortoise who by this time is feeling deprived of sleep and is running short on the milk of human kindness. The hares roll over and snore a little more loudly for victory is in the bag. Striving to continue with the game, the tortoises stumble around blinking at the glaring sun and show total indifference to the various teams departing for Cloggy and Cynr Las. It'll be wet they mutter, or if not wet it'll be crowded—inferring that The Route won't be crowded. Man's country up there on the Grochan.

The hares sprint off. Trudging the path of history up to the Clog they soak up the atmosphere, which is very relevant because for one of them it is his first visit. Hot sun bears down from blue sky, and sweaty sacks are dumped in the shrinking sunshine below the East Buttress. It is a magic day, made special by the many other teams, each occupied in their own grips yet with enough time to hurl comments across the crag. There is history here in plenty today.

Immediately on arrival, the ropes are territorially uncoiled below Great Wall. It is only 9.45 a.m. yet fear of competition urges rapid possession and within minutes the second team of hopefuls has arrived. The wall lies bare, no chalk to be seen. An inconsequential trickle of water oozes from the traverse high on the second pitch. J.C. arrives and proclaims the route too wet. This gambit fails to deter, so he wanders off to climb something less popular. Padding up the first pitch expecting it to be so much easier this time brings a sudden jarring halt at the so much harder crux. Nothing has changed. Micro-pulls and micro-pushes allow a reasonably static grasp to good holds; then some sustained climbing leads to the stance at a time when it would have been nice to stop. The pegs are frightening but careful excavation reveals a zonking crack. Surely all this gunge can't be recent? Had the wall been climbed this spring? The top pitch passes in disbelief. There are holds up there, which have always been there of course. How odd that attitudes shut them out.

Back at base and it's still short of midday, so some traditional route bagging is called for. Vember beckons because its number 54 for one and a Rock and Ice classic for the other. It is duly bagged and pronounced hard, harder than many modern horrors. The hare's sports plan is now complete, but time is trickling slowly and it's hardly 3.00 p.m.—so a final choice is made. Curving Arete has a

couple of advantages. It doesn't take long to stop and put the protection in, and fortunately, the climbing is easy. The hares complete rapidly and scorch out of the shadows. The lines grin back, huge bold features on this big crag.

Down at Ynys Ettws the tortoises have left clues; Cockblock was eventually beaten, but one tortoise decided to forego his ascent for a while. It had been a long weekend, and he was feeling tired, so he had to go home for a rest. They claim to have won, because they reached home in time for a pint or two. Man's country up there on Cockblock—not up with the boys on the Clog. James has, of course, gone. He has probably won, but is too professional to make the point.

### CHRIS—THE MISSING LINK?

A hunter in South-West China captured an ape-man in a trap in 1980 but let it go out of pity, according to a Chinese newspaper. The report was the latest evidence that some primitive man-like creatures live in remote, mountainous parts of Central China. The Tientsin daily said the hunter in Guangxi province had found a strange creature with its hand caught in a trap he had set in the forest. "It was more than three feet tall, had a mouth like a monkey's, a nose like a dog's, and ears, hands and eyes like a human being's. Its body was covered in hair," he reported. The creature looked at the hunter pleadingly with tears in its eyes and he prised open the teeth of the trap to let it go.

Daily Telegraph, Peking Correspondent.

Pebble Mill at One interviews superstar mountaineer Chris Bonington who led the first European expedition to China in 1980. The team spent days climbing the wrong mountain before making a strategic retreat and setting off up the correct peak.

Sunday Times Colour Supplement.



# THE FIRST TIME

## (or A TORTOISE'S REVENGE)

BOB BRADLEY

Well it wasn't really the first time, I had been there once before but that was a long time ago and I'd read the book many times since then—looked at the pictures and imagined the routes. The Black Cliff, a book of legends: Brown and Whillans and the Rock and Ice routes; Soper and Gregory and early repeats of routes such as White Slab; Boysen swathed in mist on Troach and Drummond alone on that Great Wall. Oh yes, I'd read the book—pulled it from the shelf on a winter's day when snow covered the surrounding Derbyshire hills and found in it a warmth that kindled the flame ready for the summer and made the inactivity bearable. But still I'd only been there once before way back in nineteen seventy something. That day we'd padded up Llithrig in a steady drizzle and I'd thought 'well if that's Cloggy you can keep it', but of course I knew better—they couldn't all be wrong.

But if it wasn't my first visit, it was certainly the first time I'd seen all the crag. On my only other visit the rock could have stopped a few feet up the Pinnacle or carried on to the top of Snowdon for all I could see in the mist and rain. But now all was clear as the morning sun sent its piercing rays over Snowdon into Cwm Clogwyn. As we walked gently downhill towards the Far East Buttress Pete confessed that he too had read the book—spending days in the local library when he should have been elsewhere studying for 'A' levels. He had been here before, several times, and as we walked along he pointed out the routes whose names I knew so well, but even that was hardly necessary, merely a refresher course in something that was ingrained and fundamental; Woubits, Mostest, Great Wall, Vember, Curving Crack—I knew them all but had climbed none of them. How many times had I driven down to Wales on a perfect day and said 'right, Cloggy tomorrow!' only to awake to a steady pitter patter on the hut roof or to be seduced by more prestigious routes on other crags (What, in Wales? Ed.) I've known people walk up to Cloggy to camp on a perfect summer evening only to be sent scurrying from their sleeping bags to catch the last pint at the Padarn as the Snowdon rain set in.

Today was different; we'd had perfect weather for weeks and we were fit. Even Pete was regaining his former enthusiasm. The week before it had been North Yorkshire limestone and a few of the nasties on offer there but today was

different. We'd come to do some classics and as we dropped our sacks below the Drainpipe Crack and took off our sweat-soaked T-shirts I noticed that it was only 9.45 a.m. God we must be keen but with weather like this it's hard not to be.

Now in my experience days on rock vary greatly; there are those which you don't remember or don't care to remember and others which stick in the mind as hard battles where every inch of upward movement comes from sheer effort and often some of these are the most rewarding. However, there can be nothing nicer than when everything just slips into place and goes like clockwork. Today was going to be like that. You could feel it, even which route we did first seemed preordained. We just looked up from our sacks as we sorted gear and there it was, a perfect crack running straight up the crag, November. "Shall we start on this?" "Yeah. O.K." "Which pitch do you want?" "Don't mind." "I wouldn't mind that top crack; it looks brilliant." "Right. I'll do this first pitch then."

. . . Pete tied on and set off laybacking and bridging up the Drainpipe Crack which was all but bone dry. Two runners in eighty feet—Pete was obviously adopting a traditional approach to add to the flavour. We had already decided not to use Friends today, preferring to place more traditional protection on this historic crag (What! Not full-weight slings! Ed.). We did however allow ourselves a little chalk—well it was very warm and no-one is perfect. I quickly joined Pete on the stance and sorted the gear for the crack above—it looked pretty steep. I set off up the first easy section leaving the first runner until the hard climbing began at about twenty feet. From here the crack just reared up to the Eastern Terrace. Fortunately the holds are good and I tried to climb quickly following Pete's lead of well-spaced protection. All too soon we were coiling the ropes in the morning sun enthusing about the route below us and wondering what to do next. We were spoilt for choice.

Pete fancied Silhouette and reckoned he could do it in one pitch. That suited me because I could have a sleep. Whilst Pete sorted the ropes out I nipped back to the sacks to dump a few runners which we had decided were just ballast. By the time I got to the top of the pedestal Pete was tied on and ready to go. The climbing looked superb, small holds and in sufficient supply, as Pete worked up to the first stance, placed a runner and continued. A small bulge about twenty feet above halted progress and Pete seemed slightly peeved that the crag could do this to him. He tried several combinations before shouting down, "Oh, it's O.K. I was missing a good hold up here", and vanished upward. Soon it was my turn. The climbing was steady until one reached a short rib which would normally start the second pitch, where a few awkward moves led to a face crack and the troublesome bulge. Here undercuts and a painful finger-jam with little for the feet gave access

to Pete's good hold and again we were coiling the ropes.

We thought that linking together Great Wall, Pinnacle Arete and the Hand Traverse would give a good sequence of pitches so we raced down to have a bite to eat and survey the territory. However our plans were thwarted by a team well and truly in situ on Great Wall. We sat down to eat and studied the guide. Some mates arrived with enough food to feed an army—they were connoisseurs of the crag and strongly recommended Troach, so off we went again. We soloed up the first pitch of Curving Crack and uncoiled the ropes on the stance. The wall above looked pretty steep. I fixed a runner, traversed right and made a long stretch for good holds on a small ledge above. No need to worry about runners here, there are none, and the only way is upward—thankfully on good holds until a couple of old pegs relieve the tension and a layback move followed by more jugs lead away rightward to the stance. From below Pete assures me that I have stacks of rope left and should keep going as the next pitch is short so I place a runner and carry on. Good holds rise up and leftward and eventually a couple of awkward moves—it must be the rope drag—land you on Curving Arete. I belay around the corner and soon the rope is coming in quickly as Pete storms the pitch.

Down we go again and this time Great Wall is free and it's Pete's first pitch. He's done this before and having an excellent memory he moves steadily upward commenting on the excellence of the runners and how he didn't have that one last time. Soon he's tied to the middle of that wall and the gentle tug of the ropes tell me it's my go. Small positive holds draw you toward the crack—God knows how they aided it—nowadays small but good footholds allow one to stand in balance. A couple of quick layback moves up the crack bring the ledge to hand. Again we sort the rack and because we have no dates to suck I head off up a slim groove on reasonable holds—twenty-five feet and only a poor wire separates us. The next bit looks nasty and even sports a wet patch but an in situ wire and another bomber that I slot below it make me feel brave. I look around for elephants bouncing past trumpeting but there are none so I launch upward on side pulls, teeter rightwards and grab a jug. Up to the stance, a quick grin at the lass belaying on Vember and up comes Pete.

"How d'you feel?" "O.K.!" "Right. Where's this Pinnacle Arete?" I scuttle across a suicidal pitch of grass and loose blocks and belay below the route. Pete arrives, looks at the disintegrating rock around me, checks the gear and sets off up the chimney of Taurus. After thirty feet or so an old wire on the left wall signals that it's time for him to move left to the arete. Fortunately the holds are good, if somewhat rattly, and steady climbing in an incredible position leads left around the arete to a steep crack and the belay. I follow after some confused shouting about one of the ropes which is hanging limply out in space. Eventually Pete takes

in and I move up to join him.

At the stance we are not sure where the Hand-Traverse starts but a glance round the corner to the left reveals a line of perfect jugs leading to a peg. I hope that this is easy because I'm starting to feel tired. I swing leftwards on good incuts with the occasional foothold to ease the strain and at last the peg winks at me as I stand below it on a good foothold. The only trouble is that I can't reach it to clip it. Quickly I pull up and click! My karabiners dangle down. Back to the foothold, shake out my tiring right arm, pull up some slack and up I go again. This time I clip in the rope and a high step and a storming finger-jam in the crack above allow me to hang out over the gully and enjoy the space below. The crack and corner above are easy and soon I pop out into the sunlight, to sit there for a while alone—just gazing around—until I remember Pete still down in the gloom. Lasso a large block belay and take in. In no time at all we are divesting ourselves of E.B.s and harnesses. We lie back on the grass and wiggle our crushed pink toes in the late afternoon sun.

What a day—what routes! “What are we doing tomorrow” “How about something near to the road?” “Yes, O.K. How about Cynr Las?” What!!!!?

P.S. Up yours, Mike!

### JOE ON T.V.

“What a bloody cockup 'ere. I think the belays are all collapsing. I can't move now, it's just not possible (when belayed).” “Don't move for a second.” “It's like trying to play a musical instrument with a million strings with someone on the end of a telephone trying to tell you how to play it.”



# CHULU EAST CONQUERED

(Possibly not for the first time)

A romp of quality undertaken by old uncle

HENRY ADLER

—C.C. pensioners' section

Working for a living seems to be one of the few options one has for supporting one's pleasures and excesses but giving up work is a wonderful way of finding time to enjoy them, as long as there is enough money about and one does not leave it too late. I was determined to meet the necessary conditions and did. The proposition I put to ExplorAsia in London, who work with Mountain Travel of Nepal, and do it superbly, was as follows:

Get me first to Delhi, put me up in real comfort, get me a car and driver for a few days, let me visit old friends but also get me around a bit to see things I should, i.e. the Taj Mahal at Agra and whatever and then transport me to Kathmandu. Arrange for me to trek around the Annapurnas and to climb Chulu East on the way (which at a reputed 20,300 feet is just high enough to impress the Watford Rotary Club) and make the expedition as private as possible; i.e. don't worry too much about cost because I was going to lord it a bit.

Now all this was not exactly original thinking on my part. I had enviously followed Hamish Nicol's (and friends') progress while I was still doing this awful thing called work. One evening when I called on Hamish he had just received some boxes of slides, only to be sampled briefly before rushing back to the office, unfit, nervous and dreaming of the day when I too could do something like this. In the event, Hamish gave me lots and lots of help—thank you very much indeed. My dream came true, at 61½ and about a stone overweight but reasonably fit after a winter spent skiing in Verbier. Read now, with bated breath, about your hero's progress, worry about his well-being and sympathise with his formidable deprivations as he makes his pilgrimage to the East.

Nothing can be achieved without due preparations; tedious applications for visa and trekking permit, insurances etc., and I see no point in boring my readers with details. What stood out were the medical preparations, with various points, not to be made, but stuck up one's bottom. The most memorable jab with ten times the volume of all the others gets pumped up there only just before you leave so that it will last out and protect you against the most feared form of Hepatitis,



you hope. With infinite skill, and I suspect with a modicum of sadistic pleasure, our nurse here performed this task admirably just so as to miss the part one sits on, important in view of the long flight to Delhi. Malaria pills have to be consumed prior to departure, other pills such as 'stops' and 'goes' have to be obtained and I decide to take 'Diamox' with me, a pill increasingly credited with easing altitude problems, which I personally had experienced on alpine peaks in the past (I took those for a period of approximately 10 days while we were between 13000 and 20000 feet). There was also the little matter of getting somewhat fitter and lighter and I thought I had done well until I reduced the kids in one Nepalese village to completely unexplained laughter—the 'clever' boy who spoke a little English revealed the truth: "They think you are very fat, ha, ha, ha . . ." Ha, ha, indeed, the impertinence of it all. Anyway, it was before the real climbing had started.

So the day finally arrived, in mid-October, to leave for Delhi. It was all very smooth. My diary refers to dozens of Indians boarding the plane at Dubai, everyone without exception carrying a huge portable stereo radio and tape combination, lovingly referred to as 'a two in one' and apparently of significant value in India. How jolly! At 03.15 hours my travel agent was waiting for me at the airport, with car and driver and took me to my plush hotel, a highly refined breakfast, a beckoning swimming pool, a couple of phone messages from friends intent on taking me out for dinner, and you will appreciate that all these deprivations were hard to bear.

Delhi was fun, so was Agra with another plush hotel and even plusher swimming pool, as well as the Taj Mahal. My driver was most resourceful and a delight and I spent my last afternoon having tea with his family in a Delhi Council Flat. I would not have the impudence to describe to you all the profoundly cultural activities of this first part of my pilgrimage, since you are obviously most anxious to move on to the hills. So let's quickly fly to Kathmandu, about 1½ hours, first along the Himalayas, then abruptly northwards over the foothills down to the comfortably simple airstrip and terminal. What a lovely flight it was. I met then for the first time my climbing companion to be, Bob Ross from Perth in Scotland, like most people in the world about half my age and a keen hill man with ice climbing experience only to be acquired in those wild Scottish mountains. What a delightful partnership we turned out to be—not a cross word for a month, no problems and in the event enough food for us both on all occasions, bearing in mind that I have to watch my figure.

As you will expect by now, another plush hotel but, alas, no swimming pool. It was quite cool there, though, and I doubt whether we should have used it. We went shopping a little, more temples (he groans), some apes running about, a fair amount of squalor but a good atmosphere, a nice place to stay. We had a good two-

night rest in luxury, ancient British barman, Freddy, mixed exotic cocktails, but beer was preferable on most occasions.

We got an extensive briefing from Al Read of Mountain Travel, himself an expedition man, and when he left we knew how to arrange our kit, what money to take, and importantly, we received all our papers which one simply has to carry and occasionally show to rather inept but charming policemen stationed in quite improbably outposts along the way. The great moment when we were to get started was by now not far off and indeed we did, right on time and in grand style. It was 06.00 hours on 23rd October 1982, henceforth to be a red letter day together with 5th November (already usurped by an impostor), when I stood proudly on top of the dreaded Chulu East.

Pertemba, our sirdar, arrived by taxi. He immediately inspires confidence by his natural authority, quiet efficiency and evident stature, and confirmed very soon our earlier view as to how lucky we were to be able to call on his services. A most respectable Land Rover with lots of gear on the roof and with just the driver arrived at the same time. Our destination: Dumre—on the road to Pokhara, about 5 hours away, where we were to meet our retinue. Slight rain, clearing up, my diary states, lovely trip along river, rice growing everywhere, first experience of crummy but endearing tea house and equally crummy police check point. In Dumre we met our impressive retinue which needs to be detailed here: Deputy sirdar: Dorje (has been up Gaurisanker) sherpas Ang Nuru, delightful and infallible chef, Ang Phurba, 21 year old learner, junior kitchen boy Septe who was just simply indispensable and seemingly infallible. Hold your breath now—we hired in addition 12 porters so that your uncle and his friend could continue to lord it right to the end.

After a while we put on our moderately heavy day packs and started up the Marsyandi river valley easily and gently, in sunny weather, no insects to pester us, to be intercepted by the kitchen team who were serving tea on a ground sheet just for us two, in the middle of a village. I felt really good until this impertinent village kid dared to tell the truth about my figure—I had to refuse the second biscuit and gave it to the boy.

An hour or two later we left the track by just a few hundred yards to arrive at a charming camp site. The full glory of our royal procession was to unfold itself there. Porters and equipment kept on arriving. A dark blue dinner 'marquee', almost, was erected together with a table and two wicker stools just for Bob and myself to sit in lonely splendour like Napoleon and his Chief of Staff planning the invasion of Nepal. Our two most comfortable sleeping tents followed, then the sherpas' own tent, the kitchen and provisions tent and, as a final touch, the toilet tent for our exclusive use—even Pertemba did not trespass on this holy ground.

The dinner served by about 18.00 hours was the forerunner of many most acceptable meals to follow. There was a bowl of water with disinfectant to wash our hands in before we sat down, then kettles full of tea and boiling water for coffee, drinking chocolate etc. We ate, we drank, we chatted and our bond with our party began to establish itself. Pertemba's English is very fluent, the young Phurba coped moderately, Dorje, quite a character, hardly coped but Nuru was always too busy. Septe's vocabulary consisted of 'washing water' and 'tea' with a sprinkling of the most elementary basics, such as 'thank you'. This then sets the scene till 31st October and I shall just refer to my diary for a few snippets along the walk-in to Manang province and the village of Braga where we left the trail to start our assault on Chulu East.

24th October; up at 06.00 hours, tea, porridge, away by 7.00 hours. Walked for about 4 hours to lunch stop in village. Nuru buys eggs. Ecology note: little girl craps in street; chicken races to spot and eats it. Eggs not tasting the same after that. Cross first rope bridge—no real problem. Cross next torrent on single narrow pole—your hero manages to look unconcerned. Villages look crummy. Kids shouting everywhere: "Namaste. Hello. How old are you? What is your country? Give me your pen." Henry remains strong—no pens. My age is 100 years—they think I am older. Sherpas start to call me 'uncle Henry'.

25th October; mountains appear for first time—Manaslu, Peak 29 . . . Set off 06.50 hours, suddenly see first of the Annapurnas. Wonderful butterflies, still no irksome insects. Nuru carries live chicken tied to top of rucksack, pleasant dinner prospects—very discreet execution, delicious soup, crapping incident almost forgotten. Weather brilliant. I feel that I am getting slightly lighter—that bloody boy!

26th October; start at 06.45, lovely lunch site 4 hours later, wash clothes in river, everything dry before setting off again. Steep climb to pass and next village. Buy beer. Whole place en fete, lovely big swing of bamboo and ropes I should hate to climb with, lovely time playing with kids. Mother changes nappy of small baby—dogs come running from everywhere to get a lick—that crap must be delicious and why should I care what they like? Things like that no longer matter!

27th October; 4 hours up through narrow gorge, gain about 3,000 feet. Irish girl invited to lunch, eats like a horse, nice kid just the same. Has lost her companions (temporarily), we reckon we know where and no-one is worried. And so it goes on, lovely scenery, beautiful weather and some interesting experiences, like Chame village where there is an airstrip. In the village there is a hole in a wall which proclaims itself to be a post office. So I send a letter with lovely stamps to myself, why not. It was there when I got home and forms part of the memento loot.

Before Braga we left the trail to visit a sherpa climbing school and first aid medical post combined and found American doctor, Steve Boyer. I joined his Himalayan Rescue Association and now own a badge. Braga itself was in the middle of its most important religious festival and we had a wonderful time on our one and only rest day, looking on, taking photos and visiting, alas, more temples. Pertemba has an insatiable appetite for these things and his enthusiasm is infectious.

1st November; very cold night—we are at about 12,500 feet—Irish girl reappears with companions safely rejoined. Smart Swiss girl goes skiing where I do and has been repaired by same bone fixer as myself. We leave trail.

2nd November; steep pull up, lovely views of Annapurna on opposite side of valley from which we are striking out northwards towards Tibet. Camp by lake at 15,300 feet, blue skies, bitter cold by nightfall. Two most beautiful and majestic mountain eagles cruise below us—maybe they are hungry.

3rd November; bitter cold morning, water bottle inside tent frozen solid, boots frozen, too, but precautions will stop this henceforth, sleeping bags perfect (They are plastic insulated, inner and outer bags and a plastic mattress underneath; all supplied by Mountain Travel.) Have learnt by now not to drink after 6.30 p.m. and have really good pee and re-pee before finally crawling in. Bob confesses that he uses a pee-bottle, the cheat. Climb to 16,000 feet, then most disappointingly drop down 2,000 feet of very steep scree, then up to our base camp at 15,800 feet. The setting is magnificent.

4th November; climb steeply and soon reach snow line. A magnificent and well-protected ice-camp by a frozen lake, just three tents now and six people of whom only four will make the ascent from 17,700 to 20,300 feet.

5th November; we set off steeply at 05.30 hours, crampons on 30 minutes later, then ropes. Much to my surprise we soon encounter a cruel ice slope. I feel my age, or is it the altitude? My clothing is of course heavier than normal—underpants, a Helly Hanson suit, woollen shirt, Rohan stretch pants, Helly jacket, Duvet, double woollen stockings, padded single Raichle boots (my toes were very cold for the first two hours), harness, ice axe, little bit of gear, heavy padded gloves, overgloves (my hands were never cold), and woollen hat borrowed from Ang Phurba, also gaiters which together with the crampons attract bits of snow and ice which in turn add even further to the weight of the legs.

We front-point up though the slope is only just steep enough to warrant this treatment. I can see that I am going to make it if I keep a really steady pace. The others are not all that displeased and are relieved that the old uncle has not fagged out on them and that they themselves retain some extra reserve of stamina. There is another even more cruel ice-slope and the going on the following final slopes is a

little uncertain. After 7 hours we reach the thick corniced blade which, leaning a little towards Tibet, forms the summit. My altimeter, which was difficult to set at the best of times in the absence of reliable fixes, shows not quite 20,300 feet—I am selfishly willing to believe the advertised height. The weather is glorious. I cough now rather badly but who cares—certainly not I. After a short rest, down again. Even with the unsteady going, two abseils and 4 hours later we complete a magnificent descent with stunning views and no tangible problems, no discords, just perfection. We find the ice camp with hot drinks and a little food, then break it up and descend further to our base where I know that bed is what I want. Bob produces the long hidden bottle of Glen Morangie and with a sixtuple ration down the hatch I retire, not forgetting the ceremonial pee without which the night might have been less blissful.

It was twelve days before we reached civilisation again at Pokhara, from where we flew to Kathmandu and a day later, via Delhi, back to the U.K. The run in was no less charming, and at times quite hard (like the 17,500-foot Thorong La pass) and we made many friends, had one or two good drinking sessions and enjoyed new views, such as the incomparable Dhaulagiri, and the sacred, Matterhorn-like, Machhapuchhare. From nowhere one day Annie Haston appeared and this called for a party amply supported by Chang (beer) which becomes less revolting as you partake. Stanley Thomas, C.C. member, came marching in the opposite direction, on his way to climb the Pisand peak, about two weeks off, and I hope that he was successful.

So finally, I arrived back home, more than a stone lighter, fitter than I had been in years, richer by a lovely Indian carpet, some bits and pieces from Nepal and a pair of Indian sandals, and poorer by lots of pounds, to face the rigours of a fresh season of skiing in Verbier. Who said that retirement was boring?



## FURTHER YNYS EXTRACTS

- 5.5.80 Fell from the top move of Marathon Man; ripped Friend, snapped No. 1 stopper, ripped other runners out, fell 45 feet, narrowly missed belay ledge. Didn't bother having another look. Dave Wiggin.
- 28.5.80 Fell 500 feet and broke leg off bottom bunk. Anon.
- July 1980 Will the Member who left 2 stoppers in Left Wall ring 051-630 3705 for them back. Al Simpson.
- 24.8.80 CHALK GOING OFF LEFT JUST BELOW THE CRUX OF TRUE GRIP. ANY COMMENT PETE? JOE HEALEY AND STEVE HASTON. Yes! People who write things in capital letters are punished by having their hands broken. (Unsigned)
- 7.9.80 Night of the gales. Best storm in ages. 3 tents dead. Bonny Masson.
- 28.12.80 Not raining! But soon started. Nearly got washed away trying to get into Smurf Zawn. Going home to get pissed.  
Chris Jackson, Roy Small.
- 11.1.81 Shared a sleepless night with other, bar one, occupants of hut. It would appear that snoring should feature on Club Membership applications. Mike Browell, Jeremy Frost.
- 13.3.81 I agree with comments of 11th January. All snoring should be stopped if necessary by compulsory suffocation with C.C. pillows. P. Bartlett.
- 11.4.81 Fell off top move of Curfew in wind and rain. Came down about 60 feet pulling an assortment of wires. Hit belay ledge breaking left and right wrist. Went back for another look by helicopter. Ena Joyce.
- 5.8.81 One of the best pendules in Wales . . . Attempt Ivory Madonna pitch 1 and actually touch Left Wall before getting a quick close look at Right Wall, then Precious, then Cemetery Gates and back to the Corner. Second attempt went O.K. John Codling.
- 25.8.81 Resurrection (Fall for aid). Chris Sowden
- 31.8.81 Christine Crawshaw and Bonny Masson met The Wasp. Both stung.

- 19.9.81      Winking Crack, just before Noah came and asked if we wanted to sail back to the cafe, but being of unsound mind we declined the offer.  
K. Sanders.
- 17.10.81     Green Gilbert—an ancient horror.  
Had a rope off Blue Peter—a modern horror.  
Mike Browell, Jerry Frost.
- May/June 1982   J.R., Cockblock, True Grip, Ivory Madonna, Precious (3rd ascent)  
The Cad (7th ascent), Wall of the Dead (2nd ascent), Suicide Wall (solo), Death Row, Nexus Direct, The Heretic, Hall of Warriors, Penal Servitude (2nd ascent), Death Row (solo), Barbarossa, Midsummer Night's Dream (1st one day ascent), Mordor, Great Wall Arete Finish.
- August        Right Wall (1st solo ascent). Phil Davidson with various seconds including J. Jewel, L. Brown, P. Williams.
- 23.8.82       Continual rain with intermittent showers have given way to the deluge. Off home to build an ark. The worst spell of weather I've ever known in Wales. An expert.



# AN ASCENT OF SNOWDON

*In the Preface to The Cambrian Sketch-Book—Tales, Scenes and Legends of Wild Wales R. Rice Davies gives an account of the ascent of the highest peak in Wales during 1865.*

‘... the ascent of Snowdon was undertaken alone and by the most difficult, tedious and hazardous route. I often wonder at my want of prudence in ascending from Capel Curig, that glorious old Alpine height, on a cold, dank and misty autumnal morning without a guide or a friendly hand to point the way. Alone I accomplished the journey, without experiencing much difficulty, or meeting a single mishap.’

*From Conway, Davies journeyed via Llanwrst, and Bettws-y-Coed to Capel Curig before finally arriving at Penygwryd. Let him tell the tale in his own words:*

The next morning, after partaking of an early breakfast of ham and eggs and coffee, I proceeded to the hotel lawn to see whether the day was favourable for an ascent of Yr Wyddfa, the ‘uwch y mynydd uchaf’ of England and Wales. Since the previous day I regretted to find that the weather had undergone a complete change; the summit of Eryri was now enveloped in dark clouds, the morning was cold, and the air was dank and chilly. The moaning of the wind in the great mountain gullies and cwms rendered the scene both awful and sublime. Meeting mine host on the lawn, I enquired if I might venture to ascend Snowdon without the service of a guide. He strongly dissuaded me from attempting an ascent alone, as it would necessarily be attended with great risk. However, after debating the matter some time, I resolved to carry out my original design of going unattended. When I reached the summit I was delighted beyond measure at having accomplished the ascent, by the longest and most difficult route, without the aid of a guide.

Having wished Mr. Owen a hearty farewell, I commenced the ascent of Snowdon. Proceeding up the road towards the Pass of Llanberis so far as Pen-y-Pass, I branched off to the left, and soon came to Llyn Teyrn, thence taking the trackless mountain above Cwm Dyli, direct towards Llyn Glaslyn; and thence by a circuitous and difficult route, which a kind mountain miner showed me, to the highest point of the Mother of Hills.

Although I found the route laborious, I was amply recompensed by beholding ‘scenes of extraordinary wildness and grandeur, over which solitude seemed to brood with undisturbed silence, scarcely ever broken by the wing of bird or the voice of melody.’ In every direction prospects the most magnificent opened to

view, and every crag and rock which I surmounted was furnished with objects of picturesque effect or deep and absorbing interest. From many a crag I looked down upon the cwms and deep dells beneath, and I fancied I could pick out here and there the very dingles to which our heroic ancestors were compelled to resort for protection, when pursued by numberless hosts of the enemy after they had sustained defeat. In these cwms they were, however, safe. Even proud and haughty Edward dared not follow the Britons to their mountain fastness. To them Snowdon had ever proved a kind and guardian angel; hence the reason why they fled thither in the hour of their defeat. No wonder, therefore, that they loved the old mountain deeply and passionately; and no wonder, too, that they composed songs to her honour and renown.

When I attained the summit of the mountain, the sight presented to my view was awfully and majestically wild and grand. The whole circuit of the Snowdonia range was enveloped in a thick and dark mist, which was so dense that I fancied I could cut it with the finest edged tool. The howling of the winds in the cwms and dingles which run down the mountain on every side was really appalling. Indeed, the prospect was horrible to contemplate. It gave an idea, says a writer on the subject, of numbers of abysses concealed by a thick smoke furiously circulating around us. Now and then, however, a strong gust of wind created an opening in the mist, which, for a moment, gave me a magnificent prospect of sea and lake, of deep chasms, and high and lofty mountains, of almost fathomless dingles and ravines; while towns and hamlets appeared in the distance like small specks on the surface of the earth. But the prospect was only momentary. The clouds of mist which were rent assunder by the strong current of wind would, in the twinkling of an eye, again form and unite, and thus present a compact and complete whole, leaving me involved in a darkness that might be felt. In a minute it would again separate into a thousand parts, and fly in wild eddies up the gullies and dingles, thus affording me another opportunity of seeing the Isle of Mona, the mountain of Plynlimmon, Hell's Mouth, the Iraeth Bach, and that magnificent bay which once formed the rich and fertile plain of Cantref-y-Gwaelod, with its sixteen fortified cities and towns, whose inhabitants met with a watery grave through the drunkenness of Seithenyn, who is styled in the 'Triads' as one of the three notorious drunkards of the isle of Britain. Contemplating the scene so strange, yet so grand, the following lines of the poet Rogers struck me as extremely applicable to my then situation:—

'The morning air

Plays on my cheek, how gently, flinging round

A silvery gleam; and now the purple mists

Rise like a curtain; now the sun looks out,

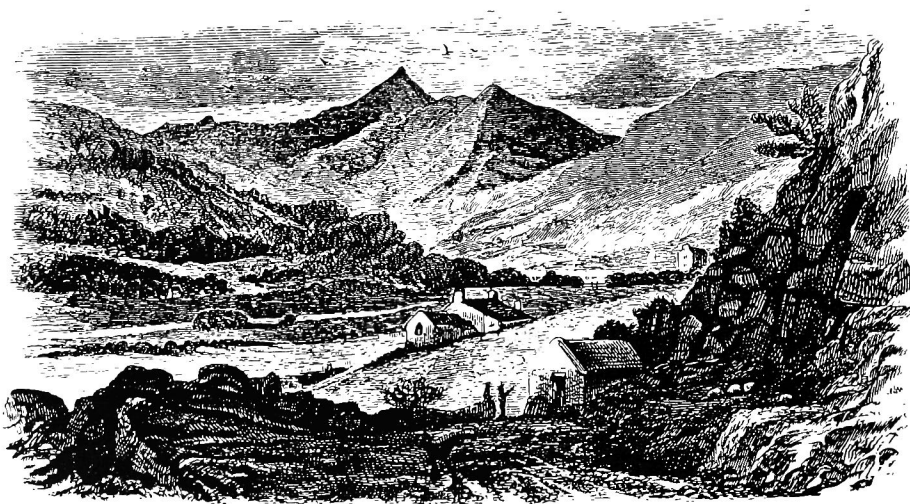
Filling, o'erflowing with his glorious light,  
This noble amphitheatre of hills.'

After spending nearly two hours on the summit in gazing upon the wild, yet the grand and majestic scene presented to my view, I felt, as I had to walk to Pont Aberglaslyn, and back to Penygwryd, a distance of nearly twenty miles, that I dare not delay my departure longer; hence I made instant preparation to descend. I, however, left this Alpine top, and bade farewell to old Snowdon, with feelings of deep sorrow and poignant grief. On leaving this most prominent historic spot in the past history of my country, I could not but enter into the deep feeling of reverence with which my forefathers regarded this mountain and its adjacent hills, valleys, and plains. Thought I to myself, was it a wonder that they almost worshipped Yr Wyddfa? Indeed they had every reason for paying honour and homage to it. To them it had ever been a never-failing friend—a sure and safe retreat when they suffered and sustained defeat in battle. To them it afforded a rich and never-failing refuge, in which they lodged the young and the feeble and the non-combatants when they went forth to fight the common foe—the implacable enemies of their dear fatherland—foes and enemies, too, who were strangers to generosity, but who loved conquest for the sake of conquest, and who were alike indifferent to the sacrifice of human blood as they were to English treasures. When they followed our brave and heroic countrymen into the mountain fastness of Snowdon, they generally suffered terrible slaughter, and repented having left those fortresses and plains where they so much loved to dwell. Considering the many and the terrible disasters which befell their marches in its fastnesses, no wonder they preferred residing at some distance removed from so impregnable a refuge. To the Welsh warriors it had been a natural guardian angel; hence the reason why they loved it so deeply, so ardently, and with the whole passion of the soul.

After I had descended some distance towards Beddgelert, I turned in order to take a parting farewell-look of this the mother of Cambrian mountains; and in viewing its high and lofty summit, now almost wholly enveloped in mist, I was forcibly struck with the wild, dreary, and boundless scene. From the point on which I stood this ancient hill appeared to be untrodden by human foot, and tenanted only by wandering sheep and goats, except the hoarse-croaking ravens. It was, indeed, sublime to stand, as I stood then, on that spot, and commune with solitude around—to gaze upon Snowdon and her manifold adjacent hills, slumbering calmly beneath me. With me there was no form, no human being, no living thing; but I rejoiced that there, amid this stupendous scene, I could commune freely and uninterruptedly with nature and nature's God, and with the spirits of my brave and heroic forefathers, whose bones lie buried in that wild and

dreary scene; and, as I finally parted from the scene, I sang the following well-known lines, and so my voice re-echoed through the dales and caverns:—

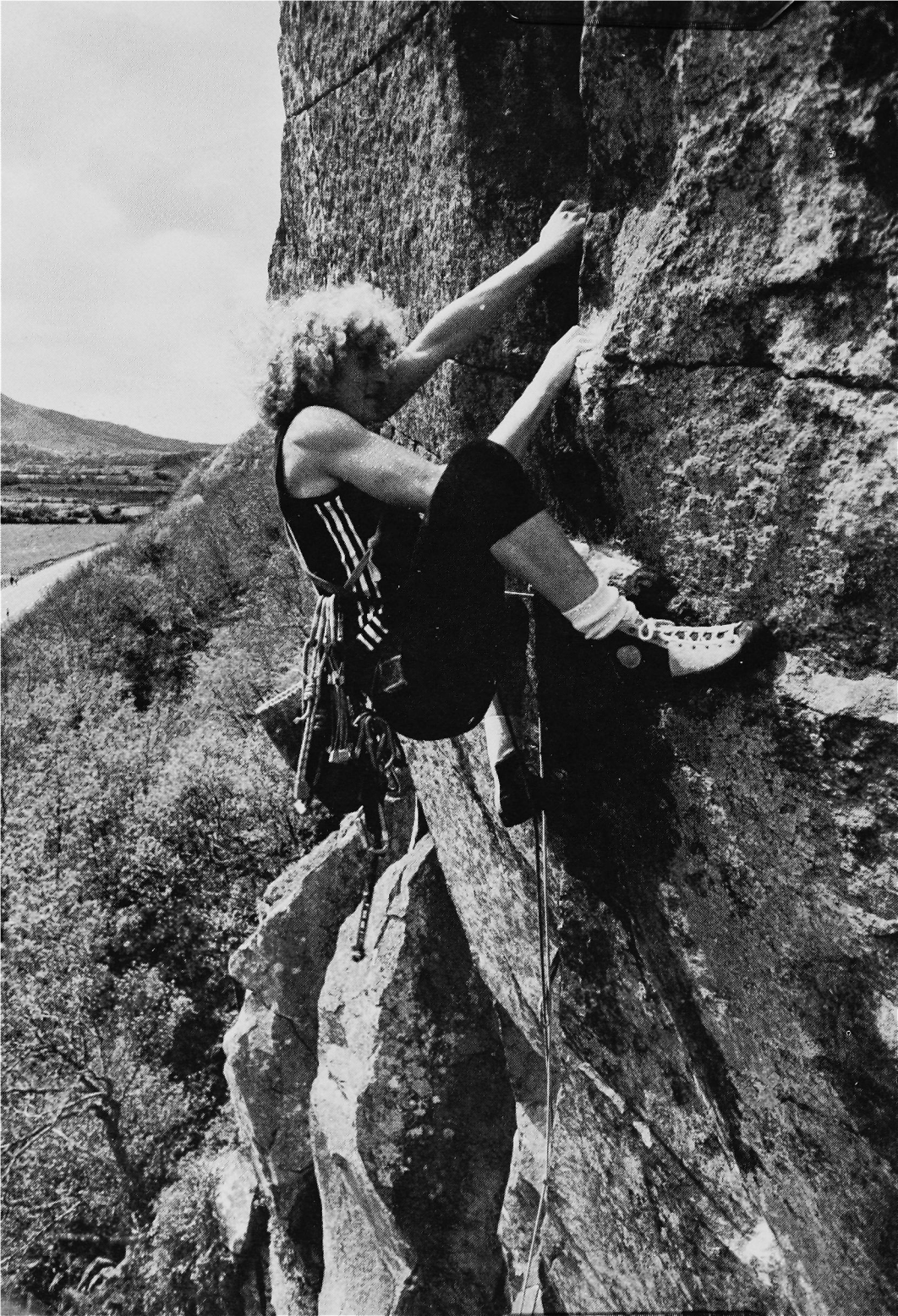
‘Rest, ye brave dead, ’midst the hills of your sires.  
Oh, who would not slumber when Freedom expires?  
Lonely and voiceless your halls must remain,  
The children of song may not breathe in the chain.’



SNOWDON







# REAL CLIMBERS DON'T

(With apologies to all Real Men)

DAVE HOPE

Real Climbers are a special breed of men. It takes a combination of the humour of Patey, the integrity of Mummery, the endurance of Buhl and the courage of Croucher to be a Real Climber.

To give you an idea, Joe Brown, Warren Harding, Jan Morris and Don Whillans are Real Climbers. Dennis Grey, Chris Bonington, Reinhold Messner and James Morris are not. Nobody's too sure about Gwen Moffat, Clint Eastwood or McNaught-Davies. Actually McNaught-Davies isn't too sure either. Everyone knows that he isn't. And everyone else knows that he is. The only thing that is certain is that we know that he knows that we know that he knows that no-one knows!

Real Climbers are intelligent. They always defer to mile-wide avalanches, five-day blizzards, eighty-foot seas, and lunatics wielding bolt compressors, Moskvich vans and chalk bags. Real Climbers sometimes say shit to all of these just before they die.

Real Climbers do have rules but climbing ethics are about as clear as the BMC constitution. The Real Climbers' Credo is:

'Never settle anything with words unless they are, "... and then I 'it 'im!" unless, of course, it's an argument with Whillans.'

Then Real Climbers just don't.

Real Climbers are Strong, Quiet Men. Real Climbers think. They never open their mouths or wallets without good reason such as eating or drinking. Real Climbers will always give you a straight answer of yes or no and never beat about the bush.

"Well, according to the latest reports from the upcoming Hunt Commission, at this present moment in time, the position as we see it, because of recently forthcoming evidence, leaves us with an interesting situation to be aware of and gives us reason to believe that negotiations are approaching a point of delicate balance (the crux, you might say), that may or may not be of importance to the successful outcome of the problem." A Real Climber calls this Bullshit.

Real Climbers are never ill. They just have recurrences of old war wounds, previous Himalayan bowel disorders, or hangovers. Hygiene is not so much

misunderstood as ignored. Real Climbers think that Herpes is another name for a ladies toilet. Likewise Real Climbers can sleep anywhere. Any bivouac finds him snoring soundly. He generally sleeps his soundest slumped over the pan after throwing up over the floor at an Annual Dinner. Real Climbers only go to Annual Dinners if they've been invited to speak. Afterwards they're expected to throw up over the floor so that anyone who invited them feels no obligation to ask him to sleep back at their place.

Real Climbers don't use chalk, Friends or descenders. What's wrong with a hefty pull from your leader, or a mild steel peg wellied in up to the hilt? Better still, a good solid coach-bolt has few equals. When anyone chops a bolt a Real Climber's trigger-finger itches until it's been replaced by another and backed up with five more. Real Climbers don't wear Calvin Klein Y-fronts. Real Climbers don't wear brown Y-fronts. They don't need to. They just call for their second to send up a man with guts! Failing that, Real Seconds rattle a bag of acid drops, offer a shoulder, or send up a sackful of chockstones.

Climbers who are all chalk and no traction are not Real Climbers. And a final word on the technical side—Real Climbers only use oxygen when cave diving for a little relaxation.

Real Climbers drive small beaten-up vans or old British motor-bikes. They crash them frequently. Occasionally they stop and have running battles with the kneecaps of huge motor-cycling giants.

Real Climbers prefer tents to huts. Real Climbers don't cook food. They eat cold beans or cold macaroni cheese straight from the tin with an old mild steel jam-spreader peg. Real Climbers don't allow the weather to upset them. They shrug off blizzards, hurricanes and heat-waves with supreme indifference. They're all one to him because he's in the pub. Real Climbers don't sing in pubs. They just talk quietly between arrows and consume vast amounts of ale to prove that they can keep cold macaroni cheese down. When Real Climbers get up at 3 a.m. for a pee they squelch unflinchingly through several square yards of regurgitated macaroni cheese lying outside the tent flap. Real Climbers don't throw up in pubs. They do it outside, preferably over the local panda car.

Real Climbers don't belong to organisations such as the BMC, the AC, the CC, or the Friends of the Earth. They do have fantasies about belonging to the original Creag Dhu!

Desmaison is a Real Climber but Rebuffat is a Ballerina.

Some Real Climbers have bits missing but it's not obligatory. Winthrop-Young was a Real Climber and so was Herzog. Norman Croucher is a Very Real Climber. Messner has spent so long over 8,000 metres that bits of his brain are missing. Unfortunately his writing is too sensitive and meaningful and thus disqualifies

him from Real Climber status. Real Climbers are characterised by their horror of such terms as meaningful, sensitive, relate to, elemental consciousness, etc. Michael Tobias writes Bullshit.

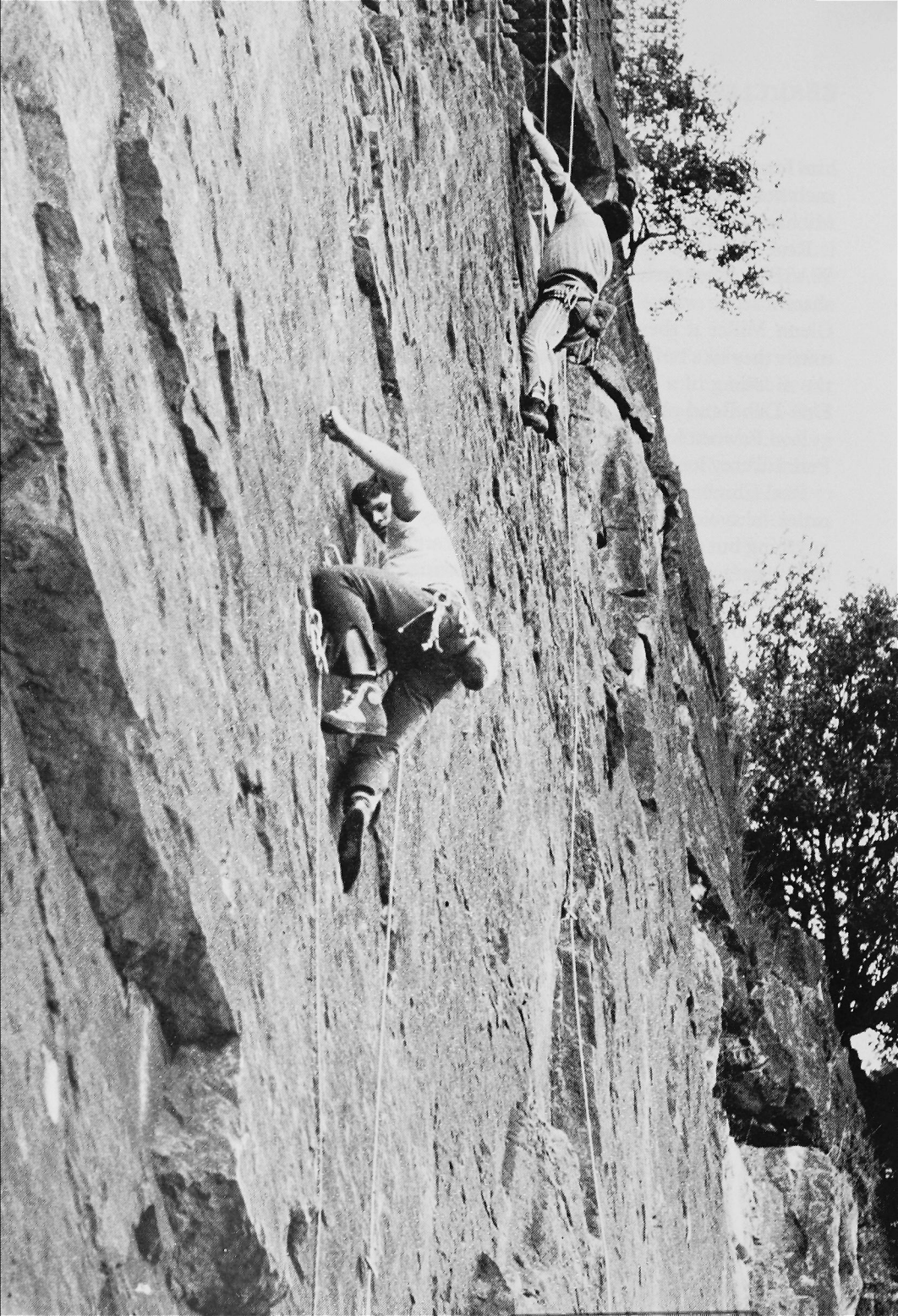
Real Climbers hate midges, farmers' dogs, seagull chicks and wasps (or WASP's). They do have a soft spot for Fulmar Petrels as long as they don't have to share a ledge with them. Real Climbers are not music lovers but will listen to Glenn Miller if they're in Cornwall. Real Climbers can't agree on the kind of music they like but do agree that there's nothing like the sound of crashing waves, the moaning of a nymphet/wind(?), and for Real Atmosphere, the Bonzo Dog Doo-Dah Band playing the Sound of Music.

Ron Fawcett look-alikes are not Real Climbers. Pete Livesey is a Real Climber. Pete Livesey look-alikes are REAL MEN. They have to be!

Real Climbers don't spend all year in the Himalayas, Alps, Patagonia, etc., in order to avoid paying income tax. If they're away that often they don't earn anything but our envy and Real Climbers are not enviable. They are reputed to be able to get to the Alps and back on £20 having spent £19.19s. 6d on a pair of boots?

Real Climbers don't read much but they do like to look at the pictures. That's why many of them mistakenly bought 'Portrait of a Mountaineer'. And even if they get as far as this line they're likely to check for the perforations so that recycling in the time-honoured fashion can take place. Besides, who needs to read when all you need to do is follow the dotted lines.





# SNOWDONIA ESSAYS

O.G. JACOBSON

*Last year Pete Faulkner of the Parnassus M.C. provided for his club journal an extract from an unpublished book written at the turn of the century by a little-known and seemingly much underrated mountaineer, Oscar George Jacobson. The text brings over the pioneering spirit to be found in many of the early climbers, and the audacity and boldness of one ascent in particular would put many a modern 'hard man' to shame. Pete Faulkner has, unknown to most of us, been researching the life of Jacobson for some years now and has headed the extract with some brief background notes on this remarkable Victorian mountaineer. These are taken from his forthcoming book, 'The Unknown Mountaineer—Oscar George Jacobson' which is shortly to be released by the publishers, Steineman Bros. I am particularly grateful to Ian Smith for drawing my attention to a piece of climbing history which has a great relevance for our own Club.*

Ed.

Oscar Jacobson was born in Aylesbury in 1860 and educated privately before winning a scholarship to Eton, and then to University College, London, where he read Physics and Classics. He went on to work as an engineer in his father's Railway Locomotive business, and was to become President of the Royal London College of Steam Engineers by the age of thirty-two. It was about this time that he was introduced to the mountains of Snowdonia by that individualistic climber, Oscar Johannes Ludwig Eckenstein. Until recently little has been known of their activities as they avoided the by now traditional gatherings at the Pen-y-Gwryd and Pen-y-Pass hotels. Jacobson's life was unfortunately cut short after only four years of climbing by a tragic accident whilst attempting a new route on the little visited Dinas-y-Gromlech. It is only through a collection of original manuscripts discovered two years ago in a house formerly belonging to one of his relatives that we have learnt of the unusually bold and generally unrecorded routes which he pioneered over those short years. The route described in this extract must rank as one, if not the, greatest feats ever undertaken. Closer investigations have indicated to me that despite many powerful attempts over several decades the original route taken by Jacobson and Eckenstein on the right of the Great Wall of Clogwyn du'r Arddu remains to this day unrepeatable. And so;

'It was late May of 1895 when by some fortuitous arrangement my friend and



colleague Mr. Oscar Eckenstein was appointed to Chair the Royal Commission on the proposed Cambrian Steam Railway to run from London to Holyhead. I was honoured shortly thereafter by a position on the committee and it was late June when we arrived at the Dolbadarn Hotel in Llanberis, which was to be our Welsh base for the surveying of the Railway construction. The situation could not have been more suitable for our task, and whereas by day we busied ourselves on the intricacies of inclines and embankments, the evenings were filled with the noxious smoke of Eckenstein's 'Rutters Mitcham Shag', and talk of future exploits in the mountains which surrounded us.

It was on an evening such as this that I was recalling to Eckenstein the words of the Reverend Mr. Bingley following his ascent of the mighty cliff of Clogwyn du'r Arddu in 1798 in pursuit of plant specimens; "On looking down, the precipice, for at least three hundred feet seemed almost perpendicular". I suggested that some excellent rock work might be afforded by such a place. Eckenstein was characteristically enthusiastic and we resolved to visit the place the following day to view the prospects.

We departed the hotel early in the morning carrying a small sack, a forty-foot Beale, and our trusty ice-packs. Two of those famous hampers of provisions which old Mrs. Williams had forced upon us when she heard of our intentions, were unceremoniously discarded after not half a mile of progress in order to reduce the weight upon our backs. The shoulder of Y Wyddfa was soon ascended and the black precipice lay ahead of us. From our vantage point it was all too clear why none had climbed at this place, the face was without weakness for its entire height and width save for a slanting rake, already the scene of the good cleric's dilemma.

Without a word spoken between us we hastened on to the base of the East Buttress. All was now revealed—the leftmost end receded without so much as a break to dizzying heights, whilst the rightward end, though of diminishing height, was seamed with the most inspiring and vertical cracks. In the centre of this was the jewel in the crown, a steep wall of some two hundred feet with not a weakness to be found. An inexplicable pull drew us to a point not one third of the way from the right flank of the Great Wall. Our gaze was drawn ever skyward, the rock was a calm sea rippled, but without a break as far as the eye could see.

Of the subsequent ascent I can recall but the briefest details, Eckenstein offered me the Beale and I gladly accepted. The first few feet went well though the verticalness of the place was no illusion and I proceeded upwards over smooth ground liberally provided with the most unsatisfactory of sloping holds. It was by far the most difficult and trying piece of climbing I had the misfortune to encounter, and after fairly forty feet I was able to draw to a rest on a foothold no

larger than the hoof of a horse. The situation hereabouts was perilous, there remaining no sign of a ledge or belaying pin where upon one might secure the second man's ascent. I beckoned to Eckenstein to follow immediately on, as the rope was at an end, which he did without delay. Our lives now depended one upon the other and I continued with renewed attention to the placing of hand and foot lest the smallest slip drag us to the screes below.

Aided by a slight zig-zagging crack an inch or so in width that supplied just sufficient lodgement for the toes, and a moderate grip for the fingertips, I was able to resume the ascent until after fully another twenty feet the holds disappeared entirely making a slight divergence absolutely necessary. Fortune shone upon us here as a small belaying pin allowed a threading of the rope behind it and I was able to assist Eckenstein who was struggling with a little problem piece below. Upon reaching me he loosened his stout leathern belt and slipped it over the diminutive spike thus attaching himself securely to the rock face. This technique we had put to good advantage some time before, and the vertical line of the rocks hereabouts made it an invaluable aid in assuring our continuance. It was by now clear to us that we had but little choice of route, we must of need continue. The situation was now of the utmost seriousness, indeed we were beyond our limits, no ascent like this had ever been put to the test before and we vowed never again.

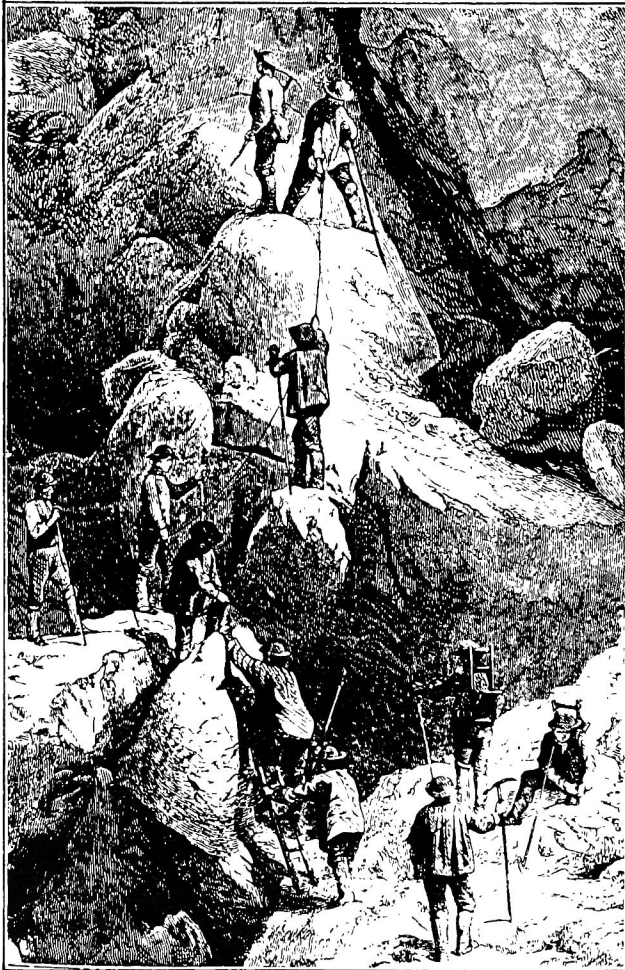
Above the belay pin the rock could be mounted with facility by aid of numerous holds of first rate quality, and we believed the curdling part to be over, though we were barely half-way to the summit of this tremendous face. Again the rock became smooth and the holds barely large enough for the fingers and sloping severely to our disadvantage. Yet there was just a sufficiency of grip for hand and foot, and not daring a glance to either side-I was able to proceed at a slow pace. Eckenstein grunted incessantly, unable to free a hand with which to rekindle his pipe lest he slip and pull us both to our deaths. So we continued for some eighty more feet, nowhere did the difficulties moderate, nor was there any hope of rest or escape, no welcoming chimney or crack, no belay pin upon which to drape our trusty Beale.

Just as I was about to whisper my last prayer I perceived a root of mountain heather at my hand and it was with no little sense of relief that I heaved onto a spacious green ledge. With a little assistance from the rope Eckenstein joined me and we sat awhile marvelling at our success, we had finished our appointed business.

It only remained for us to scramble up to the top of the terrace and descend to our sacks; the day being yet young we continued to Y Wyddfa's lofty summit where there remained a little of the winter's snows, thence to Pen-y-Pass where our post-chaise awaited us. We agreed secretly between us that none should hear

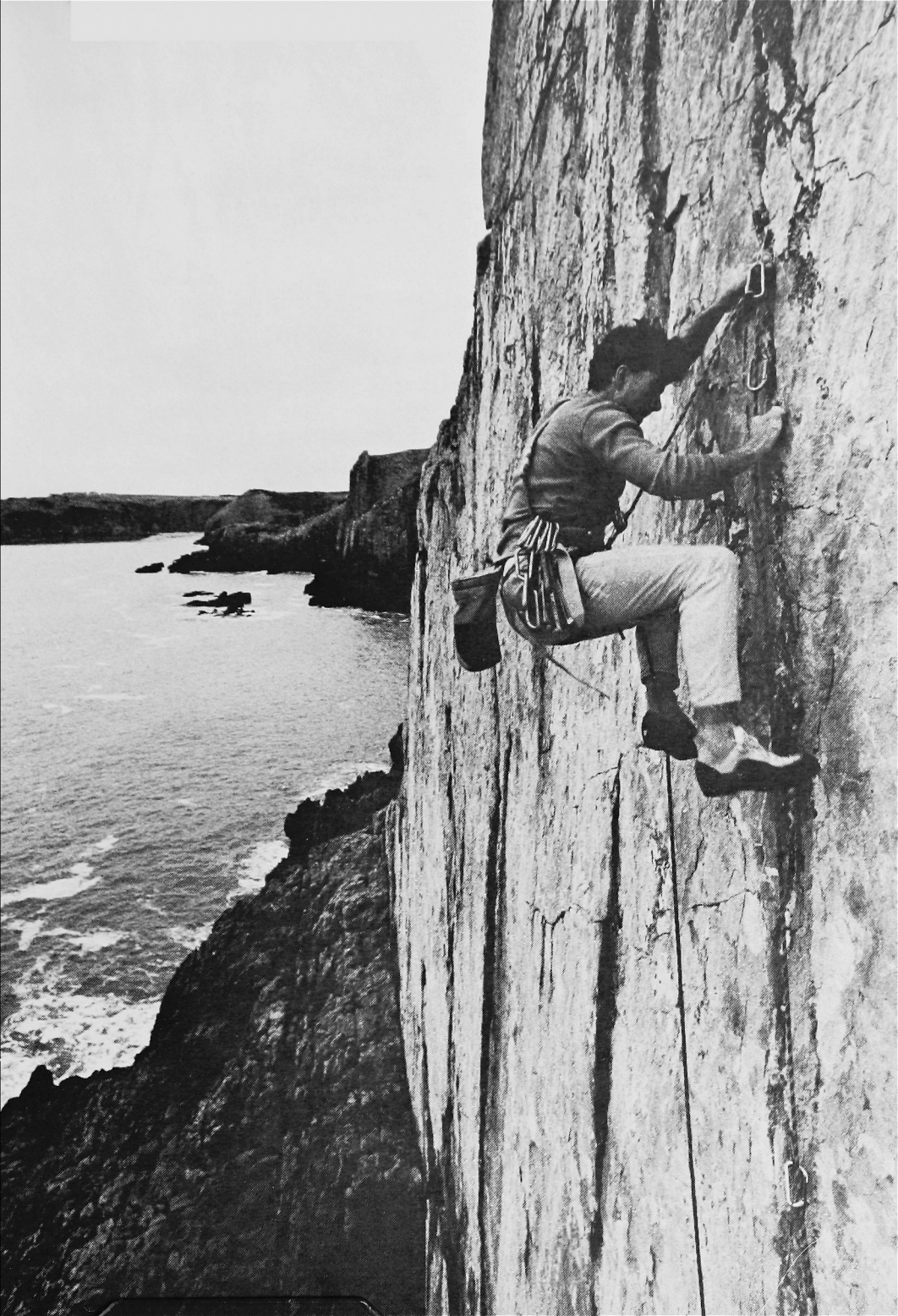
of our ascent, for if not met with disbelieving, it would bring our sanity into question. We have never climbed or seen climbed a piece like this since and it is our guarded opinion that this part of the Great Wall may have no further Masters for some years hence!’

Note: In the summer of 1983 a similar line has at last been done by a keen young climber called Jerry Moffatt. Ed.



*Kim Carrigan on White Heat, Pembroke.*

*Photo: Andy Brazier.*







# TWICE UPON A CLIMB

DAVE GREGORY

The freeing of once artificial routes is the ethic of our times and reports of aid eliminations are commonplace. Indeed, there must be fewer than enough of them left for the activists to stretch their tendons on. Those of us who used, come the winter rains, to drag a sack of rusty ironmongery from under the clutter at the end of the garage and spend daylight (and frequently evening dark) Saturdays taking the skin off our knuckles and trapping the fleshy part of our fingers between peg eyes and karabiners have less of a playground available than we once had. To add insult to injury the free routes replacing our winter metal roads are high in the algebra, even in summer.

There are exceptions, a few. In most of these I have no interest but one route, never fully artificial, does hold a certain interest. No, let it be admitted, a compelling interest. The original written descriptions of Sirplum admitted to five pegs, the folklore to eight and suspicion and optimism to more. I never got round to it while it was bristling with potential aid and slowly the little iron men obeyed the signs of the times and were not replaced when the piton beetle got them. I should have seized the opportunity while it was still an iron ladder, but time and ingenuity have brought a helpful range of other anti-gravity charms, more favoured by the ethical purists. To have been around so long and not to have done it is a pointing of the finger of suspicion-fear-cowardice—any one is criticism enough, but elements of them all are present. I have swung and twirled, knocked my knuckles and barked my shins on The Big Plum but that great looming prow blocks any view of the line of Sirplum rising across its other side. From further away on the railway track the general line of the rise can be seen but, as with many photographs, the precise line is not clear, and, the line found, where is the safe-walled groove, the break for the top? There is only one sure way to find out and I made up my mind.

An unforeseen difficulty arose. Of my range of acquaintance, some had already done it and were too busy collecting other stars to want to repeat it. Others would have liked to do it but could imagine their state of mind half-way across the traverse with gravity pulling at their arm muscles and the space below snarling at their ankles. Eventually I found a volunteer—who wanted to lead.

I was pointed, in my supporting role, at the bottom pitch and duly arrived at the

huge boulder on the horizontal break. Lashed to this I watched for aeons as the hero, who shall be nameless, worked his way over the bulge, up to the line of the rising traverse and out along it to the two grooves before the skyline arete. There, within sight of release, the fears plucking at him from below became too much and he worked his way back, move by move, retrieving all the gear until he lowered himself back to safety on the break.

Now there was no excuse. I had watched his progress up the traverse at close quarters and even with my short retention apology for a memory I now knew where it went.

Winter came and Christmas, and pudding, and pies, and avoirdupois, and the spring of '83 was vile and form was a long time coming, but slowly it came and I sneaked a look or two at Hard Rock and dropped insidious hints in my rope-mate's ear. He however, traitor, absconded to the south of France for a fortnight's supervision of a party of nubile sixth-formers. Even such treachery must not be allowed to deflect the intent once it has developed and a substitute had to be found. The traitor is six-foot some and sturdy with it. The substitute was keen to tick off Sirplum, five-foot two, half my age, half my weight and probably climbing at twice my standard. It seemed logical for her to lead the big pitch.

We fourgathered early in the layby. She, I and a dog apiece. The day was fine but overcast and humid. Clumping down the mud steps through the orchids to crunch along the ballast raised a hint of a warm sweat. The loom of buttress which dominates the view as soon as you leave the cutting reinforces it with a layer of cold. The scramble down the embankment and up the slope brought a rash of nettle stings, a sodden shirt and decisions. Shorts it would have to be—great, and chalk—ugh.

Once again I set off up the bottom wall. Over the initial section, awkward where the holds are covered by grass, and onto the steep white wall. Small but sufficient holds; solution pockets and cracks for protection, up to a peg below the final steepening. A couple of moves right and smaller holds lead to a long reach to a hidden hold, scalloped like a handbrake handle, for the pull over onto the break and that huge boulder anchor.

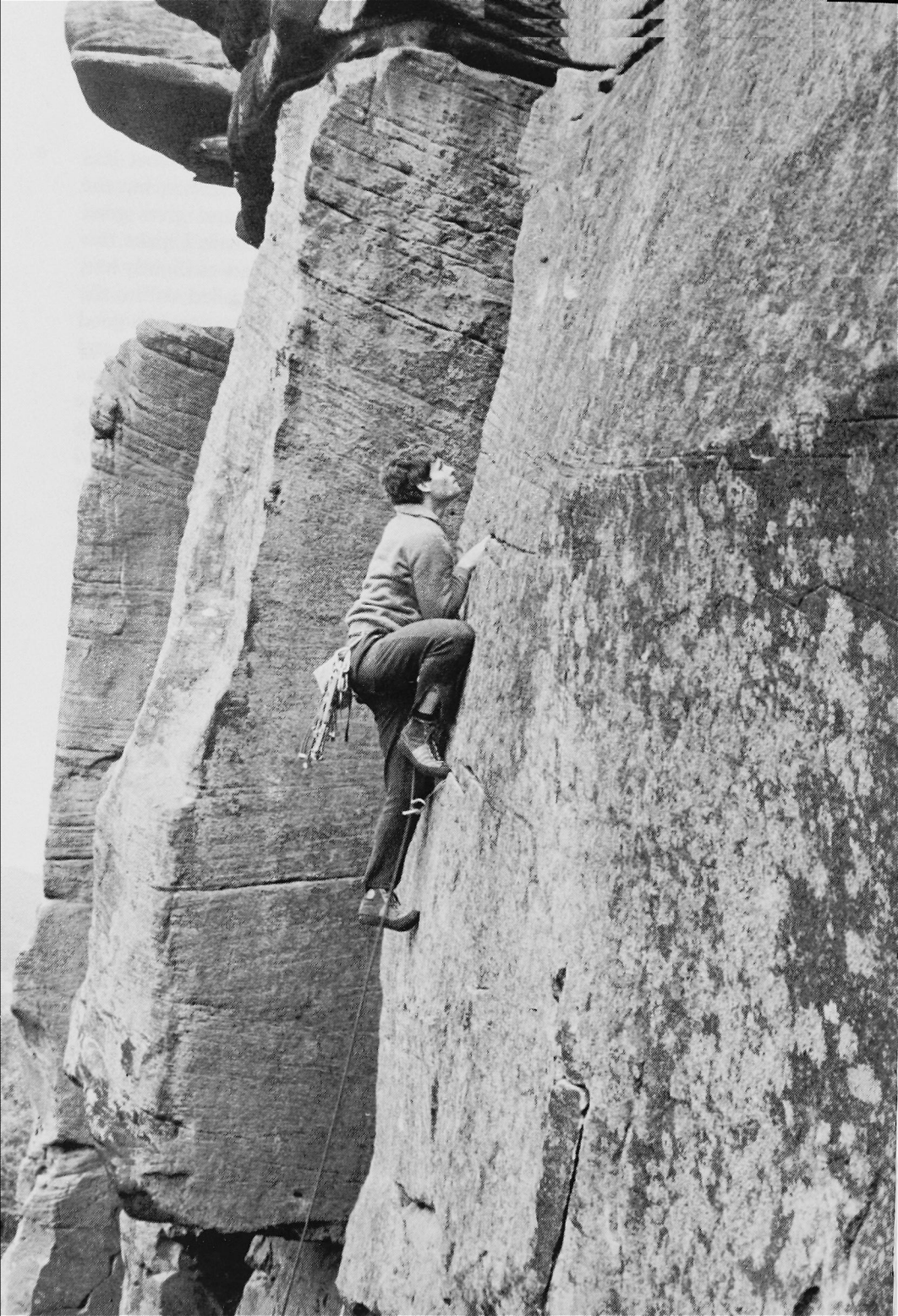
I have remembered the small Rock above the bulge and protected by this she half makes the move over the bulge to clip the other rope through the peg higher up. Down she comes to the break for the statutory rest, an arm shake and a dust of chalk. Pull holds under the bulge, the feet up high on push holds, two quick reaches and she is established above the bulge climbing easily up to the peg runner that marks the beginning of the traverse. She arranges two runners here, of different lengths, to keep the ropes tidy and sets off.

The first few feet are easy to the pedestal. Aplomb uses this as a belay stance and once, the legends say, a huge black flake was perched upon it before some lunatic



benefactor levered it into space. Even from my viewpoint I can see that it is seamed by cracks beside and below, and indeed it vibrates underfoot, but the crack which slices down its right-hand side rises upwards and gives good protection, and a tempting false line to follow. When I get there I make this mistake and have to reverse, in some trepidation, but herself moves slightly left, hitting the line straight off, laying away on flakes up the so-called slab to the horizontal break-line below a small overlap. Left along this she goes, on good holds, alternate runners on alternate ropes; parallel catenaries deepening and straightening as I pay out and she moves on to the huge thread. 'Embarrassing to the short sling brigade' maybe but I always carry a neck full of different calibre eight-foot lifelines, with knots like a matelot's test piece. She had refused the loan of these, waving in triumph a long stitched monster. With one arm threaded behind the closure she passes the tape through and clips the rope through it. The arm round the thread neck gives a rest of sorts but to the left and beyond the rock below foot level cuts under and the space you have lived with so far becomes a greater part of your range of vision. The handholds so far have been superb, the footholds sufficient. Now, on the rock which can be seen the latter seem smaller, or missing from where they should be. She moves left, still on good handholds and then, improbably, upwards before a move across and down to another peg runner on the right of the escape groove. To my surprise she moves beyond this and manages to get a rest, a legal, non-cheating rest, on a sort of straddle of a horizontal flake. She protects this rest with a Friend just above her. When I get there I doubt my ability to squeeze my bulk onto that micro-saddle and stop by the peg. The Friend is the last runner on the traverse and the rope through it makes a right angle, jerking at the stem with each upward move of the rope. It walks into the crack and I have trouble with it. My arms are pumping despite rests on the pedestal and embracing the thread. The heroine has made quick work of the groove but I remember the earlier hero's fear of it and succumb. I clip into a quick-draw loop on the peg and lean across to insert my sausage fingers painfully past the stem. I just get the tips past the trigger and before the fingers and thumb cramp in the hypodermic squeeze it jerks out and I swing back to hang from the peg, working my fingers and shivering my arms into life for the groove above. It is only vertical and once into it the handholds become footholds and it eases to the grass and the belay tree and the smiling leaderene.

We coil the ropes and use them as leg-guards as we move left and down the nettle slope to the track to the crag foot. We walk back along the railway track and sit awhile on the ballast eating wild strawberries. It is not often that I approach the matter of eating with less than my full attention but my mind is not completely on the fruit of *Fragaria vesca*. The buttress still fills the view and I gaze at it and ponder. If I asked her nicely, I wonder if she would take me up the Super Indirect?



# REFLECTIONS

BEN SMITH

I miss climbing—probably not the only Club Member in this category. It shouldn't be allowed, of course. We should all have to clock up our mandatory number of whatever turns us on within the sphere of mountain activities to prove our continued interest (and the fact that we're still alive). But I digress. This wasn't my theme at all. I didn't mean to imply that I had given it up, but merely that I missed it when not at it. It is not a consistent miss. It is spasmodic and frequently surges with the weather and the seasons, particularly in Spring and thus it could be likened to the proverbial sap. Neither is it a question of lapsed time since the last encounter. Sometimes a quick visit will sharpen the appetite such that an early return bout is demanded. Sometimes a long absence goes unnoticed until a sudden and almost violent desire to return to the foray asserts itself and demands early satisfaction. There is the annual jaunt at Easter to Scotland, of course, which acts as a distant safety valve through the long Winter. No-one knows what it will bring since it is obviously weather orientated, but we have been tremendously lucky in one way or another for the past three years, and much simple joy and satisfaction has been the outcome. Two years ago there was the stimulating blankness of the Etive Slabs, darkened room stuff for the likes of me. A year ago the sun shone and the snow froze at night, and many new places in and around Glencoe and on the Ben were visited. This year, the snow was there in a more unpleasant form but there were still new ventures (for me that is) like the Aonach Ridge—I knew I'd get round to it and around it some day! But again I am really digressing from my main theme. I am trying to examine why I miss it.

I confess I am not completely past the route-ticking stage. I am still after ALL the three star jobs within my capacity in the Welsh and Lakes non-definitive guides. This is a peculiar driving force, really. My achievements cannot lead to boasting, since they are within the capacity of most regular climbers. It's more a question of saying (even on the easier routes) "Yes, I remember that move, or this belay, or the dead sheep, or what have you". It's having been there which may not have been on a hard route, but nevertheless new ground (to me), and inevitably close to some harder routes anyway! I suppose one could call it acquiring experience. But that's not really why I miss climbing (or is it?).

And it's not just the actual act of climbing that I miss—of this I am certainly

sure. I envy those who talk of their joy in movement. Such joy usually comes to me only on easy routes. Most of the time I move with the greatest difficulty, gravity tugging at my heels as they say. I once said to a second or two that they should not climb like me given their strength and weight advantages, only to be told that I always made things look difficult! Hence, by inference, my warning was already taken for granted. This is really good for the morale!

Nor do I just miss the companionship. Naturally, I prefer to climb with some people to others, but all my strong climbing bonds are in the past. Now I'll climb with anybody providing they are willing and not stupid.

Sometimes I think it's genetics, not the geneticism that links us with the apes but of a more recent variety. One or two generations back my family were either good farm worker stock or coal miners, all very physical. Now, with what some would call progress, I am somewhat differently employed but physical effort, when made, usually produces a very satisfying experience! And the great outdoors, in any shape or form, always produces nostalgic reactions.

Really, I think, there is a very straightforward, if simplistic and generalistic answer, with psychological undertones. It's to do with the very nature of motivation. I like clear-cut tasks with short-term and achievable objectives, particularly if combined with energy expenditure. And climbing provides just that—no deeper analysis is necessary (in my case). There are other aspects of my leisure which offer similar conditions, which are equally enjoyed, but the contrast between this and much of my working life has been so marked. Does it really matter and who the hell cares? No and nobody is the answer to that, but this kind of introspection helps keep the grey matter from congealing.

## SNIPPETS

'Dennis said there was to be a feature by Gill Fawcett in the next issue of She.'

'M Hutchinson reported that access problems had recently been encountered at Smurf Zawn, Gogarth. Climbers have had heated encounters on the cliff top with a blacksmith who claims that it is his land and that they cannot climb. D Cuthbertson agreed to see if he could find out who this character is . . .'

'Leeds Climbing Wall has also had access problems. It appears that climbers must have a "porter"(!?) at a cost of £10 per night.'

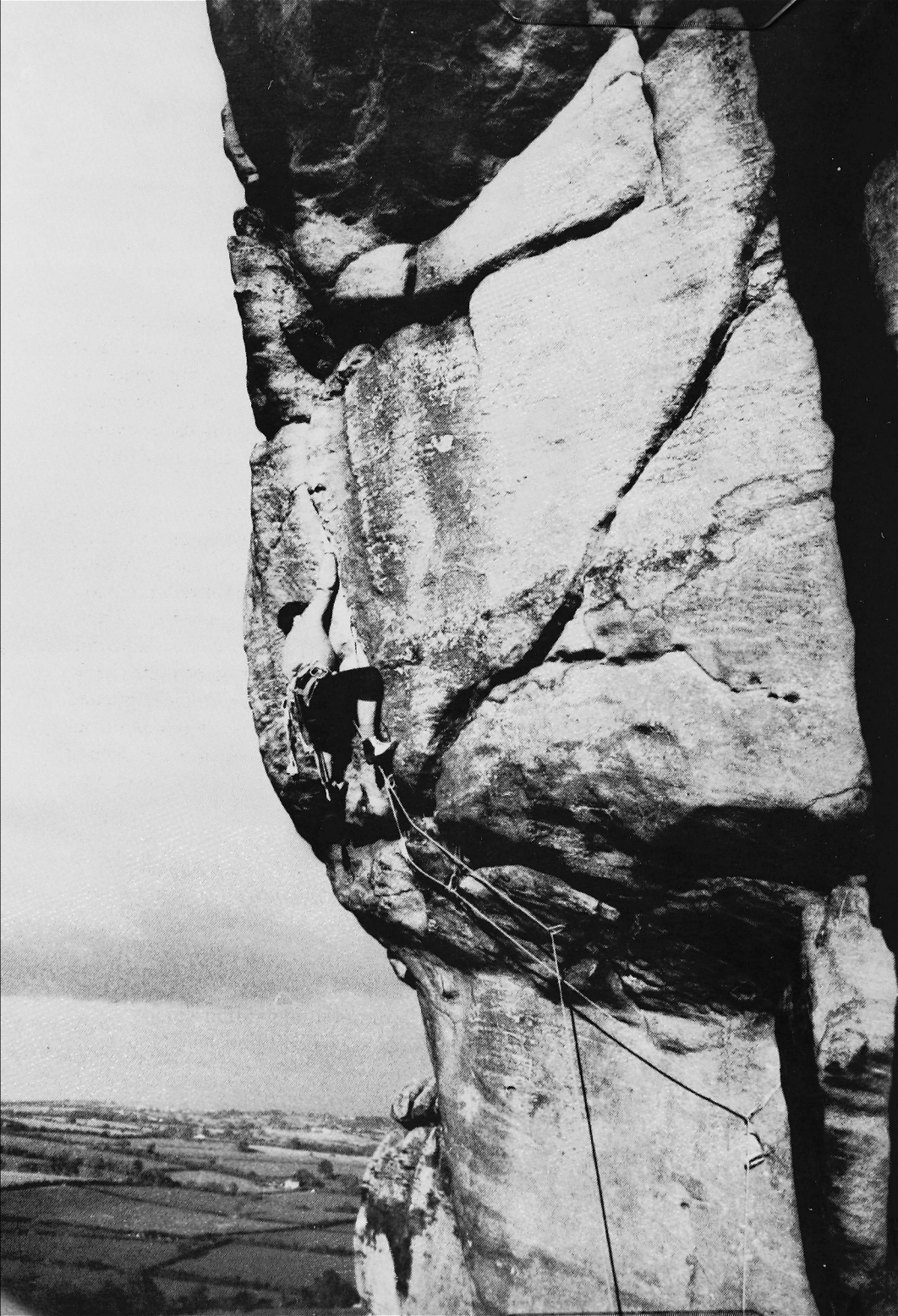
'Andy Barker hasn't a long enough rope to be able to do the Froggatt section of the guide.'

'Mike Browell is too busy—writing Fairy Stories for Climber and Rambler.'

'He fell off and left his tools behind. "What has he got two?"'







# A BOY'S BORROWDALE

JOHN HULTON WOLFENDON

The smell of crushed yarrow will never be used by perfumers, but for me it has a special magic. One whiff of this plant, which is common in northern New England, takes me across three thousand miles and over sixty years to Borrowdale, and the journey ends at a particular twist in the road up the valley between Rosthwaite Vicarage and the bridge over Coomb Ghyll Beck. It evokes joyful memories of the holidays of childhood and youth which still trail clouds of glory for me already past the Biblical span.

It would be hard perhaps to concoct a yearly routine more likely to sensitise a boy to summer holidays in Borrowdale than an intervening eleven months among the cotton mills of south-east Lancashire. There were also a good many visits at Whitsuntide to a splendid hill farm near Pooley Bridge, but this always seemed a little too blandly rural compared with what I always think of as 'the valley'. There were inevitable nostalgic moments in every Ullswater holiday when I would climb high enough on Moor Divock to see the romantic silhouette of Blencathra visible from many of the Borrowdale fells. The August holiday in Borrowdale happened without a break from the age of four months to twenty-one years; there was also an occasional mid-term weekend with my father that always seemed like a piece of fantastic good fortune even though it once consisted of three days of rain unbroken—at least during our waking hours.

When I was very young, the approach was always by horse-drawn coach from Keswick with 'lightning Willie' Askew of Grange often holding the reins. It was a family tradition that a little rain always fell when going through the 'Jaws'; this particular shower at this particular place was regarded as a ritualistic precipitation and entirely propitious. After I was about ten, the approach was always on foot from Grasmere through Far Easdale with its lovely loneliness and over Greenup Edge. This involved half an hour within the Thirlmere watershed and this reminder of Manchester lent spice to the gradual descent into 'the valley' that immediately followed it. Even the beginning of this annual journey had its magic in the unsuitable but glorious white of the passenger coaches of the LNWR. At least one Manchester Grammar School boy used occasionally to modify his urban wanderings after lunch so as to permit a glimpse of that enchanting rolling stock.

Our summer home was Chapel Field, a small farm just by the Stonethwaite-Longthwaite intersection and Mrs. May's shop which provided the mint



humbugs from Carlisle so indispensable for fell-walking. Chapel Field belonged to Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Cannon at that time, and we held them both in deep affection. The accommodation was simple but perfect. A tiny sitting-room provided a few books and some old copies of the Windsor and Strand magazines that I read many times over while my father indulged his curious Borrowdale pastime of working his examples in Forsyth's 'Differential Equations'. The small bedrooms had beds that would be thought inexcusably soft by modern standards; a basin-and-ewer were provided for washing with a small metal container of hot water outside the door every morning. The earth closet at the far end of the garden was reached by a pebble path running along a stone wall sheltering that most fragrant honeysuckle I have ever known. The Cannons usually had two cows and made their own butter, selling a little to neighbours; I was sometimes allowed to see the traditional churn in operation but never to turn the handle, a saddening commentary on either my strength or my dependability. On two memorable occasions, however, I was allowed to drive the cows back from their pasture beyond Stonethwaite at the milking time. It was a family tradition that Mrs. Cannon once asked my father, "Do you really have a moon in Failsworth too?"

We went to Borrowdale for fell and valley walking and, although heavy and persistent rain might influence our daily itinerary, it rarely prevented an excursion with packed lunch from which it was almost dishonourable to return to dry clothes before four o'clock in the afternoon. The sandwiches were washed down by hot tea made from water boiled in a curious water heater fuelled by cakes seemingly made up of wood chips and naphthalene; occasionally if my mother, the tea-cook, decided to stay in the valley, and if the weather was hot and dry, tea was sometimes replaced by stone ginger in its traditional containers. I shall never forget the discovery at the summit cairn of Dale Head that the ginger beer (not ale) had all leaked into my father's rucksack. The outside of the rucksack gave no indication of the disaster, which for my father showed the superb quality of his Dernbought rucksack and more than compensated for the loss of liquid on a hot thirsty afternoon. Such afternoons were rare; we always carried raincoats and, like Swiss cowherds, umbrellas; these were intended to delay rather than to prevent the phase of being 'wet through'.

The most popular target for a day of truly drenching weather was the upper reaches of Stanley (or Stanger) Ghyll, southeast of Stonethwaite; nearly a third of the way was under trees and more importantly there was a convenient becksides for lunch that was similarly sheltered. To help us cope with unforeseen rain, on the other hand, there was a gradually accumulated repertoire of unused barns and unusually rain-resistant clumps of trees; in rain driven by high winds, even some sheepfolds were worth remembering. My father's range of conversation was more

than adequate to forestall boredom on such occasions; the 'spelling game' (aliter 'ghosts') was more likely to be used to ease the last foot-weary hour of an unusually long day.

When I got to my early teens, I was allowed to do a fair amount of fell-walking on my own. I greatly relished a type of excursion to which I must surely have been introduced by my father; it consisted of scrambling up the steeper anonymous ghylls that furrow nearly every fellside in the valley. The more interesting of these rarely disclosed their presence except towards the end of a very heavy rain when 'the backs were out', and their positions were carefully noted for future reference. Such an ascent was more interesting than any path; it might involve very short pitches of kindergarten rock-climbing, and thirst-quenching was no problem. If ghyll-climbing had some remote echo of mountaineering in it, another of my favourite pastimes had none. This consisted of wandering, preferably on a sunny day, across the hummocky tops between one and two thousand feet high with which the fells around Borrowdale seem especially richly endowed. Glaramara and the territory between Blea Tarn and Ashness, for example, provide great stretches of this tranquil yet fascinating mixture of bog, miniature rocky eminences, bracken and heather. Nearly every 'lilliputian basin and hummock beckoned for closer inspection, and one's rate of progress was unlikely to exceed a couple of miles an hour and would often be less. It was here rather than on the high summits that I found 'the peace that is among the lonely hills'.

The lakeland climate is such that one was rarely more than a few hundred yards from a beck to supply tea-water, and most lunch halts were leisurely enough to allow the construction of one or two water-wheels from the stalks of mature bracken. Their manufacture and their shrewd siting in water flow of the appropriate velocity became something of a family craft. It was not unusual to find a water-wheel still spinning merrily the following day and even several days later, provided no really heavy rainfall had intervened.

One of the subtle but profound differences between New England and Old England is the rate of change of rural landscape. The growth of trees and shrubs is so fast in New Hampshire, for example, that ungrazed pasture may be filled with self-seeded pines a dozen feet high within fifteen years or so. A splendid panorama can be eclipsed by trees in a period astonishingly brief to an Englishman. In this regard the Lake District is much more fortunate. Apart from the widening and straightening of roads and the less grievous effects of the much intenser use of footpaths, most of Borrowdale seems to the jealous eyes of the writer unchanged. There has been some cyclic change. The toll road from Seatoller built by the Honister slate company somewhere around 1912 for a long time absorbed all wheeled traffic over the pass and turned the steep stretch along Hause Ghyll into a

pedestrian paradise. Now—and indeed for a good many years past—that revolutionary toll road is grass-grown and almost forgotten.

My home in factory Lancashire made me apprehensive even as a boy about the invasion of Borrowdale by industry; one of my few recurrent nightmares of boyhood was simple, short, and devastating: turning the corner into upper Langstrath, I beheld a cotton mill! Curiously enough, the only startling intrusion of technology into the valley during my waking hours occurred in the same branch of the valley many years later; I was descending from Glaramara into Langstrath and suddenly saw, trapped in a minor ghyll about a mile away, a huge silvery balloon, fugitive from the Glasgow barrage.

Arithmetic suggests that less than a year of youth and less than eighteen months of my more than seventy years have been spent in Borrowdale. Without reason, but beyond all doubt, I think of the valley as 'home'. An almost forgotten detail of fifty years ago supports this; on the first of many visits to the United States I felt homesick for a period. I find it hard to believe in retrospect, but it is beyond denial that my self-prescribed therapy was a year's subscription to the Mid-Cumberland and North Westmoreland Herald.

In the same sense Borrowdale must be home to a great many people. Let us hope that the valley and the Lake District will always have enough vigilant and determined friends to ensure that the lives of future generations will be enriched by this sort of homesickness.

*Note: The writer, John Hulton Wolfendon was the first Hon. Sec. of the Irvine Travel Fund when a don at Exeter College, Oxford. In the late 30s he moved to the USA and took a chair in Physics. He contributed to the CCJ an amusing account of the Alpine Meet Herbert Carr ran in the Val de Bagnes. The article is called 'A Counterblast to the Perpendicular'. Ed.*



# THE LEADER

DON ROSCOE

The next few moves were obvious, uninviting and crucial, retreat was out of the question and horizontal progress offered no easy solution. Not an unfamiliar situation to most leaders perhaps, but for me, then a ten year old schoolboy, it was the first time. Sounds of people playing on the beach below and out of sight of the little zawn drifted up but barely impinged on my consciousness. They seemed to emanate from another, more remote world. The reality of my world had become narrowed to a few feet of rock (If it could be described as such) upon which I was alone, unable to move up or down and not a little gripped.

This was the endless summer of youth which remembers no rainy days and I was spending a holiday on the Isle of Man. Even at this age the joys of the beach held little interest for me, but this particular beach, whereon my grandmother was comfortably esconced in her deck-chair, held other attractions. It was backed by a line of low cliffs which promised untold delights to a small boy whose imagination and desire had been stirred by the odd photograph of a rock climber clad impressively in nailed boots and tweeds with a hemp rope accentuating his airy pose. This was it! Now I could have a go.

And so it was that I came, after satisfactory preliminary forays on the smaller crags, to the little zawn. It was deeply cut back into the cliff and had a dark and mysterious atmosphere which both excited and repelled me at the same time. Once inside I found myself in a world of steep, grey rock streaked here and there with bird droppings and other remains of the nesting sites of the gulls. I don't know how high the cliff was, I suppose that it was no more than about thirty feet, but in my memory it looms immense, rearing up to the patch of blue, summer sky which marked the rim.

Could it be climbed? It looked as though it might be possible; I could see a line of cracks, little corners and ledges leading invitingly upward. With a surge of excitement I swung up onto the first ledge and began the ascent. I was clad, appropriately enough, in what would today be regarded as the best gear for the job—a pair of shorts. Alas no chalk bag and on my feet a pair of gym shoes. I still thank my lucky stars that flip-flops were not in fashion in those days. At first all went well and I made rapid progress to a point some ten feet from the top where I came to the impasse. The good, sound rock suddenly changed, in the way sea

cliffs do, to a very steep bank of mud into which were embedded a number of pebbles. I tested one of these and it gave way, cascading to the bed of the zawn in a little cloud of dust forcibly reminding me of my somewhat precarious position.

Ten minutes later I was still there. A growing dread was gnawing at my stomach. A tentative attempt to reverse had convinced me that this was out as I couldn't see what I had used to get up. Sideways movement was limited and still left me below the mud. I leaned my head against the surface and felt sorry for myself. I was hot, dirty, a little scratched and could feel the sweat running down my face. The top was so near, if only I could just move up a little. I studied the mud bank more closely, testing and discarding pebbles until I thought that I had located a few which would bear my weight. Slowly, keeping my weight as well distributed as I could, I eased upwards. Really frightened now I hardly dared to breathe. Another move and the tufts of grass were invitingly within reach. The urge to grab was strong but instinctively I seemed to know that this could spell disaster. A careful reach and my fingers were curled into the vegetation and then I was on top gasping with relief.

I lay there in the grass for a few minutes recovering my composure and reliving the events of the last half hour. They remain as vivid now as they did then nearly forty years ago. Perhaps this accounts for my marked aversion to climbs with loose finishes (It would doubtless emerge on the psychiatrist's couch). As I lay there I suddenly felt for the first of many times that bubbling surge of joy rising within me at the successful solution to a problem which had appeared to offer nought but a literally crushing defeat. I got to my feet and ran down to that other, more prosaic world with the wild joy still strong within me. I knew that there would be other times.







# GEMS FROM THE JOURNALS

TONY HUSBANDS

'Late one evening, soon after the receipts, from the Hon. Editor, of a letter couched, as usual, in bullying and abusive terms, I was turning the pages of a recent mountaineering publication in search of inspiration.' So commenced an article in the 1931 Journal, which, needless to say, was not edited by Geoff Milburn who merely had the following note inserted in the August Newsletter:— 'Disregard this notice if you don't want a 1982 Journal as so far I have received four articles.' Nevertheless a fine Journal of 160 pages (Don't forget the 52 pages of photos! Ed.) duly arrived in December and it included a page giving details of all the Journals in the New Series.

When I wrote to the Editor to congratulate him on the latest Journal I mentioned that I was short of the eight volumes from 1926-1938 and was having much difficulty in trying to obtain them. My surprise and pleasure can be imagined when four volumes arrived almost by return of post from Geoff—and in the Christmas mail rush too!

In spite of two articles having been cut out the 1926 Journal was most interesting and in his Foreward the Editor wrote . . . 'We have made one innovation which may occasion some surprise, but which will, we hope, be favourably received. We have not scrupled to borrow from the past and to print again that which has been printed before. We have resorted to the *réchauffé*, not because we have been unable to gather enough new material, but because we believe that there are articles entombed in the back numbers of our Journal which deserve the glory of a present resurrection. Few of our new members will have read them, and many of our old members may be glad to have their memories refreshed . . .' It occurred to me that if that was true then it would be equally so some 56 years later and I hope some of the following extracts may be of interest.

The second article in the 1926 Journal, by Owen Glynne Jones, entitled 'English Climbing: Considered mainly from an Alpine Standpoint' was reprinted from Volume 1, No. 2, 1898. This caused me to look for an obituary of O.G. Jones but the first 'In Memorium' only appears in 1926 and extraordinary as it may seem there is nothing at all about George Leigh Mallory.

By a strange coincidence there is an article in the December 1982 edition of the Carthusian, by Harold Hanbury an Old Boy (in both senses of the word!) of 83

now living in South Africa, of which the last paragraph runs as follows:— ‘If Tressler (A.W. Tressler, one of the Masters) could be described as a deviation from the normal type of schoolmaster (assuming that there is such a thing!) a *fortini* so was George Mallory, whom Fletcher (Sir Frank Fletcher, the Headmaster) viewed with complete approval. He was a man of great charm and very good looks. He had an equally charming wife with equally good looks. I cannot remember whether he was even a form master—my memory is hazy on this point, but I believe that Fletcher gave him a kind of roving commission to teach the boys the joys of good literature—and how to get the best out of them. He embarked on several ventures, one being a play-reading society, which was most popular. He served with distinction in the First War, returning to the school at the end of it. But he was soon ‘off again’ on the Everest reconnaissance and before the 1924 Expedition he and his team came to Oxford to be put through the ‘low pressure chamber’ and to receive their supply of oxygen from Georges Dreyer, then Professor of Pathology. Alas, he did not return (from the expedition).

Of course everyone knows that Jones was killed on the Dent Blanche and I had thought it was during the first attempt on the Ferpècle Arete but the first ascent of this route was made by W. Gröbli and Alois Pollinger on July 29, 1889 whereas the accident happened on August 28, 1899 and the account of it by the sole survivor, F.W. Hill (who was a C.C. member until just before the First World War).

Furrer, standing on an ice axe steadied by Zurbriggen and Jones, got what he evidently thought were two good hand holds. He was mistaken, for when he tried to swing himself up on them, his hands slipped, and he fell backwards on Zurbriggen and Jones, knocking both down. They slid down the awful rock face, the rope slowly uncoiling between them and Vuignier. This doesn’t seem to put Vuignier in a very favourable light. Fortunately for Hill the rope broke, or ‘burst’ as W.M. Crook, who saw it, described it.

Crook (who wrote the article) continues ‘Then began a struggle for life carried to a successful issue with a courage, coolness and an amount of physical endurance unparalleled, so far as my knowledge goes, in the history of mountaineering’.

If this seems a little flowery now, the fact is that Hill, having just seen his four companions killed, had to climb solo to the summit of the Dent Blanche and then descend to Zermatt to raise the alarm as the Rossier hut was not then in existence. On reaching the lowest gendarme on the ordinary route he had to seek shelter in a hole in the rock from a storm which lasted 22 hours. When it eased the next day he continued his descent (having had nothing to eat or drink of course) with difficulty but not knowing his way down the Wandfluh it took him a long time and he had to pass another night in the open, finally reaching Zermatt about fifty

hours after the accident.

While looking for the above I found in the June, 1899 publication an account of an ascent of the Napes Needle, which attracted my attention as Ivan Waller and I were once asked to climb it by a photographer. The post cards are still selling well in the Lake District but unfortunately we do not get any royalties! The following extract is rather amusing:—

‘There was nothing for it but to get wet. No one can climb in a waterproof, even though it be only a cape, and as for any other protection against such weather, you might as well—as the late lamented James Payn says in his facetious account of a Lake District expedition—offer mackintoshes to a family of otters! Somewhere up above was the Needle, but whether I had passed the place or not I could not tell. So I esconced myself in a sort of cave amongst some huge boulders to consider the plan of campaign, with the aid of a quiet pipe, and had almost given it up as a bad job and made up my mind to return, when I heard voices through the mist. I shouted, “Is the Needle up there?” “Yes, we are on it” was the answer. I had been sitting all the time at its very base’.

There is an In Memoriam of G.B. Bryant, the first Hon. Sec. of the C.C. and apparently a man who knew how to get things done. Not for him, as an early member observed, was it a case of Bryant and May—it was a case of Bryant and Must. The first article in Vol. 1, No. 1 is an article by Bryant entitled ‘Some Account of the Formation of the Club’. It includes a copy of the first circular sent out on 25th March 1898, the sixth paragraph of which runs as follows:— ‘The Annual Subscription will be half-a-guinea, and there will be an entrance fee of the same amount after the first hundred members are elected’.

However the response exceeded expectations. Exactly two hundred applications for membership had been received by the day of the first general meeting, and although this was double the number intended to be admitted without entrance fee, there was no other course, either desirable or possible, but to welcome the whole two hundred as original members of the Club. Bearing in mind that membership of the A.C. at that time amounted to about 570, this was remarkably good going.

Reverting to the 1926 Journal; five books were reviewed, the first ‘Die Eroberung der Alpen (The Blue Ribbon of the Alps)’ by W. Lehner at some length—nearly ten pages—by Arnold Lunn, the penultimate paragraph of which commences, ‘There still remain some classic problems. There is, for instance, the south face of the Eiger, a climb that certainly will be attempted this summer.’ Lunn also writes, ‘Since the war the English have not had their fair share of new climbs. Messrs. Oliver and Courtauld, with Swiss guides, made a magnificent

new climb on Mont Blanc. Finch found a guideless climb of great daring up the north face of the Dent d'Hérens, but even here the Germans went one better and climbed direct the face across which Finch had skirted' (the Welzenbach route). 'Curiously enough a few pages later we read M.S. Gotch's review of Finch's book 'The Making of a Mountaineer' in which he says 'Amongst a host of great achievements one in particular appeals most vividly to the imagination. This is the first ascent of the Dent d'Hérens by the North Face, and Mr. Finch's account is a tale well worthy of comparison with Mr. Whymper's never-to-be-forgotten epic of the first ascent of the Matterhorn'. *Sic transit gloria*.

As far as the 1928 Journal is concerned I must admit that I did not find very much of interest and it was the only one edited by Malcolm Pearson. Perhaps he was not so bullying and abusive as Carr, although I must say I have never thought of Herbert in this manner! There is however an In Memoriam of Charles Marshall, the first custodian of Helyg, who died in Chester infirmary six days after sustaining injuries from falling off a new climb he was attempting on Helsby. And in the In Memoriam of Raymond Bicknell reference is made to how on one occasion in Norway, he cut steps in ice continuously for nine hours—a feat which can rarely have been equalled in the annals of amateur mountaineering and in view of the technique of front pointing now used, probably never likely to be surpassed.

There is also a note about the Helyg garage. The nearest shelter was half a mile away at Gwern-y-gof-Isaf farm with room for one medium-sized car. Marshall, with his usual energy, set to work to remedy this defect. No ordinary shed, however, would satisfy him and Club funds being low he was on the point of suggesting to the Hon. Treasurer that he should borrow the necessary capital from the members. (The ton-up-club was not thought about until much later!) Fortunately for all of us, the Liverpool dinner was held in January 1927 and when W.E. Corbett, one of the original members heard about it he said, "Do you really want a garage? If so, you can go ahead at my expense. I do not want to hear any more about it until it is finished." Evidently members were concerned to take much greater care of their cars in those days but nevertheless, and in view of Corbett's generosity, it does seem a pity that the garage is in such a poor state now, with what appears to be a stream running through it every time it rains—a not infrequent occurrence in that area.\*

Mention of the Liverpool dinner reminds me that for many years there was a Northern Dinner, usually in Chester in May, after which many members motored on to Helyg to spend the rest of the week-end.

On opening the 1930 Journal the first thing to catch our eye on the contents page is a corrigendum—for I.M. Walker read I.M. Waller, who was with Colin

Kirkus and Marco Pallis on the first ascent of Mickledore Grooves on May 24, 1930 and there is a description of the route on page 152. Jumping ahead to the next Journal there are descriptions of The Great Slab on Cloggy, Lot's Wife and Pinnacle Wall—all first ascents by Colin Kirkus, the last being solo.

The 1930 Journal is, however, notable for an essay by Arnold Lunn entitled 'The Religion of a Mountaineer' which is of the highest class and whereas I would not wish to belittle the efforts of those in general who contribute to the Journal I think that in another fifty years time, round about 2030, Lunn's essay could well be read with interest by anyone who happened to come across it whereas I am doubtful if the same could be said of items in the present Journals. (Exit the present Editor in high dudgeon to don sack-cloth and ashes . . . and there will be much weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth. Ed.)

There is also a story entitled 'The Princess and the Glass Mountain' by E.F. Bozman which, although only two pages long, is worthy of a reprint, particularly at the present time.

In the 1931 Journal I very much enjoyed an item entitled 'A Fool on the Grepon' by 'B', who was on his first visit to the Alps and, having just arrived at Chamonix, after sitting all night in the train, met some other members of the C.C. who suggested he join them next day as they were going to do the Peigne. On reflection they thought it would be rather a long walk to the Peigne, so what about the Charmoz? However as it turned out to be a nice day it seemed a pity not to do the Grépon. B, who was climbing in tricounis, as I suppose they all were, had some difficulty with the Rateau de Chevres:— ' . . . Nothing to hold except the edge of the crack, and though parts of that slope less than others, it all slopes. Wedge, wriggle, slither; net gain, minus six inches. Wedge, wriggle, lurch—Lord, I was nearly off that time. Jam, wriggle, fingers clutch a bit of the edge that seems a little flatter than most, brace yourself up, convulsive heave—and the world turned bright orange and spun round unexpectedly, and I found myself dangling on the end of the rope over nothing in particular. Probably there was a fine view to be had looking downwards but I was in no state to admire it. "I have come off," I announced. "Thought you must have," said a polite voice above. B had some more excitement as they realised on top of the Grand Diable that, as they had not set out to climb the Grepon, they had not brought a long rope and they could not see if the end was low enough down to complete the abseil. B was sent down first to investigate, but luckily all was well.

B continues:— 'Soon we were nearing the top and I heard the leader's cheerful voice saying, "Here's another crack to climb. Tell B about it!" I groaned. It was the Venetz crack, which is splayed out at the bottom making it very awkward to start. I did not see the leader do it. No doubt he took it, like everything else, in his

stride. Number two was not proud; he proposed to take a shoulder. "You might come and kneel down here," he said. I edged along the ledge to the bottom of the crack and did so. He knelt on my shoulders. Then he said, "You might stand up now." I did. This is chiefly of interest as illustrating that great philosophic principle that, if you have to, you can.

How I was going to climb it, I could not imagine. The Mummery Crack had left me with no strength for the slanting crack, and this one, though short, looked harder than either of them. I asked if they thought they could haul me up like a sack. "Well . . ." said a voice above. "You can use the rope as a handhold if you like." I didn't feel that was going to solve the problem. Climbing a thin rope with the hands only has never been an exercise at which I fancied myself. But there seemed nothing else to hold on to and I felt desperate. I took hold of the rope . . . Certainly it gave an amazingly satisfying grip compared with the edge of that foul little slanting cleft. Suddenly, to my surprise, I found myself going up the rope like a perfect Tarzan for five or six feet, when finding a large handhold, I transferred myself to it and finished the climb in slightly better style.

So much for these four Journals. In conclusion if anyone can find copies for 1934, 1937 and 1938 I would be very grateful because if there is still someone such as Geoff to produce a Journal and I live for another fifteen years I will have a complete set spanning one hundred years.

\*Since this article was written members authorised the Committee at the 1983 A.G.M. to take action with regard to the garage.

### HARRISON'S ROCKS

'The chemical toilets have been replaced by flush toilets, because of the increased cost of chemicals.

Vegetation has been cleared from the west end of the Rocks so that the entire length of the crag is clear of vegetation.

The belligerent individual referred to in the minutes of the previous meeting has again been vocal on the subject of chalk. He turned up at the Regional Sports Council Offices making violent threats. J.A. managed to quieten him down in a subsequent telephone conversation and suggested that he make his point known to the Harrisons Rocks Management Committee. It was then reported that this same individual has been making unsubstantiated claims for first ascents which have defeated some of the top sandstone climbers.'





## Continuation of the Stanage Saga

‘Three routes have been made up the short wall, but these are loose and recommended.’

“To one’s enemies?”

‘Yawn out left across it onto the clock at the lip and finish straight up the wall.’

“Ding dong—another classic misprint.”

“Should one read ‘face’ for ‘wall’ so that one can then finish up the clock face?”

‘15m right is a wall with a crack at its centre and a cockstone chimney on its right.’

‘Climbs were added by Brain Griffiths.’

‘73 Summertime 8m HVS 5b

Climb the left edge of the slab left of route 73 past an overlap.’

‘45 Lonely Crag 9m D

**Follow the corner crack right of the buttress.’**

“This is too bold.”

“But its only Difficult!”

‘Pull up the flakes on the overhanging right face of the learning prow.’

The route ‘Half Wheat Stacked Battered or What’ turned out to be ‘Not Half Weak, Stack-Battered or What’.

‘49 Keep Crack 1m VS 5a’

“Does this qualify as a boulder problem?”

‘This currantly-shaped Tor.’

(misprint for ‘curiously’)

“Is it like a pile of sultanas?”

‘Follow small hods up the centre of the slab.’

“Is it still being built?”

‘A difficult move leads to a small ledge below and right of the crack. Another one enables one to start it.’

“Mathematically enigmatic.”

‘George Leaver with a leaning to free-climbing as much as possible put up Petticoat Lane and Lyon’s Corner House.’

“What a laugh. George Leaver has kittens at the least bit of exposure. Kit Twyford (his sometime partner) was the free climber.”

In the Burbage history it is recorded that:— ‘At the eleventh hour Barker and Mitchell continue their explorations a few steps further but have not yet succeeded on the logical conclusion to the current potential of the crags.’

“You mean, climbing everything over 8 feet high?”

Two Burbage route names were in doubt and had to be solved at a late stage of the typescript. They are respectively: The Busker and Lost in France. Several impolite alternatives appeared in the margin of which the least offensive appears to be ‘Bancroft’s buggered off—again!’

A rather nice touch in a more scholarly vein was after the crossing out of a ‘HVS, 4c’ and the angry comment ‘Never! 5a!’, the latter was crossed out and replaced by ‘Peccavi’.



# AN ANTEDILUVIAN CHRISTMAS IN THE ALPS

HERBERT CARR

You may think the adjective strangely chosen but it is a fact that Winter Sports and Tourism have risen in this century like Noah's flood and have made a different world. A glance at a small village in the Western Oberland as it was when, as a little boy, I was first taken there for my Christmas holidays in 1905 may be something of an eye-opener to the reader who takes for granted his modern world.

To begin with I then belonged to a group of children and teenagers which no longer exists—the Anglo-Indian Orphans. In Victorian times home leave was afforded about once in ten years, as the passage had to be paid out of the private income. In my time it was about once in five years. The time taken out of one's leave was about six weeks for the two journeys. Thousands of British families were then resident in India and the climate was considered unhealthy for European children. My parents brought me home in 1901 and left me with a parson and his family at a village under the South Downs and from there I went on in due course to board at a little 'Prep' school. In the holidays our families were very kind to me but it was some people called Braddon who took me out to Switzerland at Christmas for three years running. I suppose I was so evidently enraptured by the experience, they had not the heart to refuse me.

I must have liked travelling by train both in India and at home but nothing has stuck in my memory like the journey by rail and steamer to Switzerland. I said something about it in an essay I wrote in this journal in 1925 when I wrote up the comments on Arnold Lunn's latest book 'The Mountains of Youth'.

We climbed down out of the Simplon Express at Montreux on the Lake of Geneva. N.B. Continental platforms were at ground level, but England built them up to the height of the carriage door. On the other side of the platform stood an electric train. I had never seen one before and to travel in it was a great and novel experience. Moving off slowly and quietly, it climbed steadily the mountainside above Montreux and about 800 metres higher plunged into a tunnel emerging eventually into the lovely snow covered valley which was our destination. The little village of Chateau D'Oex (pronounced like 'day') would

not now be an acceptable centre for winter holidays—it is not high enough. Yet my experience of three years was that there was plenty of snow—but at that time little ski-ing was done. Our hotel was of some size and I do not remember any others. The proprietor or Manager had the name of Clausen, but no doubt he preferred some fashionable fancy such as Beau Site or Beau Sejours: even Victoria was not uncommon (as was King of Prussia in England before 1914). I think it was centrally heated—it was, it seemed to me, very comfortable. There was no lift, but none of the 50 or so guests, mostly British, minded that. At the celebrations of Christmas and New Year the whole staff dressed in Cantonal costumes—which delighted everyone.

Now. How far is it true to say that in those days we visitors at Chateau D'Oex went out for winter 'sports'? In the modern sense—none. I never saw ski brought out from home but I am sure that to places such as St. Moritz, Davos and Murren, some were. Equipment could be hired at a shop in the village and on my first visit I was allowed to hire skates and a 'luge' (toboggan).

Skating was certainly the objective of half the visitors. The hotel's tennis courts were flooded and the ice surface renewed each night by spraying. Above the rink there was an extensive shelter from the wind, or sun trap, where spectators could sit or skaters rest in comfort. A small orchestra played for about an hour in mid-morning. There was a curling party who booked part of the ice and a number of expert figure skaters who obviously came out every year. Their combined figure skating, English style, perfectly controlled, was a delight to watch. I did my best to learn to skate but there were no instructors (at any sport) and had there been any I do not think the good Braddons would have approved of my spending money in that way; self-teaching was their idea for mere amusements.

Apart from skating, which I never tried again, what did we do with ourselves? Well, there were plenty of good slopes for our 'luges' and once or twice I was with a party when a horse-drawn sleigh was hired, luges were tied on behind in pairs and away we went up the valley. Tame you may think? But we got lots of fun out of it.

I admit that later I was allowed to try my luck with ski. In the shop I was shown how to fit them on, but after that I went out alone to tumble about as best I could and watch with envy the village lads who were quite expert (in my eyes) with their turns and movements. In later life I could not afford two Alpine holidays a year so I never became a ski runner.

I am sure you are thinking that no-one would be such a fool as to take ski out from home to a place in Switzerland of so modest an altitude when plenty of much higher centres were available. True. But I would point out that in the holidays I had there the snow was deep enough to give good sport and ski could have been

hired. So far as I remember there was little talk of it among us. The sport did not 'take off' in world-wide popularity until some years later.

Nowadays lack of altitude is overcome by the overhead wire rope railway and the ski-lift. Speculators put them up almost everywhere. Get along with you or you'll have to wait in the queue.







# WIPE OUT

GEOFF MILBURN

Blocks . . . they're coming straight at me. Move . . . one's heading this way, the sky's full of them. Stop . . . Oh no! He's off! Bigger ones coming . . . head back. A savage thump on my chest knocked me off balance—falling . . . rope sliding through the fingers of my right hand but I can't stop it. Rope is jerking at my back and sliding roughly down my side. The whole crag suddenly flashes past and then . . . nothing. Blackness.

A vague dizziness leads to a realisation that stars are dancing about high above me, and bright rays of light begin to pierce my brain. A distant roaring suddenly stops and then without warning there is silence—total silence.

Suspended in a vacuum I am aware once more, but as my eyes flicker open and begin to register, an inner being deduces that there is something wrong. My body is in another world, a strange and different environment. The mind is detached and I look in at the body which is mine with only a vague and passing interest—but quickly the two halves rejoin. Why is the sky below me and dark objects above me? Slowly, ever so slowly—or perhaps in a flash—it comes to me that I am lying upside down and helpless. And then agonisingly a flashback to blocks growing bigger and Mike cartwheeling through the air with limbs flailing in all directions. How detached I feel, almost as if the whole incident had never happened.

Where's Mike? Oh no! I daren't think about it. A distant groan brought me back to my senses but as I made a move to change position the sky gradually disappeared into a fuzzy grey colour and confusion took over.

He must be terribly smashed up; is it my fault? That's funny I can see a splash of colour against the white of the limestone face. It's a runner still in and there's a rope stretching up to it from my body, wherever that is. The idiot, why didn't he get a higher runner in—it's his fault. Yes, all his fault. No, it's not; it's mine—I should have held him. It must be me to blame. Maybe I did hold him, or if not perhaps I at least arrested his fall enough to save him. A few inches more to one side and I would have been dead.

The sun is really warm. How pleasant it is lying here; must I move? Good job that I belayed above all that lower choss or I would have gone a long way. If my belay had been any tighter the blocks would have smashed me out of existence and into oblivion. Surely my stance was to the left of the line and well out of the way,

but Mike must have pulled the blocks off sideways. Must get up. "Mike! Are you O.K.?" Silence. "Mike!" . . .

That's strange I can hear some movement but what's all that groaning? The unintelligible noises were getting louder, but just didn't make any sense. "Lewirow . . . lewir. .ow. . . lewirown." Oh my God, he sounds bad, it's totally incoherent. His face must be so smashed up that he can't speak properly. And then it began to make sense. "Let me . . . down. I . . . can't breathe properly." Thank God, he's still alive.

Just then the red rope moved a fraction as my tight grip relaxed and far above my head the runner twitched sideways. Somewhere over my feet Mike swayed into view, blood trickling down his face—and rocked about from side to side. How glazed his eyes look. Must be concussion. Got to help him—I must. "Sorry Mike." "What for?" (It must be my fault, I should have held him. I wonder if we will be fit enough to go to Wales as planned next Saturday?) Should he be moving about?

Tugging on the rope and then the extra long belay slings I stood up with an effort. One minute everything looked clear and the next it was all grey again. Pulling up onto the ledge I joined Mike who was still swaying about in a drunken fashion. Must clip in again. Mike slumped forward on the ledge with his head in his hands mumbling quietly while I jerked up suddenly as a stream of earth slid down my face—but it soon stopped, and I too collapsed beside Mike. Suddenly I could hear us both groaning—perfectly clearly, and yet again I seemed to be looking in at myself from a great distance away, as if I were a spectator rather than one of the actors. Time passed.

It was all so easy just to sprawl there not caring and if it hadn't been for Mike making a decision we might have been there for hours. "Come on, we've got to make a move." "Alright then, but how are we going to get down?" "Do you think that anything's broken?" "I don't know, but I'm stiff as hell and blood is coming out of a few bad cuts. Look!" I cringed at the sight. "It's a miracle that you survived. How did you land?" "Oh, I hit the ledge head first all right but my chest and arms took most of the impact and I bounced off at an angle fairly quickly."

The easy ledges which we had scrambled up some time before now looked impossible to descend and the huge boulders on the quarry floor seemed an even greater obstacle. Could we make it? There was no choice as Mike was in no fit state to remain where he was for long. "You go down Mike and I'll pay the rope out." "Yes, but what about you?" "I'll be alright. You can protect me down as the rope's still through that sling up there." "All right then."

Slowly but surely Mike slid down from ledge to ledge, stopping frequently to wince as some part of his body touched rock. He really did look concussed but it

was impossible to decide and we could only wait and see how things went. As usual no-one knew where we were climbing and we would just have to make damned certain that we got ourselves down by our own efforts. We **MUST** get down; it would make us look a right pair of idiots if we had to be rescued. The lads would never let us forget it.

“Oh hell, what about all the gear?” I chuntered as the mercenary side of me came to the surface. “If I could move up a few feet perhaps I could get the first runners out.” “Leave the bloody lot”, Mike retorted. “We have enough on, without complicating things.” Reluctantly, in fact very reluctantly, I abandoned the gear (which wasn’t mine anyway!) and started the painful descent.

Minutes later down on the boulders we took stock of the situation and packed away our gear in a slow, mechanical fashion. The simple act of slipping into the rucksack straps turned out to be a slow and painful manoeuvre but eventually we got stood up and made the effort to move off under our own steam. Both of us were virtually muscle bound and every step was an agonising decision; in addition my left leg refused to bend and had to be dragged along in order to make any kind of progress.

The flat and grassy floor of the quarry which normally is negotiated in a matter of seconds turned out to be a major obstacle and minutes later we were still shuffling along in an ungainly fashion. Conversation was minimal and we each concentrated on the problem of remaining upright and avoiding small rocks. During the frequent rests we debated as to how we were to get down the steep slope which led to the old railway line. In fact my main memory of this was lowering myself from ash tree branches to take the weight off my injured leg. At another point it was easier to slide down in a sitting position using one good leg to control the rate of descent. Much later we passed through the disused station and thankfully slumped down in the car.

Problem! How were we to drive? With Mike’s bad arm and my bad leg the possibility of just one driver seemed rather remote. It did however cross our minds that it might be possible to navigate using combined tactics; if Mike could work the pedals then perhaps I could steer and change gear. After a short trial Mike reckoned that he could just about manage it on his own but I stayed on the ready just in case he needed a hand ‘in an emergency’. Emergency, that’s a laugh if ever there was one. The car roared off down the road narrowly missing a wall and careered about from side to side until Mike finally got the hang of things and brought it back under control. Every vehicle which approached us going in the other direction caused a minor panic until it safely passed us. Little did the other drivers know how close they were to being annihilated. Eventually, after innumerable crises we screeched to a halt outside the Ashton hospital casualty

department.

After a uniquely short wait by hospital standards we were led into separate cubicles where we were to be examined. Lying back on the bed it was possible to piece together the events of the afternoon and in the warmth of a centrally heated room I began to doze off, only to be woken up sharply by the sound of blood-curdling screams and sobbing (not Mike's!) in a nearby room. Suddenly I was surrounded by a mass of bodies: blue uniformed nurses looking spick and span and the inevitable Pakistani doctor.

"Good evening . . . and what's the matter with you?" (spoken with a broad Pakistani accent!). "I injured myself climbing." "Were you climbing on a roof?" "No, we were rock-climbing." "Was it a ladder or a wall." "No, we were rock-climbing (said very impatiently by now). We go climbing for pleasure." "Don't you think that's rather stupid if you fall off and hurt yourself? You should have used a ladder. Anyway what have you done to yourself?" "Injured myself, when a rock fell on my chest and leg." "Is anything broken?" "I don't know, that's why I'm here." "Did the rock fall off the wall or the roof?" At about that stage I finally gave up trying to make him understand English and resorted to a few groans while clutching at the injured parts. At least that seemed to have some effect and after prodding about for a while he left me to a 'porter' who wheeled me off to the X-ray room. Later, back in the little room, a bustling nurse attacked me with a large and lethal-looking curved needle which soon homed in on flesh. After a couple of lusty yells the nurse lost her patience and snapped at me to shut up and not be a big baby. Had they not heard of the invention of pain killers?

Just before she finished there was a commotion around the doorway and a procession of strange and interested-looking faces kept bobbing in and out. This was just too much for me and I relaxed dozily only to be awoken by more chatter. When I asked an excited nurse what all the fuss was about she replied that I had got a furbella and that they hadn't seen one before. Well that's it I thought—how long have I got to live? Luckily the nurse explained that the X-rays showed that I had in addition to a normal knee-cap at the front another smaller knee-cap at the back of the leg. It must have been rare as it certainly amused the medics and even the Pakistani doctor looked happy and offered to stitch us up well next time we came in.

That night I dreamt about the gear we had left behind and of course it wasn't long before we returned to the scene of the crime (complete with walking sticks) to retrieve our honour. It was all very embarrassing on the way up to the crag when two little old ladies overtook us and smiled sympathetically at our infirmity. Since then Priestcliffe has been left to other climbers who are welcome to its delights. Perhaps John Laycock was right when he wrote in 1913 that: '. . . mountain

limestone is beyond the border line of safety as that is understood by all the best and most experienced climbers'. Even he was aware that 'It is safe to assume that all holds on mountain limestone are loose', so why don't we ever learn? Which reminds me, if you fancy a day down Cheedale I know a fantastic-looking line—a bit loose perhaps but . . .

### ANOTHER GRADED LIST

E5	Chris Bonington	E1	Mike Browell
	Pete Livesey		Ron Fawcett
	Jim Perrin		Chris Griffiths
	Ken Wilson		Paul Williams
	Rowland Edwards	HVS	Trevor Jones
	Strappo Hughes		Paul Nunn
	Gary Gibson		Ed Cleasby
E4	Geoff Birtles	VS	John Longland
	Walt Unsworth		Al Evans
	Davy Jones	S	Don Whillans
	Steve Haston		Dave Cuthbertson
	Pete Crew	VD	Tim Lewis
E3	Bernard Newman		Bill O'Connor
	Steve Bancroft		Mike Mortimer
	John Stevenson	D	Geoff Milburn
	Dennis Gray	M	Doug Scott
E2	Ian McNaught Davies	E	Sally Westmacott
	Henry Barber		Marjorie Allen
	Paul Mitchell		Mark Vallance



# I SPY

Graham Hoey did **not** write the more libellous bits!

First to manage 4,000 points wins a Little Chief (Dennis Gray) I Spy rock climber's badge.

Reading a Jim Perrin article	20 points
Understanding a Jim Perrin article	200
Pat Littlejohn using chalk	600
Ken Wilson talking	1
Ken Wilson not talking	600
Martin Berzins handing out compliments	700
Gary Gibson putting up a route	5
Gary Gibson putting up a good new route	250
Trevor Jones resting on a nut	100
(note each I spy can be used only once!)	
Staying asleep in the same room as Trevor Jones	200
A copy of the '82 CCJ which stays in one piece when open	500
Geoff Milburn undergrading a route	500
Chris Jackson overgrading a route	500
Seeing more than 4 people in the Pembroke Hut outside Bank Holidays, Christmas and Easter	250
Ron Force It chipping a hold	2000
Pete Live Sea chipping a hold	1000
Receiving payment from Geoff Britles (sic)	400
Mick Fowler climbing on sound rock	600
Nat Allen Climbing (30) Joe Brown climbing (45)	
Don Whillans climbing (75) Pete Crew climbing (600)	
Tom Proctor in a pothole	300
Mike Mortimer's dog	45
Dennis Gray buying a round	450
Graham Hoey placing a 'hand inserted piece of metal'	250
Stevie Haston's latest girl friend	69
Steve Bancroft not in Paris/France	100
Ken Wilson's baggy shorts	65
Bernard Newman on Bamford Edge	850
A contributor to the 1983 CCJ.	350
Bob Moulton in Wales	400
Al Parker on limestone	800

Doug Scott not wearing crampons	200
Smiler Cuthbertson in a bad mood	600
Mike Browell leading a hard, sustained, poky pitch	500
Mike Browell seconding a hard, sustained, poky pitch	20
Mike Browell in plaster	13
A climber bolting on gritstone	3000
John Redhead bolting on Cloggy	2000
Paul Williams & Welsh lads bolting on Pen Trwyn	70
Gary Gibson bolting on Peak Limestone	15
A fully paid up C.C. Member	150
An ex-Member of the C.C.	50
A leader on The Bells! The Bells!	800
A leader on Master's Wall	900
Gabriel Regan without a drink in hand	400
Al Evans	200
Ron Fawcett not moving when on rock	99
John Laycock's 1913 'Some Gritstone Climbs'	700
A first-class guidebook to Yorkshire crags	900
A climber on the Black Cleft in Winter	445
A climber on Cilan Head	007
A friend of Mark Vallance	1
Martin Boysen unable to reach a hold	20
A climber enjoying The Vice	600
Tom Leppert on Carnedd y Filiast	350
An article in Mountain or High without an obscenity	30
A climber on a route CARRYING the new Stanage guide	500
A climber using ex-W.D. karabiners	350
Chris Bonington with ice-axe on Gogarth	600
A new route on Lliwedd	900
Climbers on Cloggy on New Year's Day	500
A non-paying climber staying at Ynys Ettws	30
A hungry climber at a Pat Green supper	1
The Discipline Sub-Committee in action	800
The Publications Sub-Committee finishing before 2 a.m.	800
A quiet C.C. Committee meeting	1000
The mines Inspector at Great Rocks Dale	300
The summit of Everest	5
An avalanche coming down on top of you	GAME
Smiler on the Eiger North Wall	999



# AUTRES PLACES EN FRANCE

TONY WILLIAMS

A tenuous process of logic began several years back while driving through the sunlit vine-covered plain south of Dijon en route for the Alps:

Vines grow on limestone  
Limestone is good for climbing  
There is limestone in Burgundy  
The Burgundians make lots of wine  
I like wine  
Therefore this must be a good place for a holiday  
Q.E.D.

With little more to go on than a glance through a thirty year old French guidebook and veiled hints in an A.C. Journal I decided to put this to the test by opting for a two weeks crag hunting holiday in France this June. Livesey's French Rock-Climbs, Verdon and Calanque guides were packed alongside a French dictionary and three Hugh Johnson books on wine.

An inspired idea it proved to be too. Firstly no long drive to t' Alps or Midi. Despite catching a late Friday night ferry we were at our destination early Saturday morning. Then there were the campsites organised French style with all mod cons and surrounded by fields of vines burgeoning in the early summer sun. Very friendly natives dispelled my long held view that the French only wanted to know if you could speak their language almost to perfection. Wine makers were particularly welcoming, usually unstinting with 'degustations' in spite of my pigeon French and knowing we only wanted a bottle or two for 'dinner' on the campsite that night. Much better to drink in a dusty barrel-filled cellar than a scruffy village cafe . . . and cheaper. The villages of Burgundy were delightful—ranging from the pure Cloche-Merl to the smart wide streets of the up market wines such as Volnay or Santanay.

On the first Saturday rock hunting we chanced upon a C.A.F. hut tucked away in a hamlet way up in a limestone fringed valley. We parked outside it and spread climbing gear around us to support my, "Ou est la Falaise?" and "Il-y-a un guide de les escalades." Pity was taken and we were invited to follow a small group to their crag. Just as well because the crag we had first seen and were making for was

in the opposite direction and virtually unclimbable.

The crag, when we reached it after winding our way through meadows and woods, was reminiscent of Wild Cat—a succession of 150-foot high corners and walls but with protection pegs in place and name, grade and topo painted at the bottom of each route!

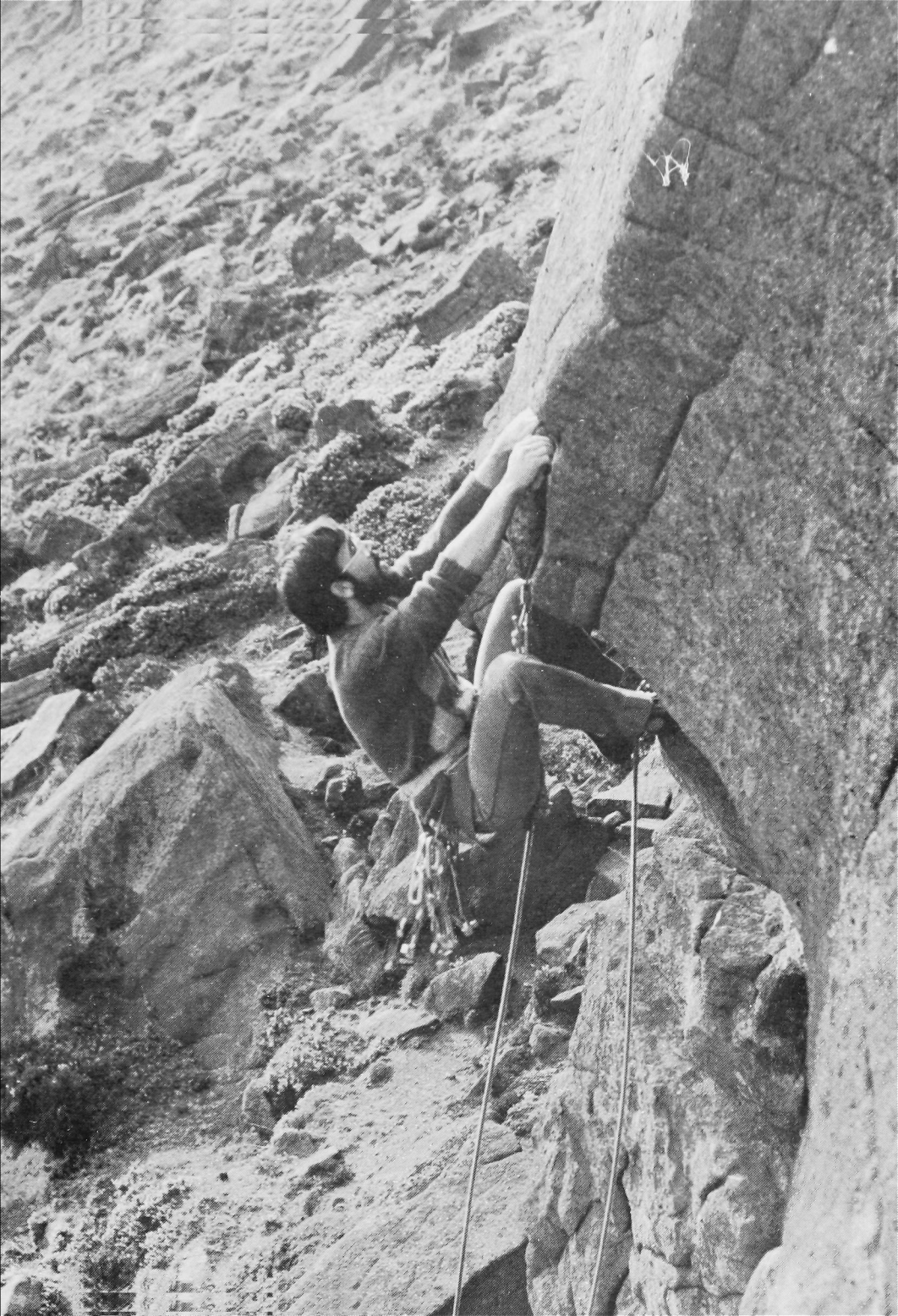
Nevertheless the Topo Guide I bought in a nearby village greatly contributed to our enjoyment of this ninety-route cliff.

Owing to a prior engagement we had to move south after a few days and were able to inspect the huge but rather loose cliffs around Chartreuse north of the Isere valley near Grenoble. We also got up a sensational but not very hard 750-foot V.S. on Presles in the Vercours. I thought Presles possibly more impressive than Verdon. A compass is necessary to navigate out through the 'box' forest at the top and the thunder-storms are sudden, violent and long. But that is another story.

Leaving the dripping misty Vercours behind we travelled north again through the sunlit Pouilly's (where there is climbing) and the wonderful Beaujolais (where there is not but they make 15 million gallons of wine a year). So back to our hospitable campsite near Meursault to tick off a few more climbs and vineyards.

All the routes we did from Severe to H.V.S. were of high quality, safe and enjoyable. The sun was hot so nobody minded chalk and the natives were chatty if amused at these eccentric (hexcentric!) English climbing with a full rack of nuts to use between the in situ pegs. The pegs seemed sound enough but I was always happier with a few good nuts in support. All told I thought it a wonderful scene. Cormot is not the only crag in Burgundy. A few miles further north we found another crag, one kilometre long seamed with routes from 20 feet to 150 feet; all apparently sound limestone with pegs in place. There are four other crags excluding the well publicised Saussois which would be worth a visit and furthermore Burgundy does not have the monopoly of crags in France. Jean-Pierre Bouvier identifies 270 in lowland France and I would bet he has not found them all.

But I shall write no more. Three-quarters of the enjoyment of our trip was the exploration and delight in unexpected finds. You do not need to be a hardman to climb in France.





# GRAZING WITH THE OX

ANDY NEWTON

Now, when you or I think of Verdon, we imagine endless, gleaming white walls covered in perfect holds, and climbing just for fun. Not so The Ox. Why climb on soaring airy ribs, when one could be thrutching upside-down in an off-width roof crack? Thus I found myself firmly strapped to a tree, below what resembled an item of Gothic Architecture.

The first mistake (as far as I was concerned) was for us to have been in the bar at La Palud whilst the usual English/French climbing conversation was being enacted. The general subject this particular evening was the newer routes in the Gorge, put up for the most part by Patrick Edlinger and his friends. Then someone mentioned a big roof crack, that hadn't seen many ascents. The Ox's ears visibly pricked up, and he attempted to discover more.

The second mistake was to be on a climbing trip with someone who drinks fruit juice. This means that he remembers in great detail the previous night's idle musings! Over breakfast in the Bar, The Ox was able to engage someone's girlfriend as a guide to the exact location of the route. The Ox vanished into the scrub with our guide, whilst I disposed of the other five climbers crammed into my 2CV. The Ox returned.

"It's a bit of a way down the cliff; she's shown me where to rap from." "Oh, really", I thought. A fixed 11mm was left, as I didn't like the look of the way out much. Two rappels, complete with dirt avalanches, brought us to not much in the roof line. A little concerned, we arranged a third rap, and I set off again. Down over an awkward gully choke, and suddenly on the left was one of the most amazing bits of crag I could ever imagine climbing. The route was an enormous ceiling crack, cleaving a jutting prow of rock, and perched above a fairly large drop. In fact a sort of Neb Direct times ten. I lashed myself to a tree below the crack and settled down to watch the antics of a team above us. The second was finding it pretty hard work, and persisted in flying backwards from the lip of the roof. "Oh, hell", I thought.

The Ox landed beside me. "Looks good." "Oh, bloody hell!" I thought. The previous party's curses however eventually faded above us, and we set about taping up. We had been warned about the crack, and some bandages fluttered ominously from the belay tree. The Ox led off. The first part of the crack, up to

the roof proper, is not too bad, just a bit dusty. Then suddenly the world goes horizontal and you're on the wrong side of it!

The Ox mutters that he wants watching pretty closely (who's he kidding) and munches out across the ceiling. He almost makes it too, but nearly to the lip, calls for a rest. "It's not the climbing . . . the crack's smeared . . . you'll see when you get here." "F . . .!", I thought. A shift of gear, and The Ox grinds across the lip and disappears into the groove above. The rope pays out slowly for a while, then a distant shout tells me to get going.

I arrive at the roof, and it looks just as bad as it did from below. Still, there's a few bits of tat if it gets out of control. I set off. "Yowww!" I suddenly realise what The Ox meant. This crack might have good jams, but the whole show is coated with re-deposited limestone such that it resembles pebble-dashing, and is extremely painful. I struggle on, only to be defeated by a jammed Friend (this is Ox's favourite trick). I clip into a fixed sling and wrestle upside-down for twenty minutes with the Friend, mainly because it's mine. At last it comes out, and I struggle around the lip. "God, this is desperate."

Once in the groove, I realise the fun is over. The stretch up to the belay is pretty loose, with no worthwhile runners, or holds, come to that. Good job The Ox can look after himself. The pitches back up to the fixed rope are a nightmare in a similar loose fashion. I suspect that we should have climbed out via a bolt-protected route up the improbable smooth walls next to us.

Well, the bandages are still hanging like trophies from the gear stick of the car, and I've even got a pretty French book showing pictures of someone doing the route properly. The Ox . . . he's still looking for a Welsh version.

Note: The climb was Mandarin Marveilleux; French 6c.



# OBITUARY

## RAYMOND GREENE

1922-19??

World War I nearly put an end to the Climbers' Club. In the years just after it membership fell to an all-time low. Active members were resigning right and left, and there were few new recruits. Raymond Greene and I were amongst those few, and we were both surprised to find ourselves on the Committee barely a year after joining. (Raymond had less reason than I to be surprised as he had been recently appointed Hon. Ed. and was already working on the 1923 Journal.) Mallory had just become President, and at his first Committee meeting he enquired about the state of the Club. The Secretary, Myles Mathews, had to admit that it was practically on its death bed. Mallory then proposed that a Sub-Committee be set up to recommend measures to bring it back to life. S.A. Marples, then V.P., was to head this body, and Raymond and I were to be its other members.

The sub-committee, which Raymond irreverently dubbed 'The demoribundisation sub-committee', met and deliberated, but it soon became apparent that what was needed was not Measures but a Man. Raymond suggested Herbert Carr for the job. Without delay Herbert was inducted into the Club and given a free hand. It is now a matter of history that he brought the club back to life by his almost unaided efforts. Raymond helped to some extent by bringing out some lively 'Club Bulletins'—an outward and visible sign that the Club was not so moribund after all.

The sub-committee as such may not have done much for the Club, but for me it brought the inestimable benefit of a life-long friendship with Raymond Greene.

He was the eldest of the three Greene brothers. When he died of heart failure in December 1982 (aged 81), his obituaries in both Times and Telegraph asserted that all three brothers were alike, and went on to list some disagreeable traits which (in the obituarist's opinion) they had in common. I do not know to what extent Sir Hugh and Graham Greene felt maligned by these aspersions, but from my own intimate knowledge of Raymond, extending over 60 years, I can say categorically that not one of them was true of him. He was in fact the kindest of men, warm-hearted, generous and with a fine sense of humour—in short, an ideal companion on the hills or off them.

In one respect he resembled his brothers; they were all well over six feet tall. Also they went to the same school, Berkhamstead, where their father was Headmaster. Raymond went on to Pembroke College, Oxford, where he studied





medicine. After graduating in 1927 he did a number of Resident jobs at Westminster Hospital before embarking on private practice in London and Oxford. After the War he became consultant physician to several London Hospitals, and began to specialise in endocrinology. In time he became a leading authority in this branch of medicine, and his writings on the Thyroid Gland are now acclaimed as the most authoritative works on the subject. He spent the last twenty years of his life as a Harley Street consultant in his speciality.

Apart from his medical work and mountaineering, one of Raymond's main interests lay in Zoology, and he was for six years Vice-President of the Zoological Society of London. In an article on him in the *Journal of Zoology* the Society's President, Lord Zuckerman, pays high tribute both to the value of his scientific work and to his warm and approachable nature.

In his childhood Raymond was introduced to the Lake District by his father, a keen mountain walker, and his long legs took him over every mountain of note in the District. Then a lantern lecture at his school by Ashley Abraham inspired the urge to climb rocks, and Abraham himself found for him companions for his earliest climbs.

'... He introduced me to a lone climber called Binns who took me up the Napes Needle. The obsession was born.

The next year Abraham introduced me to Weeks, with whom I did the Needle again and other climbs of moderate difficulty. I fell in with Holland and Speaker, great rock climbers in their day. I especially remember the day when the three of us polished off in one day all the climbs then known on the Napes. We did not stop for lunch and it was only as I ran rejoicing back to Langdale that I knew I was hungry.'

As a student Raymond explored the 'craggs' of Oxford with other O.U.M.C. friends:

'There was then no Cambridge mountaineering club and we always invited climbers from "the other place" to join us. Once I had a "return match" in Cambridge, the most terrifying weekend of my life. We did all the standard climbs on the colleges and finally Elliot Wallis, Gilbert Adair and I attempted King's Chapel. We failed high up at an overhang, but a fortnight later I had a card from the other two. They had succeeded. By stretching out the left arm, they had succeeded in holding a lightning conductor between finger and thumb, thus keeping their balance as they surmounted the drip course that had defeated us.'

Prior to qualifying Raymond spent some time in Edinburgh where he was accustomed to visiting Salisbury Crags every Sunday morning:

'Here I nearly ended my climbing days. My friend "Bunny" Mansell, a



novice, was stuck out of my sight above me. Stepping back carelessly to see what had halted him, I fell over the edge of my stance and landed on my back some twenty feet below, happily in a small patch of bog. In doing so I pulled off Bunny who joined me rather painfully in my bog. Both were unharmed . . .’

While at Oxford, he helped Herbert Carr revive the O.U.M.C., and was introduced to the Alps through a meet of that club. When I first met him he had already made a name for himself as an alpinist. But it was a chance meeting with Frank Smythe when both were soloing on Gimmer that opened the door for him to the scene where he felt most in his element—the Himalayas. He was with Smythe’s 1931 expedition to Kamet, the first 25,000-foot peak ever to be climbed. The ascent was made in two parties, Raymond leading the second. Around the 23,000-foot mark he succumbed to the altitude effect and sent the other two members of his party ahead while he rested in the snow. After a short nap he felt fresh again, and had the unusual experience of reaching the summit alone.

‘Some 300 feet above me was a white ridge in full sunshine. I thought if I could get thus far I would be able to see the top and relieve what was beginning to be a gnawing anxiety for their safety. The way became excessively steep, and the snow dangerous, a shifting powder a few inches deep on hard ice. Once the surface slipped, probably only a few inches but enough to alarm me. Here a serious slip would have meant a fall of some 7,000 feet down the eastern precipice. I felt quite confident about stopping myself, but the others were less experienced and my anxiety grew. I gave a shout and heard a cheerful and unintelligible noise above. Almost at the same moment I saw their tracks. I cut across to them and turned upwards again towards the ridge I had picked as my look-out.

Then suddenly my head rose above the ridge and my eyes, expecting a further snowfield and yet another ridge, saw for one moment nothing. Then casting them down, I saw a sea of white cloud stretching without interruption to the purple horizon. A few yards to my right lay the summit . . .’

After Kamet, Smythe’s team went on to explore the almost completely unknown Badrinath range, and conquered numerous peaks and passes of over 20,000 feet. Later in life Raymond looked back on this time as the happiest he had ever spent.

Two years later he was back in the Himalayas as chief medical officer to the 1933 Everest expedition. Here he contributed a great deal more than his medical skill, and the venture would not have achieved the limited success it did if he had not been there to back up the leader, Hugh Ruttledge, and even to take charge

himself when the occasion called for it. Retreating from the mountain led to a delightful incident:

‘Of the day when Jack Longland and I, stark naked, raced our ponies across a great green plain and, forgetting our state, into a village of which the inhabitants had never seen a white man, least of all a nude one.’

Other useful contributions Raymond made to mountaineering were his researches into high altitude respiration and his invention of the ‘Greene Sack’ for carrying down victims of climbing accidents. This latter device was to prove invaluable in commando raids during the war. One of Raymond’s own wartime activities was commando training in rock climbing.

But rock climbing for its own sake had no strong appeal for Raymond. Once he had savoured the more varied pleasures and thrills of greater mountaineering in the Alps and Himalays he came to look upon our home crags as no more than the best available substitute. Not that he didn’t fully enjoy the substitute. We had some wonderful days together in Wales and Lakeland. But he had no ambition to pioneer new rock climbs, or even to raise his personal standard, which was about the same as my own. His tremendous reach gave him the advantage on some routes, but for the kind of delicate balance climbing which was all the vogue during our years together a shorter man may benefit from his lack of inches (witness A.B.’s exploits in a later era!). But one could not have asked for a more congenial companion on the rocks.

Raymond was essentially an adventurous character. When he wasn’t seeking adventure (as, in his younger days he usually was) it seemed to come to him unbidden. This will surely be agreed by all who have read his enthralling book of autobiographical fragments published in 1974 under the title ‘Moments of Being’. I was privileged to hear many of these stories from his own mouth just after the events had occurred, and from my memory of his narratives I could justly chide him for playing them down in the book rather than over-dramatising. For example, the whole of the Aleister Crowley story as he told it to me was far more dramatic and thrilling than it sounds in print.

‘During the war I was attached to the Emergency Hospital at Aylesbury. Someone asked me to tell the Crowley Saga, which I did, including the incident of Frederick Gambier MacBean. “Why,” asked the very attractive anaesthetist, “didn’t you put a curse on him? You must have learnt a few good curses at the Abbey.”

“It never occurred to me,” I replied, “but I will do it now.” I made up a long and resounding curse, partly out of the nonsensical rituals of the Crowley sect and partly from my own imagination. Two days later I found the anaesthetist staring with troubled eyes at the front page of *The Times*

spread out on the table. Frederick Gambier MacBean was dead.'

Raymond also writes of the episode when he and his sister Molly were descending New West on Pillar with C.F. Holland coming last. When Molly fell off on the traverse, her rope to Holland ran out freely, and though Raymond held her from the far end of the traverse, she had a long pendulum swing and sustained quite a battering. It seems that Holland, whose motto on the rocks was never 'Safety First', was actually climbing down the chimney instead of attending to the rope. This is how Raymond tells it in the book. What he does not tell is that a fourth member of the party witnessed the incident from the screes below. This was a suitor for Molly's hand who had been wooing her for an unconscionably long time without screwing up the courage to propose. But, after seeing his inamorata in such peril, he popped the question on the spot and they lived happily ever after. This seemed to round off the story nicely when I heard it from Raymond.

Senior members who may recall the unhappy Giveen affair in the 1920s will be interested to learn from this book that Giveen made a serious attempt to murder Raymond for no better reason, it seems, than that Raymond had blocked his admission to membership of our Club. He actually shot in the back (though not fatally) a tall man whom he mistook for Raymond. Then, discovering his error, he killed himself with the other barrel.

In his heyday Raymond must have been, like Leslie Stephen, 'Fleetest of foot of all the Alpine brotherhood'. He resembled Stephen also in that, after he married and his two children were born, he kept his adventurous spirit sternly in check and settled down to be a good family man and a respectable Harley Street consultant. It must have cost him a great effort to give up difficult mountaineering, but he found some consolation in dashing off to the hills whenever he had a day or two to spare and indulging in long solitary walks. It caused him great distress when even this mild consolation was denied to him by physical disability.

Maurice Guinness

While avidly re-reading *Moments of Being* looking for suitable quotes for the above obituary I reserved my favourite until last, although the whole book is crammed full of favourite quotes. It is a comment about climbing in Wales and the Lakes with Frank Smythe.

'We amused ourselves in our own way, climbing mountains without looking up the routes in the guide-books and afterwards infuriating the serious climbers by our inability to explain or to name the routes we had taken. One of our favourite quotations was about the great pioneers of rock-climbing J.M. Archer Thomson and A.W. Andrews, the authors of the guide to

Lliwedd.

The Climber goeth forth to climb on Lliwedd  
And climbeth all the ways that man hath trod,  
But which of all the thousand ways he doeth  
Is known alone to Thomson and to God.  
(And, of course, Andrews!)

Ed.

Raymond Greene and I were friends at Oxford between 1919 and 1923. He was a tall, good-looking young man coming from a gifted (with brains, not with money) family. At first he was disposed to rely on his natural endowment rather than prolonged study, but his subsequent career proved that he had indeed combined the two.

Together we climbed in North Wales on vacations and in 1921 he and I set out to tour in the Western Oberland without guides. Bad weather saw to it that our plans were disrupted but we came by devious ways to Grindelwald where we paid homage to the aged Coolidge and also to the ever youthful Arnold Lunn. He had his son with him. "These", said Arnold to the little boy, "are keen mountaineers." The boy looked at me sternly. "Have you ever climbed Mount Everest?" he asked. "I fear I haven't." "Then you have not succeeded." We did not perhaps expect it at the time—but one of the four present—Raymond—was destined to play a part in the Himalayan history of the 1930s.

The best climb I did with Raymond was the traverse of the Grand Combin. I had to catch a train back to England next evening—so we left at midnight under a full moon and reached the summit at the moment of sunrise. A wonderful experience; the Combin is well-situated in the very heart of the great mountains of the Western Alps.

I had to go north to my work in later life and we lost touch. I remember him as one of many good companions the mountains gave me.

Herbert Carr

**G.F. PEAKER**  
**1927-1983**

A full obituary will appear in the next C.C.J.

**C.H.S.R. PALMER**  
**1925-1982**

Steuart Palmer died in August 1982 at the age of 77 but the sad news only reached me a year later after his widow Carlota had been in touch with the Club. He joined the Climbers' Club in 1925, the year of the opening of Helyg, while he was at Cambridge. He did a lot of climbing in North Wales, also on Derbyshire Gritstone, and is well known for the part he played in the first ascent in 1927 of Belle Vue Bastion on the Terrace Wall of the North Buttress of Tryfan, on which he led the top pitch from The Grove of Bollards to the Terrace without any previous exploration. His climbing was very effortless, he never seemed to be perturbed and he loved to look for untrodden ground, and he was still finding new routes in unlikely places right into his old age.

Steuart liked to attend Club functions and he used the huts a great deal, and he would no doubt have become better known had he not spent the greater part of his life overseas, playing his part in looking after what was then the British Empire, or representing us in distant lands.

His leave was almost always spent somewhere in the mountains. In 1930 I joined him for a few days in Villars on my way home from a Swiss winter skiing holiday, and he tried to get me up the South Face of the Diablerets, but I am afraid I was not as brave as he was and he never even got me on to the rocks. The steep snow slope approaching them was enough for me.

After he retired and came home to live in Dorking, he did a lot of walking with the Ramblers Association, especially in the Alps. I had two reunions with him when he came up to the Lake District and we did some walking together. The last letter I had from him was in 1979 when he related that he was still finding new routes in North Wales. I did not do any rock climbing with him in these latter years, but when we were climbing together in the Twenties his skill and great courage were a source of inspiration. He gave the impression of never having found out how to get frightened.

I hope that Carlota will accept the belated condolences of those who, like me, did not hear the sad news at the time.

Ivan Waller

Steuart's first new climb, while climbing solo, was done in mistake for Hawk's Nest Buttress on Glyder Fach. The route Needle's Eye Climb was done in either 1925 or 1926. The following year, 1927, was a good year; after Arete and Slab on Bochlwyd Buttress Steuart accompanied Ivan Waller on the classic Belle Vue Bastion then later in the year found the Devil's Cellar on Clogwyn y Geifr.

*Steuart Palmer.*





In 1931 Steuart teamed up with Menlove Edwards and together they climbed Llyn on the Gribin Facet, the fine East Wall Girdle, and then up in Cwm Silyn found the superb Outside Edge Route on Craig yr Ogof. Two years later they added Hothouse Crack, Devil's Pipes and Little Corner to Clogwyn y Geifr. After a further two years, in 1935, they searched Drws Cwm Clyd for Flat Chimney before Steuart began to explore Gallt yr Ogof, starting with Steep Wall. He also found Twin Groove on the Mot and explored the little visited Craig Nant Peris high above the Pass.

By 1937 Steuart took a look at Craig Lloer for Bivouac Buttress and the Trinity grooves as well as returning to Gallt yr Ogof for Gnat's Nose and Fence Climb. When not solo Steuart often climbed with J.H. Buzzard about this time. Also in 1937 Steuart went to Lliwedd with John Barford for Slantside Spout and explored further on Creigiau Gleison for Amphitheatre Slab, Black Chimney and Trident Route.

In 1944 during the War Steuart returned to Gallt yr Ogof with a close friend, John Bechervaise, for The Overhangs, Crack and Wall and Airy Corner. They also explored the East Face of Bristly Ridge for Giant's Step Buttress, Two Tower Buttress and the fine Great Tower Buttress.

Many of Steuart's routes have not been properly recorded and in his later years he was content to explore the hidden cwms and crags alone. He did leave one record of a variation he did to his own route The Overhangs, on 18th September 1977.

'Climbed alone, and as an elderly gent of my advanced age (72), I found some of the moves difficult and the exposure considerable. But it amused me and might amuse a few others of my vintage . . .'

Yes, Steuart was quite a character within the club and there can be few others who can claim to be so enthusiastic once they have passed the age of 70.

Ed.

## **PETE W. THEXTON**

**1980-1983**

I last saw Pete alive on the 26th June 1983. His face was covered in a handkerchief to protect him from the fierce Karakorum sun. He was just starting his climb of Broad Peak. I shook hands, exchanged a few words and then carried on my descent back to Base Camp. I never saw him again. Two days later he was making a summit attempt with Greg Child. Both of them were suffering the

agonies of high altitude but were determined to reach the top. Eventually they felt too bad to continue when only an hour away from the summit. Pete started to deteriorate rapidly and they made slow progress back to the camp, only arriving at two o'clock in the morning. He died three hours later, lying next to Don Whillans who was trying to keep him warm.

Pete was a very strong and very keen climber. Born in London he moved north to Nottingham and then Sheffield as climbing began to play a dominant role in his life. As a rock climber his most significant contributions were on Lundy, where he added a number of good routes such as The Vice and Green Light in the mid seventies. He also added Last Rites, a fine route, to the Suicide Wall in Ogwen. Recently he had made several visits to the USA where he was climbing better than ever, doing many 5.12s such as Super Crack in the Shawangunks. The first expedition that I climbed with Pete was the Everest Winter Expedition. Initially we invited him partly because he was a doctor but as the expedition progressed it was obvious that his inclusion was justified purely on his climbing merits. I remember that even after breaking a rib through coughing he was keen to carry on climbing when we made the decision to pack in. His enthusiasm was a very useful asset on an expedition. Before the Everest trip he had already been on three expeditions; a trip to the Kulu where he completed half a dozen good first ascents, Paul Nunn's expedition to Latok 2 and an expedition to Thelay Sagar with three American climbers, which made the first ascent of this difficult mountain.

He had taken a particular interest in sports medicine in recent years and was hoping to apply techniques that he had learnt in America over here. He was particularly concerned with the increasing incidence of tendon trouble in the modern rock climber. He will be greatly missed on the Sheffield scene as well as throughout the climbing community.

Alan Rouse

## **DON BARR**

**1983**

Don Barr was killed by lightning while belaying his partners at the top of 'Le Petit Coin de Paradis' in the Verdon.

Don had intended to stay in the Alps where he had serious ambitions for a new line on the Jorasses but as unprecedented warm weather was making big routes in the Alps unjustifiable, he had decided to move to the Verdon until conditions improved.

The accident that befell him was unique in the Verdon region and has robbed this club of one of its most talented, prolific and likeable mountaineers.

Don was only 21 years old when he died but he had done more climbing than most of us achieve in a life-time. During his first Alpine season when he was seventeen he climbed the Walker Spur and the Croz Spur on the Grandes Jorasses, the Cecchinél Nominé route on the Eckpfeiler and the Central Pillar of Freney!

Whenever and wherever I climbed with Don I was amazed at the extent and breadth of his experience. He seemed to have done every major or classic route, winter or summer, from Cornwall to the North of Scotland. However there was no sense in which he was merely a 'route-ticker'; when I first met him he was making his second or even his third ascents of such winter classics as Raven's, Smith's and Zero Gullies.

Despite his huge appetite for climbing, Don was also a successful cross-country runner; after his civil-engineering exams, when relatively unfit, he jumped at the opportunity of attempting the Graham Round in the Lake District.

He was also a very accomplished downhill skier and was always exciting to be with, yet he was very willing to forget himself and his own skiing to help other people. During a week's skiing in Verbier, the children in our party, whom he helped to teach, nick-named him 'Luke Skywalker' after the 'Star Wars' hero!

The Club's sincere sympathy goes to his parents and family. I still find it hard to believe that he has gone—the impact of his personality now leaves an empty space which will not be filled.

Mark Vallance.

## CHARLIE HEARD

1983

Charlie (aged 29) was killed on August 22nd, 1983 when an abseil anchor failed while descending from Bagarathi 1 in the Himalayas after a successful ascent with Martin Moran.

Everyone who knows Charlie will remember him for his energy, enthusiasm and philosophy of taking everything he did to the limit. He was a superb all-round sportsman, gaining a blue for athletics whilst studying at Cambridge. After Cambridge he moved to Sheffield to study town planning and finally came to Cardiff to work and later married Alison whom he had known since University.

Many people outside the climbing world will sadly miss Charlie, but they will have memories of chasing his squash ball or catching the sweat as he sped past them at evening training sessions. Of all the sports he played his greatest passion was for climbing. Those of us who climbed with him will remember trying to squeeze one or more routes in before it became dark, arriving late at the pub with

stories of epic ascents or retreats. One of these that will stand out for many of us, was when he was left suspended overnight from the cave on Davy Jones's Locker at Ogmore while the sea rose and crashed at the mouth of the cave.

He enjoyed all aspects of the sport and his name will be associated with many classic routes of Pembrokeshire and Ogmore: 'Surprise Attack', 'Deep Throat', 'Return of the Natives', 'Davy Jones's Locker' and 'Griffin' to name a few.

He was also a passionate mountaineer, his great strength and determination leading to ascents of many of the hard classic routes in Scotland and the Western Alps.

His last expedition was to be the sequel to a successful trip to Alaska, where with the same party he climbed the West Rib of Mount McKinley after a bad weather retreat from the Cassin Ridge.

Charlie is sadly missed by all friends and climbers, but our loss must be overshadowed by that felt by his wife Alison.

On behalf of the C.C., S.W.M.C. and climbers everywhere, we bid Charlie a last farewell.

A. Richardson, S. Lewis

### **DEREK LAMBLEY**

**1974-1982**

Derek Lambley, who had been a member of the Club since 1974, died suddenly in December, 1982. He was an enthusiastic and energetic climber and hill walker for many years, although ill-health rather restricted his activities over the last decade.

By profession he was a surgeon of distinction. He held a senior post at Northampton General Hospital and travelled and lectured widely, both at home and abroad. Amongst the honours conferred upon him was a Fellowship of the American College of Surgeons. Rock climbing did not greatly attract him, but he was very fond of snow routes, particularly in the Bernese Oberland. He formed a long-standing friendship with Oskar Ogi, the well known Kandersteg guide, and many of his alpine ascents were made with him.

He was President of the ABMSAC from 1972 to 1974 during which time he became ill and had to undergo heart surgery but he made a remarkable recovery and continued to pursue his many interests. He had also been a member of the Alpine Club since 1952. Of his two sons, Julian became a keen climber and a member of the Alpine Club.

Maurice Bennett.

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D.W. BATEMAN  
(Bosigran)

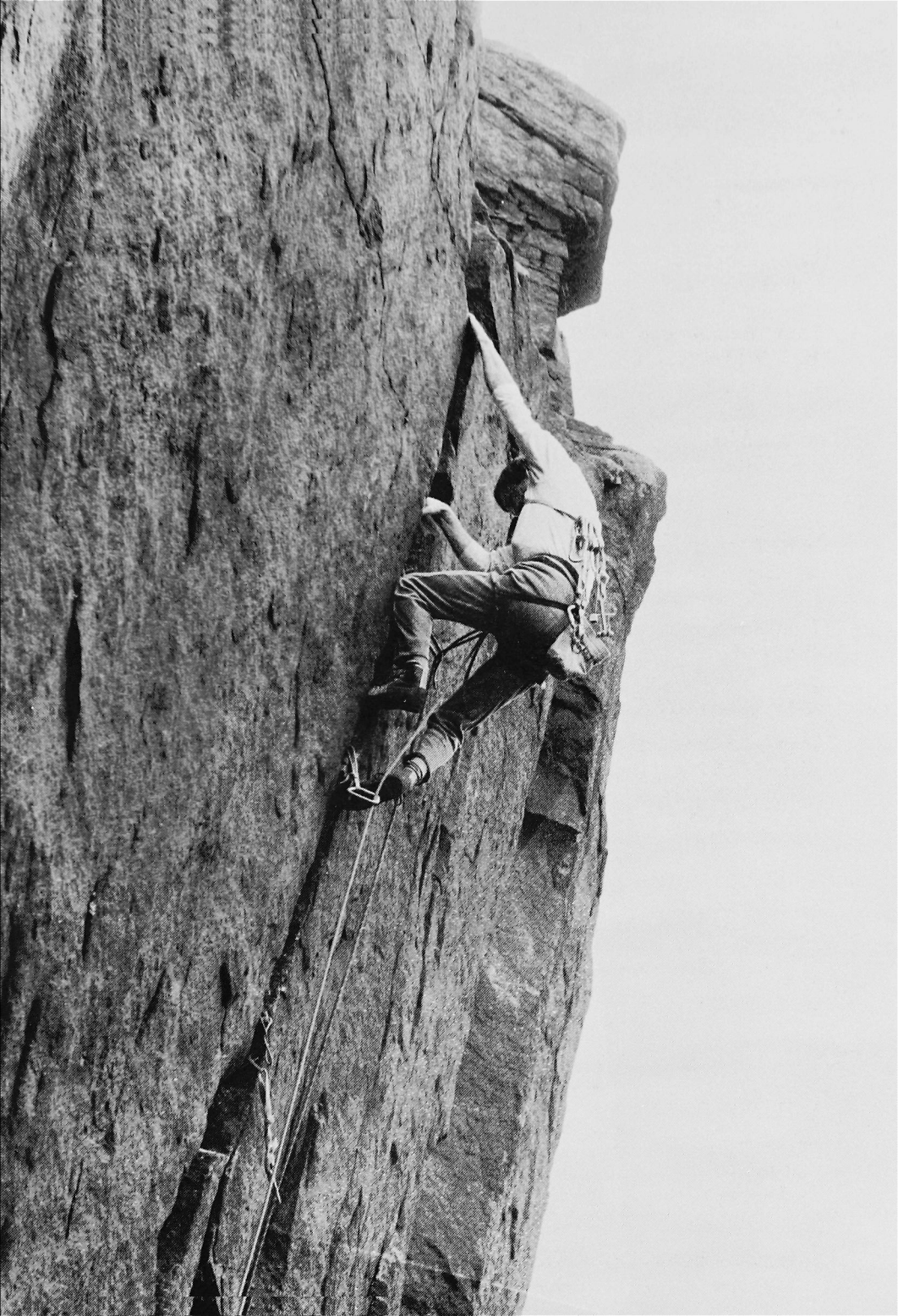
A.S.G. JONES  
(Helyg)

M. HARBER/S. LEWIS  
(May Cottage)

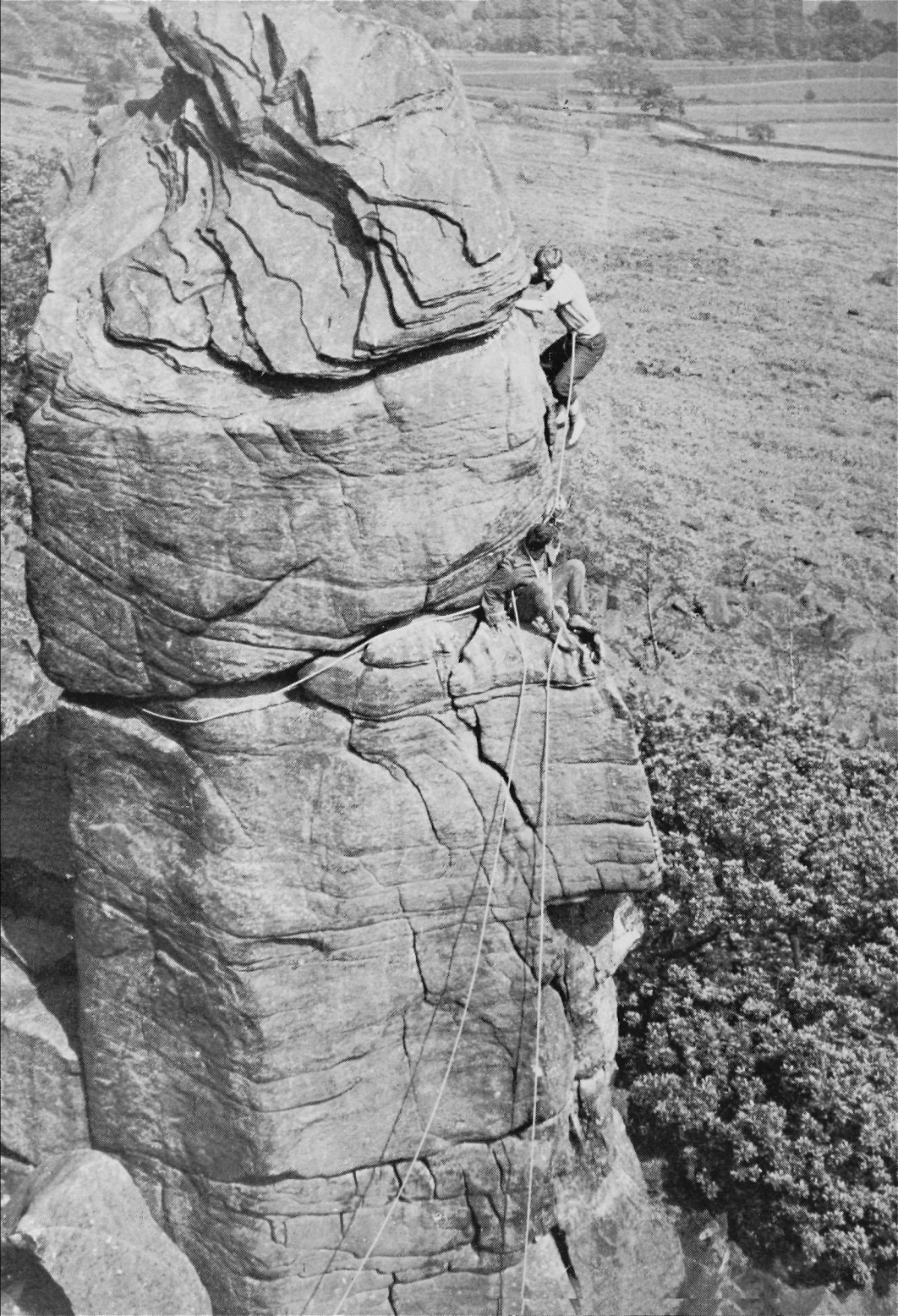
R. ENWRIGHT  
(R.W. Lloyd Hut)

P.M. NEWMAN  
(Cwm Glas Mawr)

R.J. TREGLOWN  
(R.O. Downes Hut)







# EDITORIAL

Last year the printer made a superb job of printing the Journal but unfortunately the high quality of the paper combined with the large number of pages proved to be too inflexible for the 'perfect binding' process. Much to the Editor's chagrin some of the 'not so perfect bound' journals had a tendency to release some of the four-page sections of photographs. Usually a dab of glue solved the problem, but in a few cases pages perforated near the spine. Since then limited numbers of journals have been rebound to satisfy any irate Members. At least the 1982 Journal may now become a rare collector's item in years to come!

This year's Journal has been pruned slightly owing to financial strictures (19% cut) and slowed down (inevitably) by the need to impose a quality control check. It seems that to produce a perfect journal before Christmas is almost an impossibility.

Not only does the Journal have accidents; the current officers of the Club appear to be accident prone ever since the President first set a trend by taking one small step into space to prove that after all he is mortal like the rest of us. Since then the Hon. Sec. has become attached to a large lump of plaster after a slip while bouldering—or that's his version of the incident. Even the Journal Editor jumped in on the act when he tangled with a member of the opposite sex during a ferocious hockey match. At least it was pleasant to look down on the Alps from 33,000 feet en route for the fleshpots of the Adriatic, without nagging feelings of guilt, and certainly in the knowledge that at that moment no other living climber was higher.

Of the climbers we have lost recently Steuart Palmer and Raymond Greene leave big gaps in the old brigade, whereas younger members who have tragically been killed include Derek Lambley, Don Barr and Pete Thexton.

Our membership does tend to fluctuate somewhat and it is a considerable feat to keep up with unpaid and partially paid up Members to say nothing of our wandering Members who seem to change their homes as frequently as they change their P.A.s. Since the 1978 handbook 162 Members have changed address at least once and others have flitted at frequent intervals. It is little wonder that Newsletters and journals often fail to reach their destination. Of the 'lost' Members most appear to come from the 1950s as the summary below shows:

	1978	1983	Loss
1920-29	26	23	-3
1930-39	41	33	-8
1940-49	100	61	-39
1950-59	217	156	-61
1960-69	159	130	-29
1970-79	187	182	-5
1980-		92	
	730	677	-145

In addition the July Newsletter recorded a further 160 Members who had not paid the full subscription. If over a quarter of our Members are not paid up by the end of July—a not too unreasonable request—then the Committee has no alternative but to prune the Journal by a factor of about 30%. If things go wrong this year don't blame the Editor and certainly don't blame the Committee.

Of the publications which have appeared this year the new Handbook was a welcome sight. We really must make the effort to keep it up to date, especially as word processors are now readily available. It would also be a bit more human if in future editions we could include details of 'forenames', 'Christian names', 'nick names' etc. Only 'Nat' Allen has starred in the Handbook. There is nothing worse than ringing up and saying, "Excuse me, is that the right number for R. Grasper? (Knowing full well that he has been a C.C. Member for 20 years prior to his death)." Only the personal touch can pave the way for easy conversation.

Since the last Journal we have seen Andy Pollitt's new climbs supplement to North Wales, Paul Williams's 'Snowdonia Rock Climbs', a new Stanage guide (mainly by C.C. Members) and we are currently waiting for the next Tremadoc guide.

A good start has been made to resurrecting the Club library and protecting it for perpetuity from any future 'Vandals and Goths'. Our first priority is to build up a complete set of the Club's own publications which should help in future guidebook production. A notional definitive list is included in this copy of the Journal. Of greater importance are the Hut Log Books which are a unique record of many historic events within the Club. Several are still missing and it is hoped that anyone hoarding such a volume will suffer from prolonged and painful attacks of guilt. Bequests of any climbing books, guides or journals will help us to build up the Library in future years. Even offering old C.C. Journals for sale within the Club before disposing of them would be a great help to Members who are trying to build up complete sets (see Tony Husbands' article). Even the Editor was stuck for a 1923 Journal recently to help with an obituary. Another project which the Editor is working on is to build up a more complete picture of who has and who has not been in the Club. Have you any 'Lists of Members' from the past? So far lists have been obtained for 1903, 1908, 1910, 1912 and 1914.

Little news has filtered through about expeditions but it is good to hear of Don Whillans still in action in the Himalaya. At home the action on rock gets more feverish by the week as the pace hots up. Every blank bit of rock is now a possible route and amazingly (but inevitable) Master's Wall on Cloggy has finally gone completely free to Jerry Moffatt. According to the pundits Moffatt soloed all over the Cromlech including Right Wall and then on Clog even soloed Great Wall. Although his 'breakthrough' on Masters Wall could easily be thought of as the end of an era it might just well be the start of yet another important phase in British climbing. At one extreme we have Moffatt chopping the vital bolt before his big lead and yet this year several other climbers have sold their souls to the Devil and placed bolts in both Peak and Welsh rock. A recent article in Mountain even heralds 'Pen Trwyn boom signalled by bolting free-for-all'. Beware! If you sow the wind, you will unleash the whirlwind. There can be only one message to the 'bolt brigade'—EMIGRATE. Britain is unique in the world of rock-climbing and we must fight to preserve our heritage.

Geoff Milburn.  
September 1983.

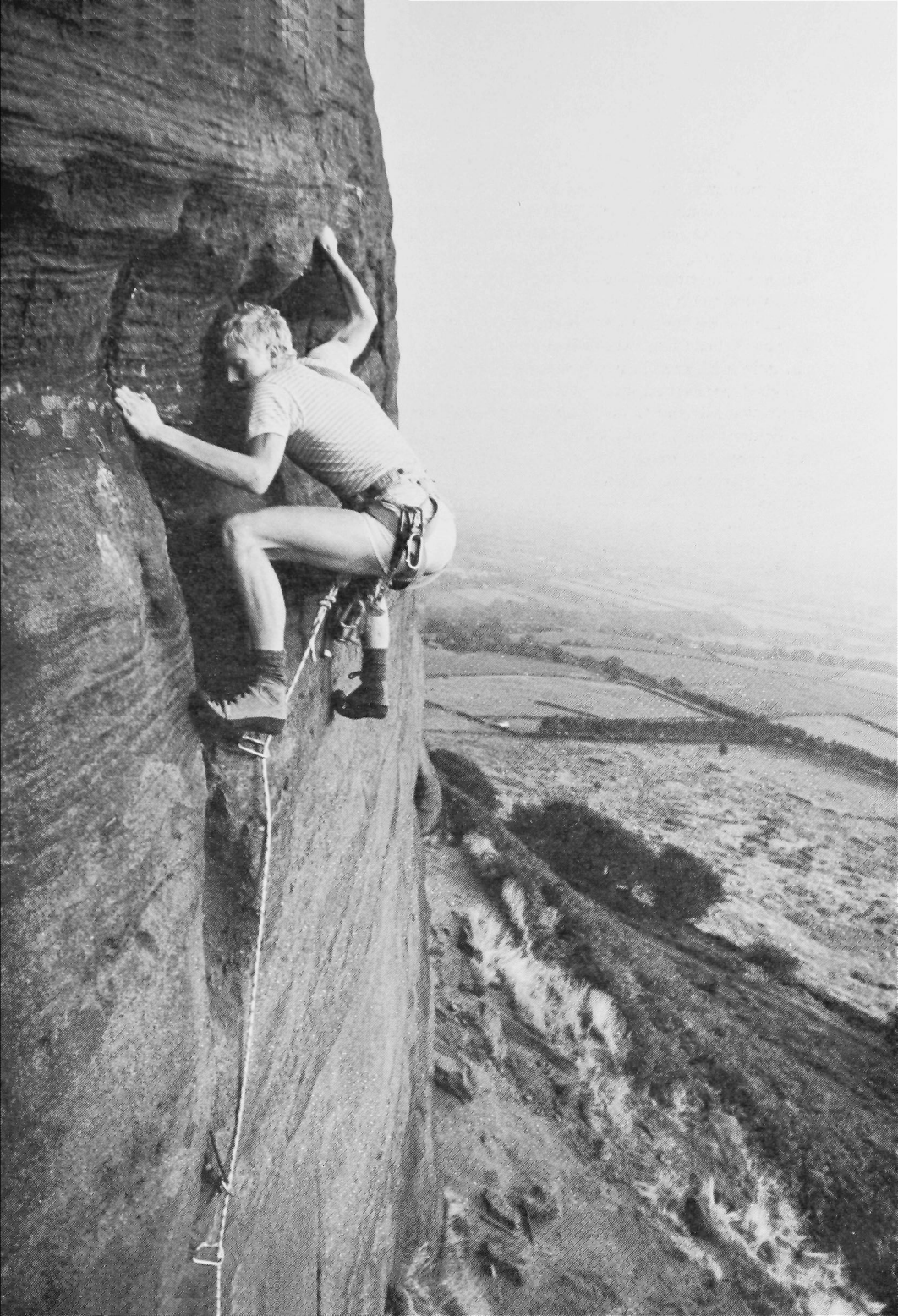
## CORRESPONDENCE

Dear Sirs,

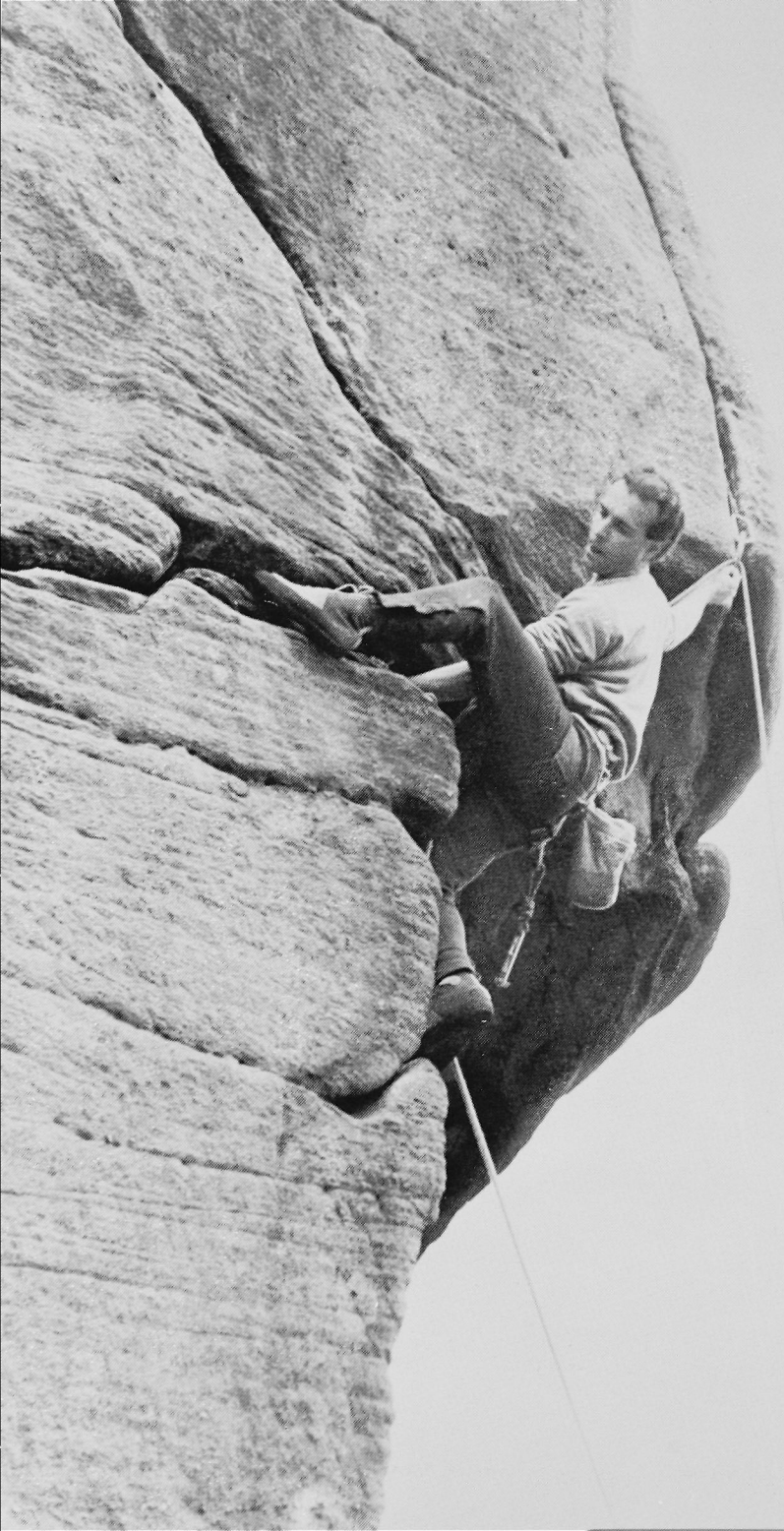
Despite having put down my Journal for 1982 for some two months before re-reading it I cannot help but be disgusted, angered and saddened by the way the Journal and Ogwen Guide have sunk to the depths of the gutter press to attempt to besmirch one particular North Wales climber. Neither has it been carried out in a truthful manner; insult, mis-representation and lies have been the order of the day. A fine advert for Britain's foremost climbing club!

*Martin Price on Bachelor's Left Hand, Hen Cloud.*

*Photo: Andy Brazier.*







Not only is the climbing world forced to put up with Perrin's 'artistic' articles(?) in every copy of climbing literature they pick up, he appears yet again to tell us all about Ogwen's history whilst managing to produce nearly a page of distorted propaganda about the 'Wrinkled Retainer', yet he fails even to mention 'Munich Climb', a far more controversial route in its time.

No-one condones the cutting down of the tree, but to besmirch Redhead for climbing and naming the route is petty and childish. Neither is it up to Leppert to rename the climb completely differently from the previous two versions. Ask any local climber; they'll tell you what it is called! Still it gives Perrin the lead for all that sentimental bile in the last paragraph. Mind you, the trees won't grow again in the Ogwen valley—not until you shift all the real vandals, the sheep that is.

On to the most disgusting item—the CCJ Area Notes. Not only is it insulting, but the creep who wrote the piece did not even put his name to it (What kind of Editorial Policy allows this?). To start with, I was with John on the 'Burning Sphincter' ascent. It was named after the results of too much pickle at an 'Indian' the night before. If you don't like the name, go do another route. The route on Cloggy is called 'The Tormented Ejaculation' (it doesn't take much thought to work out why) in case you hadn't noticed. Does this mean the next guide will call it 'Great Wall Left Hand' or some other soppy bilge?

Lies—it was never graded 8a (a myth perpetuated by lesser publications).

Distortion—there was no murmur of anything after Midsummer was done (it has a BOLT on it, by the way).

Distortion—the peg was not 'removed', it came out after being lobbed onto!

Lies—there is ONE bolt, as described in the new routes book in Pete's Eats.

Distortion and Slander—If John had such a short neck, then how come 'The Bells' is unrepeatable, despite a gang of cretins attempting a top-rope? No-one wants bolts everywhere, but there is bound to be controversy at the very top of our sport. If you don't like it then get out there and climb harder.

I joined the Climbers' Club to help support and maintain our sport, and because I thought that the Club upheld true values and fair play. I hope I am not mistaken. This trash must not be allowed to pervade C.C. literature again, or would you rather everyone bought Paul Williams's guide (a very fair and sensible publication)!

Yours faithfully, Andy Newton

The above letter clearly has many issues which could be debated at length but two or three points need clarification.

1) The Editor was the creep who wrote the Welsh Notes last year. A further wait would have meant no Journal before Christmas.

2) Since the 1977 CCJ all unsigned material or *nommes de plume* belong to the Editor. The Editor's policy is to use other Members' material wherever possible; only at the last minute does the Editor fill in the gaps in an attempt to bring the Journal up to standard.

3) In 1983 Jerry Moffatt finally solved Master's Wall and it is of some interest to note that the bolt was chopped. Q.E.D.

Ed.

Dear Geoff,

Enclosed is the first section up to Obituary as requested, also pages 152/153 of your script.

Regards Gordon and Paul (The Comps.)

P.S. In the article 'Zen in the art of climbing' if you abseil slowly down the article you will find that you have missed your footing (whoops! sorry Footnote No. 8). Suggest you correct rapidly or you could come down to earth with a bump!



# C.C. GUIDEBOOK CHECKLIST

- 1909 The Climbs on Lliwedd. Thomson & Andrews.
- 1910 Climbing in the Ogwen District. Archer Thomson.
- 1921 Climbing in the Ogwen District Porter Appendix  
Lewin Appendix
- 1926 A Climbers' Guide to Snowdon & the Beddgelert District. Carr.
- 1936 Cwm Idwal Group. Edwards and Noyce. Vol. I.
- 1937 Tryfan Group. Edwards and Noyce. Vol. II.
- 1937 Glyder Fach Group. Kirkus. Vol. III.
- 1939 Lliwedd Group. Noyce and Edwards. Vol. IV.
- 1940 Cwm Idwal Group. Edwards.
- 1942 Clogwyn du'r Arddu. Edwards and Barford.
- 1943 Craig yr Ysfa. Cox and Kretschmer.
- 1944 Three Cliffs in Llanberis. Barford.
- 1949 A Guide to Black Rocks & Cratcliffe Tor. Harding & Moulam.
- 1950 The Carneddau. Moulam. Vol. VII.
- 1950 Llanberis Pass. Harding. Vol. VI.
- 1955 Llanberis Pass. Harding. Moseley Supplement.
- 1955 Cwm Silyn and Tremadoc. Supplement. Neill.
- 1950 Cornwall. Andrews and Pyatt. Vol. V.
- 1956 Tryfan and Glyder Fach. Moulam.
- 1956 Tremadoc Supplement. Neill.
- 1956 A Climber's Guide to Southeast England. Pyatt. Vol. VIII.
- 1958 Cwm Idwal. Moulam.
- 1960 Snowdon South. Neill and Jones.
- 1961 Llanberis North. Roscoe.
- 1962 Moelwynion. Lees.
- 1963 Clogwyn du'r Arddu. Banner and Crew. Vol. 6.
- 1963 South-East England. Pyatt. rev. Fagan & Smoker.
- 1964 Cwm Idwal. Moulam. Vol. 2.
- 1964 Tryfan and Glyder Fach. Moulam.
- 1964 Llanberis North. Roscoe. Vol. 4.
- 1964 C.C. Bulletin of New Climbs. Neill.
- 1966 Snowdon South. Jones and Neill. Vol. 8.
- 1966 Tryfan and Glyder Fach. Moulam. Vol. 3.
- 1966 Cornwall Vol. 11. Stevenson.
- 1966 New Climbs Bulletin. Rogers.
- 1967 Cwm Idwal. Moulam.
- 1967 Llanberis South. Crew. Vol. 5.
- 1967 Carneddau. Moulam. (1966) Vol. 1.
- 1967 New Climbs. Rogers.
- 1968 Clogwyn du'r Arddu. Banner & Crew. (1967)
- 1968 New Climbs. Rogers.

- 1969 Cornwall Vol. I. Biven and McDermott. (1968)
- 1969 Dorset. White.
- 1969 New Climbs. Rogers.
- 1970 Northern Limestone. Compiled Nunn. (1969)
- 1970 Southern Limestone. Compiled Nunn.
- 1970 Chatsworth Gritstone. Compiled Nunn.
- 1970 South-East England. Pyatt. Rev. Holliwells.
- 1970 New Climbs. Roper.
- 1970 Snowdon South. Jones.
- 1970 Snowdon East. Moulam. Vol. 10.
- 1970 Cwm Glas. Crew and Roper.
- 1971 Bleaklow. Compiled Byne. Edited Nunn.
- 1971 Cwm Silyn and Cwellyn. Yates & Perrin. Vol. 11.
- 1972 Lliwedd. Drasdo. Vol. 7.
- 1973 Tryfan and Glyder Fach. Moulam.
- 1974 The Three Cliffs. Hatton.
- 1974 Cwm Idwal. Wilson and Leppert.
- 1975 Carneddau. Holliwell. Vol. 1.
- 1975 Chair Ladder. Moulton and Thompson.
- 1976 Clogwyn du'r Arddu. Sharp. Vol. 4.
- 1977 Gogarth. Sharp. Vol. 7.
- 1978 Llanberis Pass. Milburn. Vol. 3.
- 1978 Tremadog and the Moelwyn Mortimer. Vol. 6.
- 1978 Gogarth 1978 Supplement. Milburn & Evans.
- 1979 Bosigran. Hart.
- 1979 Llyn Peninsula Interim Guide. Jones.
- 1981 Llanberis Pass. Milburn.
- 1981 Pembroke. Littlejohn and Harber.
- 1981 Gogarth 1981 (Supplement). Milburn.
- 1982 Southern Sandstone. Daniells. (1981)
- 1982 Pembroke 1982 (Supplement). de Montjoye & Harber.
- 1982 North Cornwall etc (Supplement). O'Sullivan & Moulton.
- 1982 Ogwen. Leppert. Vol. 2.
- 1983 North Wales New Climbs (Supplement). Pollitt.
- 1983 Tremadog. McGinley.

# REVIEW

A policy decision to have the Review section Sub-Edited this year did not come to fruition and in line with current Editorial policy this section has been filled up at a late stage by the Editor.

**H.W. TILMAN** The Seven Mountain-Travel Books

Diadem £12.95

Mountaineering books in recent years have, to put it mildly, become nearly as scarce as unclimbed rock in England. Where they all disappear to is a mystery. For years I tried to track down copies of Tilman's 'Nepal Himalaya' and 'From China to Chitral' without success. Since his disappearance in a stormy South Atlantic Tilman has become even more of a cult figure and climbers of all ages have scrambled to obtain copies of his superbly written books. Go shopping to the specialist second-hand dealers and a complete 1st Edition set of Tilman's seven mountaineering books will set you back over £200—if you are lucky enough to track them all down. Those without that kind of cash can now head for the best book bargain that we have ever seen. If you have already ploughed through 'The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire', 'War and Peace' and 'The Bible' then the next great challenge, although a far less daunting one, is H.W. Tilman—all 896 pages of it.

Within one book Diadem has published the mountaineering scoop of all time. Now you can read all seven of Tilman's classic mountaineering books starting in Africa with 'Snow on the Equator' (1937). 'The Ascent of Nanda Devi' (1937), will grip you and merely lure you onto 'When Men and Mountains Meet' (1946) to explore in Assam prior to hair raising war-time exploits in Italy. By the time you reach 'Everest 1938' (1948) you will be well and truly hooked. From 'Two Mountains and a River' (1949) one roams from 'China to Chitral' to end in the 'Nepal Himalaya' (1952).

Even if you are lucky enough to already possess all seven of the above masterpieces so good is Tilman as a writer that you will be compelled to buy this book to avoid undue wear and tear of your prized 1st editions. If you have already read Jim Perrin's obituary of Tilman in the 1978 C.C.J. or Anderson's 'High Mountains and Cold Seas' you will still need this volume to get inside the real Tilman. And unlike so many mountaineering writers Tilman is eminently readable and one can freely associate with him and empathise to an extent that is almost impossible with most other writers.

Although the book only came out two days ago I have already had a chance to start reading it in earnest—almost forgetting the imminent deadline for this Journal. If you even glance through the notes on the insides of the cover you will be reluctant to put the book down. This is yet another real gem from Diadem. Don't wait for the price to go up; buy it NOW.

Ed.

**Cold Climbs** by Ken Wilson, Dave Alcock and John Barry

Diadem. £17.95

I write parochially. The winter of 1982/83 was a washout. Not a day off work, blocked by drifts; not a slide on boards in the city's parks; not a smell of a ski traverse of Bleaklow, it being 'a sea of cowdung' from September to April (almost); not a pearl of a frozen water drop on the Priestcliffe icicle; not a hope of starting Green Death above the short man's crux; a washout.

What cared I that north of the Border every eminence above molehill height was covered with crisp hard snow of a quality not seen since Bell the elder was a bairn. Tales filtered south of Sassenach teams heavily weighted with all the recommended gear; screws and tubes; Deadmen, Deadboys; long





channels, short axes; Humming Birds, Terrordactyls; being overtaken by solo weans, not long into mastery of fork, spoon and pusher sets, on their third Grade 5 of the day.

There will be many in the Club who remember back to 10 point crampons and to the discussion which reigned over the advantages and disadvantages of 12 points. The argument which held that the extra two, being at the front, would be an embarrassment, bound to trip one up, must have been wrong. The school of thought which held to tricounis was doomed to extinction. One's feet got cold enough in trikes on a wet summer's day on Middlefell Butress. A winter wait on Tower Ridge was for Aberdonians, other Scots, the depth of whose sporran would not allow them to reach to crampons, or masochists of any city.

Our modern Himalayanists, despite the technological wonders of today's crampon attachments spray their foot spikes down the slopes like arrows at Agincourt. (I believe that Martin Boysen holds the record at this event, but there may be other claimants). It is something of a marvel that any early crampon ever became firmly attached to any boot. The six foot of canvas tape would lash in the wind, become wet and freeze in razor sharp coils, the buckle a solid mace of ice. Once fitted, a miracle it stayed attached. The boots, sheen gone, soaked up the slush in the Allt a Mhuilinn and the curve of the sole impressed thereon by a hundred hills froze into clogs as the ice line was passed. The fusing nose dribble joined the ice fringe from hair and balaclava and beard to form an opaque carapace. The wind blew spindrift through every clothing orifice to settle in an icy deathbuoy around the middle. The axe, of a walking stick length, was many a lightly built rock-technician's downfall. The smith of the poem was wasted under the spreading chestnut tree. His place was on the Ben, hewing out vast bucket holds, with other worthier Smiths. There were giants on the hills in those days and their ascents prove it.

Into my waste of a winter dropped Cold Climbs and all this and more came flooding back. All that is gone. Scots bairns have Fangs fitted to their first pair of stiff-soled bootees. The hammer they use to wallop wooden pegs into their nursery toys has a droop snout screwed on it for the winter. Their romper suits are Gore-tex covered, Hollo-fil lined and their baby-grows fibre-pile. Accustomed as they are to climbing their Very Severe rock climbs covered with water in the summer they find it perfectly natural to display technical elegance on the same media in the winter. That the water has become solid just makes matters easier. In winter climbing at least the revolution has come. It may not be all due to the crafty old man of Glencoe, But it seems like it.

Cold Climbs illustrates the change. It does it well. Very well, from the early days to now. It is a quality volume. Not a coffee table volume. Definitely not. This is a volume which you read and read and hide between whiles from visiting activists, past or present. In an ordinary prose anthology, even one based round a single sport, a variety of topics will be covered giving release from a possible saturation. Here, even with the narrowness of subject, boredom is just not possible. The texts may have different writing styles but they have the common factor of compulsiveness. The photographs are superb. Bear in mind the conditions in which some of them were taken. Gripped leaders, tight-demanding seconds (should the hyphen be a comma?), spindrift, snow blocked lenses, mittens; frozen everything, fingers, shutters, eyelashes, winders. Wind. Cold. And the photographs are still superb.

The table detailing the chronological progress of ascents set against wider developments I thoroughly approve of. I found it fascinating although I would have liked a more noticeable indication, at its head, of the meaning of the asterisks, double crosses and R.I.P. sword signs and an indication of when the basic 12 point crampon first saw the sheen of ice. I would have liked the introductory information to each route to include the date of the ascent on which the article was based. I found the spelling 'concensus'. What piffing criticism.

We owe a great deal to these men of steady nerve. They are all men. Could the editors not have found just one contribution from a woman? Perhaps the Wilson's forceful bullying does not work on the fair sex or perhaps Cold Climbs is a little before their time and the rock-hardened fair are waiting, attics



full of sharpened Salewas, for the next ice age. Steady nerve the contributors must have to come unscathed through having the Wilson ring in the small hours for information. No small shock to the system, that. We owe more to the compilers for having presented this collection of their thoughts and experiences. Some ifs remain, perhaps impossible of alteration. If only there were one or two more very early accounts. Need previously published classic accounts be excluded merely on that ground? If only Robin Smith had left us a wicked winter Bat to gloat over, but we must be satisfied with what we have.

And we have a highly desirable classic. Anyone who has ever pushed a point of any type into the white magic must have it. Seventeen ninety-five is a lot of ha'pence (and probably more bawbees). If our Editor gets the Journal out in time you will be forewarned. In case not, I have a telepathy session at regular intervals, reading a few sections of it yet again and beaming out the message. Visit all those relatives who usually send you hankies from Marks or socks from anywhere. Visit the ones who don't. Don't drop hints—be definite. "COLD CLIMBS". "£17.95" "You'll have to pool your Christmas prezzies". "Get in before the rush".

Sit back; let who will cook the turkey and wash up. Get among the white hell. It's as good as the real thing.

Dave Gregory

**The Welsh Peaks** by W.A. Poucher

Constable. £6.50

**The Peak and Pennines** by W.A. Poucher

Constable. £5.95

As a distinguished member of this club Walter needs no introduction and neither do his books in this series. Both books offer a feast of black and white photographs and routes to the peaks. Sufficient is it to say that *The Welsh Peaks* has now reached the 8th Edition in a 21 year span since it first appeared in 1962. *The Peak and Pennines* on the other hand although more use to us in the Peak District(!) has now reached a 4th Edition.

If your original copies have dropped to pieces through excessive use or if you still do not possess these volumes then now is the time to fill up the gap on your bookshelf.

Ed.

**The Naked Mountain** by R.G. Morse

Fleet Books Toronto. £9.95

It is a pleasing and evocative title for a book, but it is hardly original as, apart from Elizabeth Knowlton's 1937 classic of the same name, there is at least one other identically named book. Perhaps *Naked on the Mountain* would have been a better description but Mazeaud worked that one out. Are we really running out of possible titles?

Imagine a staircase with 16,000 steps stretching up in front of you and you have the height of the Rupal Flank of Nanga Parbat—the largest vertical face on Earth. That was the ambitious target of a small six-man expedition which included Paul Moores and the Burgess twins.

'It is the large, siege mentality expedition that is an aberration, a sixteen cylinder shark-finned gas guzzler that should be relegated to the mountaineering junkpile where it so richly deserves to rust.'

"You're coming through loud and strong Big Bear. Over and out!" The author, Canadian mountaineer Randy (They don't make names like that over here do they? Just imagine C.T. 'Randy' Jones!), clearly calls a spade a spade but his earthy American-stamped approach rather takes one aback on first acquaintance. This book isn't exactly English as we know it (e.g. 'once we had gotten', 'plowing', etc.) and the influence on our language is certainly not for the better. Odd phrases such as:

'hitting up potential sponsors'; 'Schell's description was spotty'; and 'the mountain was royally socked in'; stick in my mind like pebbles in a boot after a scree run. Just as the story begins to unfold and grip the reader one has to cope with images such as, 'a flock of boys' and 'away we went like a herd of turtles'. Don't they have schools in America? Compared to the mundane trivialities of an average Himalayan expedition this story is far more exciting and one well worth telling but it is the style which drifts into machine-gun staccato that tends to irritate the reader.

'And there, as he arrived at base camp, we were.'

'I was absolutely wasted. Had no reserves left at all. A frightening feeling.'

Even in a crisis we have to suffer unnecessarily for supposed effect:

'The grass was green, the snow was white, the sky was blue. And Graham was dying.'

Why do all these expedition books dwell on the endless problems caused by the fallibility of the human alimentary canal? From the moment the plane takes off from British (sorry, or Canadian) soil it is only a matter of time before the first wave of nausea sets in and the shishkebabs strike. Later this will progress to bronchitis, pneumonia, pulmonary oedema, hepatitis, typhoid or worse. A sense of humour tends to temper the initial revulsion and lends savour to telling stories when one returns home. It can only be a matter of time now before someone feels compelled to coin a title to a mountaineering book such as, 'Where No Toilets Flush', or 'The Unsanitary Hills'. Before (or after) the mountain one is likely to suffer in a variety of agonising ways:

'I went back to my room, threw up most of my dinner then fell blissfully asleep. On a mattress.'

And then on the mountain, just as the dream of a lifetime is about to unfold:

'... when my stomach answered for me. I shot my head towards the door and puked a gobful of green bile out of it ...'

Al was evidently having a whale of a time as well(!) so one would expect that the situation should improve a bit. You must be joking!

'As the morning progressed my coughing grew worse—great rattling chest attacks threatened to knock my lungs loose. Phlegm was sprayed everywhere, with faint tinges of blood. I decided to go down to base camp.'

Are all these expedition-types sadists and masochists? Is it REALLY worth it or are they all proliferating one huge myth in an attempt to conceal how expensive and miserable it all was? Even those who don't get ill have been known to finish up ploughing waist deep through snow for hours on end and suddenly saying to each other, 'Sod this for a game. Let's go home'. My own memory of glorious days in the Atlas Mountains is still over-shadowed by the subsequent attack of dysentery—daily living in a hazy dream world of oppressive heat constantly crouched behind scorpion-infested bushes and nightly sleeping fitfully clutching the depleted remains of the last toilet roll until the next all-powerful call of Nature—led to another obstacle run over sleeping bodies in the blackness. Be honest—just think of all the heartache and agony—the lurking crevasses and toppling seracs, the howling winds and days of boredom, yet more deaths to add to the endless list, the ultimate failure ... Remember the long summer's day when you cast a last look at Cloggy with the evening light gently bathing the crag, before racing down the track for a good meal and a well-earned pint.

Not since 'The Last Blue Mountain' or the retreat from Annapurna has a book got me so gripped up and in a mood to wonder what it's all about. If this is the 'Morse code' for living then I can only counter that it sounds more like a nightmare come true. It is a book such as this that highlights those who are a breed apart and for me there is great consolation in the words of Colin Lythe:

'I have not sought those Alpine summits yet,

Nor found the footprints of the Grisly Bear;

Not mine to trace the borders of Tibet,

Nor see the sunrise on the Great Pamir.

I have not slept in snow-bound bivouac;  
 I have not won my way by choice or chance,  
 To mark the moulding of the slim serac,  
 The monstrous anger of the avalanche.

Yet have I roamed the mountains of my land,  
 And learned to love them, wind or rain or shine;  
 Through mist and snowstorm led the little band,  
 Who knew no better leadership than mine.

I love the pull and thrust of hand and foot,  
 To feel good rock, and glory in the sheer,  
 Upstanding crag, the craft of rope and boot—  
 Must I not name myself a mountaineer?

G.M.

**Snowdonia Rock Climbs** by Paul Williams

Extreme Books &amp; Design. £6.95.

In 1970 Ron James provided the Welsh scene with a ready list of the best routes for those with the 'tick mentality'. Although popular with the masses the guide was sadly out of date as regards such issues as information on aid and the grading system was thought of as a bit of a laugh in climbing circles. Later printings of the guide have looked even more dated and the field was wide open for a competitor.

John Stevenson cleverly stepped in and took his chance, quickly enlisting a local climber with sufficient experience to produce a first class guide that in theory should bring future sales of 'James' to a dead halt.

John's overall desing (of the book that is!) is excellent and is in keeping with the feel of rock action in the early 80s. An eye-catching cover gives more than a hint of what is in store. The layout is crystal clear and highly effective, and the host (nearly 100) of black and white photographs reveal what the game is all about. The crag photos in particular impressed me so much that I strongly advise that in future ALL our Welsh definitive guides should have a set even if we also incorporate pen and ink drawings to show the lines of routes. When speculating on the line of a possible new route only a good photo can reveal critical details—short of abbing down or getting to grips on the sharp end that is.

No-one can quibble with Paul's choice of routes which break down as follows:

D/VD 40	E1/E2 93
S/HS 37	E3/E4 48
VS/HVS 132	E5/E6 9

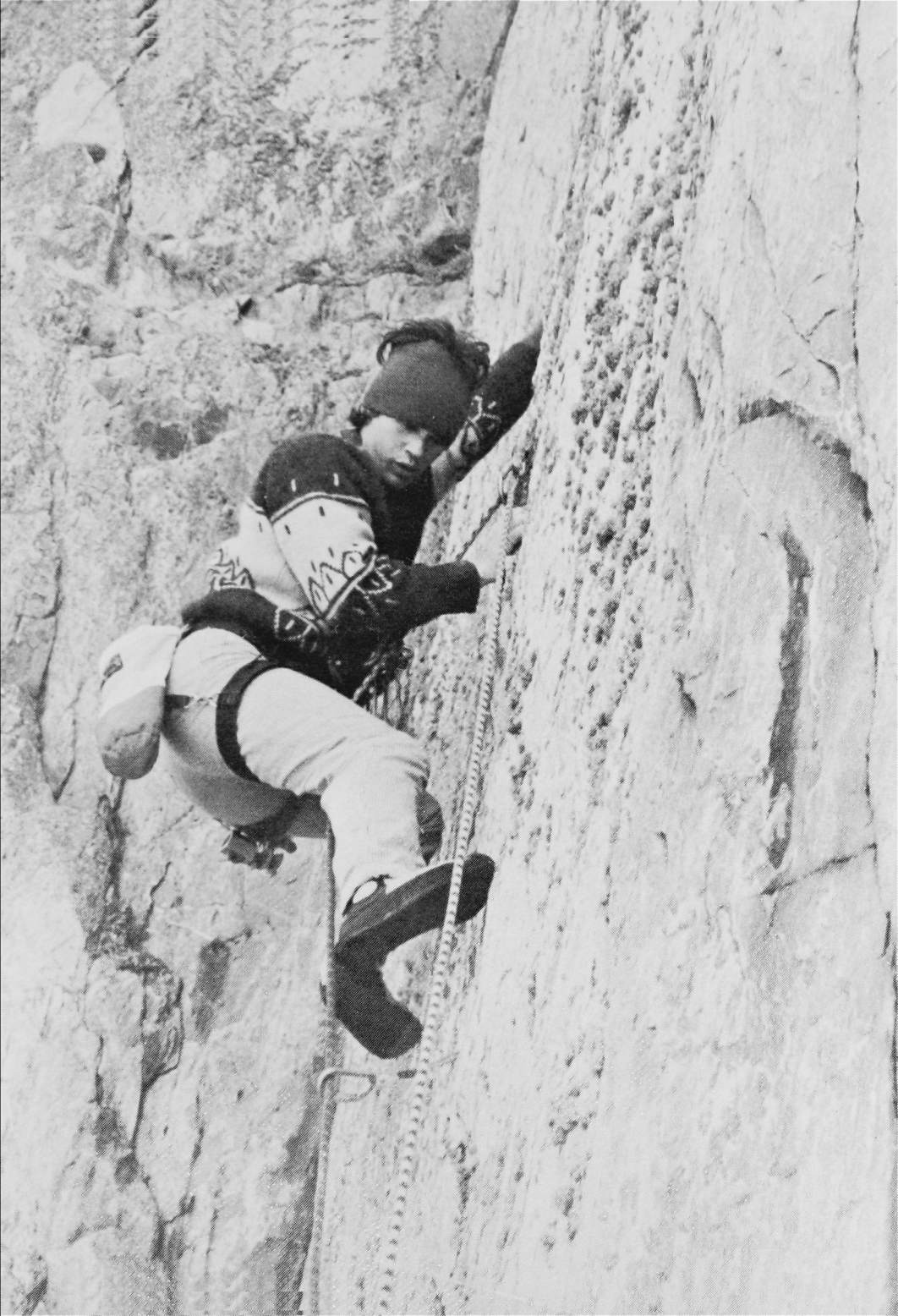
Whatever your grade there is plenty to go at and when you have ticked what you can do there are always the definitive guides.

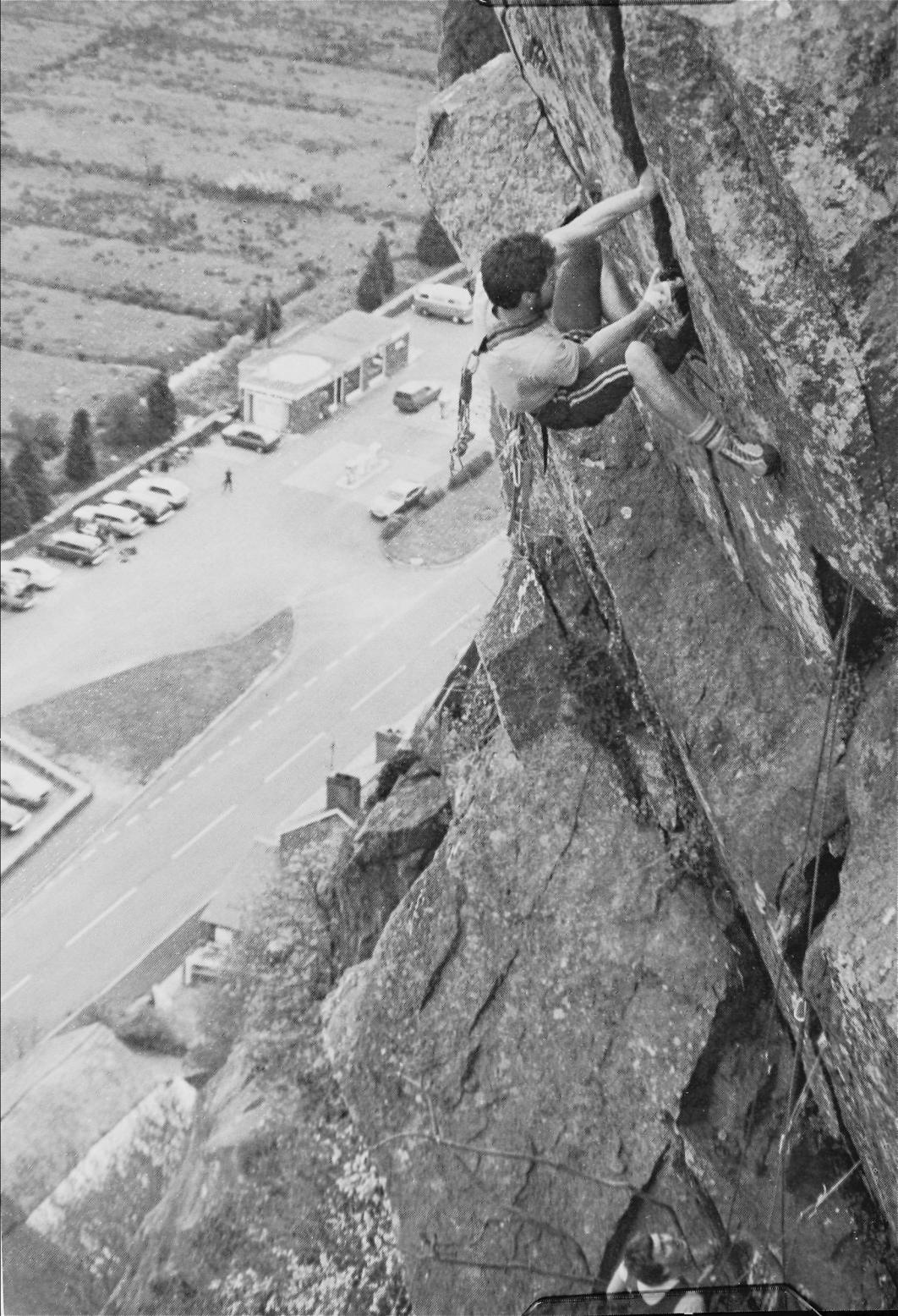
Many of the routes in James are included but Paul has played an ace by wisely choosing most of the best new routes done in the last six years. Of course we can all spot brilliant routes not included such as Trango and Barbarossa but Paul had a problem. He included 84 Llanberis Pass routes; 62 Ogwen; 61 Gogarth; 47 Tremadoc; and 29 Cloggy. Any more from these five popular areas would have brought the wrath of the C.C. on Paul's head for undermining the definitive series. No, Paul sensibly called a halt when approaching a total of 360 routes. Another pitfall Paul avoided was that of making the guide top heavy with too many desperate routes that would have only been available to the elite.

I defy anyone to knock the grades—they are absolutely spot on, but there again we have had definitive guides to each of the main areas in recent years and there has been ample time for the smoke to settle over grades after many repeats.

*Martin Crook making a free ascent of 15 Men etc., Gogarth.*

*Photo: Andy Newton.*





Really this guide is just too good to criticise but I can't resist firing three little arrows. Firstly there are a few naming errors such as: J Jordon; G W S Piggott; Birtwhistle; Pharoah; S W Hereford etc. Paul got 'A Thompson' right for Hawk's Nest Buttress (unlike the new Ogwen guide!) but then boobed with 'J M A Thompson' for Great Gully. 'P' or not to 'P' that is the question. And is it really 'Pentathol' as everyone says or more correctly 'Pentothal'? After Crew, Sharp and Williams perhaps Steve Haston will get it right in the next guide.

Secondly at a personal level 'What's his name' referred to me as 'and party' on no fewer than five first ascents: Talking Heads, South Sea Bubble, Aardvark, Freebird and North West Passage. Listen mate, as Sid will tell you, I sweated blood on that little lot to say nothing of the fact that it was my idea to explore and open up the North Stack Wall. Just wait till I get hold of 'Thingummy'.

Lastly Paul is just a trifle inconsistent about quoting aid used on first ascents. Thus Pincushion is quoted as previously artificial (but not Barbarian); Grasper had 'some aid' (but not Wasp etc); and Surplomb and Old Holborn have 1 point of aid each originally, but what about lots of others such as: The Great Corner, Girdle of the Lower Amphitheatre, Ribstone Crack, Shrike, Pinnacle Arete etc? Still why shouldn't guides of selected climbs show selected aid? These local experts(!), I'll teach him to pan my Pass guide.

Micro-snides apart this is clearly one of the best guides of all time and Paul deserves the coveted Pete Hatton 'special pat on the back' award if Lew Brown has finished with it now. It is significant that Paul is now hard at work on the next Pass guide and will probably also do the next Cloggy guide for the C.C. Ed.

**Tremadog** by Leigh McGinley

C.C. £4.95.

Well, what do you say? These reviews are getting harder and harder as the Publications Boys get better and better at producing the goods. In the bad old days it was easy to slate guides on many points: misinformation, poor reproduction, superfluous rubbish, etc., but today guide production is getting down to a fine art so much so that they are in fear of verging on the boring in taking the adventure out of our sport.

For the increase in routes the guide size does not suffer and can be considered of the same physical proportions as the Mike Mortimer example. The cover, however, says to greater effect what this Tremadog place is all about: technical moves, good gear, chalk and sun—even in the winter season (Unless I'm mistaken and all those trees have been suffering from Silicosis.). All this is in glorious colour too! To me a good guide is one which tempts and lures one to climb its routes. The cover certainly does this to such an extent that I may even force myself into a couple of training sessions on the Altrincham Wall this winter. The only improvement now seems to be to produce one that is instantly warm when you drop it down your tee-shirt. Transparent closed cell covers—could that be the next breakthrough?

The graded list also tempts and I've used one in the recent past as a 'bench mark' in order to gauge my performance which in turn made me feel good or sent me home depressed. The laid back atmosphere coupled with this revised list should certainly help many climbers to improve on their grades steadily without the epic. I remember failing on Striptease, then cruising up Fang in a mere five hours as my first HVS lead (HVS—in James). Had we been armed with a graded list then we would have tried Scratch Arete or Stromboli and packed a few more in that day. There again we had adventure and a tale to tell and that's what climbing used to be all about. Lists such as this do cheat the climber in a way but there again attitudes are changing and guides have to keep pace.

The guide gains Cwm Pennant with its three crags and looks worthwhile even for the promising



looking thrash up the minor road. Moel-y-Gest is lost to vegetation, unstable rock and rusting pegs—nuff said!

Access to Pant Ifan still seems to be a problem but how many people will read the comments on page 13 (intentional?). Will the puerile tickers take notice? Maybe a leaf out of the Pembroke guide may help here with A.P. printed alongside the grade to denote an access problem on this particular climb—therefore be on your best behaviour!

The historical is adequate (Oh the slings and arrows! Ed.) but seems to over-consume the pages in order to maximise the use of space. Strawberries is explained and possibly points to histories of the future i.e. style of ascent being all-important! There seems to have been an overlapping here; are histories necessary in both the front and the back? I'd shoot for the rear version with interesting anecdotes—it's easy to read and doesn't sound like the start of the New Testament, as often histories do, with climbers doing this then that then begatting the other—all boring stuff! This would leave at least 5 pages clear for new route notes and more tempting descriptions.

The crag photos are much better than the diagrams of the 1978 guide and ease the problems of following the routes—that is if you can find the starts.

Technical grades are now 'up front' which is general practice with the new generation guides and it's good to see a few (phew!) have been upgraded, notably Itch and Mangoletsi with Ferdinand getting an E for effort. Is Pippikin E3? Looks closer to E4!

And so on to stars. Stromboli is described as excellent but only gets one star; should be three just for the jugs alone. Barbarian gets two the same as Pincushion but Pincushion deserves two; for me Barbarian should lose its stars on that grunt of a roof, although it could be a grunt of national importance (Exit the President in high dudgeon. Ed.)! Generally the stars have been handed out for technical intricacy and difficulty alone. I don't wish to sound a bit of a wally but there are very fine routes in the lower grades. One Step deserves more and Scratch should be given one if not two. Difficulty doesn't always equate with quality.

Descriptions are generally more descriptive but quite a few have been copied out of the 1978 guide, which would of course give more time for checking the newer routes, and can't really be over-criticised.

I would have liked to have seen Pincushion given two grades even though I have done it without the peg (honest); perhaps Tantalus and Tensor could have had dual grades, both have belting pitches even with one peg for touching.

Finally, let's see more piccies in the text, they work in the Peak Series which are after all mostly the work of C.C. members (You are preaching to the converted, Dave. Ed.). I liked the guide and started ticking away as soon as I got my grubbies on a copy. I stopped soon after, realising that it wasn't my bloody guide, being only on loan. I only hope Nick has done all those routes too or else I'm in for a thick ear.

Dave Jones

### **Rock Climbing in the Peak District** by Paul Nunn

Constable. £6.95.

As I write it has suddenly struck me that it is 24 years to the day since the weather broke at the end of the Golden Year and on October 11th Paul Nunn, still at school, climbed Vember in a rainstorm. Elsewhere in this journal you can read of Paul and Claude Davies doing a new route with Baron Brown in the Pass only this year!

Fifteen years ago Paul Nunn and Oliver Woolcock were co-authors of a new guide to Borrowdale for the Fell and Rock. 1968 also saw the death of Eric Byne, leaving the editorship of the Peak guides to be filled by someone with drive and enthusiasm. Paul stepped into the breach and over the next four years

worked hard to produce guides to Northern Limestone, Southern Limestone, Chatsworth Gritstone, Bleaklow, and eventually Kinder before the pressure of his job forced him to hand over the reins. That was the era when Peak guides were floated under the C.C. banner. It was only right that someone who had put so much into the definitive series should get the chance to write the first definitive guide to the Peak district. When it came out in 1975 I got a look at a copy under High Tor on May 3rd—the day we did an early ascent of Darius just before it got popular. Earlier we had backed off Bastion Wall above the peg. Paul's new guide was snapped up eagerly by the masses and became an instant hit list. Our reaction was a mixture of envy (because it was so good and we hadn't done it!) and righteous indignation in case it harmed the sales of the definitive Peak guides. Eight years later the Peak guidebook machine is healthy and 'Nunn' has reached its 3rd edition.

The guide is worth buying still for the many fine crag photos and prompts me to suggest that we could do with a definitive photo-guide to ALL the Peak crags. Although a few modern action shots have been included it would have been a good idea to change ALL the action shots. That would have sold a lot more copies. I'm certain that Richard MacHardy doesn't still need slings on A35 (or does he now qualify for a historical shot?).

The choice of routes is excellent for all grades but somehow, despite Phil Burke's inclusions, the vast amount of limestone development in recent years is not well represented. Many of the grades have been revamped in the light of modern knowledge but the fun comes in spotting the discrepancies between 'Nunn' and the definitive guides. One can choose between Saul's Arete, E4,5c and Archangel, E3,5b or between Virgin Wall, XS,5c and Ontos, E2,6b. Saul on Burbage may be 4c or 5b depending on your source of information. Choose Great West Road in the Stanage guide and you can have a three star E1 but equipped with Nunn you will have to settle for a starless HVS. The secret is to choose the guide with the highest grade for any particular route you want to do. Behemoth at E5, 6b—GREAT, and so it should be but you can keep Prow at E5 Paul. My P.A.s won't be scrabbling up that appalling nightmare unless I lend them to a real climber. At a more mundane level if Crumbling Cracks is worth two stars then I'm Mick Fowler's grand-mother. It's still crumbling!

Nunn will always be in a prominent place on the bookshelf but for the next edition it would be wise to revamp some of the material to give it a brand new look. Buy me a pint and I'll tell you the rest of the story.

Ed.

**Clwyd Limestone** by S.M. Cathcart

Cicerone Press. £3.95.

A new guide to a new area is always good news and this latest offering fills in a critical gap in North Wales. It is a pity however that this guide was not incorporated into North Wales Limestone. The C.C. even had the chance to take this guide aboard but we were not able to offer a more commercial rate to the author, Stuart Cathcart. What will now happen to this limestone area is now anybody's guess.

'And so, at last, the guide has been completed, almost entirely due to the dedication and enthusiasm of one man.' So writes the author, who might rapidly establish himself as the Barbara Cartland of the climbing world. Is it a record for a climber to have his name appear three times on the title page? The frontispiece shows Stuart in action as do several of the nine photos in the guide. The man himself also took some of the photos. 25 out of the 30 routes listed in the List of First Ascents are Stuart's; the hardest route in the graded list is (yes, you've guessed it) Stuart's—and there is even a route named after him; Sir Cathcart D'Eath. Actually I prefer the version in the graded list—Sit Cathcart D'Eath. Good old Barbara Woodhouse.

As one-man-bands go this must rank as one of the biggest ego trips of all time. In the first 2 pages the author uses the word 'I' no fewer than 18 times, to say nothing of a few 'me' and 'myself' words. All



that is lacking is Cathcartian Limestone in the Geology Notes and a Craig Cathcart which will render High Tor and Cloggy obsolete. The Historical section is destined for classic status. Quote: '... aspirations also faded, lacking anyone with sufficient motivation to see it through. Such a person eventually materialised in the form of Stuart Cathcart'; 'Next to feel the force of his pioneering energy was Maeshafn Quarry' Wow!; 'Having cut his teeth on this project Cathcart began to turn virtually all his attention to documenting the rest of Clwyd limestone'. He must have a lot of attention. 'The pace of exploration accelerated as the ubiquitous Stuart Cathcart began to fill the gaps'! And last but not least:

'... as Cathcart's manuscript typing progress made its way along the Upper Tier, the urgency of climbing the 'last great problem' became pressing, and three evenings of concentrated effort were required to produce Vertical Games, the crux move finally made to appreciative cheers from a youth group camping below.'

Hip, hip, hooray.

The ubiquitous Ed.

P.S. Oh no! Not another numerical grading system.

**Stanage—Millstone** by over 25 peak climbers; edited by Geoff Milburn.

B.M.C. £5.95.

A few days ago I walked into a motorcycle preparation unit on an industrial estate opposite my home to enquire about a standard service on my machine. They were friendly and allowed me to watch as they tuned a racing motorcycle. They said they could fit my machine in on Friday. I thanked them and on leaving slipped on some oil and knocked a box full of spanners all over the floor. This branded me instantly as being a wally.

I mused on this; another example of first impressions being very important. The new Stanage Millstone guide just oozes quality as a first impression. It feels meaty, with good colour photographs on the covers, the front being an almost paradoxical mixture of light and shade and colour. Open the cover and the location map is good, although in common with the rest of the guide, has gone totally metric. No bad thing in itself, but perhaps a mile scale might have appeared alongside the metric scale for the vast majority who see a kilometre, multiply by five and divide by eight! Turn to the frontispiece and see an amazing colour picture of a hairy, youthful Pete Livesey, twenty-five feet further up London Wall since the Froggatt guidebook. It's funny though, his glasses and balaclava have blown away.

The heavyweight innards of the guidebook seem to have managed a good balance between economic descriptions, information, humour and character of each route and at the same time preventing sections becoming sterile.

Last weekend I was on a route in the Clwyd Limestone area. Steve Etherington and I were walking under the crags and saw a superb line—a wall with a crack up to half-height, then a blank area, then a continuation crack. It looked so appealing we had to give it a go. Whilst on the route a local came along and pronounced it 5c. He wandered off, and on his return saw us still on it. "Oh, it's 6b, I got it wrong." I didn't really care. I think we could have still had a play had it been 4a. In a roundabout way I am saying that the accuracy of grading doesn't really matter, so long as bad grading doesn't encourage inexperienced climbers on chop routes. Grades are just indicators of difficulty of little consequence on gritstone routes (in a safety sense), as just having a peer at your intended route will usually tell about the protection available. (Trevor Jones quote: 'I would suggest that Erosion Groove Direct at E2,5b would only get HVS,5a in the new Stanage guide.' Ed.) Looking at the star system, is The Punk worth one star? My answer to that is, that it is not really important. Accurate grading and a consistent star system is important on a large crag, where just 'doing' a route from the guidebook could mean the waste of an afternoon because the route was too hard/bloody chronic. Hopefully, again on gritstone,

*'The Bicycle Repair Man',—Gary, wellingtons and transport at Stadon Quarry. Photo: Chris Jackson.*

one can see if it is a good-looking line by simply looking at it. So, overall I have no criticism of the grades or stars awarded. The route lengths are all in metres (with one exception) which again means that most people are going to multiply by three and add a bit. No matter really, as we are going to have to get used to these froggy measurements someday.

Searching for routes is made quite easy with the diagrams, which are usually very close to the relevant pages. I used the guide on a recent visit to Yarncliffe Edge, and it quickly and competently showed me around. The reproduction of the action photographs is good, most being a bit butch. A very minor criticism is the names of the peg/aid routes around Nectar being mentioned in the text. A passing mention in the history is all they deserved.

The sections which used to be called things such as Access, Fauna, Geology etc, now come under the fashionable title of the 'Crag Environment', which I think is a very important section of the book probably destined not to be read by many. It is perhaps unfortunate that we have to pander to the plus fours brigade, although hopefully access is now rightfully taken for granted on the major crags. On the whole, I think it is dawning on climbers that the pressure on crags and craggy areas does not come from them alone. It is rare to go to Stanage on a sunny summer's day and NOT see hang-gliders—whose devotees have no conflict with climbers (and are probably like-minded people), but the extra people that participate, and watch, erode the same paths the climbers use. There is, however, a competition for space between bird life and climbers on crags. It's all very well to say that egg collectors effectively wiped out the nesting populations of Stanage and surrounding crags, it may well be true, but there is no doubt in my mind that birds such as the Merlin, Peregrine or Raven are not destined to return in any numbers because of climbers. I offer no solution—I like to climb too much.

When thinking back to days on Stanage, I always think of warm rock and sunny days, loads of chalk and relaxing climbing. The reality is somewhat different. Cold and wet, mashed-up hands, desperate thruthches up desperate cracks, a flat nose through trying to head-butt Nectar, or falling down a wet descent gully and landing at the feet of a University Fresher's meet and staggering away as if I meant to do a swan dive into wet sand. Millstone is different. I mean you actually go to Millstone to climb.

Usually a guidebook has a couple of empty pages at the back headed 'New Routes'. These often end up under rocks in bivvy caves. Their exclusion is an admirable attempt to prevent relatively non-biodegradable materials being buried in what I imagine must be some sort of territorial boundary ritual.

Obviously, a great deal of effort has gone into this guide. Miles of crags, routes being squeezed in between routes already too close together, probably tons of claims for first ascent credits, all must have added up to quite a headache. It's hard to believe there is a hold at Stanage that isn't used by at least two routes! The guide is by no means definitive though. PROPER lines still exist on all the crags for those with talent and imagination (although I mean imagination in terms of what is or is not possible, not in terms of imagining that a new three metre diagonal line is good, and not within one metre of the route to its left). It just gets boring to read about the weekly crop of little E1,5c routes all crammed together at Stanage End.

Hopefully, if the new guides in the new series are as good as the Stanage Millstone guide, the Peak will have one of the best guidebook series in the world. I believe the new Stanage Millstone guide is better on economy, layout and presentation than even the excellent Staffordshire area guide, the Staffs guide being slightly more fun in bed (to read). No doubt if Margaret Thatcher's policy on pushing information technology works, by 1995 climbers will be wandering around with a definitive guidebook to western Europe on microfilm. By 2000 we shall be tuning in our wrist-mounted visual display units to the transmission station Information Computer built onto the Froggatt pinnacle.

Overall it is a very fine guide, whether you fancy climbing with the crowd at the popular end, the grouse at Stanage End, or with great difficulty at Millstone, it will take you there and make you want to

climb. With the proximity of Sheffield, and easy access from Derby, Nottingham and Manchester, Stanage area is always a popular guide. The new guide deserves to be even more so; as it is so attractive I expect people will probably buy it on impulse as they shelter in the local gear shop. I hope so.

Steve Allen

Quote: 'At the moment the emphasis has shifted from the main Pennines to the Bolton Moors where the quarries are big, ugly and dangerous. I venture to suggest that one new route here is worth half a dozen at Stanage because each new route in the quarries will add to the development of the sport, whereas at Stanage there is nothing left to develop.'

Walt Unsworth, Rocksport, April 1968!

### **The Alps by W.A. Poucher**

Constable. £12.95.

A copy of this keenly awaited publication was as good as sold before I even had time to flip through the pages and that is a review copy record time. Having rung the printer to say that our Journal text was arriving after work finished I raced for school clutching a handful of mail, which had to wait for coffee break (some of us still do have to work for a living). As soon as I opened the parcel containing Walter's 'The Alps' a circle of inquisitive teachers homed in to have a look at it. The first one charged off for a pen to get details enthusing that it would make an ideal Christmas present for a friend. Another commented that she had lived in Switzerland for a year and would also like a copy. Several older pupils were also attracted by the book lying on a desk and by the end of the day it was clear that Walter has another best seller about to reach the public.

Writing further should not be necessary as one only needs a quick glance at Walter's choice of a hundred colour shots to confirm the value of this superb publication. Shots taken from the Midi-Geant telephérique brought back happy memories to my children who, when young, had rattled along in the tiny swaying cable-cars to reach Point Helbronner. What a way to introduce young children to such a breathtaking panorama of savage Aiguilles.

Those of you who have already purchased copies of Scotland, Wales, The Lake District and The Highlands of Scotland will need this companion volume but whereas there are many books on Britain and its mountains books on the Alps are few and far between and so this latest offering should appeal to a much wider clientele. Not only climbers and mountaineers in this club will be attracted, there will be countless tourists who have savoured the delights of the peaks from down in the valleys or who have gone up to gaze in awe at the Mer de Glace who will buy this book on impulse.

The only criticism I would make of a book such as this which relies on its aesthetic value to sell is that some of the pictures lose a great deal of their impact when split in half by the centre fold of the book—especially a peak such as the Matterhorn.

The shot which has already imposed itself on my mind is that of The Aiguille Verte and the Drus—just sitting there under a deep blue sky waiting for us all. And then of course I envied Walter his chance to go cruising round the peaks in a helicopter to select his vantage points—but then again he probably looked down and envied those who will read his book, then set off for the hills to revel in the majesty of the summits at first hand.

Ed.

### **The Alpine Journal 1983**

Edited by John Fairley

It was with awe and relief that I opened the latest Alpine Journal; relief, because I noticed a new Editor! Not that I have anything against Edward Pyatt—on the contrary. I hold in awe the fact that he has a record of having edited no fewer than TWELVE journals since 1971. By the time these





comments get into print I will have only got half-way to that target. Of course it is only fair to remind folks that the record is held by George Yeld who, between the ages of 51 and 81, edited the A.J. for 30 years. So far no one has managed more than SIX issues of the C.C.J. which is perhaps not surprising when C.C. members seem to prefer to write for the A.J. Is it on account of the fact that the A.J. is a more prestigious publication or does it merely attract the peak baggers?

The new Editor, John Fairley, has clearly rolled his sleeves up to preserve standards set by his predecessors and can be proud of his first issue. To break the record he only needs to keep going for another thirty years!

Ed.

### JOURNALS OF KINDRED CLUBS

The Committee wishes to acknowledge receipt of the following publications:

Pinnacle Club Journal. No. 18. 1979-1981.

S.M.C. Journal. No. 174. 1983.

Rucksack Club Journal. No. 73. 1981.

Mt. Club of South Africa. 1981 & 1982.

Fell and Rock Journal. No. 68. 1983.



# AREA NOTES

## North Wales Notes

1983 saw an unprecedented amount of activity on North Wales Limestone. The roadside crag of Pen Trwyn on the Great Orme, long overlooked, had around 100 new routes (mainly at E3-6a and above) added to it in the space of a few hectic weeks around June and July. Bill Wayman started the 'bonanza' with a dozen climbs all named in the 'golden vein'. His two superb groove climbs, *Klondike*, E4,6a, and *Solid Gold*, E3,6a, have become extremely popular. Other Wayman routes: *Goldrush*, E6,6b, done in 1982, *The Price of Gold*, E5,6b, *Krugerrand*, E4,6a, *Midas Touch*, E4,6b, *Love Over Gold*, E3,6a and *Pure Gold*, E4,6a,6a, are all very worthwhile.

Andy Pollitt soon appeared on the scene and, after rapidly repeating most of the routes on the crag, freed *The Disillusioned Screw Machine* of its aid point at E6,6b/c. He also put up many other fine hard routes—*Thunder Road*, E6,6a,6b, a directissima on the 'Machine'; *The Bearded Clam*, E5,6b, and *Anchovy Madonna*, E3,6a, both fine hanging grooves; *Pocket City*, E4,6a, *Captain Fingers*, E4,6a, and *Mr. Chips*, E4,6b,—a trio of fingery aretes; *Quicksilver*, E5,6b, the finger-ripping *Picnic*, E5,6b, *The Continuing Adventures of Charlton Chestwig*, E4,6a and *The Pirates of Pen Trwyn*, E4,6a.

Ron Fawcett also added some powerful routes: *Needle in the Groove*, E6,6b, *Body Torque*, E5,6b/c, *Charlton Chestwig* (The World's Finest Climber) E5,6b, the technically precocious *Ice Cool Aid Acid Test*, E5,6c and to the overhanging 'Pin' wall the 'super pumpy' trio of *Ward 10*, E6,6b, *Fall Back*, E6,6b/c and *Mr. Olympia* E6,6b.

Back from America, a super-fit Jerry Moffatt also left his mark on the crag with routes such as *Wings of Perception*, E5,6c, a fierce wall climb, *Rapture*, E5,6b, and a free ascent of *Oyster* at E6,6b. His finest performance however proved to be the impossible black striped wall left of the 'Machine' which he climbed with five falls to give *Master Class*, E7,6c, as yet unrepeatable and apparently the hardest route he has done anywhere (including the U.S.A.). Moffatt did some very good boulder problem/micro routes as well: *Werry's Woof Woute*, E3,6b, *Parisella's Overhang* an 18-foot 6b roof and *Clever Beaver 7a* (the hardest problem on the crag) will tax the fittest of climbers.

Gary Gibson 'discovered' Solution Wall at the extreme right-hand end of the cliff and with Adam Hudson rapidly developed it. *Spine Chill*, E4,6b, *Menincursion*, E4,6a, *Peppermint Pig*, E3,6a (Hudson led), *Willow Brooks*, E4,6b and *Drip, Drip, Drip*, E4,6a, are all pocket-pulling classics on firm rough black limestone. Two other Gibson routes worthy of mention are *Paradise*, E4,6a, and *No Red Tape*, E3,6a, the latter surmounting a large roof.

Local activists Dave and Chris Lyon, occasionally accompanied by Norman Clacher and Chris Bundock, found several good routes: *Private Investigations*, E4,6b, *Power Failure*, E4,6a, *The Alchemist's Dream*, E3,6a, and the finger-shredding *Magical Ring*, E4,6b,6b, up the bulging wall right of *Midas Touch*. On lower Pen Trwyn, the brothers found two excellent routes, *Twisting By The Pool*, E3,6a, and *Jacuzzie Jive*, E4,6b.

Mel Griffiths who had previously free-climbed *Axle Attack*, pulled out another big lead just to its left, *King Krank*, E5,6b, whilst Dave Towse climbed the superb *Flakeaway*, E4,6b, *The Jihad*, E4,6b, and *String of Pearls*, E3,6a. *The Visionary*, E4,6a, a direct line up the Clear White Light wall fell to Andy Grondowski and the problematical groove of *Masada*, E5,6b, was done by Kevin Howett. *Scary Canary*, E5,6b, *Firefly*, E3,6a, and *Silver Surfer*, E3,6a, were three good finds for Martin Crook—*Firefly* proving to be a classic!

Other hard quality climbs were *Slouching Towards Bethlehem*, E4,6b, by visiting 'Kiwi' Roland Foster, *The Arc of Eternity* E4,6b, *De Torquemada* E4,6a, and *The Wall of Blutes* E3,6a, all from

Paul Williams. Also noteworthy is the fact that Chris Gore repeated all the desperates apart from Master Class. Many other easier routes too numerous to mention were climbed, elevating Pen Trwyn from a backwater to one of the premier British cliffs.

The reason for the creation of such a fine selection of routes is largely due to the placing of bolts which aligns it with the European style of thinking. Bolts have not been inserted at four-foot intervals (apart from Axle Attack and Mayfair, two old aid climbs) but have been judiciously placed to save potential ground falls or serious swings into the rock on routes without adequate natural protection, e.g. on 'The Screw Machine', one is climbing at 6a/b above its top bulge protected only by a single bolt, out of sight, 15 feet below—a 'real gripper', but not a 'decker'. In situ threads can also be found on many of the routes.

As the Great Orme is a nature reserve, on private property, and the home of several rare species of flora, bolts, krabs and slings have been placed at the top of several routes to allow easy abseil descents thus avoiding unnecessary disturbance to plant life. Unfortunately, a 'moronic few' have taken it into their little pea brains to remove some of the slings and krabs. However, the local climbing fraternity are endeavouring to monitor the situation and are replacing the missing items—krabs are now being super-glued shut!

Elsewhere on North Wales Limestone things have been fairly quiet. On Castell-y-Gwynt, Fawcett free-climbed the 'Bitter Sweet' bolt ladder at a desperate looking E6,6b. At Craig y Forwen, *Space Case*, E6,6b, by Pollitt and Clacher plugs the gap between Great Wall and Quickstep, while *The Hurting*, E3,6a, by the Lyon brothers blasts up the wall right of Wackeroo. The Little Orme also had a couple of additions—*Hot Space*, E3,6a, by the Lyons climbs the wall right of Mur-yr-Ogof *The Hole of Creation*, E3,6a, Williams and Julian Taylor, climbs out of an amazing cave at the top of Great Zawn.

The Gogarth scene has been very quiet this year but down on Carreg Hyll Drem, Mel Griffiths pulled off an amazing coup to rid *The Prow* of its aid at a modest E5,6b. On the same crag, *Compromising Positions*, E4,6b, Chris Gore and Steve Haston, takes the massive flake left of King Kong.

The Pinnacle on Craig yr Ysfa received some attention. *Sea of Dreams*, E3,5c,5b,4b,5b,4b, Martin Crook and Andy Newton, is an exciting new girdle whereas *The Haunted* E5,6a, Gibson and Andy Popp takes the much fancied wall right of Pinnaclessima and was soon repeated by Andy Grondowski and party. On the opposite side of Amphitheatre Gully, Martin Boysen climbed a couple of lines, the best of which is *Drought*, E3,6a.

Down at the Milestone Buttress, *Crazy Horse*, E3,5c,6a,5a, John Harwood and Andy Sharp(alts), takes the wall and crack left of Soapgut. Over in Cwm Idwal Pollitt and Williams repeated Livesey's *Zero*, E6,6b, over two days, having been told to go the wrong way on the first day by a 'knowledgeable onlooker'! On the second day Pollitt led the route with one fall when his foot slipped on some lichen. Perhaps not a perfect ascent, but hardly the 'tainted ascent' reported in C. and R.—and certainly nowhere near as tainted an effort as on the two-day first ascent!

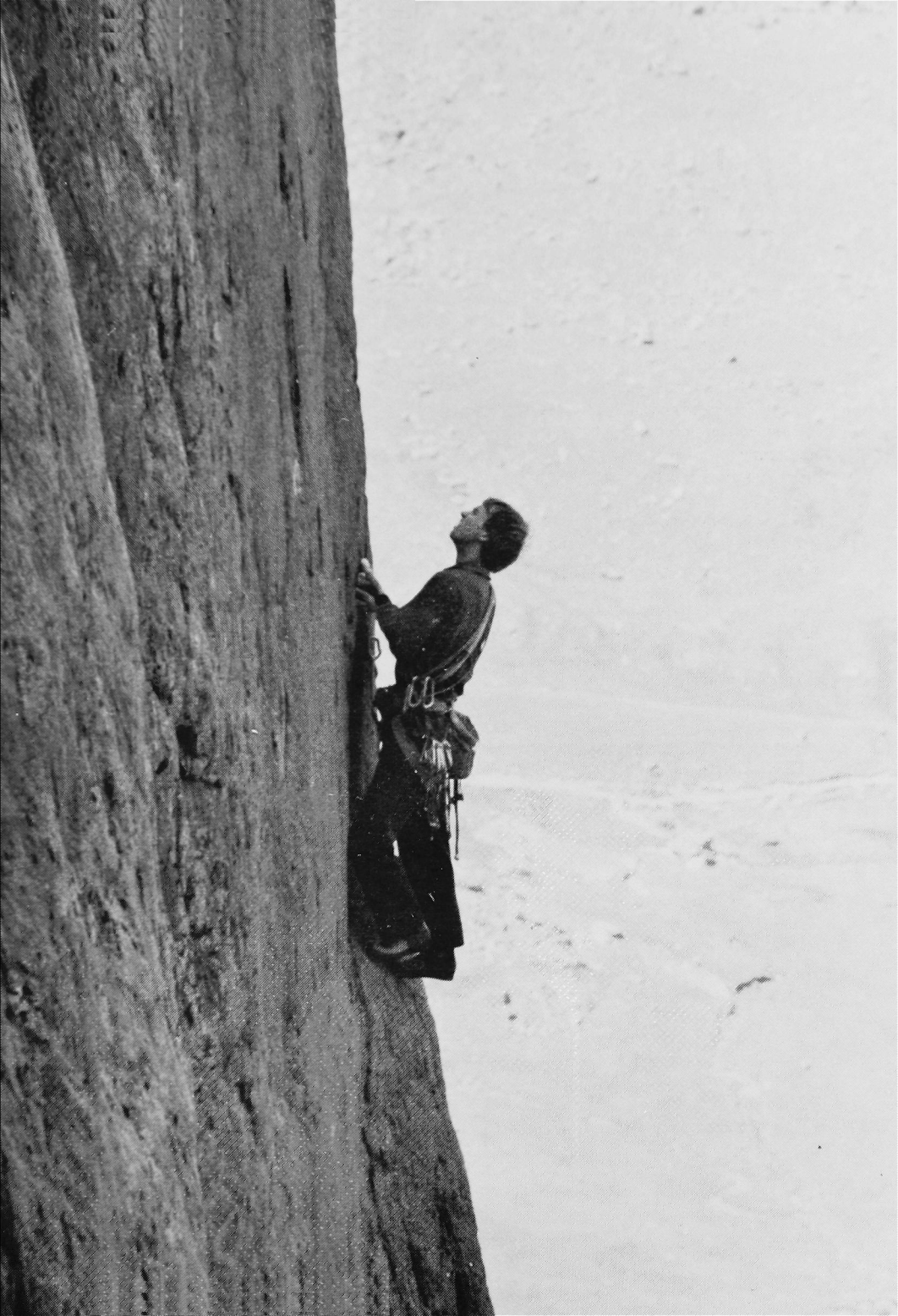
In the Llanberis Pass, Crook and friends rid *The Despicable Act* of its single aid point at E2,5c. Just to the left, *China Girl*, E2,5c,5b, was a good effort from Bonny Masson and Pete Gomersall(alts).

On the Grochan news was made when Pollitt led Quantum Jump, E4,6b, Pump, E4,6b, Cockblock, E5,6b, Venturi Effect, E5,6b, Mural, E4,6a, S.S. Special, E2,5c, 'C' Minor, E2,5c, and Stroll On, E3,6a,—in a day!

Carreg Wastad received a good new route when Martin Crook and Dave Towse climbed the steep rock between Erosion Groove and Shadow Wall to give *Twisted Sister*, E2,5c,5c.

*Rootorooni*, E3,5c,5c, Mark Lyndon and John Silvester(alts) takes a counter diagonal line to The Thing on Dinas Cromlech but Jerry Moffatt stole the headlines with an afternoon's soloing—Right









Wall, E5,6a, Left Wall, E3,5c, Memory Lane, E3,5c, Foil, E3,6a, Cenotaph Corner, E1,5c, and down Ivy Sepulchre, HVS,5b!

On Craig y Rhaeadr, *The Sewer*, went free to Steve Haston at a possible E3,5c, when dry (which it never is) and on Crib y Ddysgl, *Russet*, E3,5c, went free to Andy Sharp who also added *Hooded Crow*, E3,6a, to the same crag.

On the Crib Goch Pinnacles, Steve Reid added another *Reid's Route* at E1,5a. Down on Craig Fach, *Pulsar*, E3,6a, went free to Phil Davidson and Dave Pyecroft. Pyecroft then went on to free two other routes on the cliff with Dave Lanceley, *Diapson*, E1,5c, and *The Slash*, E1,5b.

Joe Brown popped out of retirement to put up *Sidewinder*, E2,5c, on the West Wing of Dinas Mot with Claude Davies and Paul Nunn, but the man who caused the biggest stir in the Pass this year was Stuart Cathcart. Cathcart first opened up a new buttress 300 yards right of Plexus Buttress with three hard new routes, *Silent Thunder*, E4,5c, *Gorty's Triangle*, E4,6b, and *Stalling Out*, E2,6a. He then went on with Simon Hale to open up the Equator Walls to the right of Cynr Las. *Black Eyes*, E1,5a,5a, follows a flake crack—O.K. so far—but then *New Era*, E5,6b, and *Steel Appeal*, E5,6b, were climbed both sharing a common middle section which is protected by THREE SHINY BOLTS. (See what I mean. Give them an inch and they take a mile—or as Mike Browell would say, give them a micron and they'll take a kilometre! Ed.) Although there was quite a fuss made at the time, the furor has subsided somewhat, and the general opinion seems to be "well O.K., it's a new piece of rock, but not on traditional crags, please!"

Talking of bolts, the main event of the year was the first ascent of *Master's Wall* on the East Buttress of Clogwyn du'r Arddu by Jerry Moffatt without the infamous bolt at a surprisingly modest X.S. 6b. The route was climbed after lengthy abseil inspection after which the bolt was removed prior to the lead. It will surely be several years before this 'chop route' is led on sight.

Also on Cloggy, *Moon Shadow*, E3,6a,5a, Ian Carr and Paul Braithwaite(alts) climbs directly up the wall right of The Axe. Carr also freed *Slanting Slab*, E3,6a. Psycho Killer had a second ascent from Roland Foster and Dave Lee at E6,6b, Foster taking a 40ft flier in the process. The same team also made the second free ascent of *Pistolero*, E5,6b, hot on the heels of Moffatt and Paul Williams who had just done the first.

In Vivian Quarry, Llanberis, *Comes the Dervish*, E4,6a, had many repeats and gained classic status. On the slab to the right, Pollitt and Tim Freeman climbed *Flashdance*, E6,6a, an exceptionally bold and delicate pitch which joins the Dervish at its overlap and is as yet unrepeatd.

1983 saw the emergence of several women climbers, the best of the bunch being Geraldine Taylor who led *Resurrection*, E4,6a, a feat later emulated by Gill Price. Ms Taylor also led routes such as Foil, E3,6a, Memory Lane, E3,5c, Curving Arete, E3,5b, The Boldest, E3,5c, November, E3,5c, Blue Peter, E4,5c, and Wonderwall, E3,6a—an impressive achievement!

One feature of modern climbing especially noticeable this year was that once a hard route was 'chalked up' it rapidly got repeated, e.g. Pollitt's first ascents of the year on Lord of the Flies, A Midsummer Night's Dream and The Purr-Spire triggered off about a dozen repeats of each within a couple of weeks. The chalk on 'Midsummer's' especially must have been visible from the planet Venus. Subsequent talk of downgradings of the above routes, plus other desperates should be taken with a 'pinch of salt'. There is no doubt that the first ascent of the year is the hardest and that as chalk builds up on the holds a route's mystique diminishes hence it becomes relatively easier.

This year there are more people climbing at or near the top standard than ever before. All this bodes well for 1984.

Paul Williams

### Peak District Notes

For those not climbing at 6a and beyond, this year's notes aren't going to be very inspiring. So, to liven them up a little for the average man on the crags, here are some vital statistics: Of the routes climbed and claimed last year, a mere 30% were easier than 5c. 30% were 6a and 30% were 6b. The remaining 10% were harder. Understandably, only 10% were less than Extreme while 20% were E5 and 20% E4. For those of you still reading, there is a painfully obvious conclusion to draw from this. A very large proportion of the new routes being climbed are taking terrifically impressive features, often on crags which were written off years ago. This is based on simple logic, in that the type of rock taken by an E5, 6b tends to be steep, blank and therefore impressive. Ergo, the crags were well-known, and dismissed as impossible.

Tactics are, unfortunately, sinking lower and lower. True, the majority of new routes are achieved by reasonably ethical means, but a growing minority are adopting tricks which very capable climbers have previously scorned. The Craig Pen Trwyn mentality grew from a gestation period in the Peak District; bolts have gradually appeared on limestone over the past three years. It has now been to Wales, had a lovely holiday, and become fat and petulant on a diet of sacrificial lambs. Now this lumbering behemoth has returned and found a temporary home on limestone. It is now learning confidence under the heat of public opinion, but will soon become immune and force its way onto gritstone. Will someone please destroy this monster before it eats all our rock?

Unfortunately, the bolt-bashing brigade are currently amongst the elite of the sport. They have adopted, understandably perhaps, the elitist, arrogant stance which allows them to MAKE their own routes. It is, after all, their rock?

Amongst the jewels in this year's crop, Jerry Moffatt's ascent of *Ulysses Bow* stands out. Freshly back from the States, Jerry announced his intentions for the year by a completely clean and highly ethical ascent of this notorious problem, without chipping, bolts or side runners. *King Crank*, E5,6b, is not the only major new route on Stanage. The wall right of Calvary is now taken by *Defying Destiny*, E5,6a, climbed by Bill Turner, and left of Guillotine is *Off With His Head*, E4,6a, from Andy Barker.

Standing out as one of the truly notable gritstone achievements is *Scritto's Republic*, E6,6c, at Millstone. Vigorously cleaned to the point of civil engineering by various hopefuls, it was left for Ron Fawcett to sort out, which he duly did.

Although gritstone is once again the poor relation, there has been plenty of activity. The appearance of a new Stanage guidebook re-awakened interest in forgotten crags. Wyming Brook has been micro-blitzed by Andy Barker and Paul Mitchell, and Ladybower Quarry has eight post-guidebook routes, by Doug Kerr and Jon Handley. At Rivelin, judicious tree surgery resulted in two routes in the vicinity of Jade; these are *Exit*, E3,5c, and *Der Kommissar*, E4,5c, by Roger Greatricks. On the Needle he pushed *Alternative Seven*, E5,6c, up the steep south face, but offended local opinion by cold-welding a peg into gritstone. This was promptly removed!

Bob Bradley and Graham Hoey rediscovered Blizzard Ridge and respectively climbed *White Out*, E2,5c, and *The Tempest*, E5,6b, on either side. Hoey's trade-mark 'a long thin piece of metal, hand-placed', ensured success on the latter. Just up from Rivelin is the lost block of Hallam View Buttress. *Heaven Can Wait*, E4,6a, is Keith Sharples' addition.

Stanage has naturally gained a plethora of gap fillers, notably by Chris Craggs, Colin Binks and Martin Veale. Paul Mitchell has also added a couple. At the time of writing there are fourteen post-guidebook additions of varying quality. Millstone too has come under the microscope and has four new additions. *The Ginger Sponge and Custard*, E3,6a, is a top pitch right of the top arete of Great West Road. Quentin Fisher claims responsibility. Jonny Dawes has managed a better name, *Monopoly*, E5,6b, which takes a bold line between Great Portland Street and Bond Street.

New desperates on Froggatt include Dawes's *Jugged Hare*, E5,6b, up the well-known chippings

between the Heart and Hare routes. Bancroft's concrete fillings have apparently eroded; beware the Stalybridge wall! Moffatt has climbed the true arete of Chequers Buttress with *The Arete*, E5,6b.

Curbar has been under scrutiny in anticipation of a new guidebook. Little has been found, including *Culture Shock*, E1,5c, by Ian Riddington and *Seven Metre Crack* by Andy Bailey.

A new route at Cratcliffe is a rare thing; this year there are two after a five year lapse. Moffatt's *Genocide*, E5,6b, is in the true modern idiom, making Reticent appear antique and overprotected. Also quite nearby is *Creeping Friend*, E4,6b, by Andy Barker. A blanching mantelshelf terminates the route and may be terminal.

Gardoms has two fillers, *Cnottle*, HVS, by Chris Jackson and a direct on Marshall's Wall at E4,5c, by Chris Parker.

At the Roaches, the roof left of Sloth has been breached by Simon Nadin, with *Loculus Lie*, E5,6b. Down below, *Clive Coolhead Realises that the Excitement of knowing you may be the Author of Your Own Death can be More Intense than Orgasm*. Nick Dixon found it, climbed it and graded it E5,6c. The rest of the world shortened it.

Cerebral deficiency has enabled a lead of one of Hen Cloud's most coveted lines, the wild left arete of Rib Crack. *Cool Fool* is E5,6b. Gary Gibson found this and a couple of others, *Stone Loach*, E4,6b, and *Frayed Nerve*, E5,6a. Out on the Very Far Skyline Crag where few people ever venture, is *Entropy's Jaws*, E5,6c, climbed by Andy Woodward on his home ground.

Of major significance in Staffordshire has been a repeat, six years later, of Ray's Roof. Steve Allen had little trouble on his third attempt, after a couple of mid-winter exploratory struggles. Unfortunately, Steve has been unable to translate the grade into English and it remains at 5.11c.

At Tintwistle, the prime line of the crag fell to Jim Moran as *Guns and Drums*, E4,6a. On the far side of the hill, Nick Plishko climbed *Hymen the Tactless*, E5,6c, over the roof of Dovestones' Hanging Crack. Also by Plishko is *April Fool*, E4,6a, near Rob's Rocks. Ian Carr has also been active in the Chew Valley. At Ravenstones he narrowly failed on *Welcome to Greenfield, Gateway to the Valley*, E3,5c; Mike Chapman succeeded. Carr picked up a couple of routes in Pots and Pans Quarries—*The Charlatan*, E2,5c, and *Exfoliation*, E3,6b.

Despite all this gritstone activity, limestone continues to sprint ahead with more than its fair share of the action. Yet surprisingly, Stoney remains virtually static except for the demise and disappearance of the elm tree in the Quarry. This has exposed the overhanging walls and made it a much more imposing place; Birtles's Oliver and Millionaire Touch appear to be both devastating and magnificent.

The dry backwater of Cave Dale was regrettably prominent in the news this year, and not because of Bob Bradley's major new line—*Phone Home*, E3,5b.

Chee Dale continues to be the place-most-likely-to but also the scene of the most blatant 'modern tactics'. Opinion over *Gary's Little Bolt Route* tend to be extreme. You either love it or you hate it. Five bolts enable safe 6b climbing up the otherwise unprotectable wall right of Shazam. Seen in overall perspective, it can only mean bad news for Derbyshire climbing.

Whilst this single route tends to be the major topic of debate, there have been many notable achievements down the valley. Starting at Plum Buttress, Neil Foster climbed The Plum free (again) at 6b. Up on Third Life are *Hunter House Bust*, HVS, 5a and *The Black Adder*, HVS, 5b, by John Stevenson and Boris Hanon respectively, and *Thrills and Spills*, E4,6a, by Jim Moran. Moving Buttress has a few aid eliminations by Chris Plant and Dave (Chesters) Lee. *Shock the Monkey*, E4,6b, frees Wobble; *Priming the Pump*, E4,6b, frees Shivering Crack and *A Farewell to Arms*, E2,5c, probably means it. Paul Cropper has put up *Nettle Whine*, E2,5c, and Jim Moran gave Geoff Milburn his fortieth birthday present; *The Roaring Forties*, E2,5c.

Across on the suntrap Sidings, Paul Cropper has three new routes; *A Touch Too Much*, E2,5c, *Dukes of Hazard*, E4,6b and *I Drink, Therefore I am*, E3,6a. Simon Nadin, an up-and-coming

Buxton star claims *Fame But No Fortune*, E3,5c. His real claim to fame is in Staden Lower Quarry, which must be one of the more evil holes in Derbyshire. He and Richard Davies have thoroughly blitzed the place with a free ascent of *Soft Mick* at E3,6a, *Restive Being*, E1,5b, *Silent Fear*, E3,6a, *Death's Retreat*, E5,6a, *Bandobras Took*, E3,5c, and *Invisible Limits*, E6,6b. In the upper quarry their *Action Potential*, E3,5c, girdles the Wipe Out wall.

Also in Chee Dale is a further crop of Dave Lee's routes. Nettle Buttress has *Terror Incognito*, E5,6b, and *Summer Wine*, E4,6a, while on Chee Tor is *Duel in the Sun*, E5,6b, which takes the scooped headwall above 42nd Street. Jim Moran's *Bodyline*, E3,5c, takes a groove just to the left. Gary Gibson has found two important new additions; *Suddenly*, E5,6b, squeezes in right of Apocalypse, and *Midnight Summer Dream*, E5,6b, is the obvious direct to Blind Alleys. Across the river Neil (Noddy) Molnar freed Spiders from Mars shortly before his tragic death while soloing in North Wales.

Micro-activity has begun to exploit the micro-crag of Blackwell Dale and Monksdale, mainly by by Andy Barker and Paul Mitchell. They have also been scouring Water-cum-Jolly and claim several lines on Rubicon Wall, including *No Jug, No Thug*, E5,6a, *Skippy the Bush Kangaroo*, E2,6c, *The Bomb is Coming*, E4,6b, *Professor Kirk*, E5,6b, and *Maureen*, E4,6a. Elsewhere are *The Lammergeyer Twins*, E5,6b and *Sting in the Tail*, E4,6a also by Barker.

Ron Fawcett has been conspicuously absent from the Peak District new route scene for most of the year, but left *The Vision*, E5,7a, as a parting shot. On Central Buttress, yet another big line has fallen to Jim Moran—*Fort Knox*, E4,6a. It is a matter for constant amazement that he continues to dominate this crag to the virtual exclusion of everyone else.

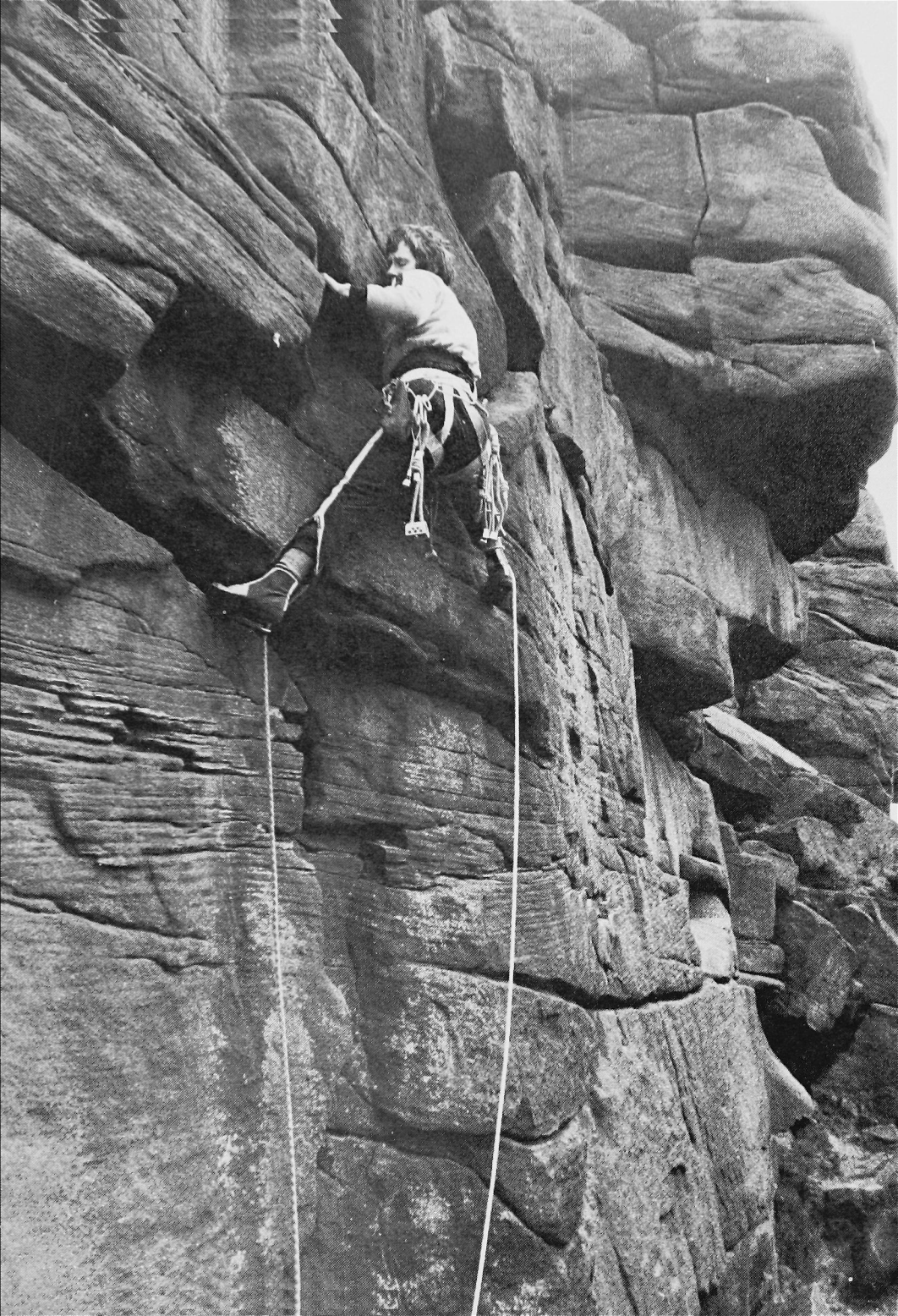
Now that Ron and Jerry have both climbed The Prow, someone has apparently decided that its not worth keeping the route, so he set out to erase it by chipping the handholds on the top pitch. This is possibly one of the most evil little tricks yet pulled in the chipping league and should be jumped on from a great height.

Cressbrook Crag has been rediscovered and redocumented by Keith Sharples and Ian Riddington. They reclimbed Ed Wood's *Billy Two Hats*, E3,6a, on Has-It Buttress, then put up *Sloane Rangers*, E3, 5c, and *The Plough*, E2,5c, on Nogbad Buttress. *Ed's Wall*, E2,6a, also by Ed Wood was reclaimed, and Andy Barker found *Flick of the Wrist*, E5,6b, on the opposite bank, and *Square Peg, Round Hole*, E5,6b. Gary Gibson rediscovered the micro-crag in Cowdale. This was the crag which Chris Jackson drove past. End of story.

Down in Dovedale the National Trust has carried out the bulk of its planned tree-felling programme which reveals the walls and pinnacles in their full glory. The result is a much-improved deal for climbers, and within a year or two the bare slopes will re-establish a binding vegetation cover. The valley has once again come under scrutiny. Jim Moran climbed *Destor's Gap*, E4,6c (The name refers to the place on the wrist where nails are driven in for crucifixion. Only that point is strong enough to hold the body weight. This may be useful when we catch the 'bolt merchants'! Ed.) up the blank bit right of Caesar on John Peel Wall. Across on Dovedale Church, Keith Sharples free climbed *Apse American Style*, E4,6b. *Watts Here* has at last gone free to Chris Hamper at E4,6a. *Crisis* went free at 6b to Jonny Woodward, and the arete above is now *The River*, E3,6a, by Mark Elwell. On the Doveholes John Codling free-climbed (well almost) The Blacksmith, now *Pumping Iron*, E5,6b. Apparently this was 'more Circe than Circe'. On Lion Rock Nick Dixon freed part of St. Dunstan with *Yuri Gagarin, the First Man in Space*, E4,6b. Chris Jackson, Bill Wintrip and Bob Conway have done some exploration and unearthed *Tricky Dicky*, E2,5b, which was hiding quite close to President's Chimney. Other little gems are *Archibald the Grim*, E2,5c, *Massanbula*, E2,5c and best of all *Flopsy Bunny goes to the Zoo*, HVS,5b.

Across at Beeston there is only one addition to report, but it could well be a major line, *Principle of*









*Moments*, E3,5c, takes the pocketed wall between Beest and Thorn and was climbed by John Fleming.

Finally, down in Matlock, Gary Gibson continues his single-handed domination of Pic Tor with *Sulphur City*, E3,6a. On High Tor, Jim Moran pushed an E3,6a, variant finish to Highlight, and John Codling quickly added an independent-but-only-just-start to give *Cannery Row*. Fortunately the route was named by the Moran/Milburn team (Don't be surprised if you see Mike's arms in plaster next! Ed.) Codling has also produced a new direct start to The Pillar, E5,6b, and a major new line in the centre of the crag, *Hot Gossip*, E4,6a, 6a,5c, which finds new rock between Lyme Cryme and Laurin and was climbed with Steve Allen. Dominic and Daniel Lee attacked the very steep rock right of M.1 to establish *Mad Max*, E5,6b. Lastly, at Willersley is *Tramp*, E3,6a, by Gary Gibson.

As an action-packed year it seems quite typical and yet it would be a mistake to pass it off as 'just another year'. For gone are last year's top performers; Ron and Jerry, Dominic and Daniel. Their occasional appearances have been up to their usual star quality, but sparsely spread. Enter the new Peak scene of Dave Lee, Simon Nadin, Andy Barker and Paul Mitchell. Gary Gibson, John Codling and Jim Moran remain as evergreen (Yes it's a plaster job. Ed.). But where are the stars of yesterday?

Mike Browell

### SOUTH WEST AREA NOTES

Residents were staggered early in the year to read that a new route at Vixen Tor had been graded E3,6b. However after an investigation it was discovered to be a route called *Docker's Dilemma* climbed in 1980 and graded E3,5c/6a. However, a number of new routes have been discovered in the Haytor area. Though no details are available it seems that someone has climbed a fierce-looking line to the left of Rough Diamond at Haytor. To hazard a guess it looks about E4, 6a/6 and comes complete with a ring peg which seems to wave in the wind. In Holwell Quarries, just north-west of Haytor Chris Nicholson and Bruce Woodley have been active climbing a number of short but good-looking routes. The best of these are: *Saversnake* E2,5c, and *Le Dernier Cri* E3,5c. These are said to compare favourably with the Embankment routes at Millstone.

Moving on to the Culm Coast we find that development has been more intense. Nicholson has been at work on Lower Sharpnose and produced three routes. The crack left of Uphill gave *Angle Grinder* E2,5c, whilst the diagonal crack right of Clawtrack gave *Challenger* E3,5a/b. He also climbed a variation start to Maxon, taking a diagonal line from the left at E2,5c.

At Maer Cliff just north of Bude, Nicholson has climbed a number of very good libes on a compact belt of slab. The finest is a superb crack named *Freedom* E3,5c, a peg for aid at the start remains even after a few strong attempts to eliminate it. In a small zawn, just north of this, he added *Tears for Fears* E2,5b, which takes a corner in the wall. The thin crack in the left wall gave *The Wall* E2,5c.

Just south of Buds a delightful slab has been developed variously by Nick Hancock, Iain Peters and Pete O'Sullivan. The obvious crack in the centre of the slab gave *One Pint to Capel* VS,4c, whilst the crack at the extreme left end gave a really superb V.Diff., the best on the coast. The hardest routes to date are *Big Business* E2,5b and *Cold Comfort* E2,5b by Peters and O'Sullivan respectively. These routes lie on the huge concave slab at the right-hand end of the cliff.

Down in Cornwall, information is harder to gain. In the Great Zawn Mick Fowler climbed a line just right of Dream to give *Canute* E4,6a. At Pordenack Point Rowland Edwards climbed a direct start to Stone Boom naming it *Telegraph Road* E3,6a. At St. Loy Mark Edwards produced an even more serious route than The Baldest with *The Barber* HXS,5b,6a. This starts just right of Finesse and crosses the Baldest from right to left. At Bosistow Island the Edwards team produced an aid extravaganza on the north face at HVS,A2. On the south coast between Porthcurno and Pendnounder a newly discovered zawn has yielded *Deep Cruise* E1,5b and *Missile Man* E2,5c, both the work of the Edwards' team.

Pete O'Sullivan

# NEW CLIMBS

Since the 1982 CCJ no-one has commented on the lack of new climb details but the 'North Wales New Climbs' supplement did appear early in 1983 as promised. Consequently only details which reached the Editor are included below.

## NORTH WALES

### 1 CARNEDDAU AREA

#### CRAIG YR YSFA

Two routes have been done on the gully wall opposite Mur y Niwl. The wall is demarkated by a flake crack on its left.

#### **El Nino** 130 feet E3

1 70 feet. 5b. Start on a fine belay ledge with a spike. Scramble round to the right, or boldly directly, to reach a foot traverse line going left. Move up to a small overhang which is climbed by obvious flakes to a greasy ledge.

2 60 feet. 5c/6a. From the left-hand side of the ledge gain a small slab which leads to a short groove. Climb this to good foot-holds then traverse left boldly to a fine pulpit (prayer and Friend protection). The last move is distinctly awkward and difficulty is inversely proportionally to height.

First ascent: 1983. M. Boysen

#### **Drought** 140 feet E3/4

A line up the wall directly above the stance of El Nino.

1 70 feet. 5c. Start as for El Nino but instead of moving left climb a steep slab direct to gain a tiny crack which leads directly to a belay.

2 70 feet. 5c. Move directly above the belay until it is possible to move right, below overhangs. Climb an overlap by a crack which is followed for 30 feet until it is possible to move slightly left to gain the top of a flat quartzite flake. Move boldly right to reach gratifying jugs.

First ascent: 1983. M. Boysen

#### **Spiral Scratch** 170 feet E3

A superb route taking the slender hanging column of rock to the right of The Grimmer. Start as for The Grimmer.

1 120 feet. 5c. Follow The Grimmer for 12 feet then tiptoe right along the very lip of the roofs to the arete. Climb this by a tiny ramp (hidden nut runner) to an overhang and climb this on the right to a ledge on the very edge of the pillar. Climb up to a peg runner then move right to good jugs. Go direct up the centre of the pillar to block belays. Tremendous position.

2 50 feet. 4c. The arete on the right leads to easy ground.

First ascent: July 3, 1983. G. Gibson, A. Hudson, A. Popp

**The Haunted** 170 feet E5

A superb wall climb, low in the grade but requiring considerable nerve. Start at the stepped corner of Pinnacle Wall.

1 80 feet. 5c. Climb directly up the wall on spaced holds to the 'pavement'. No protection. Traverse left to belay at the base of Pinnaclessima.

2 90 feet. 6a. Climb straight up the rib 5 feet right, over a bulge onto some flakes. Follow the delightful flakes up right to their termination and move left along a thin break to a thin crack peg runner. Follow the slightly right-trending crack to the top.

First ascent: June 21, 1983. G. Gibson, A. Popp

**Sea of Dreams** 340 feet E3

This 5c,5b,4b,5b,4b route is a girdle of the Pinnacle Wall from right to left starting up the right arete of Ancient's Wall.

First ascent: 1983. M. Crook, A. Newton

## OGWEN AREA

## MILESTONE BUTTRESS

**Crazy Horse** 180 feet E3

A continually interesting line up the wall left of Soap Gut.

1 55 feet. 5c. Just left of Soap Gut climb the wall behind a huge flake to reach a slim corner which is followed to a grassy ledge. Place a runner and traverse right to belay in Soap Gut.

2 90 feet. 6a. Climb the thin crack in the wall left of 'The Narrows' to a ledge. Move diagonally up left to the rib and follow this to a large grassy ledge and tree belays.

3 35 feet. 5a. Climb a vertical jam-crack to exit left.

First ascent: June 12, 1983. J. Harwood, A. Sharp(AL)

## LLANBERIS PASS

## VIVIAN QUARRY

**Flashdance** 120 feet E6

1 120 feet. 6a. A line up the slab right of Comes the Dervish.

First ascent: 1983. A. Pollitt, A. Freeman

## CRAIG DDU

**The Despicable Act**—FREE at E2,5c.

First Free Ascent: M. Crook, A. Newton, S. Haston

**China Girl** 220 feet E2

A 5c,5b line to the left of The Despicable Act.

First ascent: 1983. Bonny Masson, P. Gomersall(AL)

## CARREG WASTAD

**Twisted Sister** 200 feet E2

A 5c,5c, line taking the steep rock between Erosion Groove and Shadow Wall.

First ascent: 1983. M. Crook, D. Towse

## DINAS CROMLECH

**Rotoorooni** 150 feet E3

A 5c, 5c, counter diagonal line to The Thing.

First ascent: 1983. M. Lyndon, J. Silvester

## CRAIG FACH

Although the crag was mentioned in the previous Llanberis Pass guides several blatant artificial routes were omitted as Trevor Panther was still breaking the accepted code of climbing ethics as late as 1974. He even published a hilarious 16 page supplement to the crag in 1977, which was ignored by the climbing world.

**Pulsar**—FREE—at E3, 6a

(First done at A3 and HVS in 1974!)

First free ascent: P. Davidson, D. Pyecroft

**Diapson**—FREE—at E1, 5c

First free ascent: D. Pyecroft, D. Lancelly

**The Slash**—FREE—at E1, 5b

First free ascent: D. Pyecroft, D. Lancelly

## CRIB GOCH PINNACLES

**Reid's Route** 220 feet E1

Going at 5a this line takes the steep wall right of Reade's Route!

First ascent: S. Reid, S. Martin

## DINAS MOT

**Sidewinder** 560 feet E2

An interesting and varied route. Start as for Hiawatha.

1 70 feet. As for Hiawatha.

2 120 feet. 5b. Climb the first 10 feet of Hiawatha/Sych to the pocket then traverse left along the obvious line until it is possible to move up to reach the base of the groove on Tremolite. Move 12 feet left and climb directly up the wall to a good small pocket. Continue steeply to reach a crack which is followed to good belays on a terrace.

3 40 feet. Climb easily up heathery rock to a small tree and good belays below the upper part of Tremolite.

4 110 feet. 5b. Move left and climb various ribs and bulges heading for a roof below a prominent triangular slab below a larger roof. At the level of the first roof traverse left, peg runner, passing a precarious looking flake with difficulty. Step round the arete onto a steep wall and continue to a comfortable exposed ledge with dangerous looking blocks above. An exhilarating pitch.

5 70 feet. Climb over the blocks up to a short chimney. Follow this steeply until, a move left to a stance on Slow Ledge Climb.

6 150 feet. Finish up Slow Ledge Climb.

First ascent: August 29, 1983. J. Brown, C. Davies, P. Nunn

Several more teams have claimed various routes on Gardd slab!

On a crag 300 yards right of Plexus S. Cathcart has claimed **Silent Thunder** E4,5c; **Gorty's Triangle** E4,6b and **Stalking Out** E2,6a.

#### CRAIG Y RHAADR

**The Sewer**—FREE—at E3,5c

First free ascent: 1983. S. Haston.

#### CLOGWYN Y DDYSGL

**Russet**—FREE—at E3,5c

First free ascent: 1983. A. Sharp

NOTE: The Pass is now free of all the aid mentioned in the 1978 and 1981 guidebooks. Q.E.D.

**Hooded Crow**, E3,6a, is a new route on Clogwyn y Ddysgl by A. Sharp.

#### CYRN LAS—Equator Walls

Apart from **Black Eyes**, E1,5a,5a, S. Cathcart has placed BOLTS to manufacture two lines that he has claimed. NO COMMENT!

#### 4 CLOGWYN DU'R ARDDU

**Moon Shadow** 165 feet E3

A 6a,5a line to the right of The Axe.

First ascent: 1983. I. Carr, P. Braithwaite

**Pistolero**—FREE—at E5,6b

First free ascent: J. Moffatt, P. Williams

**Master's Wall** 160 feet E7,6b (Grade not yet established!)

THE line has at last been climbed after the chopping of THE bolt!

First ascent: J. Moffatt (with Paul Williams)

**Slanting Slab**—FREE—at E3,6a

First free ascent: I. Carr

#### 6 TREMADOG

#### CRAIG BWLCH Y MOCH

**Emotional Crisis** 60 feet E4

3a 60 feet. 5c. The cleaned arete right of the top pitch of Oberon.

First ascent: A. Andrew



## CARREG HYLL-DREM

**Compromising Positions** 70 feet E4

1 70 feet. 6b. The exciting roof between Troubador and King Kong.

First ascent: June 2, 1983. C. Gore, S. Haston

**The Prow**—FREE—at E5, 6b

First free ascent: May 25, 1983. M. Griffiths, R. Griffiths

NOTE: A proposed renaming to Raging Bull (Yes, sounds like Bull!)

**First Blood** 40 feet E3

1 40 feet. 6a. A groove right of The Wierpig.

First ascent: M. Crook, M. Griffiths

## CLOGWYN Y BUSTACH

**Prince of Darkness** 100 feet E3

1 100 feet. 5b. A line left of Kellogg Crack.

First ascent: 1983. M. Crook, T. Newton

## PEMBROKE

Half a mile west from the Green Bridge of Wales, in the prohibited Ranges, a shallow valley enables access to a huge tilted limestone pavement. Mrs. Weston of 'The Old World Cafe', Bosherton, could think of only one local inhabitant who might remember the original name because the Western Ranges have been closed for 43 years. If training for war has really obliterated the placenames of this beautiful stretch of coast, it would be a nice idea to call this fabulous feature 'Greenham Common'. People will certainly have visited the place over the years but there is no sign that the extensive cliff to which the pavement gives easy and non-tidal access had been climbed.

The cliff is in three sections: A fiercely leaning central wall offers brilliant possibilities, while the right-hand part contains smooth grooves. A prominent sloping ramp separates the central area from a messy but interesting leftward end. Despite many overhangs this appears to give easier lines. An arete to the left of the ramp is a marker for the following good route.

**Range Free** 90 feet VS

The first groove to the left of the arete.

1 90 feet. 4b. Climb a short rightward facing corner, then the obvious line, finishing to the left of a small nose. Steep, but with huge holds and good protection. Iron spike belay. (Two VD and one VS variations add an extra 20 feet out of the trench.)

First ascent: August 6, 1983. D. Cook, P. Devine

Note: The cliff is 10 minutes along the clifftop from Stack Rocks car park. The area is a paradise for swimming, diving and sunbathing. The rocks are covered with fossils.

In the same way that forays by climbers, and pressure from their clubs have opened up the Eastern Ranges, so too can the same be done with the Western Ranges.

*'No Man's Land', Greenham Common, Range West, Pembroke.*

*Photo: Dave Cook.*





## **CLIMBERS' CLUB GUIDEBOOKS**

### **OLD SERIES**

Lliwedd (1972) by Harold Drasdo.

Cwm Silyn and Cwellyn (1971) by Mike Yates and Jim Perrin.

### **NEW SERIES**

1—Carneddau (1975) by Les Holliwell.

2—Ogwen (1982) by Tom Leppert.

3—Llanberis Pass (1981) by Geoff Milburn.

4—Clogwyn Du'r Arddu (1976) by Alec Sharp.

5—Lliwedd.

6—Tremadog and the Moelwyns (1983) by Leigh McGinley.

7—Gogarth (1977) by Alec Sharp.

Pembroke (1981) by Pat Littlejohn and Mike Harber.

Bosigran and the North Coast (1978) by Ed Hart (Out of print).

Chair Ladder and the South Coast (1975) by Robert Moulton (Out of print).

Southern Sandstone (1982) by Tim Daniells.

### **SUPPLEMENTS**

Lleyn Peninsula (1979) by Trevor Jones.

Gogarth 1981 by Geoff Milburn.

Pembroke 1982 by Jon de Montjoye and Mike Harber.

North Cornwall and West Penwith (1982) by Pete O'Sullivan and Bob Moulton.

North Wales New Climbs by Andy Pollitt (1983).

### **IN PREPARATION**

5 Llanberis Pass by Paul Williams.

7 Gogarth by Steve Haston.

### **NON-CLIMBERS' CLUB GUIDEBOOKS**

North Wales Limestone by Andy Pollitt (1982)—Dark Peak.

Clwyd Limestone by S.M. Cathcart (1983)—Cicerone Press.

Gower and South-East Wales by Mike Danford & Tony Penning (1983)—SWMC.

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