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## CAT AMONG THE PIGEONS

*Ivan Waller*

Memory is a strange thing. I once re-visited the Dolomites where I had climbed as a young man and thought I could remember in fair detail everywhere I had been. To my surprise I found all that remained in my mind were a few of the spectacular peaks, and huge areas in between, I might never have seen before. I have no doubt my memory of events behaves in just the same way, and imagination tries to fill the gaps.

I am not suggesting that everyone's memory works like this. People sometimes remind me of things we have done together which I cannot remember at all. They remember them, so why did not I? With all this in mind I realise what dangerous ground I am treading in setting down these memories of some of the climbers I was lucky enough to go around with in the Lakeland Fells between 1925 and 1933.

The first Lake District climber I met was G. M. Wellburn in 1925. I was teaching myself to climb by working my way through the graded list in Abraham's "British Mountain Climbs". I was still on the "Easy Courses" and was heading along the Gable Traverse intent on The Needle Gully, when I came across a man with a rope. Today this would be a commonplace event, but to meet a rock climber in those days filled me with awe and wonder, and I discovered that he had recently been on the first ascent of Moss Ledge Direct on Scafell Pinnacle Face with Fergus Graham. Wellburn was tall, fair, good looking, the stuff heroes are made of, and with a feeling of excitement I accepted his offer to take me up The Needle Ridge. He set me off with a taste for open rock routes and warned me against messy gullies. Although I never met him again after that day I am eternally grateful to him for that climb on the Napes.

The following year I met Michael de Selincourt who took me up some superb climbs, mostly on Scafell and Pillar Rock. On the Gimmer Alphabet he considered the belays to be quite inadequate for the equipment of that time, so we left the rope behind and climbed solo in close company. I found the unhampered freedom and continuous movement so enjoyable, that I later introduced this pleasant way of enjoying Gimmer to Jack Longland with whom I had climbed a lot on gritstone and in North Wales. De Selincourt was a strong, very steady and imperturbable climber, a scientist and a somewhat cynical type. He did not belong to the Fell and Rock and rather enjoyed stealing a march on the Club with his first ascents. For example, he made the solo first ascent

of the Direct Start to Tophet Wall while members of the Club were cogitating over, or rather under, the problem.

Our partnership culminated when we tried to climb Central Buttress on Scafell. Mabel Barker had climbed the Flake Crack with C. D. Frankland so if a woman had climbed it surely we could. How things have changed! Michael had tied himself to the chockstone in the traditional manner and I was standing on his shoulders trying to reach the top of the Flake when I fell off. The rope ran out burning his hand and shoulder and then wrapped itself around him with my weight on the end hanging below the Oval. Twice more I fell while trying to regain the Oval above, but eventually in spite of his predicament, Michael was able to assist me, and even more remarkable, to cut himself loose and abseil to rejoin me.

Not long before this another of his companions had fallen while they were exploring somewhere to the right of the Gimmer Crack, and de Selincourt had been left holding him from a very precarious stance. These two events shook him not a little and not long after, he gave up climbing, saying that if it was easy it bored him and if it was difficult it frightened him and he did not like being bored or frightened. He took up cooking.

At this time nobody wore helmets, runners had not been thought of and pitons were taboo. A fall by the leader was usually fatal especially as the climbs were in general not as steep as the modern ones, so that there was more likelihood of hitting a ledge or projecting rock instead of falling clear, and furthermore there were no harnesses to check your fall in comfort.

I therefore, very early on, developed a habit of never making a move that I could not reverse, and many of my friends did the same thing. We also made a regular practice of climbing down again after we had reached the top of our climbs. The result was that abseiling was usually only done for amusement and very seldom due to necessity.

In the early part of 1928 I found myself in Barrow installing refrigerating plant in the S.S. Orford. I had no transport at the time, but in those days the Windermere Lake Steamers, the railway to Lakeside and to Coniston, and the Ravenglass to Eskdale Light Railway, "La'al Ratty", all plied as a regular service throughout the year. My first weekend was to Grasmere to see the "Dialect Play" followed by a day's skiing on Helvellyn. We went up from Wythburn and the party consisted of Fergus Graham, George Bower, Graham Macphee and A. B. Reynolds. We seemed to get much more snow in those days.

The next weekend was on Dow Crag, where Macphee, Reynolds and I did the Monkey Movement from Giant's Corner to Murrays, while H. S. Gross was soloing nearby. I took photos of Macphee in gym shoes and Reynolds in bare feet, with snow in the background. I also have a picture of me giving Reynolds a top rope on the long pitch of Abraham's B, when he found the rocks too slippery for his bare feet. He had been leading and I had gone up Woodhouse's to help him.

On another weekend I went to Boot by La'al Ratty and walked over Burnmoor in the dark to Wasdale. The next day I met Graham Macphee with Fergus Graham and C. B. Jerram, contemplating the crag on Green Gable where Macphee and Fergus Graham had each put up a number of new routes. It was cold and bleak with much snow around although these rocks seemed to be clear. Macphee led up the first pitch of one of the climbs, until he came to a halt on a small ledge, where he seemed to dither about in a most uncertain manner. I was an apprehensive type and got quite gripped just watching him. When I could bear it no longer, I called up to him "If you cannot do it, I should climb down again," which, much to my relief, he did. Falls in those days, as I have said, were very serious things, hence my agitation.

Later, in the bar at Wastdale, Macphee drew me on one side and said "Ivan, you did a very wrong thing on the mountain today. You must never discourage your leader." On a later occasion he came to visit me in Derbyshire to do some of the climbs on the Black Rocks at Cromford. We did most of the ordinary routes and then he said he would like to try something harder, so I took him to the Black Crack. On this climb you lay-back for fifteen feet or so and then traverse out to the right. He had reached this point and was bridging the crack, but having obvious difficulty in starting the traverse. However, I said to myself "You must never discourage your leader" whilst wanting to tell him to get back down quickly, before his arms gave out. At this moment he popped out like a cork from a bottle, and landing with his legs still wide apart, he broke one of his ankles.

He managed to get down to the car, and I drove him to my home. On the way he decided that he wanted to go to the Manchester Royal Infirmary and not to a local hospital, so at home I removed the front passenger seat so that he could lie full length, and my mother brought out a tray of tea. She thought she had better say something to console him, so said "I'm so sorry. This is most unfortunate" to be greeted with the reply,

“Mrs. Waller, it’s not unfortunate, it’s a tragedy.” I found Graham Macphee a likeable person, although his cloak of sardonic humour hid a nasty sharp dagger of reprisal. He fell to his death in 1965 aged 65 while scrambling near the volcano Teide, on Tenerife.

In the early days I used to meet George Basterfield at Wasdale and with him George Bower who later married Basterfield’s daughter. The two Georges were meticulous and efficient climbers and put up many new routes. Bower was a mathematician and when in later years he left Vickers and came to Rolls-Royce in Derby, I got to know him fairly well, and we climbed together on the Derbyshire gritstone. He was one of the most solid bundles of toughness I have ever known. His head was round like a football with close cropped hair and bright twinkling eyes and a smile bursting with humour, with an array of shining gold teeth. He was quiet and friendly, no wonder everyone liked him. He twice climbed the Mer de Glace face of the Grepon and he told me how he got severe stomach cramp on each occasion at exactly the same place after a strenuous pull up a steep wall on to a ledge.

It was about this time that Jack Longland and I started taking Alf Bridge climbing with us. He was a steeplejack by trade and lived with his mother in Chapel Street, Levenshulme. He was a dutiful and devoted son and a very sentimental individual. His work had given him terrific arms and shoulders, and when he started climbing with us he used to wear out the tops of his gym shoes, trailing his legs behind him like a mermaid. We explained to him that you could use your feet on rocks as well as on the rungs of a ladder, and he became a very good climber indeed, copying Jack’s technique and supplementing it with his own great strength and endurance.

The three of us, together with A. B. Hargreaves had climbed the Flake Crack one day and were continuing up the upper pitches of Central Buttress, when Maurice Linnell appeared on the scene, looking as if he had just stepped out of an office with his neat appearance, lithe figure and metal rimmed spectacles. While we were climbing up from the V-Ledge Linnell, having greeted us, proceeded to solo the first ascent of the Bayonet Shaped Crack alongside us.

Earlier that year, Bridge, with ABH, Linnell and William Dyson had put up Bridge’s Climb on Esk Buttress, and Linnell with Sid Cross had made the first ascent of Great Eastern Route on the East Buttress of Scafell, which had been breached the year before when Colin Kirkus led me with Marco Pallis as third man



up Mickledore Grooves. Colin was a thin untidy looking lad with wiry hair and slightly sunken features. He looked neither strong nor athletic, and quite unprepossessing. In fact he was incredibly tough, determined and completely dedicated to the mountains. We had set off from Langdale and there had been the ritual swim in Angle Tarn. Marco was a great mountain traveller and a good sound climber, dark haired, pale faced, solidly built and very intellectual and serious minded. I was reputed to have been the only person who ever parried his discourse with a short sharp rude expletive. I think I won that debate.

On arrival at the foot of East Buttress, then unclimbed, Colin led the first two pitches just as if he was on a well trodden route. Each pitch had a strenuous fingery move which I thoroughly enjoyed, but when I was taken up again 43 years later I needed aid for both of them. For the main pitch the second man sits on a good ledge with an overhanging wall above, behind which goes the slab up which the pitch starts. After about a quarter of an hour Colin made an excursion to the left edge of the slab and his head appeared above me. He was happy and relaxed and assured me that all was going well. After a further half hour all the rope was out, Colin was at the top and it was my turn to follow.

I imagined during those 45 minutes that Colin must have found various ledges where he could rest and was surprised to find the difficulty sustained throughout without anywhere to stand in real comfort. Colin had just potted from hold to hold in a completely relaxed manner where many climbers would have been thoroughly gripped. Now with pitons at the crucial move, modern protection and familiarity with this type of climbing, I found this pitch much easier to follow than 43 years before. Marco followed in great form, and we were both full of admiration for Colin's lead of this long and complicated pitch.

After the climb Colin and I went round and did Moss Ghyll Grooves which by contrast seemed very easy and we climbed at great speed with enormous enjoyment. His relaxed manner and remarkable steadiness inspired great confidence and I think that what he instilled in me reacted on him to round off our mutual achievement. This I felt the following year when he repeated his Direct Route on the Nose of Dinas Mot in North Wales. We took alternate leads and at the top I suggested climbing down the climb. Colin seemed somewhat taken aback, but down we went, leading through, and at the bottom he said he would like to have a look at a little thing round the corner, and took me up the first ascent of West Rib. I was cross, I said I thought he was taking

things too near the limit. Now I believe this climb can be protected all the way.

I think we used to climb a lot faster in those days than the modern chess game style of progression, probably more akin to today's solo climbers. Without protection there was little incentive to hang about on small uncomfortable holds and with no runners from which to make a safe retreat the leader just had to press on when he thought he had passed the point of no return. Today it might be said that climbs only start to be difficult when they become irreversible. Conversely those of us who never led moves that we could not reverse, did not climb anything really difficult. Hard climbs and new routes were very serious things for the leader, but fortunately in climbing irreversible and impossible are personal rather than absolute terms.

The following Easter I was in a tent on top of Ben Nevis with Freddie (Spencer) Chapman when Colin turned up, scraped himself a hollow in the snow and settled down for the night. He was a bit cold in the morning, so went down and came back up one of the snow climbs on the face, arriving just as we were having breakfast.

In 1933 I moved down to Sussex and rather lost touch with the Lake District and the Fell and Rock but the associations which were formed during the period I have described made a lasting and memorable impression which has added enormously to the pleasure of subsequent visits, and to the way in which I have been able to enjoy the district in my retirement. Every valley, ridge and summit is pervaded with the spirit of those great men of the past, and some who still turn up round unexpected corners. Walking, climbing, ski-ing are all done in their footsteps, and those who have followed and developed all the modern means of protection, have enabled us relics to enjoy again the happy memories of days gone by.

## THE ATTEMPT ON LATOK II

*Pat Fearnough*

Askole is the last village en route to the Western Himalaya, an area known as the Karakoram where many of the world's highest mountains such as K2, Gasherbrum, Nanga Parbat and Hidden Peak are to be found.

It was at Askole that our five man expedition hired porters to carry our 1½ tons of food and equipment deep into the mountains up the mighty Biafo glacier to an unknown area in the Latok mountains. Our small team which consisted of Don Morrison (Leader), Paul Nunn, Pat Green, Tony Riley and myself had permission from the Pakistan government to travel through Baltistan and attempt a peak known as Latok II by the west face. The conditions were that we hired Balti porters, took with us an Army Captain to act as Liaison Officer and paid the Pakistan government the sum of £500 for the privilege of such a venture. Latok II had been attempted previously by a strong Japanese expedition but the climb had ended in disaster when three members were killed.

Our journey had started in Skardu where we had arrived by air from Rawalpindi on one of the most magnificent and dangerous scheduled flights in the world. The plane flies past the face of the mighty 26,000 feet Nanga Parbat, missing the ridges sometimes by as little as two hundred feet. The flight calls for good weather and an expert pilot. From Skardu we travelled by jeep along the Shigar Valley to the village of Dusso at the start of the River Braldu then we went on foot to Askole.

So far our journey had not run into any serious difficulties but then the walk to Askole is fairly easy and the porters from Dusso had been in good spirits. However, the next part was a different matter. The Askole porters although skilled at carrying heavy loads over rough terrain and living off the land are very prone to going on strike and they do not like going above the snow line.

Three days out along the Biafo glacier we were caught in a violent snow storm and had to camp the night on the ice, next morning the porters refused to go any further for there was now a foot of new snow and they were very unhappy. Our Liaison Officer came into his own at this point and threatened the porters with imprisonment if they didn't honour their contracts. So, begrudgingly, they moved on through the snow to a point on the Latok glacier at about 15,500 feet. We had hoped that the porters would carry our equipment to the foot of the south west face of Latok II but they were terrified of falling into a crevasse.

As the Latok glacier is riddled by crevasses and most of them are hidden by the winter snow making it very difficult to tell whether or not you were standing over one of these huge ice caverns, their apprehension was understandable.

We made our base camp to one side of the glacier under the shelter of a huge rock wall some 3,000 feet high and contemplated the mountain we had come to climb. The south west face itself is nearly 8,000 feet high, twice as high as most faces in the Alps and rising to an altitude of 23,500 feet.

We decided we must have another base camp nearer the mountain so we set off in teams, roped together, and ploughed a route through the soft snow to the foot of the face. The weather continued to be bad and hampered our attempts so much that it took almost a fortnight to establish our advance base and to ferry all the gear up there that we would need for the climb. At this point I contracted bronchitis which can be a killer at high altitude so I had to retreat to 13,000 feet for a few days to recuperate. We had no doctor but I decided an injection of triplopen might do the trick, and fortunately, a few days later I was able to return to the climb.

While I had been ill the others had been trying to reach the west col via a huge gully known as the South West Couloir but due to the bad snow conditions they had only managed to establish Camp One some 800 feet below the crest of the col.

During one attempt to reach the col, Don Morrison lost his footing on a patch of steep ice and fell a total of 100 feet; he was arrested by Paul Nunn who fortunately was safely belayed to an ice piton. Don was carrying a 40 lb pack and it was only with great skill and strength that Paul managed to hold him. Whilst they were both hanging in precarious positions Paul shouted down to Don, "I think that is worth a mug swop." Paul had only a half-pint mug while everyone else had a large one pint model and he now saw this as a suitable opportunity to remedy the shortcoming. Don agreed to the deal and when he had recovered his senses he continued to lead.

Now that I was back in action it was decided that three of us, Paul, Patrick Green and myself would go up to Camp One and relieve Don and Tony who could then return to base camp for a rest and maybe come back with more supplies the following day. We met them at Camp One and they informed us that the snow was worse higher up but they agreed to go to base and return as soon as possible with more supplies.

The next day with me leading and the other two carrying we

managed to climb onto the col and follow the two mile ridge to the foot of the South West Pillar. We established Camp Two on the col. After that we fixed safety ropes in the South West Couloir and along the ridge at strategic points to facilitate the carrying of loads. A few days later we erected Camp Three on the ridge at approximately 21,000 feet. By now we had become worried because our comrades had not returned and we were rapidly running out of food. I decided to descend to base camp to find out what was keeping Don and Tony, but in order to keep the climb going two people must remain. I decided to descend alone.

After a hard day's climbing I left Camp Two around 5.30 p.m. This gave the snow a chance to freeze again after the full heat of the mid-day sun and if I was quick it would give me a chance to get to Base Camp before total darkness fell. I went quickly down the fixed ropes in the South West couloir abseiling for 3,000 feet from peg to peg to the glacier below.

On arrival at the glacier I found the snow to be soft but I pressed on hoping it might improve. When I got to the site of our advance Base Camp, I was amazed to find all the gear had fallen into a huge crevasse. We had been camping over a gigantic abyss. I gulped a little, then I set off down the glacier towards base camp. The snow did not get better but became worse and I began to wish I had stayed in Camp Two with Patrick and Paul. It was too late to return. I had to press on. Sometimes I would sink in up to the armpits and I had to take to crawling in an attempt to spread my weight. Occasionally the snow would collapse in a 30 feet circle around me and my whole body would drop 3 feet or so. I was gripped with fear and the thought that I was about to die any minute. I kept crawling. By now it was dark and my whole body ached with tension as I felt my way inch by inch along the glacier.

Presently, I came upon an empty rucksack and some clothing strewn around, then I saw a rope that appeared to go into an icy pool. My heart skipped. I imagined someone had fallen into the pool and drowned. I pulled on the rope and crawled nearer to the pool, it wasn't a pool, it was solid ice and the rope had been tied off to an ice screw. I traced the other end of the rope and discovered it went down into a crevasse some 30 feet away. Once again my heart skipped – could someone be down the crevasse? It was obvious that they had had some trouble here and that one of the party had fallen in. Who was it? Had they managed to get out unhurt? I continued my long crawl along the glacier and arrived at base camp some time around midnight: I discovered

the Base Camp tent was empty and once more my heart beat increased with tension. I went stumbling over boulders and ice to the Liaison Officer's tent. "What has happened?". The Liaison Officer told me the story of how Don Morrison had fallen to his death. They had tried for two days to reach him but in vain. The crevasse was bottomless and they had had to abandon the search. Doug Scott from the 'Ogre' team went with Tony to reach the ridge but returned due to the bad conditions on the glacier. After a few days' rest Tony and myself set out at dawn, when the ice is safest, to warn Patrick and Paul of the dangerous condition of the glacier.

We took with us all the high altitude food and gas we had left. We intended to join the others high on the mountain, and if necessary, take over the lead and hopefully complete the climb.

As we were climbing the steep ice on the South West Couloir we heard voices above us. The others were coming down. At first we thought they must just be coming back for a rest but when we met them they said that they were retreating and they had dismantled all the camps. They had run out of food and decided that something nasty must have happened to the rest of us so they had abandoned the attempt. There wasn't enough food left now for us to re-build the camps and to have another serious attempt so the climb was abandoned. Once more the Latoks had repelled climbers and taken yet another life.

It took us four days to get back to base camp. On one occasion we were forced to spend a night on a small island of snow surrounded by deep crevasses and giant tottering ice seracs. During the night thousands of tons of ice collapsed from the ice cliffs behind our tiny camp and although the avalanches missed our camp by 40 feet or more we stood gazing in petrified amazement at this frightening but strangely beautiful spectacle. The avalanches continued sporadically throughout the night. The noise was deafening. It was like trying to sleep between the rails on St. Pancras Station. At dawn each morning we set off, moving cautiously over the treacherous glacier, time after time one of us would fall through the unstable snow but we all roped securely together and avoided any serious falls by holding each other as only one man moved at a time on the more dangerous sections.

Once at Base Camp we were able to rest for a few days while we waited for the porters to return and take our equipment out. During this time we built a cairn of stones to the memory of our lost companion. Don Morrison had been our friend and we were all stunned by his death. This was his third expedition to the

Karakoram and was to have been his last. It was a sad team that left the Latok mountains and turned for home.

Our journey back to civilisation took us two weeks, the Braldu River was swollen with the melting snow and some of the bridges had been swept away. One bridge was over 400 feet long made from twigs twisted together to form a rope. It was hanging in tatters when we got to it and the porters refused to cross because of its dangerous appearance. I went across to test it and had to admit it was a bit insecure. I found another twig rope on the other bank and decided to repair the bridge. It took two of us several hours working into the night to get the new rope into position. Then the next morning we tidied up the hanging bits and tried again to persuade the porters to cross. However, even with the bridge now substantially repaired the porters were still too frightened to cross. So in the end, we had to make another long detour.

On arrival at Dusso we were informed that part of the jeep road had collapsed but fortunately our porters were in good spirits and agreed to carry our gear a further 15 miles in the heat of the mid-day sun. The temperature was over 100° and most of us had already lost two stones in weight and were suffering from extreme dehydration. We were more than happy when the jeeps finally picked us up and the aeroplane flew us out just before the setting in of the monsoon.

Our climb had been a failure and a disaster. We had reached a high point of 21,800 feet some 1,500 feet below the summit. We had been repulsed by the strength of the mountain but we had also managed to pierce a chink in its armour. When we can raise enough money we hope to return and continue the fight.

*(Pat Fearnough was killed in the Braldu Gorge, Baltistan, on 17 July 1978, while making the approach march for a second attempt on Latok II — Editor).*

## THE ENGADINE MARATHON

*Gordon Dyke*

My first introduction to cross-country ski-ing was with four of my students: an American, a Norwegian and two Swedes. We went up the mountain on the telecabine and then with points downhill shot off into the trees in knee-deep powder-snow. It was great fun. The Scandinavians led the way and seemed to turn with the greatest of ease. However, the American and I fell frequently until we joined a 'downhill' piste. From then on, although out of control, we managed to avoid bodily contact with the snow. After this first occasion our ventures became weekly affairs. We were described as 'crazy'; we were cursed by all and sundry; we were even given the odd congratulatory 'bravo' when descending the black piste. Our trips took us over hills and passes, across lakes and through woods. This then was what I came to understand by the terms 'lang lauf', 'ski de fond'; and 'cross-country ski-ing' – taking on everything in the mountains.

These trips had taken place in the winter of 1976. But in 1977 I discovered a different aspect of the sport. Tony Hyde, our physics master, had been given a pair of 'funny skis' (to use his terminology) and being a Liverpooldian, and not wishing to waste anything that he'd been given, he approached me to join him in training for the 'Engadine'.

"What's that?," I asked.

"The Engadine Skimarathon," came the reply.

"When is it?"

"In two month's time; it goes across the Engadine and has about 10,000 competitors."

Now I had believed that I had acquired a good standard on cross-country skis; I'd now had at least a dozen trips on the mountains with the boys, so I thought, "I can beat those sods. It's all a matter of getting past them, then, once on the mountain I'll leave 'em standing. After all, hadn't we caused a sensation by ski-ing down the Lac Noir slope? And, who'd been the first in our group to schuss the 'Nose Dive' on cross-country ski? All right, I know I finished up going head first over the tips, but that was because that 'piste basher' had tripped me up when he saw that I was passing him."

After my brief soliloquy I gave Tony my answer. "Yes, it seems a good idea!"

Tony had been in training for a term (for what, no one quite knows), getting up at 6 a.m. and going for a run, cutting down on late-night parties and cutting out all forms of alcohol. I was,



therefore, advised to take up some form of training also. But what sort of training should I do?

Conditions were not conducive; besides, I don't possess Tony's will-power and I had a whole series of set-backs. First, one of my Italian students presented me with a bottle of Chivas Regal; secondly, a friend in Gstaad rang me and asked me to stay for a few days' ski-ing, with a bottle of malt as a temptation; thirdly, young Pucci brought me a bottle of his father's best wine, 'Marquesi Emilio Pucci 1971'; and finally, an ex-student came to visit me from Madrid; she gave me a bottle of rare Spanish wine from her father. It soon became obvious that cutting out alcohol was no easy way for a man to train. Besides, it was a known fact that young Edward Cross and I had done some of our best routes after tanking up on Worthington 'E'.

Late-night parties seemed to be the answer. Yes! I could cut those out with ease. You see, I never got invited to any. But just as I'd decided to give them up I started to get invitations from our school secretaries, from the local ski club, and from a group of friendly English nurses who worked nearby.

Well! training I must do, but not at the expense of turning down invitations to parties. "I mustn't offend people by not accepting" I told myself. Other forms of training were equally elusive. I tried getting up at 6 a.m. for a run; I tried going daily on cross-country ski up to the Col de la Croix; I even tried a few press-ups in my flat.

"But running, press-ups, and short ski trips up a snow-bound road are useless training methods for the Engadine, and not very pleasant either," I told myself.

I decided, after that, perhaps Tony was not serious about the Engadine, and in any case he surely would not expect a man of my age suddenly to take up racing, even though I could pass all those sods on the mountain. So, without further ado, I shelved all attempts at training, except for my weekly game of ice-hockey and sat back with a clear conscience. Then came the bomb-shell.

"I've had my medical," Tony spurted out one day. "You have to go for yours next Thursday."

"Medical? What medical is this?"

"For the Engadine," he said.

"But we don't need a medical to go over a few mountains do we?" I asked, as the light began to dawn.

"*It's not over mountains, mate, it's on the flat at 6,000 feet, and you have to have an intensive medical examination to make sure that you are capable of lasting out 42 kilometres at that altitude,*" he said.

“42 kilometres! I’m doing no bloody 42 kilometres.”

“I’ve got the entry forms and you’ve got your medical fixed up; there’s no backing out now.”

In fact, there were two possible escape paths. First, I could fail the medical, and secondly, perhaps the headmaster wouldn’t give us the time off school for us to participate. How to fail the medical? I could limp into the surgery, coughing and spluttering, and have my arm in a sling.

“Too subtle,” I thought. Then I hit upon a brilliant idea – blood pressure!

I got boozed up the night before, and with a thick head and a greenish face I turned up at my doctor’s surgery. I had a two hour wait before I was attended to. (NB those who run down the NHS). I lay down, and each test resulted in a smile and a friendly nod from the doctor.

“Swine,” I thought. Then it worked!

“Blood pressure a bit high,” he said. I then had to do a dozen press-ups before he took it again.

“Still too high,” he said. “But lie down again and I’ll be back in twenty minutes.”

I lay still and tried to worry about my bank account – just the thing for keeping up the blood pressure!

He came back; he pumped away; he took a reading; he smiled; he repeated the whole process.

“Quite normal now,” he beamed.

“Sod it!”

Two days later my headmaster approached me. “I gather you want to enter the ‘Engadine’, and will need time off,” he said.

“Well, I thought about it, but it’ll interfere with my ‘A’ level classes,” I said.

“You can do extra classes in the evenings,” he said. “Besides, we’ve never had anyone enter for the ‘Engadine’ before, it’ll be good for the school.”

“Aye, well it would be!” I exclaimed. (“Won’t do me much bloody good though, will it?” I thought). “Thank you,” I said. “That’s very thoughtful of you, headmaster.”

And so, having been fixed up with a flat in St. Moritz for the weekend by a kind parent, I was now to enter the ‘Ninth Engadine Skimarathon’ – all forty-two bloody kilometres of it. But wait for it; that sod Tony took ill the night before and backed out at the last minute, leaving me, who couldn’t even say ‘good morning’ in another language, all alone with 10,500 foreigners.

## THE 'ENGADINE SKIMARATHON' – INTERLUDE

The 'Engadine Skimarathon' takes place yearly in that section of the Upper Engadine between the Maloja Pass and Zuoz. The distance, as the name implies, is 42 kilometres, and takes in three lakes, two uphill sections, through the woods, and a long downhill section. The organisation as one might imagine, is fantastic. Over ten thousand people are herded into pens according to their known ability, each with his dossard, and for over an hour instructions are given in the three Swiss major languages, about overtaking, course etiquette, waxing stations, repairs en route, etc., etc. Each entrant is allowed three skis, which are marked before the race, and the course must be completed in six hours for one to obtain a finishers' medal. A good finishing time (under two hours) will place one amongst the 'Elite' starters the following year, and even slower times can earn a place in a pen nearer to the start in future races. When one considers that the first hundred competitors are the equivalent of an hour ahead before the race even starts, then it will be understood that in one's first year of entry one is merely racing for a low start number for future years.

The race, though extremely tiring, is great fun, and everyone helps each other, as well as accepting a lot of assistance and encouragement from people along the course. If you have the time to spare, are between twenty and ninety and reasonably fit, it is most highly recommended.

The morning was cold, but dry. It obviously would be sunny later I thought, as I watched what seemed like a chaotic swarm of human bees. Over ten thousand skiers were gathered, along with their teams; waxing experts; masseurs; those who would supply sustenance en route; ski repair specialists; all added to this seemingly disorderly mass. I felt lost. I looked at some Italians who were chattering, as they are wont to do; they looked at me as if to accuse me of spying on their waxing operations. I merely shook my head and grinned as if to say "That wax won't do."

I wandered on, looking for a niche where I might try applying wax to my own skis. I knew nothing at all about waxing and the process is vital for cross-country ski-racing. Still, I reckoned that if I could convince enough people to put on the wrong wax it might counteract my own ineptitude. I took out my own assortment of waxes – an odd assortment that I'd scrounged from the boys at school. I spread them on the ground in mass array – one yellow, one blue, one red and a tube of purple klistor. This

attracted immediate attention. I tested the snow; first in my hand, then in my mouth and then I rolled some on my skis. I ignored the gathering interest, then I decided to apply the wax as secretly as possible (in actual fact I put a bit of each on, but they were not to know). Then one, who had been watching closely, asked, "Purple klister on top of blue?" with much surprise.

"The only thing in these conditions," I said, openly squeezing out a whole tube of the stuff on top of the conglomeration already plastered on my skis. The message went around. Arguments arose. I went to the starting pen with a satisfactory grin on my face.

It was 8 a.m. Only an hour to wait in the freezing cold. Only nine thousand people in front of me to start with, but I knew I'd soon burn them off.

"Charge through the bloody lot," I thought. "Pass half of 'em before we get to the lake."

Music started up; typically Swiss. People jumped up and down to the piped rhythm; others smoothed out their wax with the palms of their hands. I did a bit of both. Instructions were called out over the speakers in French, German, and Italian (there were at least twenty nationalities present). I looked around. Not the motley group of middle-aged skiers I'd expected, but ten thousand fine athletes including the cream of Europe. The winner was to complete the 42 kilometres in 1 hour, 45 minutes, but I was not to know that. The excitement grew as count-down neared. Then: twenty, ten, five, four, three, two, one – a cannon fired and we were off; 10,500 to be exact, heading for twenty lanes.

Within five minutes I was out of breath; my leg ached from a pulled muscle; my lungs burned from the cold air. I wasn't even going to make it as far as the first lake. Then a big, fat 'person' passed me, a female person, dressed in white, with a bottom like a house-side. Couldn't have this! I hadn't passed anybody from the start, but hundreds had passed me. I tried to catch up with old 'fat-person'. Then, just before the lake a sleek, young blonde – not a person – came past. She smiled as I looked across, no doubt because she was passing me, but I kidded myself otherwise and gave chase. What an asset! I started passing dozens of people. All the way across the lake I passed people. She was still in sight as we climbed the hill in front. Then I lost her in the woods.

Purple klister was the worst wax I could have chosen; its sliding properties in the prevailing snow conditions were practically nil – in fact I was the only person able to run straight up the

hill without traversing, my waxing job wouldn't slip back, it would grip anything. I got a big clap from the crowd even, and some of the less expert skiers imagining that I knew what it was all about, decided to follow me as I took a narrow trail through the trees. Unfortunately the snow had stuck to my skis, and not only did I run uphill, but I had to run downhill too with a group of disgruntled skiers behind unable to pass.

As the kilometres slipped, or rather dragged by, I began to get thirsty.

"Soon be at my drinking place; hope my support team's there," I told myself.

Tony had said that he would help me along as he was not fit to race himself. All the way along the course other support teams were there; rubbing calf muscles, re-waxing skis, feeding and watering their skiers, but my bloody team was still in bed. Well! He would be, wouldn't he?

We were nearing Pontresina. One last climb then a long downhill section through the woods before the course levelled out to the big stop. I reached the top of the hill, gasping for breath, when a lady filled my open mouth with orange links. Some small boys ran alongside feeding me with glucose tablets and a little girl pushed a paper cup filled with tea into my hand as I went past. From then on adults and children from the villages lined the track feeding everyone with drinks of all kinds, various tablets, oranges, and dried fruit. It was great. There were, of course, the official stopping places where one could obtain various forms of sustenance, get fresh waxing jobs done or even get a rub down. That is always provided that one spoke the language.

Then the downhill came. Cross-country skiers are all right on the flat but when it comes to downhill, Dyke comes into his own. The steepest part was through the woods, and the whole slope was cluttered with bodies and skiers groping their way timidly down the slope. Remembering my Scandinavian boys back at school, I pointed my skis down the bank and with poles back and elbows out, I charged the lot.

"Flay them to death," I thought, as I swept through the lot. My speed increased and I could hear their curses as I went past, but all I hoped for now was that I'd pick up one of the tracks again, smoothly, at the bottom of the slope. I did. A short, flat piece brought me into a big feeding station. Everyone of the spectators clapped. They clapped everyone who came in.

By this stage I'd lost all trace of time; my right leg had been reduced to a dull ache; for some reason I suddenly thought I was

home and dry. Then I was given a slap on the back (I must have looked English, for a voice spoke a language that I understood).

"Not far now," he said, "Only twenty kilometres, you are over half way."

My heart sank, "But it's downhill from here," I thought, "or flat!" Off I went, sad but knowing now that I might even finish within the allotted six hours.

I was about three-quarters of the way along the course when it happened. One of the Swiss that I'd felled on the downhill had caught up with me. He came up behind, overtook too close, and I went down like a skittle. My leg locked solid with cramp and I writhed in agony as I rolled across about six lanes.

"Peasant!", I yelled. But I kept my cool; his pals were following close behind, so in my anguish I rolled across their path, flaying the air with legs and skis I felled the lot.

Two very nice German gentlemen dragged me from the track, took off my skis, massaged my leg, replaced my skis, put me back on the track and pushed me off with a "Bravo, you vill do eet!" And in the distance I could hear, "only seven more kilometres."

The skis slowed down, but suddenly I noticed that I was passing people again. They were the aged, the infirm, and the incompetent Dykes of this world. But what was that ahead? Loudspeakers, official cars, vans, flags and crowds of people.

"Just up that hill and I've made it!" My purple klister was still working. It had managed to stop my movement forward for 42 kilometres, it must surely stop my sliding back up this last hill. It did. I ran up it. Gradually it smoothed out, only a few yards now; yells of "bravo" from the crowd; clapping getting louder. Yes! I'm entering one of the finishing gates, but what's that that's just pipped me at the finish? It's old fat person, and that's what all the cheering was about.

In retrospect it was an amusing experience. I finished in 4 hours 15 minutes. And next year? Well! I'm going to train - I'll beat the bloody lot!

## WOUBITS—A CASE HISTORY

Ian Roper

Woubits: A small brown furry bear (*Oxford English Dictionary*).

Woubits: "Exceptionally severe. A climb of great difficulty and seriousness." (First Ascent Description).

Woubits: Extremely severe. A very difficult climb, loose and not well protected (Crew/Banner 1963).

Woubits: Extremely severe – A difficult but good climb. (Sharpe 1976).

The Far East Buttress of Cloggy is an impressive place. It is remote, aloof, throwing down its challenge to all who would look at or tackle it. When approaching the cliff from Half Way House, it is difficult to appreciate that the grooved pillar, lost high on the left of the crag, is 300 feet high and holds two of the best climbs on the cliff. The title Far East Buttress is a paradox. The name is given to the whole of the vast acreage of rock and grass to the left of East Gully, but talk to any Cloggy fan and he will say that the "true" Far East is the area made up of the inaccessible (or nearly so) pillar which overhangs the foot of Far Eastern Terraces. The paradox extends further in that the cliff has no bottom, and although poor climbs, and even difficult ones, have been made on the lower tier, the routes are usually reached from the top. The whole place reeks of gloom and doom, dead sheep frequently making their contribution to the sombre atmosphere of decay and decrepitude. The rock is there all right, a 300 pillar split by a great twin groove, overhanging above, undercut below. It was in 1955 that Brown and Whillans launched their attempt on what was the last unclimbed buttress of Cloggy.

The accounts of the first ascent in *The Hard Years* and *The Black Cliff* broadly agree with each other. The initial overhang promised to stop both men, but Brown eventually managed to establish himself in the right hand groove. Their equipment was primitive – no micronuts on wires – merely a few slings, a pocket full of chockstones and a bit of wire for threading, plus the inevitable gym shoes and flat hats. Brown must have been very relieved to fix a thread runner at forty feet and escape out of the impossible looking groove into its left hand, but still unfriendly, twin. Shattered rock and grass (nowadays cleaned off) took him a further 50 feet or so to an exposed stance. Things must have looked pretty hopeless. But on joining him, Whillans pressed on into the right hand of the two vast grooves. He was on top form in 1955, but even so, Brown, writing years after the event, thought it was a stopper. Suddenly Whillans exploded upwards and

disappeared from view. Brown said that even following he had difficulty maintaining contact with the rock. The climb's reputation was assured.

It was four years before Chris Bonington made the second ascent. Others followed in close succession. Banner, in his epic style, Peter Crew and Jack Soper, all repeated the climb during the years 1957/60. A quotation from Soper's account in the 1963 *FRCC Journal* describes the atmosphere well. "Dave nearly came off the first moves and I had a gruelling time on the second pitch, in spite of Crew's new piton gleaming encouragement 30 feet ahead. Peg marks from a previous retreat didn't help, and I had a mental picture of a square man in his ratting hat bridged on the same inadequate holds and perhaps also experiencing some difficulty."

Seventeen years and several climbing generations later, I was to find out exactly what Jack meant. The intervening years had seen a revolution in climbing standards, aided greatly by much improved protection techniques. Even so, John Adams and myself were wary of tackling so formidable an adversary as we wandered over the top of the cliff to the top of the Far East Terrace, two other climbs of XS standard already under our belts.

The descent of the terrace set the tone for the next couple of hours and loose rocks slid from underfoot to plunge to the screes 300 feet below. An ancient piton in a shattered crack marked the point where the upward struggle commenced. First a traverse right, only five feet, but the back breaking boulders on the terrace were already 20 feet below. Holds creaked in the expected, but still hair raising fashion. A horizontal slot provided a more solid point of attachment, and also a runner. To place the runner, the hand must first be removed from the slot, necessitating the weighty use of a dubious flake with the left hand. Once the runner was fixed a rapid descent was made to terra firma for recuperation and a pep talk from John. The account of the first ascent thundered in my head. "Both Brown and Whillans had several goes at the overhang." I moved up as though stepping on eggs. A feint to the right enabled me to determine the correct sequence, right hand first, then left on sidehold, right foot in the slot, left on nothing in particular, and a surge of power over the overlap into the groove beyond. A brief, frantic search revealed just enough positive hold to regain balance, my breath was held in anxious anticipation of the fall that never came. The groove proved ideal for bridging, sloping



holds on either wall enabling the strain on the fingers to be kept to a minimum. I was beginning to enjoy myself, but it is always dangerous to relax on a Whillans' route. The ground, and the runner, were beginning to recede at an alarming rate, while the thread promised by the guide failed to materialise. I improvised a nut runner on single line which did little to stifle the roar of the angry rocks on the terrace. From the runner a short descent and a sliding move led onto the arête between the two grooves. A grope round the corner failed to reveal any vestige of a hold with which to pull across. Back at the runner, with aching fingers and ankles, I contemplated knocking off when a glance down revealed the correct line, lower, on the very lip of the overhang. John was impressed as I shuffled round, heels projecting over space and the red rope hanging yards out from the rock. The holds sloped wickedly but eventually a small ledge in the left hand groove was rapidly converted from a handhold to a foothold. The groove was almost as inhospitable as its right hand twin, and some hard climbing would be necessary before any protection would be forthcoming. Delicate, even enjoyable bridging, hampered somewhat by the drag of the yellow rope nailed into the tattered banners of the runners in the right hand groove, brought a runner slot level with my nose, but neither hand could be spared. With my leg muscles screaming I made a semi-controlled descent to the ledge which mentally began to assume the proportion of a tennis court. A second attempt was more successful, and the runner was placed in from a precarious back and foot position. To escape from my imprisonment in the groove it was necessary to resume a bridging posture. There is an identical move on *Coronation Street* at Cheddar. Back and foot, face right, then left, much pushing on the wall behind, and a heart stopping, excruciatingly delicate swivel into the bridge, hands and toes on rugosities. Beautiful! I began to burble about exquisite difficulty and exposure when the runner fell out and I spoiled the effect by allowing my voice to rise several octaves. A flat hold appeared on the right and a long mantelshelf took me onto easier ground. Climbing from runner to runner 1977 style, would not do on a Whillans' route, I mused. This route had to be climbed with a capital 'C.'

At the stance I took in the ropes. The slack hung far enough from the rock to be gratifying and John had a satisfactorily hard time following. I really was enjoying this climb. Above loomed the overhanging groove, displaying a disheartening collection of rotting slings, but that was John's problem. For the first time

since the foot of the climb I noticed the silence. The train had stopped running. I began to think of pints of ale and the odds-shouting in the Padarn, and more importantly, supper. I wondered if the girls would bring the car up for us.

The sun reached the stance and tiny figures 400 feet below ambled along the track, their self appointed tasks fulfilled, looking forward, no doubt, to the pleasures of the valley. To a man they stopped on the rise where the track leaves the Cwm and looked back at the crag, reliving those wild moments when the adrenalin surges, and the world is reduced to ten square feet of baffling complexity.

A tug at my waist interrupted my reverie and I set off obediently following the groove waymarked with runners, red, yellow, white and blue. A swing on a flake on the edge of space is stimulating, even on a blunt end, and the bridging above would provide food for thought even at boulder level. John was frozen on his shadowed stance and I whooped up the final chimney into the sun.

Half an hour later, crushed feet expanding into big boots, we stood at the entrance to the Cwm and watched the coppery sun bring the crag to life. Dangerously ambitious talk filled the air. It always does after a successful day. We turned to head for the valley, knowing, like thousands before us, that our return was inevitable, to pursue a lodestone none of us can ever attain. We would pursue it until some combination of age, new preferences and job or family demands caused us to change our behaviour. But the memories will exist for all our lifetime.

## MORE SHAMBLES IN THE ALPS

*Bob Allen*

There's something to be said for going out to the Alps for only a fortnight. Because time is limited you make a greater effort to get routes done; often in weather which those with more time at their disposal reject as "too bad". A route snatched out of such conditions somehow always seems more worthwhile. Perhaps in part because it is a matter of nice judgement whether to go on at all.

We started in the Dauphine – which has the immediate advantage that one long day's drive from Calais can take you to La Bérarde. We'd been the year before and managed to do the "first British" of the Gervasutti route on the Pic Gaspard. And it's a lovely spot anyway. This time we didn't quite make it in one day, but we were there the following morning with enough time for a walk up the hill behind the camp site. Trevor Jones immediately dismayed Pete Hatton and me by storming off at a fantastic pace, leaving us both well behind. The stories of his having been seen running in short trousers around the lanes of Wilmslow were evidently true.

That night in the bar where we were boozing in best British pre-route tradition, Trevor announced that *this year he* was the fittest and he was going to burn us all off. Pete decided to fix him. He has had much practice in supping ale in very large quantities, and he was sure he could out-drink Trevor. So he filled both their glasses with plonk many many times. The rest of us, planning to be away at 5 a.m., kept out of this contest. We practically slid them both into their sleeping bags but Pete was certain Trevor would be slowed down next morning.

He was. But it was only for three-quarters of an hour, and then he turned the steam on, caught us up and stayed with us for the rest of the day. Unfortunately Pete couldn't take it. He remained a distant speck stumbling along the seemingly endless glacier.

The route itself – the traverse of the Tete de la Gandoliere – was nothing to shout about. We soloed all the way along the ridge, having only one moment of excitement when Marjorie stood on rotten rock that vanished and left her clinging by one handhold for an interminable instant above a void.

Then the weather turned nasty, and the descent was down a slushy glacier in thick fog. Lovely! Derek Walker slipped on the last hundred feet of snow slope, inexplicably failed to stop himself and crashed into a rock and bruised his leg. This kept him out of action for a few days. Then the weather improved again. We

decided that our next route had to be that really great Alpine classic, the traverse of the Meije.

Two days later, along with a motley collection of English hippy mountaineers with standard-issue beards, greasy hair and green teeth, we walked up to the Promontoire Hut. Guide-book time is five hours and it was incredibly hot, so I was quite pleased to get there first in three and a half hours. Reg Atkins was there already, he'd come up to the hut for the view the previous day.

With us all inside, the hut was packed solid, and when we tried to sleep it was like being in a tropical greenhouse gasping for air. So it was with some relief that we stumbled into the dark but starry night. We immediately hit cold rock of about severe standard. In the pitch-dark that was quite exciting.

The rest of the Promontoire Ridge is fairly straightforward but nevertheless gives very exhilarating climbing, and we overtook various continental parties who had left earlier than ourselves. We made guide-book time to the Grand Pic up the edge of the Glacier Carre. What a hell of a way it looked from there, along the ridge, on across the tottering Breche Zsigmondy and so to the Pic Central. There was a magnificent view right across to the Pave, and the scene of last year's efforts on the Gaspard.

After about an hour of climbing very carefully across the rather frightening Breche Zsigmondy – which seemed liable to collapse again as it did in 1964 – I began to feel the altitude. This is one of my personal Alpine problems, and an hour at 11,000 feet was just that bit too much for me this early in the holiday. Consequently I don't remember much about the next five or six hours – still at 11,000 feet – because I felt too ill. However, I managed to lead some quite hard ice pitches around the (buried) fixed-rope sections of the Breche and to take quite a lot of photos of what is a superb route. It was a great relief when we started the abseil across the bergschrund and the long plod through deep soft snow towards the tiny Aigle hut – and sleep.

I thought we had an uncomfortable night at the Promontoire hut, but the night at the Aigle was desperate. It was so packed that we could only lie on our sides – which takes up less room – and head to toe as well. Trevor's famous aromatic feet in nylon socks sweetened the dozing hours until dawn when we stumbled away again into the fog that blanketed the lower valleys. The descent to La Grave was an epic in itself because we lost the way, and Trevor and I had one of our famous shouting-matches back at the camp site because we were both so tired. But what a memorable outing it had been!

The next bit of the programme was more ambitious. We had been looking at the Bulletin and decided that there might be a "first British" to be done on the Face of the Pic Sans Nom, but we would have to bivouac on the Glacier Noir. Marjorie opted out, but Derek decided he was fit again, and two days later we were at a bivouac site on a heap of stones in the middle of the glacier below the Pic. We failed to find the "normal" bivouac shelter.

It was a bitterly cold night and next morning I had thick frost all over my duvet. It can only be Trevor's remarkable circulation that keeps him alive in such conditions, for his duvet is at least 20 years old and has a covering power of about two feathers per square foot. But what was worse than the cold night was the heavy bank of dark cloud that rolled up the valley at dawn.

Having sat on the cold stones for another hour we decided at least to tackle the icefall and snow couloir which were the early part of the route.

The icefall went nicely enough, but the snowfield beyond was much bigger than we had thought, and the thick cloud was still hanging around. So we opted for the right hand branch of the couloir – the N.W. couloir – a snow-ice climb in its own right. We managed about eight hundred feet of enjoyable and excellent front-pointing, two-axe stuff – and then it started to snow heavily. Within minutes little spindrift avalanches were slithering down the face, and after one more pitch a great thunderclap over my head decided the issue.

We soloed down, abseiling the bergschrund from a peg which we cheerfully left in a handy rock rib.

We'd had enough of the Dauphine after that, and so took off to Courmayeur, where we all had vague designs on the South Ridge of the Noire, and thought we'd probably find Fell and Rock members nursing twisted ankles or the like.

We camped, inevitably, in the Val Veni. It snowed that night and made the Noire an impracticable idea. The Boccalatte route on the Aiguille de la Brenva was a lot lower down and we decided we could manage a good hard rock route as long as it was not snow covered.

The following morning Trevor, Pete and I caught the first telepherique to the Torino Hut and stumbled away on the rising traverse towards the Aiguille de la Brenva. We lost Pete – he rambled off on a much lower line, and it took us an hour to find him. We called him a berk, and other names, but the loss of time was not to matter.

A little later we rounded a blunt rib of rock into the couloir leading down from the Aiguille – and when we saw the black cloud hovering over its summit we decided to sit down and eat. Then we decided to have another look at the guide book. A few snowflakes settled gently on our heads. We had another sandwich. Then we decided to go up the couloir and have a closer look. After all, a little snow wasn't going to put us off, was it?

Twenty minutes later, another look at the guide book.

"What do you think, Pete?"

"I'm easy."

A few more snowflakes.

"What do you think, Trevor?"

"All the same to me."

"I see. Do you fancy this route?"

"Well, I wouldn't say I didn't fancy it."

"What about the Voie Normale instead?"

"Well *I'm* easy, as I say, but if you like . . ."

"Let's get a bit nearer and have a look."

Five minutes later we had detected an icy crack soaring up into the mist with a rusty peg about eighty HVS feet away.

"This is the Voie Normale."

"Are you sure?"

"What do you think."

"Looks bloody 'ard to me."

"But it's only the ordinary route isn't it?"

Silence for a few minutes.

Then I said, "Tell you what, let's toss a coin. Heads we have a go. Tails we don't."

So we tossed a coin. It was heads of course.

"Was that a thunder clap?"

More silence.

"Best of three?"

"Okay."

We spun the coin. It was still heads.

"Sod it. I can't even get onto the rock, let alone up it."

"What do you think now?"

"Well, I don't think it goes up *there* anyway. And look at that cloud . . ."

"Can we say it was your decision?"

"All right. But let's get round this corner where it's not so damn steep."

Thankfully we shuffled off our precarious stance on the lip of the bergschrund, and round a corner. Trevor disappeared under

an overhang, and then re-appeared with a shout of glee. "Look what I've found!" It was a little cave, and at the back of it was a grotto stuffed with superb quartz crystals which glinted at us.

That was the end of the climb. Three hours later we got back to our camp.

"Did you get up it?" asked Reg.

"No. But we've got some super crystals," we said.

## ANNUAL DINNER MEET, 1976

*Bill Comstive*

It was cold and showery as I motored to Keswick on the Saturday. It had been like this for much of the day but this did not deter many members from venturing out on the hills and crags. The poor weather had denied me a good long day on the hills which I always enjoy before the dinner but the thoughts of the evening to come lifted my spirits.

There is no doubt that the Annual Dinner has its devotees and I must admit that I am one of them. Despite some shortcomings there is a genuine air of conviviality about sitting down with one's club in the dining room of the Royal Oak Hotel which I would not like to miss.

Despite the heavy showers and low cloud on the Saturday, which denied us the glory of the autumnal scene, the fresh faces of those who had been out were evident when we gathered in the Battersby Hall for the Annual Meeting.

There is always an air of expectancy in the time before the start of the meeting and this year was no exception. The Agenda was loaded with one very controversial item. This came from the Treasurer and Committee and proposed that the subscription and hut dues should be increased to align our costs and revenue with current inflation. Promptly at 5.30 p.m. the President's gavel came down hard, calling us to order and giving the signal for battle to commence. The meeting was in fact a damp squib, the officers and committee were duly elected, the subscriptions and hut dues increased with little dissension and we moved to any other business in record time. At the appropriate point in the Agenda the retiring President announced that his successor was to be Charles Pickles, a very popular choice judging by the reaction from the members. I well remember Charles Pickles' reply to the invitation to become the next President. He said that when he was elected to full membership of the club he considered it to be a great privilege, but to be asked to be President had been beyond his wildest dreams. He said that he would serve the club to the very best of his ability, words which have not failed him as his first year in office has proved.

We moved to the lounge of the Royal Oak Hotel and joined in the pre-dinner hubbub of the gregarious gathering until promptly at 7.45 p.m. we were called to table. By the time the President rose to propose the toast to the guests a good many of us were mellowed with the food and wine, but Jack Carswell's wonderful Cumbrian dialect and unending good humour paved the way for



the reply by Sir Robert Grieve, Chairman of The Highlands and Islands Development Board. A broad Scot, his humour was dry and his "shaggy dog story" held us in suspense for some moments until the roar of appreciation broke forth from his captive audience. We continued to the toast to Absent Friends, always a poignant moment, and then drifted into the ballroom to continue the conviviality until a late hour.

The weather was slightly better on Sunday, fleeting sunshine dappled the fellsides and revealed the glorious colours of autumn mostly hidden by the menacing clouds that rolled over backed by a gusty north-west wind.

On my way home I pondered somewhat on the future of the Annual Dinner as the social highlight of the club's year. I had good cause to do so, I had been appointed Dinner Secretary on Charles Pickles' elevation to the Presidency. The numbers attending were again slightly down on the previous year. There is no agreement on the cause of this decline in attendance. My predecessor had maintained a high standard of tradition and organisation that I hoped to continue.

## ANNUAL DINNER MEET, 1977

*Maureen Linton*

The Annual Dinner Meet of 1977 was exceptionally wet even by Lakeland standards. It is reported that five inches of rain fell in Keswick on the Sunday and subsequent landslides blocked the road near Wythburn. Those who attempted some activity during Saturday are believed to have obtained their drenchings by keeping to the valleys around Keswick and the various huts, although some climbing was reported on Black Crag and Shepherd's Crag.

The AGM was held as usual in the Sunday School chill of the Battersby Hall. In opening the proceedings, the President referred to the absence of John Appleyard who, through ill health, was believed to be missing his first AGM in 50 years. In dealing with matters arising from the minutes of the 1976

meeting the President spoke on Hut Finance, Joint Subscriptions and the future of the Dinner which had been the subject of Committee deliberation during the year. The election of officers involved a ballot for the elective members' seats and this was followed by the reports of officers which were accepted without comment. Under any other business there was discussion on the role and 'membership' of the London Section, on the ballot for future Annual Dinners and a question was asked concerning the grading of climbs in our Guide Books. The meeting ended in time for members to reassemble in various Keswick bars and for those who so wished to change into the normal dinner attire.

The foregathering in the bars and lounge of the Royal Oak is in itself a Club event – so many people to see, so many conversations filling-in the gaps of months or years and the perennial speculation as to what would really happen if anyone arrived at the dining room door without the required ticket. A slight decrease in numbers gave somewhat greater elbow room as members and guests once again sat at table together to share the Club Dinner.

In proposing the toast to the Club and our Guests, the President likened the team of Club officers and committee to the members of a rope, each with individual responsibility but together forming one complete whole. He welcomed our chief guest Ivan Waller whom he described as that blend of old climber and bold climber, an old bold climber. In his response on behalf of the guests, amongst whom were representatives of most of the senior clubs, Ivan Waller drew attention to the fact that the FRCC was one of the youngest clubs present. He went on to give an entertaining account of the very wet climb he had made that day in company of the *Journal* Editor.

The evening continued in the traditional manner, the ballroom crowded with a company constantly on the move, groups forming and reforming as members and guests tried to speak with as many old friends as possible in the time still left. Hopes of any general activity on Sunday were dashed by the continuing stormy weather, but those members who did not go home early were able to meet again in the Royal Oak on Sunday afternoon to enjoy Ivan Waller's fine selection of slides of Alpine views including an account of the High Level Ski route. So ended yet another Dinner weekend, the atmosphere at the Dinner proved it a success and would seem to support the Committee's earlier resolution that the form of the Dinner should continue unchanged.

## THE LONDON SECTION

*Margaret Darvall*

We can't escape some of the problems of the old division between north and south, but we need not rewrite Johnson into: "To live in London is to be tired of life." There is quite a lot to be said for it, if only for the piquancy of contrast. Some of the magic of mountaineering and wild country has always been the sharpness of contrast from everyday, and what better place can there be than London to savour the contrast?

We haven't the luck of the hills on our doorstep but we manage quite a number of trips there. The Salving House meet is often run and well attended by the London Section, and this year John Dee was a Coniston meet leader. Mike Marsden and Ronald Young get to quite a number of meets.

Apart from the usual south country activities on Sundays and weekends (including this year a welcome return to the Dorset cliffs), several members have been sampling the long-distance footpaths, in particular Offa's Dyke and the South West coast path. We tried Offa's Dyke earlier for a weekend meet, but were cursed with unspeakable weather. Two people from the section, with different parties, have climbed Ladakhi, an 18,300 foot peak in Kulu.

It's good to have Dorothea and Ivor Richards back in Cambridge, England, instead of the States. Dorothea was the first secretary of the London Section and they have just been celebrating the Golden Jubilee of their first ascent of the North Ridge of the Dent Blanche.

The section is active and flourishing. We hope that all the problems of communication with the main club will soon be solved, and appreciate the trouble friends have taken to sort them out.

# HIGH LEVEL WALKING IN THE PENNINE ALPS

*John Waddams*

The Fell and Rock is, among other things, famed for the broad spectrum of its mountaineering interests. Nevertheless, many members, including those who enjoy climbing, regard themselves primarily as walkers. If their walks can be seasoned with a pitch or two on a ridge or an extended scramble en-route to a summit, this will generally be held to enhance the expedition. If a series of such progressions can be combined into a circuit, e.g. the Wasdale circuit, so much the better. For those who are of this persuasion, the following account of a walking tour in the Pennine Alps may be of interest. The circuit involved the girdle of the Matterhorn and Monte Rosa groups.

Route research (which constitutes a significant part of the pleasure of such an expedition), based on Walker's *Walking in the Alps*, appropriate Swiss and Italian Alpine Club guide books and gleanings from journals, e.g. *Mountain Craft 1959* (452) suggested that Fionnay in the Val de Bagnes (accessible by post-bus from Martigny in the Rhone valley) would be a suitable starting point.

The choice of route frequently dictated where the night was spent, conservation of height and distance being added considerations. In some cases Alpine Club huts could be used; in others, more enterprising if less comfortable sojourns in 'alms' were necessary – these at least encouraged early starts! Where more conventional accommodation was obtained in small inns, those of greatest character were found in small valley-head villages which preferably did not cater for the 'ski-set'.

In these ways a varied route of some 360 km emerged.

The distances covered varied a good deal from day to day, depending on the dispositions of the cols to be crossed. A few days were 7 hours long, but walks of 10 hours (maximum 14 hours) were more typical. In all, 17 days (including two off-days) were taken for the circuit which involved some 42,000 m of ascent and descent.

## THE CIRCUIT

Having reached the once-attractive village of Fionnay, now sadly overshadowed by hydro-electric developments, one escaped with relief round the north end of the Corbassiere ridge to enter the wild valley containing the Corbassiere glacier. In a gratifyingly short time the glacier itself was reached, and its flank

followed to the Panossiere hut from which the first col to be traversed – the Col des Otanes (2861 m) – was readily attained. Immediately south of the col and easily accessible in one hour via snow slopes and a scramble up the north ridge lay the Grand Tavé (3158 m). From it, the view of the great ice-cliffs of the Grand Combin (4314 m) and northwards, the shapely summits of the Petit Combin (3672 m) and Combin de Corbassiere (3715 m) provided a spectacular foretaste of pleasures to come.

Regaining the col, an intermittent track was taken to the Mauvoisin Inn situated at the end of the lake now occupying the upper part of the Val de Bagnes. Its western bank was traversed, first through a 2 km tunnel and then by a broad track leading into the even more impressive valley-head, illuminated dramatically by Wagnerian evening sunshine which boded ill for the weather to come. Sure enough, an hour after reaching the beautifully situated SAC Chanrion hut (2460 m) by the wearying zig-zags always encountered at the end of one's first day in the Alps, the storm broke.

It continued throughout the night and showed no sign of abating by noon the following day, at which time it was raining heavily. Unbelievably, five minutes later, the rain stopped, the sun shone, large areas of blue sky appeared and the clouds rolled away to reveal the surrounding mountains resplendent with new snow. With 8 hours of daylight remaining this was no time to succumb to the pleasures of the hut, and an hour later the lateral moraine of the Glacier de Fenêtre was being followed to the Col de la Fenêtre de Durand (2805 m) on the Italian frontier.

At the col thunder again began to roll and down came the cloud; the planned ascent of the adjacent Mont Gelé (3518 m) had therefore to be abandoned. Careful compass and map reading over relatively straightforward terrain led to a point below the cloud base from which the first Italian valley (Val d'Ollomont) was visible. The way thither, was however barred by an extensive cliff some 350 m high extending, without obvious break, across the head of the valley. Near its mid-point stood a habitation where advice on the route might be obtained if the inhabitants (were there any?) could understand English. My luck was in; I was received by a charming lady who declaimed (in English), after the manner of Dame Sybil Thorndyke, that the valley below was closed because of a landslide caused by the storm, but if I would take tea (*terribly* sorry, it's Ceylon) with a marooned member of the Italian government, she would telephone for advice on an alternative route. One hour and one litre of tea later I was sliding

down a steep rocky cliff path in torrential rain witnessing further instalments of the landslide. After this novel introduction to the Italian scene I was glad of the simple hospitality offered by the Hotel Mont Gelé in Ollomont, the first village in the valley.

The next morning dawned fair revealing the shapely peaks south of the Valpelline framed between the bounding walls of the Val d'Ollomont. A series of high-level tracks leading from Frissonia di Sotto enabled the middle reaches of the Valpelline to be reached in the vicinity of Oyace. The route proceeded at a considerable height up that deep valley, the surrounding mountains being particularly fine, especially the rugged eastern wall over which the next day's route to Valtournanche lay. Beyond La Lechere the track skirts the Prarayé lake (absent from the Swiss Landeskart). Prarayé itself (2005 m), situated near the valley head, is surrounded by scenes of great splendour. From it radiate magnificent passes leading to both the Swiss and Italian valleys. The valley head is occupied by the long and beautiful Tsa de Tsan glacier and this well repaid an evening visit. The valley's vast eastern bounding ridge descends from the Dent d'Hérens (4171 m) dividing the Valpelline from the next day's objective.

Surrounded by these splendours it was tiresome to find that the Prarayé inn, set on a wooded knoll at the head of the lake, no longer functioned as such, and that the nearest accommodation was 6 km way down the valley just ascended. The night was therefore spent in a serviceable alm near the inn. It certainly did not lack atmosphere and by 5.30 a.m. the temperature was such that an early start presented few discouragements.

The first problem in resuming the journey eastwards was to find a route into the Val Cornera, a hanging valley running south from the Valpelline. The steep, wooded terrain was easiest just east of a waterfall descending from this valley and, after penetrating the undergrowth on the lower slopes, vestiges of an old track were picked up, leading to ruined huts perched on the lip of the valley whence the stream was followed to its upper reaches. The map showed the desired point of exit (Col di Val Cornera) at a point opposite the confluence of two streams emanating from glaciers at the valley head. Low cloud unfortunately hid the col and five hours were spent prospecting impossible ways up gullies and ramps, in shattered dripping cliffs, before an exit was effected (1.5 km *west* of the position shown on the map) up a steep 300 m gully of block scree into the head of which a waterfall debouched. Reaching the top was extremely tiring, especially after the abortive expenditure of

energy during the five preceding hours: it was therefore vexing to emerge into an extensive coomb, up the rear wall of which, steep snow led to a spectacular U shaped col perched dramatically between two flanking peaks (Pta di Fontanella 3386 m, Cime di Balanselmo 3316 m). Ultimately this airy point was reached (3066 m) to reveal a yet steeper and longer ice and snow slope on the far side, leading down to Lago del Dragone. This was no time for indecision; crampons were strapped on and, with axe at the ready, the slope was tackled. Half way down, the consistency of the snow changed and permitted a glorious 200 m glissade (crampons and all!) to the easier angled snow below – the view back was impressive – even more so was that of the huge 5 km rock wall of M. Dragone, Chateau des Dames and M. Blanc du Creton, extending N.E. from the col. The way continued down a rock rib to Lago Balanselmo, whence, in gathering cloud, it was a relief to pick up the first real track of the day leading down three dramatic tiers of cliff to Lago di Cignana (2158 m) and thence to Val Tournanche on whose outskirts another simple inn, Mille Fiori, run by kindly people, was found for the night's lodging.

A turn for the better in the weather next morning encouraged an early start. An old hillside track linking scattered hamlets led up the valley to Breuil-Cervino (2006 m) which H. H. Symonds might have classified with Rossett Ghyll as a place which one reaches without enthusiasm and quits without regret. The onward route eastward to the col, Superiore delle Cime Bianche (2982 m) was, however, magnificent. Dominating all was of course the Matterhorn, with the Furggen and Italian ridges particularly well seen. The eye travelled westwards from the latter to a continuous sequence of peaks, glaciers and passes, wonderfully clear and incredibly beautiful in the strong morning sunlight. In due order the Dent d'Hérens (4171 m), Punta Margherita (3903 m), Les Jumeaux (3872 m) and Pta Budden (3630 m) rose from the majestic wall which fell to the valley traversed earlier in the morning.

Easy tracks led to the day's col which provided a breath-taking revelation of the country beyond, including the next day's ridge and col. This was to be a standard (and sometimes daunting) feature of the Monte Rosa cols crossed thereafter.

In sharp contrast to the previous day's nick in the ridge, the Cime Bianche Col occupied a broad plateau from which rose a Striding Edge-like ridge leading to the Gran Sometta (3166 m). This was obviously good for a scramble and promised an even finer viewpoint. All went well to within 80 m of the top where a

steep friable wall left by a huge rock-fall barred progress. Prudence dictated retreat for the solo walker, though two with a rope could justifiably have continued – a pity because the traverse of the Sometta, descent to the Col delle Cime Bianche Inferiore and continuance along the ridge over the Cime Bianche themselves would not be difficult; the route could then be resumed by joining the track descending to the lovely Val d'Ayas.

This was approached via a fairy-tale subsidiary valley leading to Fiery which is perched on a knoll at the junction of the steep gorges draining the Combe de Verra and Ventina glacier. The descent thence to St. Jacques d'Ayas was savoured to the full at the end of so splendid a day: it all had the character of a dream from which one might or might not have woken on finding that Mine Host at the Albergo Gran Tournalin was the living double of Wilson Pharaoh.

After a night under his hospitable roof I was convinced (the gift of a *litre* of wine at dinner helped!) that the best possible plan was to spend a second night there. Next day I therefore ascended the Colle di Nana (2775 m) from which rises the south ridge of the Gran Tournalin (3379 m). This provided a further sample of prudent retreats for solo walkers, but as consolation a scramble was enjoyed to the adjacent summit of the Bec Trecarre (3033 m). This proved to be a splendid viewpoint.

The walk down the Val d'Ayas in the early sunshine next morning re-established the spell of this beautiful valley, a last glimpse of which was vouchsafed through trees from the endless zig zags of the steep path leading from Chapoluc to the Chalets on a high green shelf appropriately named Crest (1935 m). From here the upward path led via the photogenic hamlet of Cuneaz to the Col di Pinter (2777 m), flanked on the north by the Testa Grigia (3315 m) which Walker declares commands perhaps the finest view of the south side of the Monte Rosa chain. This proved to be one of the most rewarding diversions of the tour; giving excellent scrambling, a superb display of alpine flowers and an unforgettable panorama extending from Mont Blanc, via the previous week's peaks clustered about the Matterhorn, to the stupendous mountain architecture of Monte Rosa.

The Col was regained via M. Pinter (3132 m) and thence a quiet descent made through pastoral surroundings to the steep wooded slopes above the delightful Val de Lys. A path was ultimately found leading obliquely (and at times spectacularly) down to Gressoney La Trinite (less attractive than its name suggests) where German was overwhelmingly the second lang-



uage – the reason for this became clear some days later during a conversation on the Turlo pass above Rima.

First impressions can be deceptive, but Gressoney seemed less hospitable than villages visited earlier; I was ultimately directed to a large hotel which neither in character nor probable tariff was what I sought. It proved to be an extraordinary place run by six young boys (the *administration*) and a flock of harassed mums who swarmed about the kitchen and dining room after the manner of their kind at a poorly organised Sunday School treat. Incongruously, I found myself seated at dinner with a bishop and two priests whose French was even worse than my own – we had a hilarious time! In fairness it must be said that food, service and comfort were all excellent and the bill 70 per cent less than I had expected.

An unnecessarily early start next day brought me before noon to the Colle d'Olen (2881 m) leading to the Val Sesia. To its north rose the easy summit of the Corno del Camoscio (3026 m) reported to command a view rivalling that from Testa Grigia; it was therefore ascended. Whether the view was better was beside the point; it was certainly superb because of the close proximity of the Vincent Pyramid (4215 m), Schwarzhorn (4321 m), Parrotspitze (4436 m), Signal Kuppe (4556 m) and Punta Vittoria (3435 m). The eye was drawn to the next day's pass, the Bochetta della Moanda, standing high and remote in the ridge thrown down by the Signal Kuppe, nobly flanked on the north by the shapely Monte Tagliaferro (2964 m). Then followed the descent to Alagna for overnight accommodation.

The route to the Bochetta della Moanda (2422 m) proved to be no less steep than had appeared from the opposite side of the valley. This combined with the continuing brilliant hot weather encouraged frequent rests giving ample opportunity to admire the expanding panorama at the valley head. Not less than 80 per cent of the sketchy track proceeded, by endless zig zags, finally traversing a narrow ledge to the col itself, which until it had been vacated by 4 goats, could not be stood upon. From this nick in the ridge, a faint track led up the north ridge of Monte Tagliaferro, the most striking feature in the previous day's views across Val Sesia. The track, where it existed, was set (barely!) on the ridge's flank inclined at an alarming angle; nevertheless, it could be followed and perhaps once the ridge proper was achieved, the going might improve. A rib crossing the path was particularly troublesome to circumvent and having done so, another tactical withdrawal became necessary, for the previous week's storm had

caused a land-slip leaving only precariously unstable earth at an even more alarming angle than the flank of the ridge. This was disappointing for M. Tagliaferro would have added to the already fine collection of prospects of Monte Rosa, and provided a scramble down its east ridge to the Val di Rima through the rhododendron and pine forest clothing its eastern slopes. After regaining the col, consolation was taken in an alternative route crossing the mountain's south-east ridge by the Passo del Vallarolo (2332 m) and thence traversing, obliquely, idyllic alps before descending into the forest at the lower limit of which lay Rima. This is a fairy-tale village, of medieval houses, church and roughly paved square from which radiate intriguing courts and alleyways. It is rightly protected by law from modification or development. Simple but generous hospitality was found amid faded elegance at the picturesque Albergo Alpino, run by two kindly old ladies whose attentiveness reminded one too readily of their counterparts in *Arsenic and Old Lace*.

These suspicions having proved baseless, I regretfully left the village early next morning – better rather than worse for my stay, and followed the main stream up the valley to the chalets above Lanciole (1943 m) where the track disappeared completely. Much time was spent casting about to retrieve the line and ultimately patience, plus some careful compass work, revealed a faint track which later developed into a splendidly constructed thoroughfare over a metre in width, made up of large evenly set slabs of rock giving a well graded and easily followed route for over a 1000 m to the Col del Piccolo Altare.

The far side of the ridge was precipitous and at this moment the cloud chose to come down. Westward along the ridge, a more amenable descent was found – as was a chamois hunter, who clearly enjoyed company (at least under the protection of cloud!). Together we traversed the ridge over the Colle del Vallè (2850 m) to reach the head of the Turlo pass (2738 m) by an excellent scramble of the Welsh kind – it was not unlike Bristly Ridge.

My companion was a mine of information; he explained for example, that the Turlo and Piccolo Altare tracks were originally military roads and that they had been extensively used during the 19th century as cattle droving routes between the Swiss valleys, Macugnaga and the northern Italian valleys. This traffic led to a community of outlook in the regions thus connected, to inter-marriage, the adoption of German as the second language and to distinctive culinary practices which I had also noticed.

The descent of the Turlo in heavy cloud was long and dull.

Emerging into the clearer atmosphere of the attractive Vallone Quarazza was particularly welcome as was the contrast of its trees and spectacular rock pools in the main stream descending from the Locce glacier.

From the lip of this long hanging valley poised above the Val Anzasca, a small but well defined path led down through chalets and woodland to the river roaring down from the Monte Rosa glacier set in the tremendous amphitheatre below the Dufourspitze (4517 m). Some distance up-stream, the Albergo Stella Alpina was reached – where mine host turned out (unbelievably!) to be Wilson Pharaoh's second double – he even spoke English!

Next morning, an enterprising track was taken from Macugnaga-Staffa up the steep crags separating the valley from the more reasonably angled upper slopes of its north side. After a long 1650 m of ascent, the Monte Moro pass (2868 m) – leading back into Switzerland, was reached. In view of the length and gradient of the ascent on the Italian side, it was not surprising that no-one else was met; by contrast, the Swiss side teemed with young and old coming up from the Saastal (and one assumes, returning thither). Whatever the attractions of the Swiss valley (and these were many), the most majestic views were undoubtedly backward into the vast circle of peaks crowning the Rosa group (Cima di Jazzi (3804 m), Jagerhorn (3970 m), Nordend (4609 m), Dufourspitze (4634 m), Zumsteinspitze (4563 m), Signal-kuppe (4556 m).

From the head of the Saastal (now occupied by a lake beneath which lies the Mattmark Inn), the long walk (30 km) to Stalden was commenced. Despite the resorts punctuating the route, it is a delightful valley tremendously deep with steeply cut walls leading to beautiful alps upon its higher slopes. Small communities and isolated chalets cling in improbable positions on the precipitous sides of gorges and one wondered for how long people would be prepared to extract an equally precarious living from farming such terrain – accessibility only by foot or mule.

The night was spent at Gasthof Hohlgassli, a pleasant place whence one was despatched next day with a huge breakfast.

Thus fortified, St. Niklaus was quickly reached and soon the track leading ingeniously up the valley's craggy treelined western flank was being followed to the Jungtal. The view which opened up southward was one of great splendour, dominated by the brilliant white pyramid of the nearby Bruneggorn (3586 m) flying a dramatic pennant of cloud. Eastwards lay the ever increasing prospect of the great sequence of summits on the

magnificent northern spur thrown out by Monte Rosa, including the Strahlhorn (4190 m), Rimpfischhorn (4199 m), Allalinhorn (3834 m), Alphubel (4206 m), Taschhorn (4490 m), Dom (4480 m), Lenzspitze (4294 m) and Nadelhorn (4328 m).

The way up the Jungtal provided one of the many unexpected changes in direction and terrain on these tracks leading to passes. Without warning, the path, which was heading directly for the clearly visible Jungpass, disappeared through a wall, executed a tight and entirely unexpected hairpin above a waterfall and then proceeded by a series of open zig-zags over steep slopes on to a high shelf. After a considerable distance this led to a higher valley (the Innertalle) leading westwards over extensive boulder wastes to the Augstbord pass (2894 m). Throughout this section there developed terrific views to the east, supplemented later by fine northerly prospects to the Oberland. An hour's scramble to the summit of the Schwarzhorn (3202 m) – one of the route's finest viewpoints – extended the view to include the St. Gotthard and Ticino mountains.

There followed the easy descent to Gruben in the Turtmanntal, with fine views into the head of this quiet valley. Simple, inexpensive, but hospitable accommodation was found at chalet Walderruh, just below the village.

The excellent weather showed no signs of breaking next morning as a start was made for the Meiden Pass (2801 m) leading to the Val d'Anniviers. The ascent was straightforward, first through attractive woodland, then over easy alps and only during the last 200 m over rougher terrain.

From the pass it was an easy matter to traverse the flanks of the Meidspitz, Corne du Boeuf and Pas de Boeuf, though some step cutting across unexpected bands of ice had its moments. After regaining the ridge the steep southern ridge of the Bella Tola (3026 m) was ascended. Surprisingly the summit was shrouded in very cold cloud. This was the third time I had visited this summit in these conditions within a period of otherwise perfect weather thus illustrating the universality of the Law of Maximum Perversity, the summit being noted as a particularly fine viewpoint. The Law was further illustrated when after descending 300 m, the cloud dispersed completely! From the summit a steep path led via St. Luc down the tree-clad slopes to Vissoie situated near the junction of the Vals d'Anniviers and Moiry. The latter was followed to Grimentz, reputedly the most beautiful of the Vallaisian villages and therefore a good place to spend the night. It certainly lived up to its reputation, like Rima; Grimentz owes

much of its charm and atmosphere to being a protected village. Every building was richly decorated with flowers, its chalets were old and full of character, cars were banned from its narrow paved streets – even its people seemed colourful – like members from crowd scenes in *Der Freischütz*.

Next morning, in even better weather, the dam at the north end of the Moiry Lake was crossed giving dramatic views of the Moiry glacier and its flanking peaks, notably the Grand Cornier (3962 m) and the Bouquetin ridge descending from it. There followed a straightforward ascent to the beautiful Col de Torrent (2918 m) giving access to the Val d'Hérens and affording an extraordinary panorama. To the east, beyond the Bouquetins, the stupendous ice cliffs of the north and west faces of the Weisshorn (4505 m) dominated the scene which included the great peaks grouped round the glacier cirque surrounding the Cabane Mountet (Zinal Rothorn (4221 m), Trifhorn (3728 m), Wellenkuppe (3903 m), Obergabelhorn (4063 m), P. de Zinal (3791 m) and Dent Blanche (4359 m)). To the south and west, the prospect was if anything even finer; the Val d'Arolla led to the extensive group of peaks bounding the north side of the Valpelline, traversed earlier in the tour, (M. Brule (3591 m), L'Eveque (3716 m), M. Collon (3637 m), Pigne d'Arolla (3772 m), etc.). All these were delineated in unbelievable detail in that extraordinarily clear air, resulting in much film being used at this spot! The only difficulty in the descent to Haudères at the junction of the Combe de Ferpecle and Val d'Arolla was negotiating an assembly of some 200 cows rendered frolicsome on the steep path by a group of frisky goats dashing headlong through the herd.

A leisurely walk up the Val d'Arolla followed, the evening sun picking out the detail in its eastern rock wall (especially the Aiguile d'Arolla) with colourful and unreal sharpness.

Next day was perhaps the most brilliantly sunny and clear morning of the tour. As a way was made up the north flank of the Glacier de Tsidjiore Nouve, the unbelievably clear air and intensely blue cloudless sky made even more dramatic the proximity of Mont Collon (3637 m), the Pigne d'Arolla (3796 m) and Mont Blanc de Cheilon (3827 m). Every feature of their north faces was clear and much time was spent admiring their architecture. A lateral coomb led steeply to the Col de Riedmatten (2919 m), the descent from which – down a steep gully – was not especially difficult. At the bottom lay the Glacier de Seilon and emerging onto its lateral moraine, the full majesty and extent of the circle of peaks and glaciers at its head were revealed

(Rosa Blanche (3336 m), La Salle (3646 m), Mont Pleureur (3704 m), La Luette (3549 m) and the Aiguilles Rouges (3646 m), in addition to the Pigne d'Arolle and Mont Blanc de Cheilon mentioned above). Set centrally on a spur of rock was the Cabane des Dix – what a magnificent base!

An enterprising path led down the moraine and descended an ingenious line to the vast artificial Lac des Dix feeding the Grand Dixene hydro electric complex. Its western bank was followed through a long hot afternoon, with splendid views backwards and upside valleys of ever changing and always impressive scenery. Just short of the lake's northern end a hanging valley led to the Alpa Barma whereon was situated the delightful hut La Gentiane (2458 m). A night spent here was triply rewarding: for its immediate surroundings; for the views up the main valley; and not least, because it saved an 850 m descent to the nearest accommodation at Pralong, which height would have had to be regained next day. I had the hut to myself but took the evening meal on the terrace to enjoy the ever changing colours and prospect as the sun declined.

The next day dawned as fair as its predecessor, encouraging an early start. Following the tradition of the best climbs, the tour's crux was reserved for this last section. First the day's col was the highest of those attempted and might be either a snow or ice col. Secondly, its precise location was not apparent from the map. Thirdly, if it could be found, the map's contouring left in doubt whether a solo walker could prudently tackle it. Finally, if the col could be reached, the descent on the far side could not be guaranteed. I was therefore apprehensive when, from the Glacier des Ecoulaies, I located the glacier pass of the Col du Cret and adjacent to it, a nick in the Ridge that I had to presume was the sought-for Col de Severeu (3111 m) since it was the only other point remotely possible as a crossing point – unfortunately it was approached by 400 m of broken rock and scree, which looked almost vertical. The tour's starting point in the Val de Bagnes lay a short 6 km away – could the circle not be completed? Pressing forward (with some anxiety, I must confess) along the moraine separating the glacier from the crumbling cliff of the Rosa Blanche (3336 m) – the depressing scree slope, first seen an hour earlier, was reached. At the last possible moment, a broad gully appeared beyond a buttress providing a moderately steep but feasible route to the ridge over large blocks hearteningly reminiscent of the approach to Grey Crag in Birkness Coombe. After a breather the col was attained, revealing a steep rock rib

or a short glacier as alternative descents into the Val de Seveeu on the far side; the rib's lower part was invisible from the col, so the glacier was selected and cramponed down without difficulty giving magnificent views of Mont Blanc and its satellites to the West all incredibly clearly delineated; an impressive foreground was provided by the nearer Grand Combin group and the sweep of rugged ground down to the Val de Bagnes immediately below.

Two obstacles remained to be negotiated before Fionnay (the walk's starting point) could be reached. The first was a steep cliff flanked by sizeable waterfalls set across the lateral valley containing the glacier just descended; secondly, this hanging valley had an extremely steep and thickly vegetated 500 m outfall into the main valley below. The absence of anything but the sketchiest vestiges of a track down the ultimate dramatic ravine and across the wall of its final gully left nothing to be desired in the way of a *con spirito coda* to the venture.

With an hour of daylight left, Fionnay was reached, whence the way was followed down an unfrequented road in the main valley to an attractive inn (Pension du Chasseur at Lourtier) which I had noticed on the way up. The completion of the round was duly celebrated.

# NEW CLIMBS AND NOTES

*Ed Grindley*

The dry spring has given a bumper crop of new routes: an amazing total of about 90 have been climbed in the six months since the *Recent Developments* booklet appeared. Many of the climbs are of high quality, honours going mainly to the Carlisle teams of Armstrong, Botterill, Lamb and Whillance. In spite of the fine example being set by this group, the year has seen the use of several disturbingly despicable techniques by climbers who seek to get themselves new routes by 'unfair' means. These include the chipping of holds (surely the worst kind of cheating), the placing - or pre-placing - of pegs and the placing of runners by abseil. Further, the growing use of runners placed high in neighbouring routes is not leading, it is top roping. Let us hope that the next new climbs section can report that the highest standards of unaided leading are being adopted by all who aspire to climb a grade.

In order to keep climbers better informed the guide book committee has decided to publish this section of the *Journal*, as a cheap, biannual new climbs booklet. Because of this wider readership I have dropped the use of initials for Fell and Rock members. As in *Recent Developments* both technical pitch grades and E grades are used where known.

The guide book committee at its recent meeting also decided to terminate the latest guide book series with the *Borrowdale* book. The remaining two books, *Eastern Crags* and *Buttermere*, are now to be combined and will appear during 1979 as the first guide in the next series. This series will contain only five volumes, the remaining four being: *Langdale*; *Borrowdale*; *Dow Crag*, *Eskdale*, *Seafell and East Wasdale*; and *West Wasdale*, *Gable*, *Pillar* and *Emmerdale*. The guides will be largely rewritten and of slightly larger size (4½" x 6½" as opposed to 4¼" x 6").

David Miller is the new guide book editor and descriptions can be sent to him at 31 Bosburn Drive, Mellor Brook, Blackburn. Otherwise we recommend the use of the new climbs books at the Packhorse Inn at Keswick and Frank Davies Climbing Shop at Ambleside. The next new climbs editor will check these sources.

## BORROWDALE

### LOWER FALCON CRAG

**Wuthering Heights.** 130 feet. Extremely severe (E2).

1 130 feet. 5c. Climb the initial groove of Dangler till above the bolt. Traverse horizontally left for 20 feet to gain a short crack. Climb this to a resting place. Move right; then left onto a steep wall and climb this on good holds to the top.

First ascent: A. Hyslop, R. McHaffie, R. Graham. April '78.

**Cyclotron.** 120 feet. Extremely severe (E3).

Climbs the steep wall between Hedera Grooves and Stretch. Start as for Hedera Grooves.

1 120 feet. 6a. Climb as for Hedera Grooves until possible to traverse right and get established on the black wall. Traverse right to a niche; then pull up left. Back right to better holds. Climb leftwards for 15 feet; then straight up to a possible belay. Climb the steep wall above.

First ascent: K. Forsythe, T. W. Birkett. 26.4.78.

**Masquerade.** Pitch 2 straightened out.

From the thread belay traverse 10 feet right till directly under the final steep crack. Climb the crack to join the original finish (E2, 5b).

First ascent: J. Taylor, C. Downer. 26.4.78.



**Deruptus.** Variation finish.

From the belay on the right (below the overhanging wall) make a rising traverse left for 25 feet and step left across the top of a groove (above the thread belay on Masquerade). Straight up to the big ash, 60 feet, very severe.

First ascent: J. Taylor, 26.4.78.

**Close Encounters.** 170 feet. Extremely severe (E2).

Start just right of Masquerade.

1 100 feet. 6a. Climb the groove behind the tree to the overhang; then move right and up to the peg at the start of the traverse on the Niche. Traverse left to a groove (peg runner) and climb this to the Girdle. Peg belay on the right.

2 70 feet. 5c. Move left for 20 feet and climb the overhanging groove some 10 feet right of Masquerade pitch 2.

First ascent: R. Graham, T. W. Birkett (alternate leads), R. McHaffie, 15/16.4.78.

**Star Wars.** 170 feet. Extremely severe (E2).

Start 15 feet right of the Niche.

1 70 feet. 5c. Climb the groove to a sapling; then gain the right side of the Niche.

2 100 feet. 5b. From the right side of the Niche climb steeply up past a peg. Continue up slightly leftwards to finish up a groove some 15 feet left of the Niche.

First ascent: T. W. Birkett, R. Graham (alternate leads), A. Hyslop, 8.4.78.

**Kidnapped.** 140 feet. Extremely severe (E1).

Links the direct start to Dedication and the variation finish to Plagiarism. Start left of Illusion at a groove between two trees.

1 140 feet. 5b. Climb the groove and continue to reach the small spikes on Dedication at 50 feet. Climb into the overhanging niche (Plagiarism) and up to the roof, piton. Traverse left to the arête and follow the groove above to the top.

First ascent: P. Botterill, J. Lamb, 25.4.78.

**Good times, bad times.** 130 feet. Very severe (hard).

Climbs the wall between Illusion and Joke.

1 80 feet. 5a. Easily up the wall to a tree and go up behind this, slightly right to below overhangs. Pull over these, peg runner, to a niche. Bridge up the niche; then left to better holds. Continue to a belay on Joke.

2 50 feet. As for Illusion.

First ascent: D. Knighton, B. Conlon, 27.8.78. The peg was placed by abseil.

## RECASTLE CRAG

**Guillotine.** 100 feet. Extremely severe (E2).

Start just right of Rack, at a very small hawthorn.

1 100 feet. 5c. Climb the black wall to a ledge. Continue up a thin groove to a bulge and go over this to a thin, hollow flake on the wall. Step right and continue to a second bulge. Over this, step left and up to the top.

First ascent: J. Lamb, 5.9.78.

**White Noise.** 100 feet. Extremely severe (E2).

Start immediately left of Rack Direct at a large block.

1 100 feet. Climb up strenuously to gain a crack and follow this up the wall to a bulge near the top. Continue over the bulge to nut belays.

First ascent: J. Lamb, R. McHaffie, 9.8.78.

**Thumbscrew.** 100 feet. Extremely severe (E2).

Start directly above the tree between The Rack and The Gibbet.

1 100 feet. 5c. Climb the easy wall to ledges. Continue up a steeper wall to a big flat hold below two parallel cracks. Climb the left hand crack to the top.

First ascent: J. Lamb, D. Cherry, 24.8.78.

## CAFFEL SIDE CRAG

**Everard.** 90 feet. Extremely severe (E2/E3). 5c.

Takes the thin overhanging crack 20 feet right of Blondin. Climb the groove; step right and continue up the wall and crack above.

**Apricot Lil.** 90 feet. Extremely severe (E1). 5b.

Climb the initial groove of Everard for 15 feet and move left onto the wall. Up the wall passing a pinnacle and finish up an obvious groove.

Both first ascents: P. Whillance, D. Armstrong, M. Berzins. 8.7.78.

## GOUTHER CRAG

**First Offence.** 230 feet. Extremely severe (E2).

Climbs the overhang and slab between Kaleidoscope and Fool's Paradise.

- 1 100 feet. As for Lodore Groove to belay at the end of the traverse on Fool's Paradise.
- 2 100 feet. 6a. Step left and climb the wall above the traverse on Fool's Paradise. Climb the wall and hanging groove at the right side of the overhang. Pull onto the slab above and climb the crack on the left. Step right and climb up the middle of the slab and wall above to a belay.
- 3 30 feet. 4b. Step down and right and climb the cracked wall and slab.

First ascent: M. Doyle, K. Telfer, D. Barr. 19.8.78.

## SHEPHERD'S CRAG

**Meet on the Ledge.** 180 feet. Very severe (hard).

Traverses the fault line starting at Vesper and gradually rising rightwards to finish up Conclusion.

- 1 110 feet. Start as for Vesper. Move round a bulge and continue right across the mossy wall to good holds on the right edge. Step right and cross two bays to Brown Crag Grooves.
- 2 70 feet. Cross the open groove and finish up Conclusion.

First ascent: D. J. Hellier. 26.4.78.

**Stone Tape.** 40 feet (E2). 5c. A first pitch climbing the triangular face below the saddle on Little Chamonix. Previously pegged. Extremely severe.

Step of a large pinnacle at the foot of the wall and move right to some blocks. Move back left and up to below the overhang, old peg runner. Swing left and up to the saddle.

First ascent: J. Lamb, R. Cowells. 17.8.78.

**Thin Air.** 130 feet. Very severe (hard).

Start at the right rib right of Shepherd's Gully, behind a large tree.

- 1 40 feet. 4b. Directly up the rib to a good ledge.
- 2 90 feet. 5a. Climb the rib above to a ledge, where the rib is turned on the right. After 10 feet cross Derision Groove and make an awkward traverse past a tree stump to gain the foot of a hanging groove, which is followed to the top.

First ascent: R. McHaffie, C. Gibson, N. Robinson (alternate leads). 14.9.78.

**Bob Martin's.** 65 feet. Very severe (hard).

Start at the top of pitch 1 of Rogue's Gallery. Climb a flake on the right which curves leftwards to a tree. Move right onto a slab and climb this to the foot of the final groove of Devil's Wedge. Traverse out low down on the left wall to gain the arête. Climb this on pocket holds.

First ascent: P. Livesey, B. Berzins, M. Berzins. Spring '78.

## BLACK CRAG

**Romeo Error.** 200 feet. Extremely severe (E2).

- 1 Climb the left wall of Shroud's corner, initially from the bottom left to a good foot-hold. Move up and left to the arête. Belay.
- 2 Up Jubilee Groove for a few feet. Traverse left for 20 feet; then move up the wall to a clean finish.
- 3 Gain the hanging groove above on the left and follow it to the top.

First ascent: E. Cleasby, B. Rodgers, I. Williamson. 16.4.78.

**Silent Sun.** 200 feet. Extremely severe (E1).

Start as for Grip Factor at a slab with a tree half-way up it.

- 1 25 feet. As for Grip Factor.
- 2 100 feet. 5b. Step up and left to pull onto a slab. Climb the slab to an old peg runner and climb through the overhangs at the obvious break. Climb the right arête to a large spike belay on the Girdle.
- 3 75 feet. 5b. Above and to the left is a groove. Enter this groove and climb it till possible to swing left to the final few feet of Holly Tree Groove.

First ascent: P. Botterill, R. Parker. 30.8.78.

## GREAT END CRAG

**Trouble Shooter.** 275 feet. Extremely severe (E4).

Climbs the wall and grooves between Nagasaki Grooves and Undertaker.

- 1 105 feet. Pitches 1 and 2 of Banzai Pipeline; then move left to tree belays on Undertaker.
- 2 70 feet. 5c. Up a small slab, over a bulge and up the groove in the slab above to the overhanging wall (peg runner on the right). Move up to under-cuts and pull over to ledges. Move up and climb the groove to a ledge on the right. Block belays.
- 3 100 feet. 6a. Up left over blocks to below a v-groove. Climb the groove for 15 feet to a spike. Move left across the wall on under-cuts to the arête. Pull up left into a hidden groove and climb this to a sloping ledge on the right. Step right and climb the right side of the arête.

First ascent: P. Whillance, D. Armstrong. 17.5.78.

**Hiroshima.** 255 feet. Extremely severe (E4).

- 1 105 feet. Pitches 1 and 2 of Banzai pipeline.
- 2 150 feet. 6a. Follow Nagasaki Grooves for 50 feet to where it moves right to its crucial groove. The even smoother groove above (i.e. to the left of Nagasaki Groove) is climbed using its right edge, until a long step left can be made to gain an obvious foot-hold on the slab. Move up to balanced blocks. Gain the under-cut groove up to the right and follow it to a junction with Nagasaki Groove. Move up leftwards to climb the face as for the last moves of Trouble Shooter.

First ascent: P. Livesey, P. Gomersall. Spring '78.

## YEW CRAG

**White Man Walkabout.** 160 feet. Very severe (hard).

Start at the right end of a mossy slab.

- 1 110 feet. Climb the right-hand edge of the slab to a ledge. Traverse right for 6 feet and climb the slab, trending right, to the arête. Belay.
- 2 50 feet. Climb the overhanging wall on good holds, trending right. Pull over the final overhang to easier ground.

First ascent: N. Gibbons, B. Rushton. 26.8.78.

**Jacko.** 80 feet. Very severe (hard).

Start 10 feet right of the edge of the crag. Climb a smooth slab and block overhangs for 50 feet, trending rightwards to a large clump of heather. Reach high right, pull up and step right. Ascend overhanging cracks to the top.

First ascent: N. Gibbons, B. Rushton. 27.8.78.

## LONG BAND CRAG

**Technician.** 100 feet. Extremely severe (E4). 6a.

Free climbs the roof and groove of the old aid route. Start as for Masochist. Climb the groove and short crack leftwards to below the big roof. Climb the roof and groove above to the top.

First ascent: P. Botterill, P. Whillance, D. Armstrong. 18.6.78.

## EAGLE CRAG

**Fall of Eagles.** 160 feet. Extremely severe (E3).

A good climb which takes the big groove to the right of Where Eagles Dare; then finishes up the thin wall just left of The Verdict.

- 1 55 feet. 5c. Pitch 1 of Where Eagles Dare; then move right and up to belay at the top of pitch 2 of Falconer's Crack.
- 2 70 feet. 5b. Move left and climb the big groove to the base of a large detached flake. Climb the right side of this; then move up left onto the grass ledge.
- 3 35 feet. 5c. Move left along the ledge; then climb the wall on very small holds to a tiny spike below a thin crack. Move up into the crack and continue up onto easy slabs.

First ascent: R. G. Hutchinson, J. W. Earl (varied leads). 8.5.78.

## HIND CRAG

**Nantucket Sleighride.** 205 feet. Extremely severe (E1).

Starts 30 feet left of Turbulence at a shallow white corner.

- 1 50 feet. Climb the corner directly, exiting on the left and belay on a grass ledge at the foot of the next wall.
- 2 125 feet. The easy wall leads to a ledge on the left rib. Follow the rightward trending rib to the block overhang. Awkward moves right on good holds lead to the obvious cleaned groove. Climb this to exit on the right and trend right to a thread belay at a large flat block.
- 3 30 feet. Climb the flake crack of Turbulence but finish direct.

First ascent: C. Sice, T. Stephenson, R. Parker (alternate leads). 15.7.78.

**Turbulence.** Climbed free by T. Stephenson and C. Sice at E1. 8.4.78.

**Serenity.** 220 feet. Very severe (hard).

Starts as for Turbulence and takes the prominent corner to its right.

- 1 100 feet. Climb the wall of Turbulence until a rightward leaning groove is reached. Follow this, pulling out right to a peg belay.
- 2 30 feet. The cracked wall behind the belay leads to a jamming-layback corner. Up this to a grass ledge and pinnacle belay.
- 3 40 feet. The short corner above leads to the top.

First ascent: T. Stephenson, C. Sice (alternate leads), J. Lamb, R. Parker. 8.4.78.

## GILLERCOMBE

**The White Lady.** 130 feet. Extremely severe (E3).

Takes the white groove line between Eyrie and Patient Tigers. Start 20 feet left of Eyrie.

- 1 130 feet. 5c. Climb the groove to a ledge on the right. Continue up the groove, passing a small overhang to join the Eyrie traverse. Move up right to a ledge below the roof. Pull over into a steep groove and continue up the corner.

First ascent: P. Whillance, D. Armstrong. 17.6.78.

**Eyrie Direct.** 110 feet. Extremely severe (E2).

- 1 110 feet. 5b. Climb the crack of Eyrie for 75 feet to below the large overhang. Take the obvious chimney/crack slanting up right below the overhang and finish up a short groove.

First ascent: P. Whillance, D. Armstrong. 17.6.78.

**The Black Knight.** 170 feet. Extremely severe (E1).

Climbs a groove system to the right of Patient Tigers. Start as for Patient Tigers.

- 1 40 feet. 4c. Climb the groove to a niche below the overhang. Pull into the crack above and step right to broken ledges.
- 2 130 feet. 5b. Climb the groove above to a bulge. Move up and trend leftwards along a steep ramp to a ledge. Go rightwards across a slab and up to join the Eyrie traverse below a steep groove. Climb the groove to a ledge and continue up a layback crack formed by a huge flake to the top.

First ascent: P. Whillance, D. Armstrong (alternate leads). 17.6.78.

#### CASTLE CRAG

**Castle in the Air.** 150 feet. Very severe (hard).

Start 30 feet right of the main gully, 5 feet right of an elm. Climb the groove to a tree. Up to and over an overhang. Follow cleaned ledges to a crack in a corner which leads to the top.

First ascent: R. McHaffie, K. Telfer, P. Poole. 20.5.78.

**Castellan.** 150 feet. Very severe.

The clean wall and flake crack 20 feet right of Castle in the Air.

#### GOAT CRAG

**High Flyer.** 160 feet. Extremely severe (E1).

- 1 80 feet. The slab between Peeler and Deadly Nightshade, exit left at the top to a spike belay.

- 2 80 feet. The prominent cleaned groove-arête directly above the belay. Exit right at the top to a belay on Deadly Nightshade.

First ascent: C. Downer, C. Bacon. 9.6.78.

**Fear of Flying.** 190 feet. Extremely severe (E2).

Starts 15 feet to the right of Blaspheming Butterfly at an obvious crack.

- 1 120 feet. 5c. Climb the crack, moving left at its top to a ledge. Step up onto the wall and climb direct to a small overhang. Gain a ledge above. Climb the groove above, moving left at the second overhang to a ledge.

- 2 90 feet. Climb easy slabs just right of the diedre finish of Blaspheming Butterfly.

First ascent: C. Downer, A. Hunter, C. Bacon, D. Nichol. 8.5.78. A nut was used for aid on pitch 1. Climbed free by D. Mullen and J. Lamb.

**Solid Air.** 340 feet. Extremely severe (E1).

Start as for Cursing Caterpillar.

- 1 80 feet. 5a. Climb the steep slab, as for Cursing Caterpillar, till possible to move up a green slab to gain a crack in the overhang. Ascend the crack and trend right to a ledge. Pitch 1 of Alone in Space.

- 2 60 feet. 4c. Follow Cursing Caterpillar left and traverse to reach a peg under a small overhang. Pull left over the overhang and climb steeply to a small resting place. Traverse left to a small ash belay.

- 3 80 feet. 4c. Climb the corner on the left till below a corner in the overlap. Climb this and gain the slab above. Follow a crack-line rightwards for 20 feet; then move right and ascend another crack till near the top of the slab. Move right and climb a corner on pitch 3 of Alone in Space to a stance.

- 4 50 feet. 5b. Traverse left for 15 feet to two good foot-holds below a ledge. Move left to below a v-groove, gain a niche; then ascend to a mossy ledge.
- 5 70 feet. 4c. Ascend rightwards to a flake and gain a slanting corner. Climb the corner and groove above.

First ascent: R. J. Kenyon, A. Hewison. 29.4.78.

**Heretic.** 75 feet. Extremely severe.

Start about 150 feet right of Bitter Oasis at a large flake by a tree. From the flake, climb the scoop in the wall for 20 feet; then step onto a grass ledge on the right. Climb the wall above direct.

First ascent: B. Wayman, G. Landless. 30.7.78.

**The Gibbet** (HVS, 5b), has been climbed free. (D. Armstrong, R. Parker).

## BUTTERMERE AREA

### BUCKSTONE HOW

**Encroacher.** 200 feet. Extremely severe (E1).

Start 20 feet left of Cleopatra at a cleaned groove.

- 1 120 feet. 5b. Up the groove on good holds to a junction with the left-hand side of the gangway on Cleopatra. Up the groove above to the overhangs and pull right over these to the long traverse on Cleopatra. Pull right across the wall to gain a leftward slanting corner. Up this till possible to pull right onto the rib. Continue over an overlap to a stance.
- 2 80 feet. 4c. Step left; then up broken rock to a spike. Swing left onto the front face of a jutting wall, trend left to a groove and climb this to the top.

First ascent: D. Knighton, M. Brown. 16.7.78. Mr Knighton states that the second pitch was NOT top-roped! Perhaps he would like us to send him a gold star.

### HIGH CRAG

**Samson.** The original pegged overhang can be climbed free. (E1). 5a.

**Lost Colonies** – a first pitch. Start in the middle of the wall between Phillistine's arête and the direct start to High Crag Buttress. 6a. Balance moves up and right lead to a good nut placement in a shallow corner. Move horizontally left into the centre of the wall and climb straight up. Continue in the same line to the thread runner on Psycho (60 feet). Either move right to join Lost Colonies or move down to belay in the cave.

First ascent: J. Lamb, J. Taylor, P. Botterill. 4.5.78.

**Phillistine.** An obvious direct start has been made up the arête, taken first on the right; then on the left (5b).

### EAGLE CRAG

**The Plague Dogs.** 105 feet. Extremely severe (E2/E3).

An exposed route up the tower between Hanging Chimney and Easter Buttress.

- 1 55 feet. From the large grass ledge directly beneath the tower move up the groove of Hanging Chimney Direct for 15 feet. Traverse strenuously out left on large holds till possible to move up into a groove which is followed to a belay halfway up pitch 2 of Easter Buttress.
- 2 50 feet. Move rightwards to a large hold beneath the overhang. Climb up onto the overhang and go strenuously leftwards to pull onto the wall above. Climb straight up the wall till possible to traverse rightwards to the base of the wide crack in the prow. Finish up this.

First ascent: J. W. Earl, R. G. Hutchinson (alternate leads). 4.6.78.

**The Clown.** 165 feet. Very severe (hard).

1 65 feet. Pitches 1 and 2 of Birkness Chimney.

2 100 feet. Climb the left wall of the gully directly to a bottomless corner. Ascend this to the roof. Move right to the arête and follow a groove to a ledge. The corner in the short wall above is climbed to a stoney finish.

First ascent: J. W. Earl, R. G. Hutchinson. 15.7.78.

#### LING CRAG

**Hay Fever.** 90 feet. Extremely severe (E1).

The second pitch takes the steep groove left of The Purist. Start 20 feet left of The Purist.

1 40 feet. Climb the wall on good holds, moving right up a rib. Belay on the big vegetated ledge at the bottom of the left-hand groove.

2 50 feet. Climb the groove direct, exiting right with difficulty up the arête. Continue more easily to the top.

First ascent: R. G. Hutchinson. 9.7.78.

On Pillar Rock **Gondor** has been climbed free. (G. Tinnings).

## DOW CRAG AREA

#### RAVEN CRAG

**Head over Heels.** 120 feet. Extremely severe (E2).

Takes the overhanging groove right of the main pitch of Beautiful Losers. Start 20 feet right of Beautiful Losers.

1 40 feet. Up the overlapping walls to the glacis on Beautiful Losers. Continue to the belay of that route.

2 80 feet. 5b. Up the groove, passing a piton runner, to a junction with Lemming. Climb the steep mossy scoop above.

First ascent: D. Knighton. 1.8.78. The piton was placed by abseil. A nut was also used for aid but dispensed with at a later date.

#### YEWDALE CRAG

**Starstruck.** 150 feet. Extremely severe (E1).

Starts 30 feet left of Dusk below a crack in a line of overhangs.

1 50 feet. Climb up and over the overhangs till an easy traverse leads rightwards to a ledge and piton belay.

2 100 feet. From the bottom edge of the ledge move up to the right and continue up to good holds beneath a bulge. Pull over the bulge to gain a crack and easier ground.

First ascent: I. Cooksey, M. Danson (alternate leads). 17.5.78.

## EASTERN CRAGS

#### CASTLE ROCK

**Ecstasy.** 240 feet. Extremely severe (E3).

A good and surprisingly independent route up the wall between the starts of Agony and Overhanging Bastion, and finishing to the left of Eliminator.

1 80 feet. 5b. Start at the foot of Zig-Zag. Climb easily up the wall, passing a block on the left. Traverse up leftwards under the bulges to a shattered spike. Pull rightwards through the bulges and up more easily to a belay.

- 2 30 feet. 5c. Climb the steep wall on the left into a short groove. Exit left and on up to a stance.
- 3 90 feet. 5c. Climb the wall on the left, passing a good spike, to a junction with Overhanging Bastion. Climb the ramp for a few feet; then traverse across the wall on the right to a niche. Pull up and out right to an easier angled wall. Up the wall for 15 feet; then up a ramp on the left to a block belay.
- 4 40 feet. 4b. Up the wall above.

First ascent: E. Cleasby, B. Wright, R. Matheson. May '78.

**White Dwarf.** 150 feet. Extremely severe (E2).

Start at the top of pitch 1 of Rigor Mortis.

- 1 150 feet. 5b. Climb the 'white cone' directly and move left to the piton on Rigor Mortis. Straight up the groove above to the gangway of the Eliminate Girdle. Climb the bulging wall above.

First ascent: T. W. Birkett, K. W. Forsythe. 5.5.78.

**Last Liveseyan.** 120 feet. Extremely severe (E3).

A contrived route up the steep wall between Ghost and Triermain Eliminate.

- 1 50 feet. 4c. Climb a thin crack, some 20 feet left of Harlot Face, to a stepped groove leading to the ledge.
- 2 40 feet. 5c. Move directly up the wall to the left of Triermain Eliminate; then move right to a rest and runner in Triermain's chimney. Move up then left across the wall to a stance on Ghost.
- 3 30 feet. Ascend the chimney; then move right and climb a corner to the top.

First ascent: D. Cuthbertson, D. Jameson. 1978. The route was cleaned and inspected by abseil and runners placed as far as the chimney on Triermain.

#### RAVEN CRAG

**Politrak.** 200 feet. Extremely severe (E3).

Climbs directly up each of the stepped walls on the right-hand side of the crag. Scramble up to the left-hand side of the lowest wall.

- 1 85 feet. 5c. Climb the short wall to the left end of a narrow grass terrace. Follow the obvious steep crack-line and wall above to a good ledge.
- 2 55 feet. 5a+. From the right-hand side of the next wall make a rising traverse leftwards to the top of pitch 1 of Creation. Belay on the large terrace.
- 3 60 feet. 6a. Climb directly up the wall 15 feet right of Creation, until at 25 feet a step right can be made into a short groove. Up this to the top.

First ascent: E. Cleasby, R. Matheson (alternate leads). 25.5.78. Subsequent parties report the existence of a chipped hold on the top pitch.

**Creation.** A first pitch. 100 feet. 4c.

Start 20 feet above the larch. Enter a rightward slanting groove from the right and follow it to good holds below a bulge. Pull onto the wall above and up to better holds. Up slightly right to another groove which is followed to the oak.

First ascent: P. Botterill. 2.8.78.

**Das Kapital.** 155 feet. Extremely severe (E5).

Start in the cave.

- 1 95 feet. 6a/b. Climb the back of the cave to a niche (as for Gates of Delirium). Climb straight over the large roof and into the crack above. Follow the intermittent crack till possible to swing right to the top of the flake on Blitzkrieg. Back left and up Blitzkrieg for 4 feet; then traverse left for 20 feet (poor blade peg runner half-way, high up) to a shallow groove. Climb this, peg runner, to a sapling. Over the roof on the left to a short groove which leads to a ledge. Move left for 5 feet to a block belay.



- 2 60 feet. 6a/b. Up the crack above the belay to an overhang. Move right onto an under-cut slab. Follow this rightwards to a niche. Move up for a few feet and step left to gain a thin crack. Climb the wall on the left of the crack to gain the final crack leading to the top of the buttress.

First ascent: P. Livesey, P. Gomersall. Spring '78.

#### DOVE CRAG

**Ommadawn.** 290 feet. Extremely severe (E4).

Starts at the foot of Dovedale Groove and climbs the wall to its left. The final pitch takes the grooves to the right of the direct finish to Dovedale Groove.

- 1 55 feet. Climb the first 20 feet of Dovedale Groove till possible to step onto a sloping ledge on the left. Climb the wall above slightly leftwards to a ledge below a steep wall. Traverse left for 15 feet to a good spike belay.
- 2 120 feet. Traverse back right to the ledge. Climb straight up the wall to a peg below the overhang. Pull strenuously onto the wall above and continue strenuously in the same line to a good ledge. Climb the wall above to a large grassy ramp and block belay.
- 3 115 feet. Move 10-15 feet down the ramp to a slim mossy groove which is climbed to small ledges beneath the direct finish to Dovedale Groove. Climb across right towards two indefinite grooves. Climb the left-hand groove until it is necessary to pull onto the rib on the right. Pull up the rib and into the groove that slants up rightwards and leads to the top.

First ascent: J. Lamb, P. Botterill (alternate leads), J. Taylor. 11.5.78.

#### SCRUBBY CRAG

**Death Vader.** 170 feet. Very severe (hard).

Start as for Heoret.

- 1 80 feet. Climb left into the left-hand groove. Follow this to belay below the big corner.
- 2 90 feet. Climb the left edge of the left wall to reach a wide crack. Follow this and easier rocks to the top.

First ascent: C. Read, B. Wilson. 11.6.78.

#### HUTAPLE CRAG

**Heat Wave.** 300 feet. Extremely severe (E2).

- 1 70 feet. Start up the wall just left of the start of Amphitheatre. Move up right onto the arête and follow it to the large ledge. Move left to belay.
- 2 80 feet. Move up right into a prominent groove and climb it to a good runner beneath the overhang. Surmount the overhang and climb the overhanging groove above with difficulty to a ledge beneath the final groove. Continue up this to a grass ledge.
- 3 150 feet. Scrambling to the top.

First ascent: R. G. Hutchinson, J. W. Earl (alternate leads). 13.6.78.

**Summer Diversion.** 295 feet. Extremely severe.

- 1 65 feet. Climb the left-most groove up the centre of the wall between The Amphitheatre and Sleet Wall. Up the slabs above to a belay.
- 2 80 feet. Move up right as for Heat Wave to the good runner beneath the overhang. Swing out left round the arête into an overhung groove. Exit from this on good holds and climb the easy groove above to a grass stance.
- 3 150 feet. Scrambling to the top.

First ascent: J. W. Earl, R. G. Hutchinson (alternate leads). 13.6.78.

## EAGLE CRAG

**The Worm.** 120 feet. Extremely severe (E2).

Start right of the final pitch of Sobrenada, directly below an obvious hanging groove.

**1** 120 feet. 5c. Climb the problematical groove to below the higher groove. Gain this and exit left. Continue in the same line to the top.

First ascent: T. Stevenson, J. Lamb (varied leads). 22.4.78.

## GOWBARROW CRAG

**Birkett's Direct.** 130 feet. Very severe (hard).

**1** 50 feet. Pitch 1 of Birkett's View.

**2** 50 feet. Climb the shattered wall to a ledge, step right and then up the groove in the steep wall above. Move left onto a ledge; then step right and climb a crack in the wall above to an oak.

**3** 30 feet. Climb the rounded arête to a large spike. Continue awkwardly up into a rightward trending crack. Finish up this.

First ascent: R. G. Hutchinson, J. W. Earl (alternate leads). 14.5.78.

## THRANG CRAGS

**Locusts.** 125 feet. Very severe (hard).

The rightward slanting groove in the left-hand side of the lower crag.

**1** 50 feet. Climb the steep groove moving right at the top to belay at the left-hand side of the terrace.

**2** 75 feet. Move left to a spike on the arête and continue horizontally leftwards to a line of large holds which lead to the top of the pillar.

Continue over vegetation to a flake crack on the right. Climb this crack.

First ascent: J. W. Earl, R. G. Hutchinson (alternate leads). 18.9.77.

**The Wilderness.** 100 feet. Very severe (hard).

On the right-hand side of the upper crag is an obvious overhanging prow.

The climb takes the groove immediately left of this prow, the corner at its top providing an excellent finish.

**1** 100 feet. Start immediately beneath the prow and climb easily by means of large flakes to a grass ledge. Continue up the mossy groove and move slightly left then up right to surmount the large wedged block. The steep corner above is climbed to a slab which leads easily rightwards to a spike belay.

First ascent: R. G. Hutchinson, J. W. Earl. 18.9.77.

## GOUTHER CRAG

**Bloodhound.** 110 feet. Very severe (hard).

Start in the centre of the slabs between Kennel Wall and Hindleg Crack.

**1** 100 feet. Climb easily up right; then diagonally left with difficulty to gain an obvious flake in the middle of the slab. Continue directly upwards to the base of an obvious groove in the top overhang. Climb the groove and the wall above.

First ascent: R. G. Hutchinson, J. W. Earl. 2.7.78.

## GREAT GABLE AREA

## KERN KNOTTS

**Triffid.** 115 feet. Extremely severe (E2).

Start as for the variation start to Central Climb, at a steep crack a few feet left of Kern Knotts Chimney.

**1** 35 feet. 4c. Climb the crack to a large spike belay.

- 2 80 feet. 5b/c. Climb up slightly right above the belay to the bulges. Climb the steep groove/crack that cuts through the left side of the bulge to the top.

First ascent: P. Botterill, J. Lamb. 23.4.78.

#### THE NAPES

**Golden Calf.** 130 feet. Extremely severe (E4).

To the left of Tophet Grooves are two conspicuous thin off-set cracks up the leaning buttress. Start left of the direct start to Tophet Grooves at the foot of the first crack.

- 1 55 feet. 5c. Climb the crack direct. Belay well back in the corner.  
 2 20 feet. 4a. Traverse easily right to belay below the scoop of Tophet Grooves.  
 3 55 feet. 6a. Climb the scoop until it is possible to bridge up beneath a thin crack. Follow this crack to the top.

First ascent: P. Botterill, J. Lamb. 21.5.78. Varied leads.

**Sacrificial Crack.** 150 feet. Extremely severe (E3).

The impressive overhanging crack above Tophet Wall. Start as for the original start to Tophet Wall, where grass ledges cut across the face.

- 1 70 feet. Climb a rib between Tophet Wall pitch 3 and Demon Wall pitch 2 and pull over a bulge above into the right-hand of two short grooves (directly in line with the crack). Climb this to the traverse beneath the upper wall. Belay just right of the foot of the crack at a shattered pinnacle.

- 2 80 feet. Climb the crack.

First ascent: J. Lamb, P. Botterill, J. Taylor. 18.5.78.

#### HERON CRAG

**Minor Sixty-niner.** 120 feet. Very severe.

Start up Kama Sutra and climb up to a line of flakes. From the flakes, traverse right past a spike to the arête. Climb the arête for 80 feet to a block belay at the top of pitch 2 of Kama Sutra.

First ascent: A. Phizacklea, R. Grimshaw. 29.8.78.

## GREAT LANGDALE AREA

#### WHITE GHYLL

**Rampant Finish.** Extremely severe (E3).

A fitting finish to Warrior. Traverse left from the belay (peg runner) and pull up to reach holds above the roof. Move left (peg runner) and climb a rib and cracks to the top.

First ascent: M. Berzins, C. Sowden.

#### PAVEY ARK

**Digitaris.** 240 feet. Very severe (hard).

Start left of Golden Slipper at the left end of an overhang.

- 1 80 feet. 5a. Up the wall below an obvious mossy groove. Step onto a downward-pointing fang of rock; then up the thin groove above to good side-hold. Move up and right to a small slab. Up and right again to a cleaned slab leading to a ledge. Traverse right to belay on Golden Slipper.  
 2 80 feet. 5a. Climb the wall left of pitch 2 Golden Slipper.  
 3 80 feet. 5a. Move right around the rib, beneath an overhang and up to a ledge. Climb the thin crack on the right of the smooth corner to the top.

First ascent: P. Clarke, M. Tolley. M. Dale. 29.4.78.

**Death Star.** 220 feet. Extremely severe (E2).

The right rib of Rake End Chimney.

- 1 120 feet. 5c. From the bottom of the rib climb on the right-hand side of the black moss streak till moves right lead to the foot of a thin vertical crack. Climb this, pulling out right at the top. Move back left and continue up the rib to a stance.
- 2 100 feet. 5a. From the chockstone where the chimney starts again, step left onto the wall and up till moves left across a slab lead to an arête. Up easily to a large block belay.

First ascent: T. W. Birkett, J. Adams. 21.5.78. The bottom of the rib was protected by a runner high in Rake End Chimney.

**Heartsong.** The thin crack just to the right of Fallen Angel has been climbed by R. Fawcett and C. Gibb at E3/6a. No description as yet.

#### BOWFELL

**Solaris.** 120 feet. Extremely severe (E1).

The obvious corner left of Flat Crag Corner. Pleasant. Scramble up to the groove and climb it, eventually moving right to gain the left end of a large ledge. Swing down and across left to climb the left arête of the groove to easy slabs.

First ascent: M. Berzins, C. Sowden. 14.7.78.

#### NECKBAND CRAG

**Cut-throat.** 120 feet. Extremely severe (E1).

Climb the overhanging crack left of Gillette to join that route. Move right onto the arête and climb an obvious crack to finish up the last few feet of Gillette.

First ascent: M. Berzins, B. Berzins. 13.5.78.

**Flying Blind.** 220 feet. Extremely severe (E3).

Climbs the arête left of Nectar.

- 1 100 feet. 6a. Starting from the left, gain the arête and climb it to a poor spike at 45 feet. Move right to a crack and up this for a few feet to a doubtful block. Move immediately left to regain the arête. Up the arête till easier climbing leads to a ledge.
- 2 120 feet. As for Nectar.

First ascent: T. W. Birkett, K. W. Forsythe. 16.7.78.

#### SIDE PIKE

**Tinning's Move.** 110 feet. Severe (mild).

Start 10 feet right of Spider Crack and climb the initial wall to a ledge. Pull over the bulge on the left; then go slightly right. Into a shallow corner and up to a good ledge. Belay. Climb directly up cleaned rock to the top.

First ascent: A. Evans, G. Milburn (alternate leads), J. Moran. 24.6.78.

#### DEER BIELD CRAG

**Stiletto.** 120 feet. Extremely severe (E3).

Climbs the thin crack in the Pendulum buttress. Start 25 feet right of Pendulum at a steep groove just left of a tree.

- 1 120 feet. 6a. Climb the groove to a ledge on the right (runner on the tree). Climb the flake on the left and continuation crack to the traverse of Pendulum. Take the crack through the overhang and wall above to a sloping ledge on the right. Up the thin crack in the overhanging wall to a niche; then easier rocks to the top.

First ascent: P. Whillance, D. Armstrong. 8.4.78.

**Take it to the Limit.** 190 feet. Extremely severe (E5).

Zig-zags up the impressive face to the right of Desperado.

- 1 100 feet. 6a+. From the foot of Deer Field Chimney climb the wall diagonally left to a ledge (as for Desperado). From the right end of the ledge step right and pull up into a sickle-shaped depression (poor peg runner). Move up to the top of this; then up right to reach a large pointed block which protrudes from the Chimney. From the block traverse left to a hold in the middle of the wall. Move up and leftwards to reach a thin crack which slants rightwards across the wall. Follow this to better holds below the roof. Belay.
- 2 60 feet. 5a. Follow a crack up to the right below the roof and pull through at a groove. Continue direct to a large spike belay (top of pitch 4 of the Buttress).
- 3 30 feet. 5a. Move right and climb the left-hand crack out of the cave (left of Desperado's finish).

First ascent: P. Whillance, D. Armstrong (alternate leads), 15.7.78.

**The New Girdle.** 410 feet. Extremely severe (E2/E3).

A complete right to left girdle at about half-height. Start at the foot of Eden Groove.

- 1 140 feet. 5a. Climb Eden Groove for 60 feet to the bottom of a long grassy groove. Move up the wall on the left, traverse round the arête beneath a bulge and step down into Easedale Groove. Up leftwards to the arête (Pearls before Swine) and traverse left to a stance at the top of pitch 1 of Hubris.
- 2 70 feet. 5b. Climb the steep groove on the left to where the angle eases. Traverse left to the arête (Imagination) and continue into Deer Field Chimney. Descend for 20 feet to a large block belay.
- 3 30 feet. 5b. Move left out of the chimney onto a slab. Traverse horizontally left to a belay at the foot of the long groove on the Buttress.
- 4 30 feet. 5b. Step down and move left to a slab on the arête. Hand traverse into the Crack and move down to large ledges.
- 5 50 feet. —. From the left-end of the ledge go over a large block and along the ledge to its end. Belay on Stiletto.
- 6 90 feet. 5c. Follow Stiletto for 60 feet to the sloping ledge below the final head-wall. Move left around the corner and continue along easy ledges to the end of the crag.

First ascent: D. Armstrong, P. Whillance (alternate leads), 6.5.78.

**The Horror** has been climbed free. (R. Fawcett).

## SCAFELL AREA

**Shamrock Eliminate.** An improved first pitch making the over-all grade E3.

- 1 145 feet. 5c. Follow Gilt Edge Eliminate to the top of its first pitch; then move up left into a scoop. Climb this until it is possible to move delicately left into a thin crack which is followed to a grass terrace. Climb the easy rib to a belay at the base of the square-cut groove on the left edge of the buttress.

First ascent: R. G. Hutchinson, J. W. Earl. 20.5.78.

**S.O.S.** 180 feet. Extremely severe (E4).

An eliminate line through May Day climb. Climbs a groove that leads to the first belay on May Day; then an overhanging crack in the buttress left of its Direct Finish. Start directly below the pitons at the top of the first pitch of May Day.

- 1 80 feet. 6a. Climb the groove to the pitons and follow the second pitch of May Day to a thread belay and 'friction stance'.
- 2 100 feet. 6a. Climb the corner above for 10 feet, to where the Direct Finish breaks out right, up its groove. Climb a wide crack at the back of an enormous block to the top of the block. The upper part of the overhanging wall above is split by a superb crack. Gain this with difficulty, a small flake high on the left being useful (no' 2 stopper in place). Follow the crack and its continuation to belays.

First ascent: J. Lamb, P. Botterill. 16.7.78 and 26.8.78.

**Cullinan.** 190 feet. Extremely severe (E4).

Climbs up directly where Shere Khan sneaks off rightwards.

- 1 90 feet. Follow Shere Khan to the ledge (3 peg runners). Climb the wall just right of the arête to pull leftwards onto a ledge. Move right and climb a crack (peg runner) to pull onto a sloping ledge. Continue up to Lord of the Rings at a peg and small sitting stance.
- 2 40 feet. The same line leads to Great Eastern's ramp.
- 3 60 feet. The last pitch of Lost Horizons.

First ascent: B. Berzins, M. Berzins (varied leads). 17.6.78.

**Equinox.** 230 feet. Extremely severe (E3).

Climb the corner to the left of Lost Horizons; then a system of flakes and cracks above.

- 1 50 feet. Scramble up to belay beneath the corner.
- 2 150 feet. 5c. Climb the corner and pull over the bulge onto a slab. Follow the slab for a few feet; then gain a ledge on the right wall at the foot of a flake. Climb the flake to a broken ledge and the continuation to another ledge. The flake crack above leads to a sloping ledge and belay.
- 3 30 feet. 5a. In the steep wall above and right is a rising traverse line. Swing up onto this and pull up above to good holds. Scrambling remains.

First ascent: J. Lamb, P. Botterill. 29.5.78 and 4.6.78.

**Caradhras.** 220 feet. Extremely severe (E4).

The climb starts 15 feet right of Overhanging Grooves Direct and climbs the obvious groove to reach Great Eastern. The remaining pitches climb the prominent corner above the slab pitch of Great Eastern. Scramble up to flake belay below the groove.

- 1 50 feet. 6a. Climb the short wall to gain the groove with difficulty. Continue straight up to belay on Great Eastern.
- 2 40 feet. Follow Great Eastern to a nut belay beneath the corner.
- 3 50 feet. 6a. Climb the thin crack in the right wall of the corner until a bridging position can be gained above the roof. Continue more easily in the same line to a belay on the slab above as for Centaur.
- 4 80 feet. 5a. Climb the corner above to a roof, gain a ledge on the left and climb straight up. Climb up the stepped corner to the top.

First ascent: J. Lamb, P. Botterill. 28 and 29.5.78. Varied leads.

**Lucius.** 280 feet. Extremely severe (E4).

Free climbs the first pitch of Chimera; then follows a system of corners, before finishing up the final pitches of Phoenix. Start as for Chimera.

- 1 50 feet. 6a. Climb the overhanging cracks, peg runner, to gain a groove. Continue to a nut belay and sloping stance.
- 2 50 feet. 5c. A shallow rightward-facing corner starts just to the right. Gain this corner and follow it to a gangway. Block belay to the right below another corner.
- 3 90 feet. 5b. Climb corner and bulges to the top of a flake. Traverse right and then up (as for the old aid move on Lord of the Rings) to a belay on Phoenix.
- 4 90 feet. As for pitch 3 and 4 of Phoenix.

First ascent: P. Botterill, J. Lamb (alternate leads), 13.7.78 and 26.8.78.

**Talisman.** 200 feet. Extremely severe (E2).

Climbs the wall between Trinity and Gremlin's Groove. Start at the foot of the obvious crack.

- 1 80 feet. 5b. Climb the steep crack, peg at half-height, to a junction with Holy Ghost. Move up the wall until easy ground leads right to a belay in the corner on Trinity.
- 2 90 feet. 5b. Move back left till above the line of the crack. Climb the wall to a flake, move up right; then straight up the vague groove above to a large stance on Trinity.
- 3 30 feet. 5b. Climb the steep little crack just left of Trinity.

First ascent: P. Botterill, J. Lamb (alternate leads). 25.5.78.

**Armageddon.** Climbed free at E2/5c by P. Whillance and D. Armstrong. 3.6.78.

**Shere Khan** has been climbed free. (R. Fawcett).

## IN MEMORIAM

R. C. ABBATT	...	...	...	...	1930 – 1977
A. W. CAUNT	...	...	...	...	1962 – 1977
LORD CHORLEY OF KENDAL	...	...	...	...	1916 – 1978
M. N. CLARKE	...	...	...	...	1940 – 1977
E. K. CODLING	...	...	...	...	1935 – 1978
C. G. COWAN	...	...	...	...	1934 – 1977
Reverend G. W. ELLISON	...	...	...	...	1924 – 1976
A. G. EVERETT	...	...	...	...	1919 – 1978
P. L. FEARNEHOUGH	...	...	...	...	1964 – 1978
C. R. FREARS	...	...	...	...	1945 – 1977
A. G. GILG	...	...	...	...	1932 – 1978
Miss E. GILSEN	...	...	...	...	1923 – 1977
W. D. GLASS	...	...	...	...	1957 – 1978
L. K. GRIFFIN	...	...	...	...	1947 – 1976
J. HEAP	...	...	...	...	1939 – 1978
Mrs. A. R. JACKSON	...	...	...	...	1946 – 1978
Miss E. LEE	...	...	...	...	1947 – 1976
J. MAWSON	...	...	...	...	1959 – 1977
C. J. MUSCHIN	...	...	...	...	1929 – 1976
Miss E. L. PATTERSON	...	...	...	...	1934 – 1977
D. P. PENFOLD	...	...	...	...	1958 – 1977
Miss E. PIRIE	...	...	...	...	1934 – 1975
P. B. ROBINSON	...	...	...	...	1927 – 1977
J. N. SPENCE	...	...	...	...	1936 – 1978
E. SHIPTON	...	...	...	...	1953 – 1977
J. TAYLOR	...	...	...	...	1977 – 1978
C. E. TURTON	...	...	...	...	1937 – 1978
A. R. WILSON	...	...	...	...	1974 – 1976
E. M. WILSON	...	...	...	...	1925 – 1976
J. WHITEHOUSE...	...	...	...	...	1969 – 1978

### ROLAND C. ABBATT, 1930 – 1977

It was through membership of the Society of Friends that Roland C. Abbatt met A. B. Reynolds, who introduced him to rock climbing in the late nineteen-twenties and proposed him for Club membership in 1930. They were together on the first ascent of Borstal Buttress in 1928.

In the years which followed Abbatt became a regular and popular attender at certain FRCC meets. He was always to be found in Wasdale at Easter, Keswick for the AGM and Dinner and, after his retirement from business, at the Scottish meets.



H. V. Hughes, Graham Wilson, Raymond Shaw, George Webb and the two Pollitts were amongst his frequent companions. With some of these friends he made a few summer visits to Switzerland for climbing. But he developed a skill and enthusiasm for ski-ing. He first skied in Austria where he had lived for a time in his earlier years, and later in life he had 15 successive winter ski-ing holidays in Adelboden. Here he was happy amongst many friends of other nationalities – all regular visitors at the same time and place.

Whilst he was not a leader when climbing he was competent and thoroughly reliable as a supporter at all times. His range of interests was wide, and with his keen sense of humour he was an ideal companion on the fells. He held the respect and affection of a large number of Club members, particularly those who must now find themselves classed as senior citizens.

He married rather late in life, and after the death of his wife in 1976 he, very sadly, was unable to recover from his bereavement. He died at the age of 81.

Those of us who can claim to have had his close friendship have reason to be thankful for all our recollections of Roland Chappell Abbott.

*Edgar C. Pollitt*

#### MARSHALL N. CLARKE, 1940 – 1977

We record, with regret, the death of Marshall Neville Clarke at the age of 80. He was educated at Sherborne and Exeter College, Oxford, and took to the law. He was a member of both the English and Irish Bar. In his younger days he was a regular attender of lectures both at the Alpine Club and the Association of British Members of the Swiss Alpine Club as well as the Fell and Rock. The ABMSAC owe much to him as he was one of their honorary secretaries from 1931-1944 and editor of the Annual Report. Older members of the Fell and Rock will remember him by the many walks that he led largely in Kent which he knew well.

He climbed quite a lot, always with guides, mainly in Switzerland, his favourite places being Zermatt, Kandersteg and Engelberg, but also spent holidays in Austria and Norway.

His later years must have been rather lonely as he became deaf and was not often seen at lectures. He never married and though known to many mountaineers only a comparative few knew him well.

*R. H. Tysse-Gee*

## C. G. COWAN, 1934 – 1977

Charlie Cowan was most active on our Lakeland hills and crags during the 1930s, when he was associated with a group of local climbers based on Kendal, Keswick and Penrith, many of whom subsequently joined the Club.

His standard of climbing did not compare with that of others in the group, but he was always game to join in whatever expedition was planned and was a very welcome companion.

He somehow radiated an atmosphere of good humour and friendliness in spite of a self effacing personality and he had a very subtle sense of humour which combined with his quiet manner caused his wisecracks to be unexpected and all the funnier.

His activities on the fells almost ceased after the outbreak of war in 1939. He lost his wife about four years ago and had been since then in steadily declining health.

I will always remember the very happy hours I spent in his company.

*J. H. Ingall*

## REVEREND GEOFFREY W. ELLISON, 1924 – 1978

Geoffrey Ellison was born at Bradford and began his education at Bradford Grammar School before going to Sedbergh. He was commissioned in the Royal Horse Artillery in 1917 and saw active service in France in 1918. After the war he read history at Oxford and returned to Sedbergh in 1922 as a master. He was inspired to take up rock climbing by a senior colleague, George Woodhouse, pioneer rock climber and an original member of our Club who in 1924 proposed him for membership. In the 1957 *Journal*, under the title 'Thirty Years On' he wrote a whimsical introduction to the Latin verses in which an incident in his climbing career is commemorated by his climbing partner, Cecil Evans, another master at Sedbergh. The Latin verses are ably put into English verse by Hugh Ellison, Geoffrey's elder son. Soon after this, Cecil Evans died and Geoffrey had the sad task of writing the obituary notice of his old friend and climbing partner for the 1958 *Journal*.

In 1931 he left Sedbergh to become a professional librarian, first at the War Office and later in Northamptonshire as County Librarian. In 1944, after a period at Theological College, he returned to the north, first to Sedbergh as curate; then, in 1947, to Levens as vicar. In 1953 he became Vicar of Langdale and his

period there until his retirement in 1961, living among the Lakeland people and the Lakeland fells, gave him great joy. When his younger son Robin became a member of the Club in 1957, Geoffrey was delighted.

While he was living in Langdale, Geoffrey was able to take part in Club events. He attended the Jubilee Dinner at Keswick in 1956 and gave a most appropriate mountain-orientated address at the service at St. John's Church the following day. He was asked to officiate at the dedication of the 1939-45 War Memorial bridge in Ennerdale in May 1960 and, to make sure that things would go without a hitch, he made a reconnaissance about a month beforehand, walking from Gatesgarth over Scarth Gap to the site of the bridge. The occasion is fully described by Dick Plint in the 1961 *Journal*.

Geoffrey Ellison's interest in Lakeland included the literature and he had a fine collection of books on the District. He visited our Library soon after it was installed at Lancaster University, casting a professional eye over it and showing great interest in it. This he expressed in a practical manner by making a most generous gift of books (recorded in *Journal* No. 65, 1975-76) to fill gaps in the Lakeland collection.

He retired to Cartmel in 1961 and while there continued his interest in the Lakeland fells. His last years, from 1969, were spent in the Cotswolds where he died suddenly in March, aged 79. The Club offers its sincere sympathy to his wife, his daughter and his two sons.

*Muriel Files*

#### PAT FEARNEHOUGH, 1964 – 1978

Pat is gone and what gaps he leaves. No longer will he grin from his immaculate Ford as he arrives at the precise time agreed for a climb or a pint; nor will he frown at the unreliability and procrastinations of us lesser mortals. Pat was something of a grenadier at heart and had little truck with the general sloppiness of the age.

He came from the tough east end of Sheffield and he took the traditional path west to the Peak. There he found an atmosphere more congenial than that of the narrow streets huddled in the lee of the black steelworks. Somewhere en route he left his drape suit behind and National Service took him into the RAF Mountain Rescue Service. With them he gained much experience of the Scottish Highlands in winter and spent pleasant weeks in the CIC hut on Ben Nevis. As a result his ice climbing capabilities

were by the late fifties well developed though based upon a traditional step-cutting approach. He had the balance and precision of an alpine guide in minimizing the effort of cutting steps on ice, and an enthusiasm for action in all but the worst conditions. All this was combined with a thorough knowledge of many parts of the British hills which, in all, made him a splendid climbing companion. Another legacy from the RAF were some firm and enduring friendships with his colleagues of that period, some of whom also eventually became members of the FRCC.

After military service, Pat visited the Alps a good number of times and climbed routes throughout the main chain. In the Peak he once took charge of young people joining the Peak Climbing Club, advising them on how and where to climb in an admirable manner and trying to ensure that they did not break their necks at a time when protection on rock was much more sparse than it is now. He produced one or two stiff new climbs on Stanage while helping to prepare the last Eric Byne Guide to the area, and above all, he always enjoyed himself. He was one of the pillars of the Wednesday night climbing scene which operated without fail winter and summer for many years, ranging in its activities from ten to twenty hardish rock climbs on fine summer evenings to battles in the dark with Goliath's Groove, Byne's or Brook's Crack, the Flakes or High Tor Original Route. Occasionally due to blizzard, activity might be reduced to marching up Bretton Clough in knee deep snow before quaffing several pints in the Barrel Inn and hiking back late at night. There was an adventurousness and open endedness about such activities which was a inspiration to everyone involved.

In the mid-sixties Pat visited the Lakes very frequently and came to repeat a good number of the harder climbs of that era. He made an early ascent of Extol almost as an afterthought following a visit to Carlisle to mend his van. He made the third ascent of Ichabod the following day. In a very natural way Pat was drawn into Fell and Rock membership and he wrote the *Gable Guide*. The latter proved a long and onerous task. It was a lonely one at times, necessitating solo visits to remote little crags to which he would not normally have been attracted. Published in 1969 the *Gable Guide* was the epitome of the sober English guidebook, accurate to a tee and suppressing almost all vestiges of egotism. Characteristically, Pat was still able to revise it nearly a decade later.

Like most of his generation Pat married in the sixties and he and Sandra had a daughter Sally. He also established himself in

the Post Office Telephone Service, first of all on the lines and later under the pressures of the Control Centre. There he was a popular though individualistic member of the team, breathing angular good humour into what could be a wearing occupation. It was all more secure than the application of building skills which has its memorial in a host of natural stone fireplaces in South Yorkshire and, incidentally, in the new type locks which he and Al Maskery fitted to all the FRCC hut doors. His precision in such matters was matched by his driving, which was very fast, very smooth and, with one or two exceptions, undamaging to life and limb. In his early years he possessed an ancient Ford Prefect which had a propensity to turn upside down. But, as in all things, he learned quickly and well. Pat loved the hills in both winter and summer. He was a romantic at heart and he took time to come to terms with the shenanigans of the 'new' ice climbing. His temperament made him unsympathetic to the sectarianism of some younger climbers. His ideal on rock, ice and bigger mountains was that of unimpeded and relatively rapid movement. Ironically, this made him more in tune with modern Alpine style climbing than many younger men. He believed in the minimization of dangers by avoiding prolonged exposure to them. This depended more on fitness, skill and verve than mounds of equipment and mere dogged persistence. Sometimes such a style won but on other occasions attempts at a 'spirited grab' did not come off. For example, he failed on the North Face of Ebnefluh in a storm and in his attempt to climb the Bonatti Pillar in what amounted to a one-day clearance in a series of stormy days. On occasion his reluctance to carry a heavy sack led to uncomfortable bivouacs which were spent in an air of acrimony. This occurred after a wild winter ascent of Observatory ridge without crampons and in a storm. The idea had been to prepare for harder things!

With climbs and men Pat kept his scores. He did not easily let go. He still intended to climb the North Face of Monte Agner upon which he and Jack Hesmondhalgh were nearly drowned; he intended to ski powder with the best. On the way to his last Karakoram Expedition he finished the four mile Islamabad Hot House Harriers paper chase with a four hundred yard Vladimir Kutz spurt which demolished almost all the opposition.

Pat had become ever more adventurous in his choice of expeditions of late. A few years ago he accompanied Peter Brown, Jack Soper and Rod Brown on a geological exploration in a remote region of East Greenland. He played his part in evacuat-

ing Peter who had sustained a dislocated shoulder. He led a group to East Turkey on a very smoothly executed trip in the mid-seventies and the 1978 Latok Expedition was his third visit to the Karakoram. All this was achieved despite a demanding job and very much at his own expense. In 1975 an alpine style push in the Tongo Peak area ended when Pat's companion was unable to continue. An attempt on the West Ridge of Latok in 1977 ended following the death of Don Morrison. After early illness Pat had led the last section to the Col and opened up much of the route leading to the final pyramid of the mountain, and even after Don was killed he moved up in support with more supplies. He was visibly shaken by the death of our friend but he was still willing to try to scale the peak. Again in 1978 he could not resist the challenge of Latok II, he could not bear the idea of not going. One of nature's vikings, he was overwhelmed by an unholy alliance of earth and water, swept into the furious Braldy River by an insidious collapsing wall of mud and rock. Glaring deserts, warm rocks and icy fastnesses will never be the same.

All our sympathy must go to Sandra and Sally.

*Paul Nunn*

#### LESLIE KENDAL GRIFFIN, 1947 – 1976

For nearly 50 years my closest companion in the hills had been Leslie Griffin. Tragically he died, unexpectedly after an operation, at the age of 62, when we were planning to enjoy our joint retirements together. He had been a member of the Club for nearly 30 years but an active mountaineer for nearly half a century. He and I started our rock climbing together as boys on a little crag on The Hoad at Ulverston, later graduating to Dow Crag. We were both founder members of a tiny club, the Coniston Tigers, with headquarters in a wooden hut at Coniston Old Hall – almost the first climbing hut in the Lake District. Every weekend we slept in crude bunks we had made ourselves, cooking on old Primus stoves, bathing in the lake and climbing all the classic routes on Dow and Gimmer. It was the finest period of our lives.

Leslie was a sound, steady climber and a very safe man on the hill in bad weather, with a particularly fine sense of direction and an eye for country. In recent years he and I had done several long walks together, our preference being for out-of-the way, untracked routes, ideally with plenty of adventurous gill scrambling thrown in. Not long before his 60th birthday, hearing that I had done the Lakeland 3,000s, he did them himself alone,

starting and finishing at Seathwaite and including a passage of the Scafells in thick mist and driving rain. Our last day together, a month before he died, was the Striding Edge – Swirrel Edge round in snow, ice and mist. He seemed as superbly fit as usual and talked of moving permanently to the Lakes from his lovely Cheshire home on my retirement, so that he could be nearer the fells. Sadly, he died on the very day of my retirement party.

Hearing of his death a friend rightly described him as ‘one of nature’s gentlemen’. Quiet and self-effacing, he showed consideration and kindness for others and lived for his family, his mountains and his music. An active skier, he and I had many holidays together in Austria and Italy and often in Scotland. He had a passion for bathing, rarely missing the chance of a dip in pool or tarn. Our last bathe together was in Easdale Tarn when, in mid-lake, we were engulfed in a cloud burst. His last holiday abroad, a few months before his death, had been to visit his son, now living near the Swiss mountains where they climbed together.

The little Cheshire church was crowded with many friends from all parts of the country when tributes were paid to his lifetime of service for ICI and his love of the mountains. A few days later two of us scattered his ashes from the summit rocks of Wetherlam – a noble resting place among his beloved Coniston fells with the dales stretching north-west to the highest land in England.

*A. H. Griffin*

#### JOHN HEAP, 1939 – 1978

John Heap, only son of Ruth Hargreaves, will best be remembered by the members who regularly went to Parkgate, Coniston, before the war. He was then part of a very happy crowd who met most weekends and enjoyed the hospitality of Helen and Evelyn. He was always keen to climb and gained quite a good standard. The war came, John joined the army and was drafted to the Middle East where soon, due to his climbing and ski-ing experience, he was drafted to the Mountain Warfare regiment stationed at The Cedars, Lebanon.

One of my most vivid memories of him was ski-ing down from Ghyllbank, Burnmoor with my young son on his shoulders and a basket of eggs in his hand. Both arrived safely. Afterwards he became the landlord of the Burnmoor Inn and it was there that he died at the early age of 55 years.

*S. H. Cross*

**JOHN MAWSON, 1959 – 1976**

John, of Stockton-on-Tees, died on 10th November 1976 at only 49 in a Newcastle-on-Tyne hospital, following several years of chemotherapy for a form of Leukaemia, diagnosed eventually after he and his family returned at Christmas 1969 from two-year stint in India with ICI.

He was one of many kindred spirits met in the hills. However, only few such chance acquaintances mature into lasting friendships, if only for entirely practical reasons. John was one such exception. We met for the first time during my leadership of a Whitsun Meet based jointly upon the Salving House and the K-Shoe hut beneath Coombe Gill in the mid-fifties. As every member knows, a dutiful leader sees to it that all desirous of company are duly fixed up for the day. John was the last to arrive the first day and we spent it together on Pike's Crag. That was the beginning of a lasting friendship which endured until his premature death.

John always responded readily to any opportunity for a day in the Lakes or their environs. For instance in 1966, during a temporary respite from my self-inflicted exile in the US Mid-West, we spent a squall-laden day on Blencathra, ending up with a complete change of clothing in a phone box near Threlkeld! During a further period of such exile in South-East England, we enjoyed several day visits westwards from my matrimonial Teesdale with Eric Ivison, Jim Huddart and Dave Coupe. Perhaps the last day proper John had on the tops with us was The Calf at Whitsun 1972, before in fact diagnosis of his ailment. Nevertheless, many times since then we recalled 'days-of-old', particularly so at splinter-group Annual Dinners in and around Keswick.

In earlier days, he had been prominent in the foundation and activities of the Cleveland Mountaineering Club, based upon the Black Horse at Stockton. Sailing was another of John's varied interests and he duly introduced me to this stimulating pastime in his own-built Flying Fifteen – in seas a mile out from Whitby and an extant gale warning!

John is survived by his Swiss wife Margrit and two children, Eileen and Michael. Indeed, others as well as I who knew him during his years in the Club will remember him as a very convivial and companionable member.

*Gordon C. Sayer*

When the Cleveland Mountaineering Club was formed, John was one of its original members and we climbed regularly



together on the sandstone outcrops, finishing up at the 'Jet Miners' at Broughton or somewhere equally accessible. We had a short holiday in Skye together when John climbed successfully with a broken wrist heavily encased in plaster, and we had some good Scottish winter trips. He was a sound, but not outstanding climber, and a splendid companion. His premature death has brought great sadness to his friends.

*C. S. Tilly*

#### E. LESLEY PATERSON, 1934 – 1977

Lesley Paterson had been a member of the Club for 43 years, but her retiring nature meant that she was not known to many members of recent years. A strong fell walker, she enjoyed solitary walking on the Borrowdale Fells she knew so well, and in her younger days she had been a keen climber in Wales, the Lake District, and in the Alps. After retiring from the teaching profession, she lived quietly in a cottage at Rosthwaite, where she identified herself with the life of the village. Many of the older members will recall her kindness, and continued interest in the Club, when Committee Meetings were held at her cottage, which she left to the National Trust.

*Nancy Murray*

#### DOUG PENFOLD, 1958 – 1977

I was introduced to DP in the '50s at Almscliffe Crag. He had fears that he would not be playing Hockey for Yorkshire indefinitely and thought that he should take up climbing for his old age! He was 40 at the time.

Our friendship developed and was based on twice weekly meets at various Yorkshire Craggs with people like Dennis Gray, 'Beardie', Alan Austin from the YMC and other lads from the YRC continuously on the scene.

Doug was a stickler for 'form' and exhibited an old world charm with, I suspect, a large element of tongue in cheek. He was anxious to do the climbing job properly. "Does the second always have to carry the rope, the slings, your boots and buy all the beer?" "Yes," I assured him, "You have a lot to learn about this climbing scene, you're not on the verandah after poncing about with a hockey ball." I began to get a little apprehensive, however, when I saw how well he was climbing, with well thought out balancing movements as he recovered my runner after I had failed to lead some green Almscliffe verticality. And so down to the Square and Compass (definitely not the place it is now). "Yes,

seconds do carry the gear back and stow it in the boot of the transport they traditionally provide." At the bar he nudged me sideways. "I expect drinks are on the second?" "Of course," I assured him. "One pint please and a glass of water for my friend."

For the next 20 years mountaineering absorbed him and his enthusiasm infected his wife Kath and daughter Julia. Apart from his hockey, it was his life. Several times during the summer they would all take off one mid-week evening to a spot high up on Buckden Pike, from where they could see the length of Wharfedale. Here they would bivouac and return to the office next morning, with Doug as spruce as ever.

Whatever he did, he did it 101%. He became interested in mountain bird life and would study the nesting cycle of the golden plover with meticulous power of observation. Or he would ring me at the office - "A 'perry' has been seen on Meugher" (to lesser mortals this is a wild, remote top lying back off the Wharfedale hills). "Have you got your boots in the office?" "No," I was thankful to say on many such occasions.

And he would approach new routes (for us, that is) with the same dedication. He would eschew the traditional climbing understatement of 'going to have a look at' a route. No, he wanted to do the South Ridge on Chir Mhor on Arran, so that is what we were doing regardless. Arriving on the route I was amazed to find that he had actually committed to memory the whole of the guide book description! I returned to the route many years later with other friends and did not recognize the place as, with guide books stuffed down our shirts, we thrutched our way up the Twin Cracks.

A valedictory should be truthful and I have to admit that DP could be one of the most infuriating companions. He wanted to do Eagle's Nest Ridge on Gable in appalling winter conditions and I refused. DP would see if he could manage it and found a strong looking youth geologizing. "Young man, drop that hammer and follow me." The youth couldn't refuse such a messianic message and ended up on a frozen crag with DP 50 feet up on the upper wall leading to the 'Nest'. I had lowered myself down into this with a spare rope in readiness. Just as DPs frozen moustache came into view I gently lowered the spare rope for, without an axe, he would never have made the last 15 feet of iced-up slab. He came off, grabbed the rope and swung across the face, actually muttering that we could have done the route easily if I hadn't messed him about!

It would be most ungrateful for the FRCC not to mention DP's close connection with the YRC. He was a loyal and much loved member and, in my opinion, his membership and activity stemmed again from a deep rooted masculine pride. He enjoyed 'fighting it out' with a crowd of blokes, either on the hockey field or on crags. I also felt that the YRC were exceptionally kind to Doug and I always felt moved when I heard of Edward Tregonning, Geoff Turner and friends annually visiting with Doug a special cairn they built on Bowfell when Julia was born.

The Penfold family, nevertheless, were inseparable and Birkness became their second home. Kath was some years junior to Doug and her tragic death 18 months ago, just at a time when Doug was seriously ill himself, nearly destroyed him. He kept going for Julia and to see Julia accepted into the mountaineering community.

Doug died descending from Pike O Blisco with Julia, who is very anxious that the kindness of David Rose and his friends and Anne and Geoff Grandison, who were at Raw Head, should be recorded.

#### EVELYN PIRIE, 1934 - 1975

Evelyn Pirie spent much of her childhood in India and used to speak of the joys of camping in the foothills of the Himalayas with her father and mother, where she discovered the pleasure of hills and mountains that was to last the whole of her life.

Evelyn and her sister Helen started the Dow Crag Clumber Hut in Coniston, where one was always sure of a great welcome, coming back from a day's climbing, probably cold and wet, knowing there would be hot baths and tea ready for us.

Evelyn drove a ambulance in London during the first war and did nursing in the second, but in between times managed to visit Iceland, the Atlas Mountains and a good deal of Europe.

I think she enjoyed spring more than anything and was one of the early people to take skis on the Lake District hills and an original member of The Lake District Ski Club.

Unfortunately, ill-health put an end to all these activities at a rather early age, but she never ceased to take the keenest interest in any mountain exploration.

Evelyn's death is a sad loss, she will be much missed by all her friends.

*Ruth Hargreaves*

## JOHN TAYLOR, 1977 – 1978

Few people could deny that John Taylor was a remarkable mountaineer, remarkable if only because of his boundless enthusiasm and unquenchable love of the hills. A recent outing typifies the man: after work in Borrowdale walked up to Scafell and soloed Slab and Groove and another route. Slept on the hill, up at six to solo Gold Rush before walking to Bowfell to meet Neil Allinson. Sword of Damocles; then down to Neckband to climb Gandalf's Grove and Razor Crack. After Neil left, soloed Gandalf Direct, Gillette and Virgo and walked back to Borrowdale. Admitted to a little tiredness at the end!

Besides his enthusiasm this incident shows another of John's facets – a love of soloing. Odd days off (as a climbing instructor and warden) and a solitary nature gave John a record of soloing the most formidable routes: hard routes everywhere, most notably Shiboloth in Glencoe, and Cengalo North Ridge in the Bregaglia region. Lately he started to reject his backrope technique and it was while attempting the second free ascent of Pendulum in Combe Ghyll, one evening, that he was killed. His sleeping bag and food were at the foot of the crag.

I first met John at Exeter in 1967 where he was President of the University Club. He really took up climbing at Exeter and in the two years before my arrival had taken in many routes in the SW and Wales. Hours of chat in the coffee bar seem to stick in the memory rather better than the physics I was there to study. After teaching training, John worked first at Plas Gwynant where he gained a tremendous knowledge of Welsh routes, then the Loch Eil Centre where he made solo ascents of the like of Zero Gully and finally he worked as National Park Warden at Buttermere.

Over the time that I knew him, John just seemed to improve and improve, until he was climbing the hardest of Lakeland routes with the Carlisle team. Somehow, John always seemed surprised that he was capable of such test-pieces.

Perhaps his last winter was his best. The big freeze gave him the opportunity to solo many of the classic Lakeland ice routes; climbs of the calibre of the Screes gullies and Inaccessible Gully. On the Nevis meet, John managed three or four routes a day, every day.

Everyone that knew John will regret the days when they didn't have the enthusiasm to do another route or take notice of some rare plant or flower. He was buried at St. Katherine's Church in Eskdale: a place of which I'm sure he would have approved.

*E. Grindley*

## CHARLES ERNEST TURTON, 1937 – 1978

Charles Ernest (Tuff) Turton died on 6 October 1978 at his home after a short illness. He was 75 years of age and had been a member of the Fell and Rock Climbing Club since before the war. In his business life he was a practising Chartered Accountant, and although the firm in which he was senior partner had been merged with Spicer and Pegler in 1975, he continued to come to the office as a consultant until within two months of his death. From his early days he was extremely fond of the outdoor life and although he never really took to rock climbing, fell walking was his abiding passion. In most years of his life he climbed the majority of the peaks in the Lake District and in Wales. He celebrated his fiftieth birthday by a family ascent of Great Gable, but even more remarkably his seventy-fifth birthday was celebrated by walking up Snowdon, where he, his family and a party of fifteen friends took a bottle of Champagne each which they all consumed at the top. He leaves a widow, a son, a daughter and six grandsons.

*R. C. Turton*

## JOHN WHITEHOUSE, 1969 – 1978

John's sudden death was a great shock to all his friends. Although most of his life was spent in London, where he worked in the Board of Trade, he managed to spend a good deal of time in the Lakeland hills and was often to be found in the Club huts. He was an enthusiastic member of the London section holding office as Secretary from 1971 to 1973. His great love was for the Continent and he made many trips to the Alps where his linguistic ability in German and French opened the door to many a pleasant social occasion. He was a member of the Austrian Alpine Club.

I first met John on one of the Club Camping Meets in Scotland, where he soon made a name for himself, as gourmet and superb cook. Many will remember him kneeling before his roaring primus surrounded by a sea of bags containing such items as mushrooms, clams, avocado, bay leaves and nutmegs. Coffee grinding equipment and garlic squeezer were part of his normal camp kit. He liked to share these pleasures and would go to immense trouble to please his guests. He was once known to spend two hours choosing a bottle of wine.

Although not an avid rock climber, John was competent and safe. His main love was for fell-walking which he did in all weathers, demonstrating considerable powers of endurance and determination. I remember him striding through an April

snowstorm on Mam Sodhail singing Schubert Lieder in his fine tenor voice. Finding it hard to acclimatise quickly to a weekend in the hills after the sedentary life of London, he began to attend gymnasium sessions in his lunch hour. He carried out persistently such a tough regime of physical exercise that in this way he was able to outstrip on Meets even those who normally lived and worked among the hills.

The wildness of Scotland gave him great pleasure and he went to live at Dunblane in anticipation of many happy days on the hills. The Scottish way of life however proved not to suit his southern epicurean tastes and after three years he and his mother moved south again to Cheshire, where he died after a short illness. We extend our sympathy to Mrs. Whitehouse.

*Margaret J. R. Duke*

#### ALAN RHODES WILSON, 1974 – 1976

On 25 July 1976, Alan was killed as a result of a fall from Kern Knotts West Buttress. I have known him since childhood days when he lived close to me in Workington. His interest in mountains was kindled at an early age by his parents who were both good walkers and keen on the hills.

Alan had achieved distinction in the academic world. He graduated with first-class honours in physics at Manchester University and later obtained a Ph.D. in nuclear physics at Leeds. At the time of his death he was researching into medical physics at Birkbeck College, University of London and had just completed a project on which he had worked for five years.

It was during his student days that he started rock climbing. About three years ago he wrote to me expressing his interest in joining the Fell and Rock. I was pleased to propose him and after he obtained membership he attended meets regularly and on the weekend prior to his death led a Club meet at Birkness hut.

In addition to his regular visits to the Lakes he went to the Highlands whenever time permitted. He had a special affinity for Skye and the Cuillin hills. In fact he had done the traverse of the Cuillin Ridge twice this year and was contemplating a third attempt. It was always a pleasure to have him call at our house to talk about mountains and to see his colour slides.

Alan's friendly personality earned him many friends both within and outside the climbing world. The letters received by his mother after his death have shown the extent to which he was regarded.

*Eric Ivison*

In *Journal* No. 65, the obituary of Edward Harland was attributed to John Appleyard. This is incorrect. It was written by Donald Murray.

## DONATIONS

The club has received two donations. One is from the Rev. Arthur Bell who has given the club £50 "for whatever cause is most valuable". The other is from an anonymous donor who has given £150 to the Club's Exploration Fund.

## HONOURS

During 1977 Charles Pickles was awarded the Queen's Silver Jubilee Medal.

## THE LIBRARY

Information about the use of the Library is given on page 32 of the current handbook. Certain changes should be noted. Following my retirement as Librarian, maps and climbing guides (which have been accommodated at my home address) will in future be with the rest of the Library in the library of the University of Lancaster. Requests to borrow them should be addressed to Mrs. M. J. Farrington, Acquisitions, the University Library, Bailrigg, Lancaster. Peter Fleming has been appointed Assistant Librarian and has taken responsibility for the hut libraries and for the stock of back numbers of the *Journal*. The waiting list for scarce numbers has been passed to Peter to whom all enquiries concerning the sale of *Journal* back numbers should be addressed.

With the issue of the *List of Maps* (Section IV of the Library), the *Catalogue of the Library*, supplemented by the *Additions to the Library 1972-1975* and *1975-1978*, is complete.

**Gifts.** As always, members and friends of the Club have been generous in giving books, journals and archive materials, and all are warmly thanked. They have readily agreed that books they have offered, of which there are already copies in the Library, might be sold so that other books that are needed could be purchased. Space does not allow individual lists of all the gifts, but the Library's benefactors include Eric Allsup, Lady Chorley, W. E. R. Clay, Mrs. Olive Haines, Bill Neate, Charles Pickles, D. F. Pilkington, W. A. Poucher, T. W. Saxton (member since 1928 who, sad to relate, died soon after giving a long run of *Journals*), Rod Smith, Jack and Angela Soper, Mrs. Thornley and Mrs. Josephine Wilson. Special mention must be made of the gift made by Eric Allsup from the collection of mountain books built up by his father, Bill Allsup, member of the Club from 1911 until his death in 1969. Included in the gift are a signed copy, No. 17, of a special edition of Mummery's *My Climbs in the Alps and Caucasus*; and a signed copy, No. 19, of a special edition of Whympers's *Travels amongst the Great Andes of the Equator*. Jack and Angela Soper who have both contributed to the new *Geology of the Lake District* edited by F. Moseley have generously given a copy to the Library. This important book brings the subject up to date more than 60 years after the publication of the well-known *Geology of the Lake District* by J. E. Marr (a former member of the Club) which has long been out of print. Fortunately a copy was presented to the Library a few years ago.

**Club Records.** Lady Chorley has made a notable gift of manuscript letters, press cuttings, drawings of Pillar Rock by



H. G. Willink, and photographs. The manuscript letters are from C. A. O. Baumgartner, F. Bowring and James Jackson (of Pillar fame) to George Seatree during the years 1874 to 1886. Jackson's letters are the originals of those reprinted from the *Penrith Observer* in a booklet dated 1906, a copy of which is in the Library. Among the cuttings from the *Whitehaven News* are letters concerning the ascent of Pillar Rock by Rusty Westmorland's father (Tom), his uncle (Ned) and his aunt (May) the second woman to reach the top. May (Mary) Westmorland's ascent was questioned by James Jackson (under the pseudonym X.Y.Z.) and there is a long letter in reply dated 12 September 1874 and signed 'Tom and Ned' vindicating their claim. All these will be catalogued before being placed with the Club Records at Barclay's Bank, Kendal.

**Bequests.** John Whitehouse has left to the Club a most interesting collection of some 70 songs written by mountaineers. In each case the original words and music are accompanied by the mountaineer's song set to it, the authors being W. P. Haskett Smith, Geoffrey Winthrop Young, A. D. Godley, George Basterfield, Darwin Leighton, John Hirst and many others. Some of the songs were sung at Pen-y-Pass parties, others at Pen-y-Gwryd, and many at climbing club gatherings; and some are reprinted from the *SMC* and *FRCC Journals*. The collection seems to have been made in the 1920s but, at the time of writing, it is not known by whom. Efforts are being made to ascertain this and any information which would help identification would be welcome and should be sent to Muriel Files.

The Library is much indebted to Geoff Cram who, with great skill, has repaired valuable books which would demand too much time and patience to be undertaken by a commercial binder.

Since the issue of the last *Journal*, 150 items have been added to the Library, some being from the collection of B. L. Martin (mentioned in *Journal* No. 65, p. 299). The full list is printed in *Additions to the Library 1975-1978* and it is practicable to give only a selection below.

ALPINE CLUB. Catalogue of books in the library ...	...	1888
BECKEY, F. Challenge of the North Cascades ...	...	1977
BONINGTON, C. Everest the hard way ...	...	1976
BOURRIT, M. T. Nouvelle description des glaciers. 3 vols.		1787
BROWN, H. M. Hamish's mountain walk ...	...	1978
BUELER, W. M. Mountains of the world ...	...	1977
BURGBACHER, K. White hell . . . search and rescue in the Alps ...	...	1963

CAIRNGORM CLUB. Catalogue of books in the library ...	1975
CLARK, R. W. Men, myths and mountains ... ..	1976
CRAIG, R. W. Storm and sorrow in the high Pamirs ...	1977
DUNSHEATH, J. and BAILLIE, E. Afghan quest ... ..	1961
EASTON, J. An unfrequented highway through Sikkim and Tibet to Chumolaori ... ..	1928
ENGEL, C. E. They came to the hills ... ..	1952
FELL AND ROCK C.C. Catalogue Additions 1972-1975, compiled by M. Files ... ..	1975
FELL AND ROCK C.C. Catalogue. Section IV, Maps. compiled by M. Files ... ..	1978
FLEMING, J. and FAUX, R. Soldiers on Everest ... ..	1977
FORBES, J. D. Travels through the Alps of Savoy. 2nd ed.	1845
FRASER, C. Avalanches and snow safety ... ..	1978
FRESHFIELD, D. W. The life of Horace Benedict de Saussure	1920
GILBERT, R. Memorable Munros ... ..	1976
GRIFFIN, A. H. A. A year in the fells ... ..	1976
HANKINSON, A. The mountain men ... ..	1977
HARRIS, S. L. Fire and ice: the Cascade volcanoes ...	1976
HAY, D. and HAY, J. Mardale: the drowned village ...	1976
HAY, D. and HAY, J. Ullswater through the centuries ...	1978
JONES, C. Climbing in North America ... ..	1976
KING, T. S. The White Hills ... ..	1871
LAKE DISTRICT SPECIAL PLANNING BOARD. Draft National Park plan ... ..	1977
MACKENZIE, I. A survey of shelters in the Scottish Highlands ... ..	1976
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## MEETS 1977

<i>Dates</i>	<i>Venue</i>
January 8-9 .. .. .	Brackenclose
January 22-23 .. .. .	Beetham Cottage
C February 5-6 .. .. .	Raw Head
February 6-12 .. .. .	C.I.C. Hut, Ben Nevis
February 19-20 .. .. .	Black Rock Cottage, Glencoe
March 5-6 .. .. .	Birkness
M March 19-20 .. .. .	Birkness
March 26-27 .. .. .	Woolpack Inn, Eskdale
April 8-11 .. .. .	Brackenclose
M April 23-24 .. .. .	Beetham
C May 7-8 .. .. .	Raw Head
May 13-23 .. .. .	Glenfinnan
M May 21-22 .. .. .	Raw Head
M May 28-29 .. .. .	Brackenclose
June 4-7 .. .. .	Roy Bridge (Camping)
June 18-19 .. .. .	Brackenclose
C July 2-3 .. .. .	Sun Hotel, Coniston
July 16-17 .. .. .	Beetham
July 30-31 .. .. .	Birkness
August 27-28-29 (Bank Holiday) .. .. .	North Wales (Ynys Ettws)
C September 10-11 .. .. .	Wastwater Hotel
September 25-26 .. .. .	Birkness
M October 8-9 .. .. .	Salving House
October 15-16 .. .. .	Yorkshire Potholing, Grassington
October 29-30 .. .. .	A.G.M. and Annual Dinner
November 12-13 .. .. .	George and Dragon, Garrigill
C November 19-20 .. .. .	Salving House
December 3-4 .. .. .	Beetham (Joint meet with M.A.M.)
December 31-January 1 .. .. .	Langdale

C—Denotes Meeting of the Committee during weekend

M—Denotes Maintenance Meet



## MEETS 1978

<i>Dates</i>	<i>Venue</i>
January 14-15 .. .. .	Brackenclose
January 15-21 .. .. .	C.I.C. Hut, Ben Nevis
January 28-29 .. .. .	Beetham Cottage
C February 11-12 .. .. .	Birkness
February 25-26 .. .. .	Raw Head
March 11-12 .. .. .	Woolpack Inn, Eskdale
M March 18-19 .. .. .	Birkness
March 24-27 (Easter) .. .. .	Salving House
April 1-2 .. .. .	Mile House (Cairngorms)
M April 22-23 .. .. .	Beetham Cottage
C May 6-7 .. .. .	Raw Head
May 12-22 .. .. .	Scottish Meet, Inchnadamph
May 20-30 .. .. .	Glen Brittle BMC Hut
M May 20-21 .. .. .	Raw Head
May 27-29 (Spring Bank Holiday) .. .. .	Birkness
May 27-29 (Spring Bank Holiday) .. .. .	Killin (Camping)
M June 3-4 .. .. .	Brackenclose
June 17-18 .. .. .	Brackenclose
July 1-2 .. .. .	Sun Hotel, Coniston
C July 15-16 .. .. .	Birkness
August 5-6 .. .. .	Beetham Cottage
August 26-28 (Bank Holiday) .. .. .	North Wales
C September 9-10 .. .. .	Wastwater Hotel
September 23-24 .. .. .	Birkness
M October 7-8 .. .. .	Salving House
October 28-29 .. .. .	Annual Dinner and A.G.M.
C November 18-19 .. .. .	Salving House
December 2-3 .. .. .	Glan Dena Joint Meet
December 31-January 1 .. .. .	New Year Meet, Raw Head

C—Denotes Meeting of the Committee during weekend

M—Denotes Maintenance Meet