

BENTLEY BEETHAM

A. Gregory

T H E J O U R N A L O F
T H E F E L L & R O C K
C L I M B I N G C L U B
O F T H E E N G L I S H L A K E D I S T R I C T

Edited by
A. E. WORMELL.

No. 57
VOLUME XX
(No. 1)

Published by
T H E F E L L A N D R O C K C L I M B I N G C L U B
O F T H E E N G L I S H L A K E D I S T R I C T
1963

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BRITISH-SOVIET PAMIRS EXPEDITION, 1962

EXTRACTS FROM MY DIARY

Sir John Hunt

Some readers of this journal will remember the six cheerful, friendly young Russian climbers who stayed at Brackenclose during their three weeks' stay in this country in 1960. Anyone who met them will understand one reason why I have enjoyed my visits to the Soviet Union and, in particular, to the Russian mountains; it is the simple one that some of us have become real friends with some of them. Ideologies have no place in this sentiment; nor, except in so far as they provide a focal point and a common source of interest, have the mountains themselves.

For myself, at any rate, this was the main attraction of going to the Pamirs, especially when I learned that two of our Soviet companions were to be from the 1960 group. But the motives of a party of individualists, especially when these are mountaineers, are not often single-minded; nor are they the same for each member, in nature or degree. This fact, added to the complication of blending two separate parties from Scotland and from England, and of taking some account of the contention that the British must not be found wanting in technical performance alongside their Russian partners, produced results which, judged by any yardstick other than the actual climbs, can at best be termed a qualified success.

But being in charge of the whole expedition of 18 (12 British*: 6 Russian†) I actually found it an object lesson in the planning of expeditions and a fascinating exercise in human relationships!

In a climbing journal it is perhaps, sufficient to record the facts that, in the course of two months last summer, we made four major ascents jointly with the Russians, including that of the highest point in the U.S.S.R. One climb was a new route on a 20,000-foot peak; another, a first ascent of a 19,000-foot mountain hitherto unclimbed and unnamed. On the fourth tragedy struck us, when Wilfrid Noyce and Robin Smith fell to their deaths after reaching the summit with two of our Russian friends.

The tragedy apart, this was, for the record, a satisfactory result; perhaps the more so in view of the differences in our approach to the undertaking and the difficulties inherent in

* Sir John Hunt; Dr. Malcolm Slessor; Wilfrid Noyce; George Lowe; Ted Wrangham; Ralph Jones; Derek Bull; Joe Brown; Ken Bryan; Graeme Nicol; Ian McNaught-Davis; Robin Smith.

† Anatoli Ovchinnikov; Eugene Gippenreiter; Anatoli Sevastianov; V. Kalakov; N. Alkhutov; Nicolai Shalaev.

planning an expedition in which two groups, of separate nationality and language, make their proposals and their preparations 2,000 miles apart. There were inevitable misunderstandings; the contrast between our scales and standards of equipment was considerable; so were our relative states of personal preparedness. In view of this and more besides, it is remarkable that so much was achieved, at high altitude, in so short a time.

Despite its weaknesses, the strength of this Expedition, as between the Russians and ourselves at any rate, lay in a basic respect, implicit rather than explicit, for the differences in outlook and method which undoubtedly exist. More than this, was the fact that as individuals, we British and the Soviet climbers genuinely liked one another.

I deem this simple discovery an experience well worth making, again and again.

These extracts from my diary may not reveal the human emotions which at times divided us but, more frequently, drew us together. I hope the reader will accept the fact that they existed, more strongly perhaps during the sequel which, following the tragedy, is not recorded here.

3rd July. My ice-axe, which had been mislaid *en route*, has turned up. We were able to collect it at the airport on our way today. A quick snack, and we boarded an Ilushin 18, similar in size to a D.C.6, for a 5½-hour flight to Dushambe.

We came down into the stuffy heat and darkness over Dushambe and landed punctually at 10.30 p.m. The five Soviet climbers were there to meet us, with their leader Anatoli Ouchinnikov; also Nikolai Romanov, former President of the U.S.S.R. Federation, who is deputy leader (honorary!) of the Spartak group of mountaineers, 25 of them. They have come to attempt the South Wall of Peak of Communism, in the national competition for the most meritorious high altitude climb of the year.

Our hotel is on Moscow Square, where we were paired off in rooms and then given a meal.

A serious hitch came to light at a meeting with Anatoli afterwards. Taval Dara has been declared a prohibited area to foreigners. This means that, whereas our baggage and the Russians can fly from T.D., we must be taken to a place

named Jirgatal, just off the Muko Su Valley, further north, and thence by helicopter. What is more serious, we will not be able to return on foot down the valley, but must fly out as we entered.

4th July. Today we have gone into action with our baggage, stored at a depot in a sports stadium outside the town. We uncrated everything, sorted and issued personal kit; then loosely boxed the gear for the 120 km. lorry journey to Taval Dara. In the evening we brought up our personal rucksacks and packed them too.

6th July. Another visit to the bazaar started my day at 7.30 a.m. Wilf and I drank tea and took many photos. Later, we all set off by bus for the Varzo Gorge, 20 km to the north in the Gissar mountains, where we spent a delightful three hours bathing in a deep pool of a tributary stream and visiting a Tadjik village. This was, in fact, a small Kholkhoz (collective farm) of some 20 workers. We met them, men and girls, busy with their reaping hooks, harvesting the barley; a very friendly and colourful crowd, most co-operative to photographers! The girls wore bright pink smocks and head scarves.

I held a party meeting to decide some points relating to tomorrow's move to, and setting up of, Base Camp. In the evening we were the guests of the Tadjik Mountaineering Federation. They are a most likeable crowd, intensely interested in British mountaineering. They, too, are to make their first expedition in the Pamirs, climbing from the Fedchenko Glacier.

All is now set for departure early tomorrow with intriguing—and doubtless formidable—problems ahead.

7th July. The day started with an earth tremor at 5 a.m. coinciding with our being called to get up; the room shook for 5-10 seconds and the electric lights shook considerably for twice as long. Several people rushed out of the building and dogs started barking.

We were seen off at the airport by three members of the Tadjik Mountaineering Federation and flew over low passes to the great valley of the Muk Su river, reaching Jirgatal (or Mir Aza) in one hour. The country is surprisingly green, with plenty of water and habitations; I had expected the bare, rocky and rubble hillsides of the North-West frontier of India, or the Karakoram.

8th July. We have at last reached our destination—or as near as the helicopters could take us; yesterday was an exciting day. We left Dushambe at 6.50 a.m., flying in an Ilushin 14 to Mir Aza (or Jirgatal) where there is a grassy landing strip beside a tributary of the Muk Su; the latter divides the western from the northern Pamirs. After about two hours, during which we drank green tea with the aircraft crew in a waiting room, the two helicopters arrived and within minutes we were being whisked off the ground and entered a deep gorge, heading east. The weather was heavily overcast, but we caught glimpses of some big peaks. The main interest was in the grassy uplands, on which flocks of sheep could be seen, with an occasional herdsman's tent. I think we had all expected to see dry, stony hillsides and this was a most pleasant surprise.

The landing was spectacular and unpleasant! The pilots evidently decided that they could not safely land or take off at the intended spot higher up and beside the glacier; so we have been left, with part of our baggage, below the glacier snout. We are, in fact, some three hours' walk and 2,000 feet below where we had hoped to be. As it was, the landing was a chancy affair.

The weather closed in and it began to rain as we started carrying loads to the place selected for Base, in a wood about two miles from the glacier. George, Wilf and I walked up to the glacier this evening. It poured with rain when we got back, as we were eating our supper over an open fire.

Tomorrow more loads will be flown in and we will start shifting our high-altitude food to make a depot where we had formerly hoped to make our Base Camp.

8th July. Leaving Graeme, Ted, Derek and Robin in camp, the rest of us have carried H.A. food boxes at 30 pounds each up to Avodara, which is normally used by the Russians as Base. For all of us, and especially for myself, it has proved to be a gruelling day. We plodded over deadly stone slopes beside the glacier for 4½ hours, feeling the weight and the altitude abominably. It was dull and inclined to rain which, though this made for coolness, added to the dreariness of the scene. The mountains on either hand are not inspiring, due to bad rock which results in endless scree. The Russians, much fitter than ourselves, made light of the journey, but I became more and more exhausted on the way back; George kindly stayed with me.

9th July. It has been the turn of the eight who carried yesterday to stay at Base today, while Graeme and party (4) carried nearly all the remaining available H.A. loads. The first helicopter flight came in at 8.30 a.m., a second at 9.30 and a third, almost completing our stores, two hours later. So we are set up at Base, but with this fearsome problem of carrying forward thousands of pounds of gear on our backs.

A discussion with the senior pilot gives us some prospect of air-dropping 200 kg at a time, however, much higher up the glacier at prospective camp sites on the Garmo and Vavilova.

A lot of thinking based, at last, on more exact statistics than I had in London, gives us the hope of two climbing periods of 10 and 18 days respectively, with a lot of heavy carrying and some rest days in between. The Russians are evidently disappointed by my schedule particularly as it leaves out the proposal to send a party to the Gando Glacier in order to make a new route on Pik Moscovia.

10th July. My turn for a second carry, and it has gone very well this time, with a cool, bright day and a breeze to help matters. George and I walked up together and we were able to catch up Wilf, Joe and Mac at the half-way stream; all of us took about 3 hours 50 minutes to reach Avodara. The return journey also went well, except for the last hour, when my feet began to feel very tender; I hobbled into Camp pretty weary.

What a dull plod this is! and how we begin to realize the difference between this and the Himalayas, having to do all our own portage! I am so impressed by the time consumed, the effort and the depressing effect of this portage that I have decided to experiment in air-dropping the balance of our food for the higher camps, when the helicopters are ready to help us; Malcolm and I are busy with calculations to this effect now.

11th and 12th July. Two dull days from the weather point of view, with the 'carry' to Avodara continuing but no helicopter flights. Living here has become rather unpleasant; cold and windy, with a dust storm each day and some rain.

We have discussed alternatives to present plans, in the form of local climbs from Base Camp, but the general preference has been for sticking to the intention of moving up the Vavilova Glacier on 13th if the helicopters arrive for the air-

drop of our stores at points along the glacier. We cannot advance without this drop and it is pointless to carry forward any more stores to Avodara until we know the prospects of the drop coming off. It is a frustrating time for all, but it is being taken in good heart.

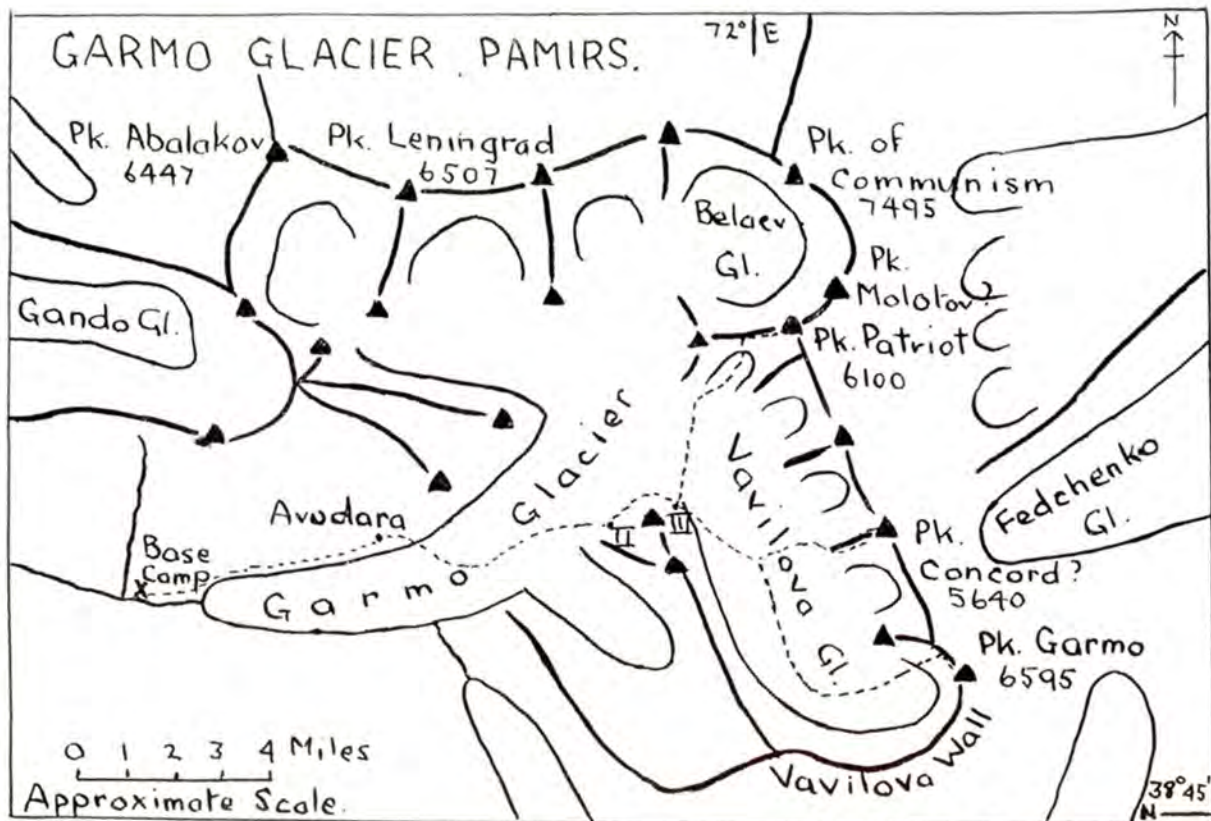
Last evening we had supper with the Russians for the first time; an excellent meal was served by Eugene, Malcolm and Kenny. It included a Chikor, shot by Anatoli Sevastianov. So far game has been scarce, although most of us have seen hares and Graeme a small deer.

13th July. At last! A clear, cool morning and the un-beautiful but welcome sound of helicopters at 7.00 a.m. I am cook today with Wilf, but I found him and George ahead of me in the 'kitchen'. We roused everyone and I went off to meet Abalakov and Borovikov, President of the USSR Mountaineering Federation, feeling very bleary-eyed. The senior pilot agreed to drop our loads at Camps II and III starting at 9.30 a.m., so we were very busy after a hasty breakfast, moving our loads to the lower landing site.

George, Anatoli and I then climbed into the cabin with the air despatcher and we were away up the glacier, with a stupendous view unfolding before us. The side glaciers revealed fine ice walls and straight ahead rose the huge wedge of Pik Communisma, the tent shape of Lenin Peak, etc. etc. Pik Garmo and the head wall of the Vavilova Glacier as we turned up it, looks magnificent; no lack of climbing here.

After a few steep turns, the pilot skimmed low over the site for Camp III; the indicator buzzed, the door was opened and, following a second buzz, out flew our loads in rapid succession as we whizzed along the moraine 15 feet up at 60 m.p.h.! We turned again to view them, then down to the site for Camp II, where I wanted our test food box dropped. One load burst apart but, being tents, no great damage will have been done. Soon we were back at Base, making arrangements for more flights tomorrow.

14th July. Two more air-drops took place today, supervised by Malcolm and Graeme respectively; we learned that the food boxes appeared to drop intact, which is a very great relief. The alternative would have been more heavy carrying, at the expense of climbing.



Before we started for Avodara on our way up the glacier, Misha Khergiani arrived on the last helicopter flight with a younger brother of Josef; it was nice to see him again.

I set off alone at 2.20 p.m. It was very hot and it took me 4 hours to reach Avodara. We were all assembled here before dark and after supper we settled details about the loads for tomorrow. Owing to the amount of personal gear I have decided not to carry food forward to Camp II, for use during the second period, as we had originally intended; this will have to be ferried up later.

In my group are Eugene and Nicolai Shalaev, with Ralph, Graeme, Joe and myself. Each group has started living and feeding together for the first time. The Russians have a huge quantity of tinned food, weighing a great deal more than ours. However, it is very good to eat! Tinned crab, chicken, caviare, fruit, etc. etc. They cannot carry all their loads to Camp II tomorrow and have failed to work out the advantage of air-dropping loads from the helicopter.

Am sleeping out under the stars tonight. Life gets into a better perspective, lying out here in starlight, with a half moon.

15th July. A clear morning, and I woke early, after a good sleep. Got breakfast going at 6.30 a.m. but what with load sorting and general slowness we only started at 8.50, following Wilf's party at 25 minutes' interval. After half an hour along the moraine we scrambled down to the glacier and over rubble to good, dry ice. Wonderful views up glacier to Peaks Communisma, Kuibishev and Patriot; later we saw the sharp point of Peak Leningrad.

Here we are, with view far down the glacier and up the Belaef ice-fall beneath Pik Communisma, a horrid-looking place. Five of our Russians then set off back to Avodara, while we have been enjoying the peace and beauty of these mountains. The only marring feature about them seems to be the appallingly bad rock.

Our loads, air-dropped here, are in a sorry state with jam, cereals, sugar, etc. etc. scattered about on the ground. We have salvaged most of it. Most of the party are working with a will, at any and every job to be done. Derek, Robin and, of course, Wilf, are wonders of selfless labour for the common weal!

I saw a number of choughs today; the others saw a huge lämmergeier. Two herds of ibex were sighted by one of the Russians and I heard their sentinels whistling above a moraine lake 10 minutes' walk from here. Clumps of pink primula(?) are growing on the moraine and an Apollo butterfly was flitting around.

16th July. We are on a grassy promontory high above the confluence of the Vavilova and Garmo Glaciers, where our food boxes and most of our rucksacks were air-dropped two days ago. We found them, virtually intact, along a strip of old snow topping the lateral moraine. This is a beautiful spot at about 14,000 feet, with superb views up the Vavilova to the headwall and Pik Garmo. Straight opposite us are Peaks Patriot and Molotov (now a forbidden name), both 6,000 metre summits, and over the Garmo Glacier is the tremendous rampart supporting the Pamir Firn Plateau, with Peaks Leningrad and Abalakov (in memory of Eugene of this name, elder brother of Vitali; he is said to have been electrocuted in a bath).

On the grassy shoulder by which we came here are growing many species of flowers and also wild onions, riddled with marmot burrows and footprints of ibex.

Arriving early, we have had time to modify our plans. Wilf's party (with Robin, Ted, Derek and the two Anatolis) is still to attempt the new route on Pik Garmo; it looks very snow-covered (the rock face) and dauntingly high from here. Malcolm's group, in which I have exchanged Joe for George, is to go for Pik Patriot by the left-hand ridge (West) as seen from here. This looks interesting and difficult; the two Russians Vladimir and Nicolai, both aspiring to Masterships of Sport, are enthusiastic.

My group (Ralph, Graeme, George, Eugene and Nicolai Shalaev and me) are to be in support of the two main efforts in the event of an emergency. We have still to choose our summit, but there are two good alternatives between Piks Molotov and Garmo on the far side of the Vavilova Glacier.

The afternoon was spent by some of us in collecting loads from the opposite moraine, a mile across the glacier, where they had been air-dropped in anticipation of that being our Camp III. We found a sorry mess of a food box experimentally air-dropped by myself; it was completely disintegrated and

scattered over a wide area. Other gear was also much dispersed and difficult to find. While we were doing this, others climbed up behind the tents to get a view. Ralph came back enthusiastic about a peak high up the glacier and we have decided to carry up loads tomorrow and inspect it at closer quarters.

A good deal of discussion has gone on, in each group, this evening in order to harmonize the contrasting practices of ourselves and the Russians. We apply the principle of summit and support groups on high mountains, establishing camps and distributing our food and gear so as to ensure a line of advance and return of the whole party, with adequate support and close assistance to the summit group. Garmo and possibly Patriot come into the scale of enterprise to which we would apply such tactics. The Russians, on the other hand, are in the habit of moving as a single group, leaving no gear behind for eventual use on retreat or return from the top.

Our discussions reveal, too, differing notions of the time required; these stem partly from the tactics, partly from the more spartan toughness of the Russians.

17th July. Wilf's party and mine started up the glacier at about 9 a.m., to carry loads to dumps and then return to-night; Malcolm was to cross the glacier later, camping on the far side.

It was exciting to reach the open upper part of Vavilova Glacier and to see at close range, the immense head wall, on which even the boldest and most optimistic eye could scarcely imagine a route. It was very satisfying, too, to see the peak proposed for our group by Ralph; it seems a most worthy objective.

We crossed the glacier to set our loads down above the moraine in an ideal spot, giving us an easy day's carry to a camp on the right-hand (West) ridge; by this we hope to reach the top. Altitude is being felt now, but all my group seems to be in reasonably good form.

The return journey to Camp III seemed a long and exhausting one and I arrived once again, pretty done up. A splendid supper of two soups and a stew soon put things to rights, however. We had a pleasant get-together with a cup of tea after dark, with Wilf's group. Anatoli Sevastianov had

been hit by a stone as he was passing beneath the exposed cliffs which dominate part of the route up the glacier; it is a dangerous spot. The altitude here is 3,800 metres.

18th July. I decided on a late start for our mountain, feeling very slack myself. We slowly got ourselves ready during the morning, which was cloudy. Wilf's party got going at the same time as ourselves (1.30 p.m.) and we have come up to this delightful place in about 3½ hours; the height here is 4,200 metres. We have a view straight down the Vavilova Glacier, and Pik Moskva rises dramatically beyond the Pamir Firn Plateau.

Wilf's group is also camped in sight of us, on the glacier below.

We have had a fine supper of two different soups and a meat course and have continued chatting over cups of tea—or more accurately, we have been providing a willing audience for Ralph! What a line-shooter!!

Around the tents are a few mauve, yellow-centred daisies, a small yellow ranunculus and the pink primula. A pair of ravens honked their way over the tents.

19th July. It snowed in the night, but we awoke to a glorious clear morning; I started getting breakfast ready at 8.00 a.m. We are now busy packing rucksacks and dividing food for a 3-4 day expedition on our mountain and we hope to get away by 11 a.m. I expect to finish this on return.

22nd July. (On return.) We are back from a most successful climb, full of interest and not without excitement.

On 19th, loaded like pack mules, we climbed up and across a small tributary glacier to reach the West ridge of our mountain at its lowest point; a huge tower of yellow rock marks its end, above the Vavilova Glacier. We went along this ridge on shale and snow until our way was blocked by a series of rock pinnacles; at this point Ralph and George set off to reconnoitre, returning after an hour with the news that progress would be difficult. The way seemed to lead round the pinnacles on steep snow, but these slopes were suddenly cut off by an unexpected icewall, out of sight from ourselves. Some difficult rock-climbing on deplorable rock might get us over the first tower, but beyond? I decided to try and bypass this obstacle on the right, by descending some 200 feet

on scree and looking for a gully which might get us back again to the ridge. Graeme and I then went ahead, rounded a rock buttress and at once saw a likely-looking gully. We also chose a camp site beneath it and signalled to the others to follow.

Soon we had the tents up, the only mishap being Nicolai's sack, which started rolling off the little tent platform and bounded down to the glacier about 300 feet below. The only damage was to a Butagas cylinder, which burst in the sack, and impregnated everything, including food, with a nasty, sickly smell—fortunately this was temporary.

On 20th at 8 a.m. we started up the steep scree and entered the gully, partly snow-filled, which led us back to the ridge; an awful toil with heavy loads and a bit dangerous with so much loose rock around. We had turned the main obstacle encountered thus far. Ahead was a stretch of snow-covered ridge, which narrowed before abutting against rocks where the angle steepened appreciably. At this point (5,000 metres) we found a neck of snow where it was possible to camp. We cut two platforms for the tents on the safe side of a huge cornice—a marvellous position.

It was still early and I asked Ralph and Nicolai to reconnoitre the route ahead and above us. We were able to watch them most of the time, as they tackled a series of rock steps; it was obviously not plain sailing. In four hours they were back, having reached a point immediately below a big step in the ridge which we had already wondered about, but which Ralph thought climbable. At one point they had left a fixed rope in a rock chimney.

I decided that we would go for the summit the next day, with Ralph and Nicolai leading as they have paved the way. George decided to drop out; so Graeme, Eugene and I made up the second rope. I was ready to drop out as well, if a three-some should slow up the climbing unduly. We settled in early, George undertaking to make breakfast for us in good time to enable a start to be made at 6.30 a.m.

Funny how keyed up I felt; my tummy full of 'butterflies', and with doubts about my own ability to tackle what promises to be a hard and high mountain.

Our start on 21st was reluctant but prompt; the morning was grey and lowering. First up a rock step behind the tents, then along an impressively narrow stretch of ridge on snow

and rock, to the tower where Ralph and Nicolai had left a rope. When we arrived they had already removed it for subsequent use on the bigger step beyond; in crampons, on rotten rock, we found it quite hard enough. After more narrow ridge we caught up the leading pair at the big rock step. Here the rock was even worse, and Nicolai's lead up an ice gully, the ice adhering precariously to the crumbling under-surface, was a particularly good effort. Somehow, Ralph had managed to plant a piton to secure him during this difficult passage.

Once again, there was more narrow ridge beyond this point; a specially fine bit of the route. It led to the big sweep of steep snow, about 1,000 feet high beneath the summit tower. Nicolai and Ralph were already well launched on the slope when we arrived and I was much relieved to note that the snow seemed to be in good condition; they were climbing steadily on a hard crust.

It was awfully hard work. Never very steep (40-45 degrees) but we moved one at a time, as much for resting as for protection; rope length after rope length, seemingly for hours. At last we were near an outcrop of rocks which marks a change in gradient. We turned this on the left, only to find ourselves confronted by an ice wall barring our progress on to the final slope of snow. This took a long time to master, with the protection of ice pegs and a fine lead by Ralph. More exhausting plodding and, at last, we reached the summit rocks. The last 300 yards along the ridge to the top called for all my resources and I fancy the others were in much the same plight. I was leading at this stage and was taking 2-3 breaths per step, halting for a rest every 10 or 12 paces, gasping for oxygen! Just below the summit I waited for Eugene and together we stepped up to it hand in hand. Heartfelt handclasps and bear-hugs for joy! It was 1.35 p.m. when we completed the first new ascent of this expedition. The height of our very worthy mountain was recorded by the altimeter as 5,600 metres (the detailed German map of the Fedchenko Glacier gives 18,788 feet).

Unfortunately thick weather blotted out any view and gave us some anxiety. Thunder rumbled in the distance. We spent an hour on top, heating snow with a Butane stove and taking pictures. Before leaving, a small cairn was constructed and we placed within it a Union Jack and the Soviet flag in a box.

Then down. The ice wall caused a lot of bother and time; the big snow slope had deteriorated into rotten snow. We floundered deeply in it at every step. It was very exhausting and rather nerve-wracking, for there was an immense plunge of several thousands of feet below us to the glacier on our right.

George could see us at the rock step and it was very good indeed to be greeted by him—and by the hot soup he had prepared—when we finally reached the tents at 7.20 p.m. after 13 hours on the move.

In all, a most memorable day and a happy outcome of all the planning for this expedition.

22nd July (continued) . . . On 22nd I woke after a bad night, being overtired. It had snowed lightly all the time and the morning was again grey and depressing. We packed up the tents at 8.30 a.m. and came on down steadily to Camp IV in 2½ hours. Birds—I suspect ravens from the tell-tale 'honks' from the cliffs above us—have made havoc of all the food they could get at—mostly biscuits, sweets and butter.

We are now drying out our things and lazing pleasantly the while, following a magnificent repast prepared by the admirable Colio. Heavy clouds still swathe all surrounding peaks.

Discussion continues over a suitable name for our mountain! 'Friendship'; 'Fraternity'?? something must be found to accord with Soviet principles in nomenclature. It will not be easy to find something appropriate.*

Our plans are now to go round to Wilf's upper camp as promised, in case we can help in his attempt on Pik Garmo. If not required, we may try to reach the ridge (West) and look over to the Fedchenko Glacier.

(The height of this Camp IV is 4,180 metres.)

23rd July. It rained all night. This morning our plans to start for the upper camp of the Garmo party were postponed when George complained of giddiness and chill. Graeme has him under observation against the possibility of any serious development; I discarded a notion to divide the party, sending three members forward today, in case we might all be needed to help evacuate George to Camp III.

The weather continues to be wretched, raining on and off and with low cloud down to 5,000 metres.

* It has since been officially named Peak Concord (5640 metres) and graded as IVB.

All day it continued wet, misty and, in the evening, cold. George was better by supper time and we crowded into our Meade tent with mugs of tea, telling ghost stories from places as far apart as Henley, Yorkshire, the Caucasus and, of all places, the Antarctic! George regaled us with accounts of the whale industry; Eugene, of life among the Svanetians, including a macabre demand to bring back next year the body of one Iliko to his home land; he died on Pik Pobeda in 1961.

24th July. Life is full of surprises! Today has provided one of them.

We had intended to make an early start while the snow was still firm; breakfast was ready by 7 a.m. But we did not, in fact, get away till 9 as the tents were soaking after the rain and we waited for the sun to dry them.

On the glacier I sank deeply in the snow at almost every step as a result of this; progress towards the Garmo icefall was terribly tedious and slow. After a long stop for lunch (we heated soup) we decided to rope up in two threes; Eugene, at his own request, led off with George and Graeme, with myself, Ralph and Colio following. It was barely 10 minutes later and some 400 yards further on that I suddenly heard a shout just over an intervening rise and, running forward, at once noticed that the rope ran from George straight into a gaping hole in the snow. George was holding on for dear life! I went up to the hole and there, 20 feet down was poor Eugene up to his neck in icy slushy water. He was amazingly calm, despite the fact that he was out of his depth in this freezing temperature, with a very heavy sack burdening him down. We sent down an end of our spare rope with a karabiner attached and hauled out, first the sack and then Eugene. It was a very lucky escape and the rescue was made relatively easy by Eugene's amazing courage. He was, of course, drenched from head to foot and, as it appeared later, suffering from shock.

We decided immediately to go back to the point where we had lunched and to camp there, partly because such an incident was almost certain to occur again if we had pressed on in this condition of snow; partly too, to allow Eugene time to recover.

So here we are, far from our objective. We have been scanning the rock face and the West ridge of Pik Garmo for signs of Wilf's party this evening, but have seen no traces. In fact, there has been a good deal of discussion as to whether

they may not already have turned back and be now at Camp III; the old tracks we have followed up the glacier are, in Nicolai's view, 'down' ones. Should all go down, or should we divide the party? Or should we press on? I have felt an urgent need to get up into the upper basin of the glacier, in case they are still on the mountain.

27th July. I left this diary at our glacier camp where Eugene's mishap occurred and only now, on our way down to Camp III, have a chance to fill the gap. These have been terrible days.

At about the time I was writing the last sentence to the entry for 24th July four people were in fact, descending from the summit of Pik Garmo. They were Wilf and Anatoli Sevastianov on one rope, with Robin and Anatoli Ovchinnikov on the other. At some point on the West ridge the Anatolis, who had hitherto been climbing without crampons, decided to put them on. Robin, impetuous, suggested that he should join Wilf, who was in the lead; he and Wilf were already wearing their crampons. The change was made in the order on the ropes. A little later on the two Russians, following, advised Wilf not to descend a certain snow couloir owing to the state of the snow and to take to the rocks instead. The advice was not accepted by Wilf and the couloir was, in fact, safely descended and crossed to the other side. Just below, across the intervening rocks, was a steep snow slope, ice covered by sun-saturated snow. Anatoli, leading on the upper rope, suddenly saw one of the lower pair slip—they both started falling at ever increasing speed.

From their top camp some 1,500 feet below Derek and Ted, who had turned back at this very slope earlier in the day, had been watching the four climbers, having heard a yodel which doubtless was meant to encourage them to start cooking. They saw Robin and Wilf fall. First into a snow couloir, then into a rock gully, moving now at a terrific pace. Horrified, they still hoped against hope that the fall might be to the true right, on to less steep ground; but it was not to be. They fell over the ridge towards the upper basin of the Garmo Glacier, down a huge slope which borders the West (rock) face; it is terrifically steep. The two men fell first over an upper bergschrund and then over the edge of an ice cliff marking the upper lip of a second, much bigger one. To Derek

it seemed that the fall was arrested here, on an ice terrace below the 60-foot cliff, about 800 feet above the glacier basin. In fact, both thought they could see one of the bodies lying there; there was no sign of life. The time was 6.20 p.m.

So died two outstanding British mountaineers.

. . . We, of course, knew nothing of all this tragedy that night, although we had been scanning the face at about that time and had been puzzled by the absence of visible tracks; a small ice avalanche fell down the rock face at about 6.15 p.m. Something seemed to be wrong, but we could not place the reason for our disquiet; as I mentioned in my notes for 24th, we even debated whether some or all should go down to Camp III. In the end we decided, providentially, that we must press on next morning and clear up the mystery.

On 25th, therefore, we moved rapidly up the glacier on hard frozen snow as far as the lower icefall, then quickly up the true right edge to the lower of two high glacier basins beneath the peak, at a height of about 16,000 feet. There, at 9 a.m. we were at once greatly relieved to sight one Russian tent. A few moments later our worries seemed to be dispelled when we spotted two tiny figures on the West ridge of Pik Garmo; evidently they had abandoned the notion of attempting the unclimbed and fearsome looking West face and were climbing (or more probably, had already climbed) by the ridge on its left.

We had a meal, for we started out without breakfast; then Graeme and I went on up the higher icefall, towards the upper basin. Both of us wanted to reach the ridge if possible, as well as making early contact with our friends. It was very hot in the seracs, and route-finding would have been difficult but for faint traces of the footsteps of Wilf's party, evidently made several days ago.

We could now see at least two people descending the steep snow slopes from a col on the left of the main ridge, going so slowly that we suspected an injury to one of them—nor would they respond to our shouts. Graeme and I were clearly going to wait, so we found shade and coolness in a huge ice grotto beneath a bergschrund which terminates the slope they were descending; it was a welcome relief from the glare and fierce heat outside. After a time, not seeing any signs of the others, we decided to start up a rock rib which the other party appeared to have used when going up; we still had ideas on

reaching the ridge if the descending climbers were, in fact, all right. Looking down from this vantage point, we suddenly saw two of them below us, on the glacier. A few shouted words from Derek broke the awful news.

Yet unwilling to believe and cheering each other with unlikely explanations of some mistake, we went carefully down to the level ground. Both parties now moved towards one another; the two Anatolis were, I noted now, there as well.

There was little to say just then—the truth hadn't sunk in fully. It was suggested we might go at once to look for the bodies, but I decided that we must all return to our camp, for it was too late for safety and all were tired. A sad and silent party, with myself in front roped with the Anatolis, descended through the seracs. Ralph and the others saw us from below and shouted greetings but we didn't reply. Shortly after, I broke the awful news to them in their turn.

Six a.m. on the 26th, and a clear, cold morning. I asked Derek and Ted to stay in camp and prepare for our return; eight of us set off on our sad and difficult mission. In one hour we were back in the upper basin, moving to the foot of the great ice slope and the bergschrund where we believed our friends to be. George had lost sensation in his feet . . . ; so I left him and Eugene below to collect the gear thrown down from the ridge by Derek two days before, and to be ready to help when we brought the bodies down. This left six of us to go up. We roped on two ropes: the Anatolis with Graeme, Ralph and I with Colio.

The climbing was difficult, including some feet of really steep ice which we ascended on the two front crampon points. At last we reached a short ice wall below the big schrund which proved less of a problem than we had feared. We stepped on to the terrace, and there they lay . . .

We quickly decided not to bring them down . . . There was a deep crevasse at the lip of the terrace and we put them in there; it was a painful little act which was too much for my composure as I helped with Wilf.

So down again, mercifully preoccupied with the technical problems of descending the steep ice, fixing a piton belay, etc. etc. Lower down, as Ralph and I unroped and went ahead, a big stone—forerunner of many others—came humming and whining off the cliffs, and passed neatly between

us. It was a near miss and a timely warning that we had completed our task only just in time. The rest of the day was spent resting at the camp, preparing for an early start next morning. It was time for reflection and decision about the future.

Should the Expedition continue or not? What should I do personally? These questions went round and round in my head, till at last I was clear about them. (a) I must personally go back; to see the relatives; to ensure that the events were properly told and understood; to help clear up many problems resulting from the tragedy—all this without delay and while I have the time to do so. (b) The Expedition must go on, if there are enough of us willing to stay on; I am counting on Malcolm's group as the nucleus, as they have not been directly involved.

27th July (continued). Down the icefall, starting very early while the snow crust still held. Down the glacier to our dump beneath Camp IV, where we breakfasted. Then still on down, all keeping together, to Camp III; the Russians very considerably joined and stayed with us, probably so that I might break the news to Malcolm's group—they have been simply marvellous over all this sad business.

On arrival at about 3.00 p.m., we found a note from Malcolm explaining that they were over on the opposite moraine. Two of the group have reached the top of Pik Patriot by the West ridge. Joe is badly laid up . . . Will Graeme come over to cope?

So, after 2½ hours' rest, Graeme and I set off again, planning to spend the night with Malcolm's party. They were delighted to see us and in good heart; but they seemed by no means happy about the climb, which had been carried through in conditions of great objective danger . . .

I talked of my decision and hopes for the future. They were immediately in agreement and willing to carry on; in fact, they took it splendidly. So . . . this would make six to stay; the reasons for the remainder in deciding to go home are completely understood. Weather cloudy and storm threatens.

28th July. It rained in the night and was still dull this morning. Graeme and I returned across the glacier for breakfast with our party. We then set off for Camp II, lifting huge

loads which made balance very difficult on the steep hillsides. But it was a delight to traverse the richly carpeted slopes, with many flowers over which flitted sleepy Parnassus Apollo butterflies. Marmots, sandy coloured like those I had seen and (to my shame) shot in the Karakoram in 1935, scurried back to their burrows as we approached.

We fixed a rope for the descent of the steep rock gully and arranged all the gear for the second period, in a Russian tent at Camp II.

Long hours of descent down the glacier to Avodara, where we met Malcolm's group. Then on, in the evening, weary and footsore, to Base. I travelled part of the way with Derek, a very considerate companion. The weather was lowering and gloomy, but cool, throughout our journey.

On arrival, what a meal awaited us, prepared by Vassili our hunter-chef! marvellous stew with wild goat meat (he had killed two of these); then macaroni with onions, stewed fruit and a wonderful fruit drink. Later we sat round our fire to drink whisky and tea in the dark; Anatoli and I each said a few words about the events of the past fortnight; conversation then continued in very pleasant fashion till about 11.00 p.m.

At Anatoli's suggestion we stood for a few moments in silence, paying tribute to Wilf and Robin.

Tomorrow the important messages are to be sent, conveying the news and asking for a helicopter to take us out.

29th July. I sent a cable to the Ambassador this morning, breaking the news of the accident and asking him to inform London. At the same time Anatoli cabled Moscow and Frunze, reporting events and asking for a helicopter. We now wait on events.

30th July. In reply to my cable I received a sympathetic message from the Ambassador this morning, confirming that he had sent the message on to London . . . This is the worst moment . . .

. . . This evening we have entertained Abalakov and six Spartak men, as well as our own Russians. The fare provided was Ovaltine and honey-spread biscuits, Abalakov having firmly refused my offer of whisky. Conversation soon started on the South Wall; then to competition in climbing and consequent attitudes to the sport. I ranged over personal experiences in skiing and climbing since the early 1920's(!)

to make our point; Joe and others joined in with fervour. We also offered our views on the Pamirs when requested to do so. I asked Anatoli to give his impressions of climbing and climbers in Britain.

It was interesting to hear the two Anatolis supporting our opinions about the importance of the 'approach' to the mountains, which we have missed by arriving in helicopters. It was a thoroughly worthwhile evening, high-lighting though it did the gap between Soviet and British views . . .

31st July. I was day-dreaming of the need for sending a 'hastener' message to the Russian authorities and to our Ambassador when, at 8.00 a.m., the well-known sound of a helicopter woke me up. Everyone leapt up, astonished by this fantastically quick arrival. The four of us who were to leave hastened to get ready and before 10 a.m. we were off, in two lifts, to a lower point down the valley at first, because of the weight. A flying doctor—a huge, dominating character in a remarkable hat—had come up to render any aid . . . He works in this capacity for the Kirghiz Government. Anuvrikov and another Spartak man also left with us.

The wheels had really been set in motion, for at Jirgatal a special aircraft waited for us, and hospital orderlies stood by. We were given a meal and then speeded on our way to Dushambe, where we arrived at 3.30 p.m. Ever since that moment, it seems that the ears of the world have been trained on us: *Reuter: Associated Press: United Press: Tass: The Herald, The Mail, The Embassy, Sue Bradshaw: Then Reuter* again, then *Herald*, then *Embassy*, etc. etc. The phone was still ringing four hours later when George and I left our bedroom to join the others for a meal; it continued incessantly until midnight. If ever my return needed justifying this seems to provide the answer in part . . .

POSTSCRIPT

In the month following the departure of George Lowe, Derek Bull, Ted Wrangham and myself, the Peak of Communism, 7,495 metres, was climbed by a party of four Russians and four British climbers, following the Georgian route on the South face and the East ridge. Except for the last few hundred feet the two parties climbed separately, by mutual agreement. It must have been a very great moment for them all when, together, they reached the top.

Corsica, birthplace of Napoleon and former home of banditry; that was all we knew about this island before we decided on our visit in June 1962

Dick Cook collected information about the climbing areas from the Carlisle Mountaineering Club, and Harry Stembridge from the Y.R.C. and together with the recently published guides of M. Fabrikant this was to prove invaluable. The rest of the party, Donald and Nancy Murray, provided the resolution to end the holiday with a few days idling by the sea.

We flew from London to Bastia the first week in June in under five hours, including a leisurely lunch at Nice, when the first taste of good French food and wine added considerably to the general elation of the party. From Bastia, where we stayed overnight, a small diesel train took us to Ponte Leccia, where the railroad divides to Calvi, and the island's capital Ajaccio. We were a little dismayed to find there was no bus from here till evening but a car stood waiting hopefully, so we hired this for the 16 km. to Asco. The road left the plain and wound steadily upwards through the narrow Asco gorge with glimpses of the old donkey-track winding here and there across the steep sides. The enterprising hotel keeper at Asco provides surprisingly comfortable accommodation; we left our extra luggage with him, arranging to return in a few days time, made a lengthy shop for provisions and then took the car up the Stranciacione Valley to the Manica bridge.

By now, after our early start from Bastia, we felt the need for lunch, so we settled down under the pine trees by the Manica river. But not for long as we were determined to make camp in good time at the Manica Bergerie (4,420 feet) and examine the prospects for the next day's climb of Monte Cinto (about 9,000 feet), the highest mountain on the island.

The path rose steeply through the pine forest with here and there a forestry works clearing and huge patches of pale green hellebores in flower and giant yellow-green spurge growing in profusion from the sides of the path or among the boulders. It was a striking variety of different greens and yellows that we were to find everywhere during our time in the mountains, but we missed the brighter colours, and more varied flora of the Alps and Pyrenees.

The Manica Bergerie was a cluster of stone huts in various stages of collapse, although one had a roof, and would shelter a party, but we favoured our tents, and soon had these up and the evening meal cooking. Monte Cinto looked very fine in the evening light, and still held a good quantity of snow, so we decided on an early start with ice axes in the morning, particularly as just before turning in we were surprised by a returning German party, who had taken 11 hours on the mountain without axes.

We were up at first light, and in spite of unfamiliar routine managed to leave camp soon after four, and made up the cairned track through pine trees, then birch and alder and finally low scrubby alder hanging thick with catkins, which showered a sweet smelling pollen and sheltered hosts of serins that darted in and out chirping a chorus of alarm. We passed the Grands Mulets, a chain of rocky towers and a spur of the Cinto massive, on our left, and reached the Col de Barba where there is a small plateau and the Lac d'Argent, covered by snow. Up a further snow-field we reached the Cinto-Larghia-Minuta ridge, and finally easy rocks on the south side led to the summit. Mt. Cinto is noted for its fine viewpoint, but it is advisable to be on top early as clouds often descend at mid-day and stay till evening. In spite of the early start the clouds were already low and the glimpses of view disappointing, so we returned to the col for rest and food, and ambled down to the camp enjoying the heat of the day and the views of Cinto and the Grands Mulets now tantalisingly clear in the mid-day sun.

The German party had recommended a camp site at the Stagno Bergerie, with a view which justified a visit, so the following morning we returned to the Manica Bridge and took the forest track up the Stranciacone river valley and finally found a bridge and a steep path up to the Bergerie. These stone huts were ideally situated in an upland pasture below the Mufrella ridge. A little stream bordered by alders wandered through the pasture and clumps of huge pine trees provided welcome shade. To the south the Cinto massive was stretched before us, with Pte. Minuta Pampanosa and Capo Larghia black against the afternoon sun.

The following morning a brief scramble up rough slopes through maquis, a spiky undergrowth of thorny berberis and juniper, brought us to the rock ridge behind the camp, which

we followed north over La Mufrella and on to Capo al Carozzo (7,120 feet). The weather was perfect, and as this ridge forms the watershed for the northern part of the island, large valleys and rivers radiated from it. All around us we could see fine ridges and rocky aiguilles, with the sea in the distance and Monte Cinto and its neighbours nearer to the S.E. on the other side of the Stranciacone valley. Back in camp we were able to enjoy a pleasant laze before reluctantly leaving to return to the Manica Bridge, where a little down the valley a car was to carry us and our gear to the comforts of the Hotel Monte Cinto at Asco. With Dick in charge of the party it was not surprising that we arrived at the appointed time and place, but we had not reckoned with the Corsican climate and temperament, and during the two-hour wait we were able to explore the T.C.F. Refuge, which was in poor condition, and wonder if we had been forgotten. Back in Asco at last, dinner was prolonged and hilarious.

The old mule track in Asco leads down between the high walls of the houses to the river where a 12th century bridge crosses the gorge in a single span, the arch reflected in water beneath. It was well worth a visit, and after the photographers had recorded every angle, we left the village by car for Calacuccia where another friendly proprietor at the Hotel Tourist arranged for our transport to Calassima (3,700 feet), the highest village in Corsica, and last on the way to the Grotto des Anges (4,170 feet) our next camp.

The walk from Calasima to the Grotto is up an old forest road, following the Viro river. Plans are afoot to make it passable for cars, and then beyond doubt much of the attraction of the well chosen camping site will be lost for ever. After little more than three miles we were surprised to see the Grotto near a rising turn of the road, a massive isolated boulder, so tilted on to smaller boulders that it provides shade and shelter for a large party. A clearing surrounded by a low stone wall has been made by a succession of previous campers, and this provides a level spot for tents on otherwise sloping ground, and also protection from pigs which roam in the forests, and find both provisions and rooting in tents much to their liking. The river runs below, with many pools for bathing and fishing, and beyond the pine forest covers the steep sides of Paglia Orba which dominated the scene like a second Matterhorn—the most beautiful mountain on the

island. We had no choice but to pitch the tents in this clearing as the surrounding terrain was a stony waste covered thickly with maquis with its innumerable prickles.

Up before four the following morning we soon left camp and crossing the river went up the Prugnoll valley past the Bergerie to surprise the shepherd milking dozens of sheep, which he and his dogs had driven between two narrow stone walls. The cheese made from this milk we sampled several times and were unable to be enthusiastic; the flavour leaves no doubt about its origin.

Our objective was the summit of Paglia Orba, but on arriving at the Col de Foggiale (6,540 feet) the weather deteriorated. Mist and rain enveloped the mountain and we were soon wet through, our first and only time in a three-week holiday. Above the col we crossed over loose scree to the south-west pillar and turning this on the left climbed north up gully after gully on fine red granite—an interesting and easy route even in wet conditions. Arrived at the top, we caught a glimpse of the fine rocky ridge with many aiguilles leading up to the north summit and to the west behind us Capo Tafonato, with what appeared at first to be a patch of snow on its side. We later realised it was a huge hole piercing it from side to side. We descended quickly by the south face via a number of chimneys, where care was needed as the rock was wet, but there was no real difficulty.

The afternoon improved, and back in camp we had spread our clothing out to dry, when we were surprised by a large party of Swiss novice climbers and two Swiss guides and three donkeys laden with tents, food, wine and even a table and a Swiss flag. We were a trifle dismayed at this arrival and even considered moving upstream but soon found the maquis had complete possession and only an axe and pick could have made another clearing. However, we soon settled in, and the newcomers proved pleasant company although they yodelled and chopped wood a few yards from the tents until well after midnight, when our plan was to be up at first light.

The following morning promised a wonderful day with a cloudless sky, so we set off early down the Calasima track until we judged we were at the foot of the ridge leading down from the Cinque Frati. We made upwards to the first pinnacle over surprisingly good ground, in spite of the scrub and large lily-like flowering plants on the lower slopes. We

reached the first rock pinnacle and made our way across the face to a chimney facing south east and running down from the summit. Here we roped up on two ropes and climbed several interesting pitches, one severe with a welcome piton, before breaking out into a steep gully with good holds which led to the summit of our first Frater. It was a fine small summit where we could admire the wonderful views of valleys, villages, the sea in the distance, and the remaining Frati, steep-sided and spectacular. Dick quickly found an easy way off to the gap and climbing Frater 2 from this gap we saw some of the Swiss party on Frater 3. We abseiled off and joined our friends on Frater 3, then moved on to climb remaining pinnacles 4 and 5 without difficulty and arrived at the foot of Mt. Albano. Here we left the faint track skirting its base, which would have been an easy way back to camp, and by mistake found ourselves making a descent down a wide gully formed by the precipitous sides of Frater 5 and Mt. Albano. Much time was spent crossing water-worn slabs and boulders and scrambling among the maquis on the mountain side, to turn the waterfalls or drops in the gully bed. The situation was most impressive and made the unexpected effort at the end of a long day worthwhile. All but the indefatigable Dick were glad to reach camp, and at least one member of the party was thinking of pleasant ways of spending an off-day on the morrow.

The off-day well spent, we decided to make an early start and, returning to the Col de Foggiale, crossed the scree to the Col Maures separating Paglia Orba and Capo Tafonato (7,810 feet). Leaving our rucksacks at the col, we traversed the almost vertical face on an exposed ledge which passed first under the hole, then over quartz rock, and back again to the hole, an impressive archway some 120 feet long and 30 feet high through which we could see the distant valleys below. Beyond the hole we continued across the face and up the North Arête, on an exposed route with good firm holds to the summit. The mountain was an amazingly thin wedge of rock with steep sides and the ridge carried on to north and south in a series of aiguilles. The vertical north wall of Paglia Orba, set against the distant view of Pte. Minuta Larghia and Mt. Cinto was particularly fine, while to the south west was Mt. Rotundo and Mt. d'Oro, and to the west a hazy blue sea faded into a clear blue sky on the horizon.

Descending by the normal route to the col and our rucksacks, we made good progress down to the camp, and in spite of a threatening thunderstorm we made a snap decision to strike camp and walk down to Calasima that afternoon. This we did, but we had reckoned without the thunderstorm, for when over a leisurely beer in the bar at Calasima we asked to telephone for a car from Calacuccia, we were told there was no telephone till the morning. We sat thinking: was there a car or bicycle in the village? No. We did some more thinking. Perhaps after all, despite our heavy loads, we would have to walk the eight miles to Calacuccia. The summit of Tafonato and the early rise that morning seemed very far away. Suddenly we heard a disturbance in the street and rushing to the door saw a small van stop and open to show it was packed to the roof with bread. Harry soon fixed up with the driver to carry us down when the bread was all sold, which happened in an incredibly short time. This visit was only twice a week, so our luck was in, and we were soon sitting among the bread crumbs and winding down the steep road while the baker's man reviewed the whole economic situation of Corsica. He was so appreciative of his almost uncomprehending audience that he refused all payment and we were lucky to have some packets of English cigarettes, which we had kept for such occasions.

In the morning we returned down the wild gorge below Calacuccia to the plain and then on to Corte, the old capital of the island. The countryside was sunbaked and barren, little cultivation, many derelict buildings and no one to be seen working. We were not surprised to be told by taxi drivers and innkeepers that Corsica is a poor country. The only solution seems tourism, so we were thankful to be there before the inevitable change this would bring. In Corte it was intensely hot, and after an overlong siesta we had to hurry round, for there was money to change, and provisions to buy, and the time left for roaming round the narrow streets, quaint buildings and old churches, was regrettably brief.

In the morning we left early and went by car up the Restonica valley to just above the Pont de Tragone where the forestry road fades out, and only a track continues. We found another perfect camping site beneath the pines with river close by and pools deep enough for swimming and diving.

Above the camp after a two hour walk to the head of the Restonica valley we found a barrier of glacier-worn rocks and once on the top of these we saw the lovely Lac Mélo caught in a depression above the barrier and surrounded by an impressive ring of rocky peaks.

The following day, after a fishing interlude in Lac Mélo by two of the party, we left in the afternoon and made up the Timozzo valley, as we planned to bivouac below Mt. Rotondo and be on the summit before dawn. The route passed above the Bergerie Tomozzo and leaving the valley climbed steeply up a shoulder and then over a succession of glacial rock barriers till finally, after hard going among the alders and over boulders and slabs we discovered the Lac Oriente lying like the Lac Mélo in a depression below the ring of mountains with Rotondo in the centre. On the way up the mist hung heavily on the summits and although we were hot from exertion, the evening seemed cold and damp with the prospect of a miserable night ahead. But as we scrambled over the last rock barrier to find the Lac Oriente, the mist parted and we were left with a stupendous view of Mt. Rotondo snow-covered in patches, and the glassy lake at the foot reflecting the snow. The far end of the lake was snow-covered rocks, but the end where we stood was short close grass—a perfect site for a bivouac. We fed, relaxed over a fire, then creeping into our sleeping bags lay watching the stars. After a perfect night's rest, we woke to find the pale moon still up in a starry cloudless sky.

The climb up Mt. Rotondo presented little difficulty. First round the head of the lake to the slabby rocks and above these the snow slopes which finally led to a snow couloir up which we cut steps to the ridge. Then, after a short scramble over easy rocks, we arrived at the summit just after dawn with the sky and rocks rosy from the rising sun. The wind blew cold, so we hurried along the ridge to an easier snow slope, returned to the bivouac for a second breakfast and then down to the camp by ten o'clock on a hot sunny morning.

The last few days have no place in a mountaineering journal. We found a small inn above a sandy bay with rocky coves at either side and we enjoyed long swims in an incredibly blue warm sea, and even longer siestas, and explored to a limited extent the country and villages round and about.

STILL MORE OF ARFON

N. J. Soper

This year sees the advent of a new guide to Clogwyn du'r Arddu. Whether its appearance marks the end of the current wave of exploration remains to be seen but, as on Scafell, relatively few major lines remain to be climbed. Mention of the recent explorations is not made in the historical notes in the new guide. It may therefore be of interest to record some impressions of climbing on Cloggy during the last few seasons.

The exploration of Cloggy began relatively late and its history is one of periods of intense activity separated by lean years. When the Abraham brothers visited the crag in 1905, at a period when Scafell boasted a dozen major routes, the principal buttresses were unclimbed and the place renowned for its forbidding aspect. On a misty day they walked below the East Buttress, made a tentative attempt probably on the line of Chimney or Piggott's and scrambled up the Eastern Terrace. The glaciis ended abruptly before them in the tremendous gully face of the Pinnacle. Lying full length they peered over and found, as many have done since, that a stone dropped from arm's length falls free for well over two hundred feet. After such an impressive introduction it is not surprising that they concurred with the prevalent opinion that the feasible ways were too easy and the difficult impossible. They did however make a short climb from the Terrace and confidently predicted the ascent of the cracks on the north face by climbers of a future generation.

It was some twenty years before the main buttresses were climbed. By the Second War the easier cracks on the East and slabs on the West had all been ascended; this fascinating period of exploration is well-documented.

After the war there was a lull. It has been said that the need at this period was for a new technique to permit the ascent of long crack pitches. In the nineteen-thirties it had been suggested that 'the cracks left of Curving' (Vember and November) would eventually be climbed as 120-foot laybacks. The technique was, in fact, already available. Peter Harding exploited the hand-jam to great effect in the Pass but, inexplicably, made only one major climb on Cloggy, and that on the West. Looking back a dozen years it seems that a breakthrough on Cloggy was inevitable. Harding himself had



Rosemary Soper

CLOGWYN DU'R ARDDU

- a. Pinnacle Girdle
- b. Pinnacle Arête
- c. Serth
- d. Daurigol

- e. The Great Wall
- f. The Troach
- g. Scorpio
- h. Ghecko Groove

- i. West Buttress
Eliminate
- j. Bow Variations

reached the great flake on the front of the Pinnacle, but the second man could not follow. Several ancient pitons, for example above the Jubilee terrace and on the Pinnacle arête, probably date from this period. Birtwistle had climbed the first pitch of Vember before the war and Kirkus' direct start to Pedestal Crack demands similar technique to many of the modern climbs. Perhaps if Jim Birkett had been quarrying Penrhyn Purple instead of Cumberland Green the story would have been different.

As it is the story is well known. A period of activity by Joe Brown and his associates in the Rock and Ice group began in 1951 and doubled the number of climbs on the cliff. Many were harder than the existing routes, some within a different order of difficulty; most are magnificent natural lines and they were often climbed in adverse conditions. Much has been said of the application of gritstone techniques to Welsh rock, of optimum build, strength/weight ratios and the like. What surely was a major factor in the safe ascent of these long pitches was the cunning use of natural protection, of which Brown is the acknowledged master. Inserted chockstones were legitimate, pegs avoided if at all possible and in any case strictly rationed. After the initial breakthrough a further advance seems to be due to Don Whillans whose ability to push on equally hard rock with poor protection resulted in such daring climbs as Woubits (on which Brown shared the lead), Slanting Slab and Taurus.

For several years the new climbs were *terra incognita* to all outside the Rock and Ice group. Then information about the big routes gradually became disseminated as they were repeated by people outside the group. Hugh Banner played a leading role in this minor revolution. In 1958 Joe Brown ascended the wall down which the Abrahams had looked and called the climb Shrike. Although two further climbs were made, the Shrike seems to mark the close of the period of Rock and Ice dominance on the Big Cliff; the major effort had already shifted to increasingly technical climbs on the steep craglets of South Snowdon.

It was in the glorious summer of 1959 that David Gregory and I, along with many others, first became acquainted with the post-'51 climbs. Although the fine weather did not start until after mid-summer, the cliff was dry thereafter for week-end after weekend until early October.

We were sitting in the shepherd's hut at Monteners after several infuriating repetitions of the sequence: walk up to hut; weather breaks; return to valley; weather improves. Half-seriously someone suggested, 'Cloggy may be dry'. Sixty hours later we were roping up for Sheaf, our last outstanding 'old' route. After that there was nothing for it but to try one of the new climbs. We selected The Corner because the description indicated good protection. I climbed the easy lower section, hand-traversed into the crack, arranged a good runner and, thus excused, retreated. Dave then led the crack in fine style. Next day, very tentatively and using all available protection, we climbed the Left Edge of the Boulder and East Gully Groove. We began to realise that a fierce appearance does not necessarily mean extreme difficulty or poor protection.

I felt that it was time for a push. In those days Llithwrig, Diglyph and Vember were the legendary big three. Vember was wet still; we thought Diglyph went up a series of grooves which looked impossible and were in fact unclimbed (now Daurigol): Llithwrig it must be. Dave greeted the suggestion in the non-committal manner which signified that he was prepared to do his share and more if necessary. Next morning, with Dave secured in Sunset Crack, I ventured onto the first pitch. Steep it certainly was, and the holds small, but each problem amenable to careful sorting-out. After each section the position at first seemed desperate, then after some shifting of weight and general fiddling became more reasonable and finally, if provided with a runner, formed a base for further operations. The pitch went very slowly as I learned to reverse every move before making the next: my apprenticeship under Harold Drasdo in the Eastern Fells was not forgotten. The rope move was complicated by the passage of the Snowdon train (on another climb) which precluded communication at the critical moment, but Dave soon joined me on the small ledge. We were both rather surprised to find ourselves there and he more so to find the second pitch no more than mild Severe except for fifteen feet at the top which were rapidly dealt with. Quite soon we were on the Green Gallery and I remember scrambling down repeating ridiculously 'We've done Llithwrig!'

Next day Dave led Cenotaph. By then we had so impressed ourselves that we went home to think about it. A great deal

has been made of the 'mental barrier' to the harder climbing, but something of the kind did exist at that time (four short years ago!) and after that memorable week we felt that we had crossed some sort of Rubicon and that great climbing days lay ahead.

At the next opportunity we returned to the Big Cliff, intent on White Slab. Why we thought of trying White as our second major route I cannot conceive. It had been climbed less than half a dozen times and had a tremendous reputation. But having watched Banner's ten-hour epic ascent we perhaps surmised correctly that there were holds. For the first and last time Rosemary said, 'You won't get up'. Allan Austin, on the West Girdle, gave us a pitying look but provided his black book of descriptions. We each took one of the long slab pitches. Our ascent diminished the climb's reputation and within a couple of months the number of ascents had doubled.

Next day a defeat on Red Slab served to maintain our sense of proportion. The following Saturday it was Octo and then the Boulder, from which I had a grandstand view of Austin on the crux of Black Cleft, an impressive sight. On Sunday, instead of attempting the Cleft, which has never subsequently been drier, we tried Diglyph and Dave created a precedent by falling off and bloodying my head. To restore confidence we thought to climb Pinnacle Flake, graded easier than Octo: an unfortunate error. Joe and Mortimer were just ahead and, surprisingly, seemed hesitant. When my turn came I balked at a horridly exposed mantleshelf. The advice which floated down was unhelpful. I reversed the move below by means of a semi-controlled fall onto one hand (a less-publicised grit-stone technique) and was thankful to reach the belay ledge. Dave, apparently suffering no ill effects, then led the pitch with great aplomb and an exception was made to our convention that he should lead the grooves and cracks, I the walls and slabs.

As people returned from the Alps more of the major climbs were repeated. The spell of good weather engendered a general desire to climb the big routes and the effect of the successes of other parties was cumulative. Banner repeated November and climbed his Troach, Eric Metcalfe made a bold second ascent of Taurus, long shunned for its loose rock and extreme difficulty. On the Far East Buttress Joe Brown made his last contributions, Boomerang and Woubits Left

Hand. Peter Crew made his effort on Vember and entered a period of falling off White Slab. The season closed on October 11. That day Paul Nunn, then still at school, climbed Vember in the first rainstorm.

Next year we returned to Cloggy armed with cryptic duplicated descriptions ('. . . climb the groove, hard at 90 ft. . .'), a great deal of keenness and no doubt some ambition. At this time Dennis Gray was our mentor. He seemed pleased with his Yorkshire Team as he called us, after climbing for years with the Lancastrians. His advice and knowledge of the folklore of the newer climbs was invaluable. One otherwise tended to assess a climb by who had done it, having a fair idea of the capabilities and preferences of those involved. This no doubt led to an erroneous impression of competition. In fact one sometimes went to repeat a climb on hearing that so-and-so had done it because a better estimate of the difficulties could then be made. For this reason we scrapped plans for the Mostest and went into Woubits the day after Peter Crew's ascent. Dave nearly came off the first moves and I had a gruelling time on the second pitch in spite of Crew's new piton glinting encouragement thirty feet ahead. Peg marks from a previous retreat did not 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. That pitch provided the second exception to our convention.

Other highlights of that summer were the girle of the East and West, previously made by Paul Nunn, which took us eleven hours; an ascent of Red Slab by the Bonnatington Pillar variation and the first repetition of Troach which we made almost by mistake.

It was a Saturday around Midsummer's Day. We had a bivouac beside the llyn. The circle of hills leading round to Moel Eilio were assuming their characteristic velvety appearance in the evening light as we paused below the wall to observe, for the twentieth time, Banner's sling which had hung for almost a year from the upper peg. I suggested an exploration of the first moves and Dave was soon belayed above the first pitch of Curving Crack. In order to gain establishment on the wall a diagonal bulge had to be passed. Standing on Dave's back I flicked a small spike, stepped up on his head and into the sling. An apparently irreversible move

across the bulge then revealed a small ledge complete with chipped spike. Feeling rather committed, I placed a sling and progressed by long reaches on flat holds. The sling fell off so I pressed on to the first peg. This seemed poor so I continued, with difficulty now, to the second which was in vertically below a little ceiling, and wobbled. Ninety feet of rope were out, hanging free. To the right another line sling jammed behind a thumb-nail flake marked the crux. It had evidently been stepped in and not retrieved. With one clipped into the peg and the other into the sling I was relieved of the weight of the hanging ropes, but could scarcely stand in the sling before Rosemary's critical eye. A 'perceiving move' revealed what must (the pitch having proved possible) have been a finger hold well above the bulge. With the aid of a hold strictly for PAs the necessary height was made and two fingers curled gratefully over the incut. Easy climbing then led to an excavated belay and Dave joined me in just eight minutes, replacing the first sling with a red one, his colour of the year. He led the traverse to the arête in gathering gloom and later the exultant party ate rabbit stew below the moonlit crags.

That was our most memorable climb of the year but we also spent a good deal of time in the Lake District and were chased from Scafell by the Whitsun thunderstorms. But when the weather appeared settled we always went down to Wales, such being the lure of the Big Cliff. Fewer people were climbing there than in '59 but a regular clientele had developed, led by Banner and Jones who were making the new climbs at this period.

Next year saw changes. The partnership dissolved and I teamed up with Peter Crew who had also fallen under the spell of the place. Between us we had repeated nearly all the existing climbs and began to think of new ones, which is the proper order of things.

Came the cold blustery morning when Peter and I scrambled up the first pitch of Pedestal Crack and I pointed out a hold high up to the right. Above it loomed a shorter but steeper Troach wall. Ten minutes later, after an abortive sortie to the right, I found the line and reached the hold which proved to be a quartz break. A hand traverse led to several juniper tufts and a large spike. Above was a groove, apparently holdless, furnished with a cap of overhanging turf. Two hours later I had scraped every accessible inch with my wire

threader and the groove was still holdless, a new phenomenon. It was necessary to cheat. Base camp forwarded our supply of very small nuts threaded on line loops and the back of the groove took two of these. Standing precariously in the uppermost, which settled several times, and braced on a knob to the left, I was able to remove the turf. This revealed a ledge with a nick either side, suitable for single line which was rapidly arranged. We were both cold and demoralised by the slow progress so I parachuted back to the pedestal. We left the ropes up and went down to Llanberis for supplies, returning that evening to invite ourselves into the Sheffield University club-tent by the lake.

We awoke next morning to the unwelcome pattering of rain and observed our ropes suspended from a very wet and forbidding piece of vertical scenery. Eventually the weather cleared and a cold wind began to dry the rock.

I mantleshelfed onto the ledge and turned the ensuing overhang to the left. The rock seemed steeper than on Troach and the holds smaller but more incut. Several line runners, of purely psychological value, could be arranged. When a place appeared for a good piton I had no hesitation in placing one. The next little ceiling involved a traverse which led to blind layback crack. This was duly laybacked to an apparent jug-handle which turned out to be sloping and useless: a minute-hold. With my minute's grace I contrived a sling on a loose excrescence on the flake and stepped thankfully in. Good holds were only ten feet above but the intervening section appeared quite blank. Thirty minutes later, after the whole flake had moved out slightly in response to my efforts to place a peg, a rope became desirable. With this aid I was able to clean mud and lichen from a hole large enough for two fingers and the move could be made. Peter, blue with cold and displeased at my incompetence, came up rapidly and left the nuts in place. Back on the pedestal and thoroughly annoyed, but in sunshine now, I started up again and soon completed the first legitimate ascent. We called it Scorpio. Next day we did Troach again, Peter leading the long pitch which we thought technically easier but more serious than Scorpio and a bolder lead.

Our ambitions turned to the Pinnacle of which the possibility of a girdle traverse had attracted attention over the years. Several parties had attempted various lines so there

seemed no reason why we should not join in. Jones and James had tried from east to west and turned the first major difficulty, the overhanging right arête of East Gully Groove, by a neat diagonal abseil. Brown had laughed to scorn the idea of a girdle which ends lower than the start so subsequent attempts had been west-east. He had reached the ledge on Spillikin from Pinnacle Flake but Banner had discovered a lower independent line across the front face, although he had been deposited down one of the bottomless grooves when a flake came away. Jones' Guinevere exploited this traverse, so a first pitch was evidently feasible.

The next weekends were spent watching rain in the Pass, rare fine days yielding the Cromlech Girdle and a few climbs in the Gwynant. The girdle became an obsession. Then came news that Brown, whose interests we thought lay elsewhere, had traversed the front, climbed the crux of Taurus and tried unsuccessfully to reach the arête. Peter left for the Alps and I for fieldwork in Sutherland. His return coincided with the only settled anticyclonic spell of the summer. After hurried telephone calls we arrived at Ynys the same evening, a Wednesday.

The following morning we were soon across the front face and up Taurus. On the belay ledge Peter lifted a suspiciously withered piece of turf to reveal a new piton, sure evidence that the Master had passed this way. The rest of the day was spent in reaching the arête which, after much heart-searching, required a piton. On the morrow Peter led the Hand Traverse, Banner's harrowingly exposed pitch across a smooth vertical facet of the gully face. The next pitch, across an arête with stepped overhangs, was first climbed in reverse, as the near side involved some blind moves: these manoeuvrings along with the removal of several tons of dangerously loose blocks from Gargoyle occupied the rest of Friday. Next morning we were already at grips with the seventh pitch when the first weekenders appeared. We had predicted a traverse line from Gargoyle to the arête of East Gully Groove on geological grounds and sure enough, inwardly dipping flow-banding provided a series of incut holds—and also a large detached block which occupied Peter for an hour or so while I basked in the early sun. Then followed an abseil down the overhanging arête which I do not wish to repeat. The ropes ended a hundred feet above the gully bed and several yards from the

face. If one lost contact with the rock the prospects of regaining it were remote. However, a thread provided a staging point and from there it was possible to half reverse layback, half abseil to a ledge in the chimney. When Peter's turn came I was able to haul him in, but let him swing out first to ensure that he appreciated my bravery. The rest of the climb was familiar ground. That night nature celebrated our success with a violent electrical storm and I saw a blue fire-ball but nobody believed me.

So ended three unforgettable days. It seems strange to think how keyed-up we were for that climb. There were a few comments about over-keenness and the competitive attitude, but it was anybody's climb and we took the best line: I would not have missed it for anything. But perhaps there was a grain of truth in the criticism. Under the stimulus of an imminent guide book the pace of exploration quickened in 1962 and as many new climbs were made as in the two halcyon years of '51 and '52. But latterly there was an air of competition somewhat removed from the friendly rivalry which is normal, and possibly desirable, under such circumstances.

The only settled spell of the year came just after Easter and saw unprecedented activity on the cliff. White Slab, for example, had half a dozen ascents. Slanting Slab, unrepeatable since Harry Smith and Joe Brown had made the second ascent in 1958, was surprisingly climbed three times within a week. The climb starts with a loose overhang on pitons then, immediately, a slab thinner than anything on Cloggy followed by a traverse between overhangs to a point where 150-foot ropes hang free. The second pitch involves a 180-foot run-out up a crack in the slanting slab proper, ending with two overhangs separated by another vicious little slab. Crew and Ingle had just returned from their ascent when we arrived at Ynys. Crew had recovered and was breaking the hut rules as usual, but a pale shadow of the former robust Ingle crouched silent in a corner and could only take soft food. His darts game suffered too. Barry Webb and I climbed the Slanting Slab a few days later and were duly impressed. On seconding the first pitch I was horrified to find I could easily tap the pegs out with a karabiner, the leader having our only hammer. I climbed the second pitch most carefully as a slip would at best lead to a long prussik. Barry jammed the crack throughout and arrived covered with mud. Martin Boysen

made his ascent the same evening after doing the Mostest but was nearly benighted and arrived in the Dolbadarn a chastened man.

The outstanding event of the summer was undoubtedly Crew's ascent of the Great Wall. This 200-foot pitch is the only possible line on the wall between Daurigol and November and had been abandoned by Brown in 1956 after his self-imposed quota of pitons had been used. Both Crew and I abseiled down and thought the upper part would go with one peg, necessitating the use of one less on the lower section. I removed the only piece of turf to reveal a huge 'jug'. Peter came down again, tried a peg for size and inserted several chockstones. The ascent was made the following weekend in poor conditions and a heavy squall prevented the second man (Barry Ingle) from following. It has been rumoured that on the first ascent slings were attached first. So far as I am aware this is not true.

Descriptions of all the 1962 climbs are in the new guide book but as so little is known of them it may be helpful to comment briefly. Only Serth and the Great Wall have been repeated. Serth was found very hard, the crux being a move below the sloping ledge on the first pitch. Nadden Ddu is regarded as the most difficult of the new climbs and involves a long rope move. The first pitch of Daurigol is very sustained but the crux seems to be placing the peg in the bottom of the second groove. This could be simplified by climbing further up the first and taking tension, but to do this would no doubt evoke wrath from the authors of the climb. Haemagoblin is usually wet and still requires gardening; on the other hand the Pinnacle Arête is one of the first to dry. Much of the West Buttress Eliminate had been done before but the climbing must be of high quality all the way. Unfortunately it detracts from the individuality of White Slab and Sheaf. A similar criticism could no doubt be levelled at our variations to Bow-shaped Slab, but the upper pitch gives truly delectable slab-climbing in very exposed position. As the independent lower pitches added later are much harder than the long slab it is worth mentioning that the chockstone belay below this pitch can be reached from the fifth pitch of Bow, after the traverse, by ascending rightwards at about middle V.S.

1962 closed with a series of fine repetitions of the big walls by David Yates—Shrike, the Great Wall, Troach and Scorpio—and a new line on the Pinnacle.

What of the future? Of the Rock and Ice routes which it would be interesting to climb while they still have an aura of the unknown only Woubits Left Hand, the direct start to East Gully Grooves and Whillans' finish to Sheaf remain unrepeated. November, Carpet Slab and Boomerang have been climbed twice. Slanting Slab and Woubits above all retain their reputation. The only other major pre-'62 climb still to be repeated is the Pinnacle Girdle which with an effort could be completed in one day and would then undoubtedly make the finest rock expedition in Wales.

Few natural lines remain to be climbed and anything of quality will be very hard. Half the battle with new routes is to know what has already been climbed or attempted. With the aid of the new guide people will soon spy out the possibilities.

But there is scarcely a poor climb on the cliff and it will be pleasant to repeat the old favourites. Or lie in the sun by the llyn and watch the next generation (there seems to be one very six months now) take their girl friends up the climbs we thought hard. And although Arddu is, after all, only an unfeeling piece of rhyolite and the scratchings of the last few decades irrelevant to the larger scheme of things, there is an air of tradition about the place, of great deeds wrought in the past. On silent days when the cwm is deserted and the crags loom strangely through the mist it is easy to imagine the Abrahams peering in amazement down Shrike wall, or one of the great teams of the nineteen-thirties at work with the grass up on the West, or a young man from Manchester uncoiling his hemp rope below Vember.

THE CINDERELLA CITADEL

Anthony Greenbank

The stone walls of the Salbi hut might make any house in Eskdale; the Salbitschijen itself, an enlarged version—to the tune of 2,981 metres—any of the triangular outcrops in the valley. The granite fabric of both areas is as identical as the rhododendrons and pines on the lower valley sides. And there is little snow.

You haven't heard of the Salbitschijen? Above Göschenen? Near Andermatt? In the Central Alps? Neither had I until Walter Dowlen pointed to the route of boyhood dreams in André Roch's book, *On Snow and Ice*, where the 'passage clef' picture of the South Ridge shows granite crystals and a soaring edge. Few other climbers we met had heard of the peak either. Only René Dittert, whom we saw later at the Sass Fura hut below the Piz Badile, volunteered information—'So you have come from Andermatt. Then you have done the Sud-Grat of the Salbitschijen . . .' His eyes lit up. He talked enthusiastically. He inferred that anyone who had done the Sud-Grat in seven hours was fit to attack the North-East Face (T.D.) of the Badile at once.

There are many more climbs on the Salbitschijen than the Sud-Grat, however. The Anderruthe-Niedermann, for instance. The Niedermann-Deiner. The Villiger-Gruter. The Fleischmann-Gruter. And the Haider-Inwyler. Small wonder all this led to bi-nominal confusion, our fervently believing in a mythical Villiger-Fleischmann route. At any rate the name had enlivened pitches on the Spiral Girdle of Pillar, and C.B.

Of all the above climbs—mostly of the sixth grade—the Sud-Grat is most popular. Yet from the Salbi hut it looked easier than its Grade Five classification suggested. As it appeared over the bowler's arm during a game of tin-can cricket the first night, the angle seemed too reasonable. There would not be many 'gripped-up' moments tomorrow.

The shock was sudden. The rock steep. After the hour's trudge to the foot of the first flanges slanting into a col to miss the Zahn, or Salbi Tooth, the Elephant's Back reared in

a steep edge inlaid in blue. It certainly looked extremely gripping now.

Walter started work on the spine, steeper and smoother than Eagle's Nest. He ran out about seventy feet of twin rope, trailing it through pegs, moving slowly on the hot rock, and using side-pulls and pitons for holds. Then my turn. The only sound was strawberry-juice slopping in a cumbersome wine-skin, and the clink of karabiners wafting on pegs. Eventually grunts. The top swing on old wedges into a smooth V-fracture was strenuous.

Above, a fretted leaf gave a vertical layback, where crystals ground into the fingertips. And over the top, the 'passage cleft', the crux, sprang into view—all 150 feet of its wall-angled granite tongue. It completely blocked the ridge.

We descended to a gap, then attacked the giant flake. At first the holds were deep slots, gradually thinning towards the edge. A steel hawser sling from an Alf Bhend peg helped the swing round the rib to a tiny stance. More technically difficult climbing and great exposure then led upwards.

Higher, there is a thin needle signpost. Not only does it route climbers up its back, but conveniently pours them off at the correct height, via an awkward move, to the Plattenturm (Slab Tower). And here there is a choice: to press on up the rib, or move diagonally left. We chose the latter, and probably wrongly. The red, friable wall overhangs. Existing pegs are unsafe. It was as hard a pitch as any so far, and the difficulties were not challenged by the next tower, the Zwillingsturm. Now the standard had eased; we finished by pleasant cracks and grooves to the summit pavements.

The true summit of this monarch of the Uri Alps, however, is the Salbitschijen's leaning flake, offering 40 feet of lay-backing up the edge. It looks fierce, the hardest moves being low down, a ring on the summit making an abseil safe. We didn't do it, but drank the wine sac dry instead, and glissaded with peg hammers down the snow basin behind, which spills out long runnels of snow down to the hut.

Two days later, and this time loaded with orange juice, we chopped steps up a potential chopping-block couloir, and stepped out on the East Ridge of the Salbitschijen—just

missing rock falls. Above lay undefined problems. Grade Four perhaps. The guidebook was vague. It spoke of slabby *ressauts* leading in three steps from where we stood. At least they gave an answer about the difficulties to come: the top step proved too hard—an almost vertical arête slimming to a taper with a small roof. And above—a peg well out of lassoing range. We by-passed the section.

There are other hard pitches too, but not in the Sud-Grat class. The best of these was a layback, jamming and bridging corner, undercut with space and offering a few pegs. And there was another, The Bastion, a loose-looking tower, which we left alone. According to the hut guardian this was just as well: 'No one goes up The Bastion today . . .'

By now it was obvious many of the double-name routes were too ambitious for our short stay. Even though Martin Epp of the Rosenlauri school, and J. O. Talbot had climbed the South-East Wall of the Zwillingsturm the day before, and recommended this Grade Six, A3 route in superlatives. Instead, we still wanted to try the original (Grade Six) route up Tower Two on the West Ridge. There was only one snag. It lay on the other side of the peak, split from the hut by a massive cut-off. It seemed best that we drop back down to Göschenen, go round the mountain and sleep out below the pinnacle.

And then we decided to move on to Bregaglia, calling on the return trip to tackle Tower Two. It was a good idea, for the granite of the Salbitschijen had us well tuned-in for the North Ridge of the Badile, and then for the Cassin route up the North-East Face.

Especially interesting is the comparison between these two peaks, so alike in shape, height and granite. Yet one popular, the other hardly known in Britain. The Salbitschijen's South Ridge is much harder than the Badile's Spigolo Nord, and technically as hard as the Cassin. Undoubtedly it would receive less marks from the Design Centre for its sculpture than the Badile's North Ridge, but its granite is generally sounder and more compact. It is also more exposed than either route on the Badile. Surprisingly enough, the Cassin *face nord* climb—for all its breath-taking immensity—is not dramatically sensational below the welts. However, the

Salbitschijen is nowhere as serious as the Bregaglia peak, whether from the rocks tobogganing down the faces, ridges and couloirs, the sudden violent storms, or the impressiveness of the snow crater scenery below the North-East-Face. Because of this safety factor, it is an ideal introduction to hard rock climbing in Alpine settings.

We never returned to Tower Two on the Salbitschijen. A road diversion at Grabs—or was it Gams?—took us over 100 miles too far north of Andermatt. It still awaits a first British ascent, as do many other of the Grade Six, A3 routes on this Cinderella citadel.

THE BARA SHIGRI 1961

J. P. O'F. Lynam

In 1958 five of us had gone to Lahul and Spiti. We had started from the Spiti River, gone south over two ridges, and descended into the head of the Bara Shigri, the biggest glacier in Lahul. This is surrounded by twenty or more peaks of over 20,000 ft., hardly any of them climbed. On that occasion we had been more interested in exploration and survey, and had no time to do more than admire the peaks, before descending the glacier. We determined to return, and in particular to try and climb the big peak at the head of the Bara Shigri which Peter Holmes measured as 22,500 ft. but which we more soberly estimated at 21,800 ft.

In 1961 we got the chance; I was working in India on the construction of an irrigation barrage, a job which closed from July to October on account of the monsoon, and the leader of the 1958 trip, Gwynn Stephenson, who is a schoolmaster, can always manage the best part of two months off in August and September. Since Lahul is more or less monsoon-free this was enough. Peter Harvey a Wayfarer from Liverpool, and Harold Mellor a Rucksacker from Oldham made up the party. As the rest of the party were coming by car, we agreed to get all our food and as much equipment as possible in India. This was not so easy. To save transport costs I had to buy everything in Delhi, 1,400 miles from where I was working in Orissa. The post (and everything else) proceeds at a leisurely pace in India, and I did not know until the last moment whether we would really get packing cases, or even food. The porters were arranged by Major Banon in Manali, so that was no trouble. We had two old friends from 1958, Jigme and Wangchuk, and two others Wangyal (who had been up Deo Tibba with Eileen Gregory) and Sonam. We also had Holmes' invaluable Rigzen as ponyman (he finds it more lucrative than portering). The Indian Government is the most leisurely of all Indian institutions, and our request for an Inner Line permit, which was sent in March was only definitely refused after our return.

The rest of the party drove out in my Hillman Estate Car in the astonishing time of 19 days, and we set off from Manali in Kulu on 8th August. The monsoon was in full blast, but as in 1958 we expected to find fine weather as soon

as we had crossed the Rohtang Pass into Lahul. This time we were less lucky and rain and cloud followed us for two more days up the Chandra.

In six days from Manali, in spite of some trouble with our second ponyman, we reached the foot of the Bara Shigri, where we paid off the ponies and made our base camp. The lower part of the glacier is a tangled mess of moraine heaps, and relaying our kit up it, we averaged not more than half a mile per hour. It took us five days, including relay trips, to set up our camp in the middle of Concordia 12 miles from the glacier snout. Concordia is of course named from the Oberland, but the glaciers that meet there to form the Bara Shigri are far larger than their Swiss counterparts.

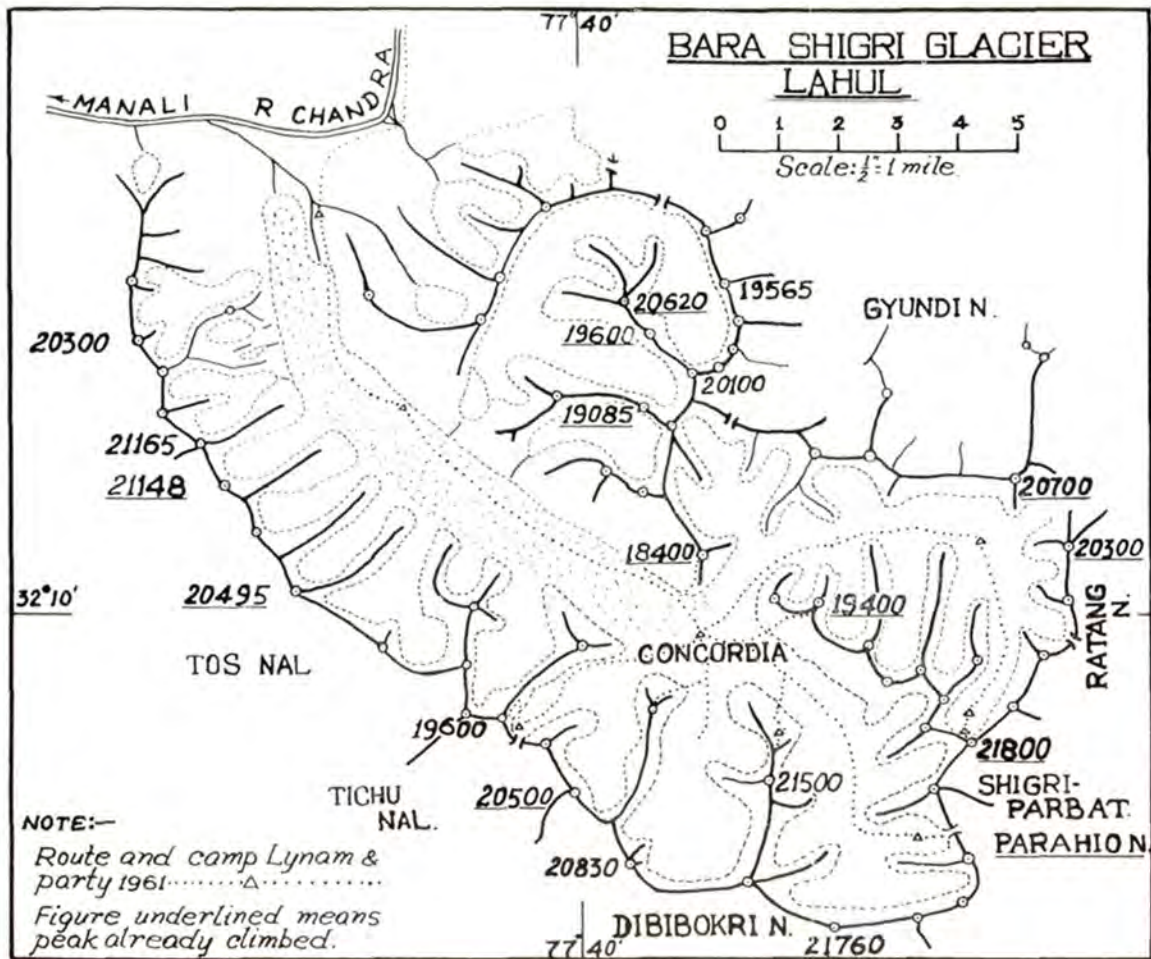
We spent a week surveying and climbing small peaks around Concordia. Gwynn and Wangyal made a quick trip to the Parahio east of the Bara Shigri, and the rest of us with Jigme tried a 19,600 ft. rock peak on the south wall of the glacier. We failed through lack of time.

Then we all moved up the north branch of the glacier which leads to Peak 21,800 ft. (now called by us Shigri Parbat). For some reason the porters went badly on this stage and it took us two days to follow the sweep of the glacier first north, then east, and south until it finished below the N.W. face of Shigri Parbat.

We camped below the face at about 2 p.m. Above us ice walls and seracs rose into thick cloud. In the evening the clouds lifted and we watched the peak being slowly unveiled. High up, the west snow ridge was climbable, but how to reach it? Direct ascent from the glacier would involve a climb up steep fluted ice, well spattered with rock fragments from the lower rocky part of the ridge. We looked at the North-West face, pure snow and ice, and traced a route among the ice walls and between the crevasses which threaded its way upwards and to the right until it seemed possible to break out on to the west ridge at the only point where the cornice relented. The ridge looked easy for as far as we could see it, but some rock showed high up, and the clouds still hid the last 500 feet.

The next morning Harold was unwell with dysentery which had been dogging him for some days. Gwynn, Peter, Wangyal and myself, carrying a small tent and equipment for

**BARA SHIGRI GLACIER
LAHUL**



BARA SHIGRI, LAHUL
(approx. 3 miles to the inch)

two to spend the night higher up, left camp at 8.45 a.m. We crossed the glacier and attacked the face. Everywhere the route we had planned was possible. Steps had to be cut, small bergschrunds crossed, and though our progress seemed funereal compared with the size of the face we gradually gained height. We were in shadow all the time and Gwynn and Peter suffered from frozen feet. We had to stop to take off their boots and massage. Two hundred feet below the ridge I stumbled on to a small level patch of snow under an ice wall with just room for our tent. Height about 19,700 ft.—about half-way to the top. We left Wangyal to put up the tent, and pushed on towards the ridge. Along a shelf; across a dying crevasse; up a boss, left and up a steep wall gradually easing to a slope below the cornice. Then diagonally left to where the cornice only projected a foot or two, and so on to the ridge. It was 3 p.m. The ridge ahead looked climbable, but the top was still in cloud. The wind was bitterly cold and we hurried back to the camp. Wangyal had brewed tea and while we drank we discussed who would stay up. Everybody was prepared to be self-sacrificing, but obviously nobody really wanted to go down. Eventually it was decided that Peter and I should stay up, but we also agreed that if the upper part of the mountain offered no rock difficulties, and if the route was prepared, it would be possible to climb it direct from the glacier. So Gwynn and Wangyal would try this.

The others went down, and as the sun set, we turned to the tent to prepare supper. No matches; Gwynn had taken the last box. We deliberated for some time before deciding to stick it out. Lack of hot food was not so bad as lack of any sort of liquid at all. We gloomily munched bully beef, jam and biscuits and settled into our bags for a miserable night.

We woke up (or more correctly ceased trying to sleep) at 5.30 a.m. and looked out on a wonderful sunrise. We ate jam and biscuits and prepared to move. Everything was iron-hard, even our boots which we had taken into our tent (though not in to our sleeping bags). We spent a full hour fighting our way into boots, buckling on frozen crampons, and unangling the frozen rope.

We left at 7 a.m., just as two dots moved out from the glacier camp below. We climbed quickly up the track to the ridge, repeating in half an hour the two hours' task of yesterday.

Once there, we hoped to get into the sun, but we were shaded by the north ridge. Nevertheless we halted, to take off Peter's boots and massage his feet which were again dead. I was worried about my feet also, but as I rubbed Peter's, I worked my own toes in my boot until I could feel reassuring pins and needles.

We decided Peter had better not wear his crampons, which left the leading to me. The ridge was quite broad but steep, with snow lying insecurely on ice. Each step had to be kicked or cut with appalling effort. I would move up four steps and collapse on my axe, take another four or five steps and again halt to pant wildly. Gradually we drew near some rocks which promised warmth and a change from step cutting. But they were snow-dusted and smooth and we lost more time in climbing them carefully. Once we reached the top of the rock the slope eased, and looking back we saw the others following us up the ridge. We shouted to them to avoid the rocks by steep snow on the left. By now dehydration (and perhaps altitude) were seriously affecting us. We plodded up the easy slope to the apparent summit, and found that there was still a long rocky ridge to be traversed. We crawled rather than climbed along this, moving singly simply because this gave us more opportunity to rest. At last the ridge fell away and we were there. It was 11.30 a.m. and we flopped onto the rock and tried desperately to assuage our thirst with fruit drops. After a long battle with my conscience I summoned up the energy to get the tripod out and take a round of survey photographs. Not that they were much use, there was too much cloud around. It was neither possible to recognise the Gyundi peaks which we had climbed in 1958, nor to sort out the tangled ridges between the Parahio and the Parbati which the lack of an Inner Line permit had deterred us from visiting. At 12.15 p.m. Gwynn and Wangyal arrived, having made extremely fast time.

We started down at 12.45 p.m. and all roped together for the descent of the ridge. The steps had softened and could not be trusted, and we moved very carefully. Wangyal was obviously wondering what the fuss was about, but as a slip would certainly have taken us down the N.W. face quicker than we wanted we firmly discouraged him from glissading. Once off the ridge we were out of the sun and onto hard snow, and we reached the Assault Camp at 3 p.m.

Wangyal brewed first tea and then Oxo, and Peter and I slowly rehydrated while Gwynn scrambled around with four cameras draped from him taking photographs. The camp site was in fact quite spectacular.

At 5 p.m. we dragged ourselves to our feet and went down to the glacier camp, where we were welcomed with cheers and handshakes in the approved fashion.

That night I discovered my left big toe was dead, and in spite of rubbing it for hours, by morning it was purple and swollen. Gwynn's doctor had given him some notes on how to treat common diseases, but there was nothing about frostbite; Peter's First Aid book was also silent. Despatching Harold and Jigme up the peak we decided that I had better get back to Concordia at any rate. My boot would not fit over the swelling, so my foot was wrapped up in duvet hoods and scarves and shoved into my rucksack (which fortunately had a leather bottom). After the phenomenon had been photographed we all started down. At first I slipped and slid but soon acquired a technique of heaving the monstrous boot along by the rucksack straps. We unroped below the crevasses and let the porters go on. But now my foot had got wet, and I was afraid of it freezing, so I hurried on, swinging my foot wildly along. There was a maze of open crevasses just above Concordia but I was past caring by then and flung myself across them. Gwynn and Peter followed more decorously, concluding that there was not much wrong with me.

At camp I inspected the damage; the swelling had burst and though the whole toe was still yellow and purple it was better than in the morning.

That was more or less the end of the trip. I had to go down anyway, and Peter came with me. Gwynn and Harold tried a lovely 21,500 ft. peak above Concordia, but Harold's dysentery returned and they had to give up.

We returned without incident to Manali where I had to give the Police a day by day account of our doings without letting them know that we had crossed the Inner Line here and there. Fortunately their knowledge of Lahul geography was pretty poor.

THE RT. HON. LORD BIRKETT, P.C.

1883-1962

Lord Chorley of Kendal, Q.C.

No one in recent times has been more effective in the defence of Lakeland's beauty than the late Lord Birkett, no one loved its traditions and its scenery more passionately, and although he was not of course a member of the Fell and Rock Climbing Club he had close association with us, and it is fitting that we should pay tribute to his life and work.

William Norman Birkett was born at Ulverston in 1883 and was educated at local schools and at Cambridge. He was brought up amid the lovely scenery of the southern fells, and the beauty of the scenery nurtured his poetical feeling, so evident in those eloquent speeches to which in later life he largely owed his position as a national figure. As a boy he attained a local reputation as a speaker, and at Cambridge where he was elected President of the Union Society this faculty came to fruition. His possession of it naturally led him into the profession of the law, in which, as is well known, he became one of the great advocates of his generation. The musical quality of his voice, and his beautiful use of the English language which he studied and used more reverently than any of his rivals whether in law or politics undoubtedly won him a place in the hearts of his countrymen which was probably unique, at any rate for a lawyer. Much more than this was required of course to secure him his place as the greatest defender of his generation, of Mrs. Pace, Mrs. Dampier, Maundy Gregory, Mancini, Ruxton, Rouse—the names leap to the memory. For two short periods he was a member of Parliament, but during a time when the Liberal Party to which he belonged was in decline he made less of a mark than might have been expected. In 1941 he became a judge of the High Court, where as *The Times* said of him he was 'exceptionally successful'. He retired from the Bench with the rank of Lord Justice of Appeal in 1957. During his judicial period he was seconded for service as one of the British representatives on the International Tribunal at Nuremberg which tried the German War Criminals. Soon after retirement from the Bench he was made a peer and from time to time served in the judicial committee of the House of Lords which is the final Court of Appeal.

For a number of years he also took part in all the more important debates in the House of Lords in which the problem of saving the natural beauty of the countryside was discussed. The most important of all these occasions was undoubtedly his intervention in the debate on 8th February, 1962 on the Manchester Corporation's Waterworks Bill which foiled the attempt of that City to add Ullswater to Thirlmere and Haweswater as one of its municipal reservoirs. His great speech was almost certainly the decisive event in the defeat of the Bill. He had not spared himself either in the careful preparatory stages before the debate, which went on for many weeks, nor in the gruelling and exciting discussion itself which lasted till a late hour. Knowing as he did that his heart might at any moment fail him he can be said to have staked his life on the great effort to safeguard one of the most precious areas in his beloved Lakeland. And indeed Death swept in the stake, because two days later he died.

But the Ullswater debate was only the culmination of long years of service in the cause of the Lake District and of the amenities movement generally. Characteristically in most of the obituary notices in the Press which followed his death his work in this field, which he himself certainly regarded as of the greatest importance, received only scant recognition—*The Times* ignored it altogether.

It would take more space than I ought to use to describe all this side of his work in detail. He was of course President of the Friends of the Lake District for many years, and those years of unremitting and on the whole successful work. He gave freely of his time to the National Trust in its Lake District work and made a substantial contribution to the effort to save Langdale farms which was very much occupying the Friends in the months immediately before the War, and which led to the formation of Lake District Farm Estates which he was one of the first to encourage and support. Perhaps the most important of all his services in this field of activity was the Chairmanship of the C.P.R.E.'s Standing Committee on National Parks. It was largely due to the careful, detailed work of this committee that the National Parks movement came to fruition in the years immediately after the war.

This Standing Committee was set up as a result of a highly successful conference held at the Central Hall, Westminster,

in November 1935, at which Mr. Norman Birkett took the Chair, and which really opened the campaign: it was attended by delegates from all the open-air and amenity societies. That he should have gone on to accept the chairmanship of a working committee at a time when he had one of the heaviest practices as a leader at the bar was a measure of the importance which he attached to its work. His chairmanship conferred considerable prestige upon the committee, and his wise counsel was of great value. As a member of the deputation from the formation committee set up by the conference which waited on him to invite him to accept this position I well remember how jubilant we felt when he agreed. He decided to remain chairman for some time after his promotion to the Bench, a very unusual decision on the part of a Judge of the High Court and a good illustration of his readiness to take an unconventional step in support of a cause in which he believed, and he resigned the position very reluctantly when his judicial duties made it impossible for him to go on with it.

Lord Birkett had more than casual relations with the Fell and Rock Climbing Club. In the pre-war years he was several times a guest at the annual dinner of the London Section and never failed to entertain us to one of those delightful after-dinner speeches, humorous and yet highlighted with passages of poetical eloquence for which he was then becoming well known. In 1936 we had the immense pleasure of entertaining him at our annual meeting at Windermere and his speech is a vivid memory to all those surviving members who heard it. He once told me that he took particular pleasure in reading our Journal which always gave him the feeling of the fells. And I remember a meeting with him shortly after the appearance of the issue containing the account of the opening of the Brackenclose Hut when he said he had been much moved by the occasion; at which he would dearly liked to have been present. Anything connected with his beloved Lakeland made an immediate appeal to him, and he was ready at all times to expend money, time and energy for its defence or well-being.

Lord Birkett, although a townsman and coming from a family of tradesmen, was a typical dalesman in appearance. Very tall, loosely built, with fair hair and ruddy complexion he always reminded me of the typical viking of the sagas. Indeed his capacity to make a situation come alive in the

describing of it, and to light it up with a humorous and sometimes exaggerated 'tall' story was essentially in the Norse tradition: it was not surprising that he looked to Norway for the gracious lady he married.

His disposition was marked by an exceptional friendliness. This and his winning smile enabled him to get on to terms of understanding and co-operation with people very quickly, and this would ripen rapidly in the warmth of his sympathetic understanding, which often must have been very heartening to his criminal clients. His extraordinary success with juries was undoubtedly due to these qualities—the twelve men and women felt that they were working with the advocate in ensuring that a just result was achieved at the trial. I remember appearing with him on one occasion in a case during which two members of the jury asked me if I could get them 'an interview with Mr. Birkett'. I had of course to say that this would be wrong, but enquired what they wanted to see him about; to which they replied that they wanted to thank him for helping them so nicely with the case!

LETTER FROM GRAHAMLAND

Robert Lewis

Already a year has flown by and my second at the Argentine Islands seems likely to pass leaving much undone. However, the prospect of sunny days on warm Lakeland rock is suitable recompense.

The sea-ice which formed during the winter remained with us well into the spring and so we have had a good opportunity to visit the mainland. Even now Penola Channel, which separates the Islands from the mainland, is still fast ice with only a few leads and a fortnight ago the relief ship was unable to reach us though we met it at the ice-edge to collect the mail and some Christmas fare.

After much sledging on the sea-ice near the Islands to accustom the dogs to work once more, Penola was first crossed on ski in July though the ice was very wet. At the first opportunity, early in August, Ted Grimshaw and I skied over to Cape Tuxen to climb Mt. Demaria. (An error in my letter last year put the height at 3,000 instead of 2,000 feet.)

The morning was clear and crisp giving the snow a good ski-ing surface. Two hours saw us at Tuxen and we followed the normal NW ridge to the summit of Demaria. The lower section of the ridge was very similar to the Band, with gullies making it narrow in places. Beyond the survey cairn at 1,000 feet the whole ridge narrowed and became horizontal, the next few hundred feet providing some difficulty with 30-foot cornices to be avoided and a soft snow covering on icy rock. However, all went well though the climb took longer than expected. We reached the summit at about 4.30 p.m. after racing against time up the last snow slopes. The sun was still bright and the view was splendid. We could get a better idea of the scale of the neighbouring peaks and the distances involved in approaching them. The sea was frozen to the horizon in all but one area—off the Bismark Strait beyond Booth Island. The ice in the Grandidier Channel looked in very good condition, as did that in Penola up to Hovgaard Island. The thinnest ice appeared to be that on which we'd sledged a few days earlier, just west of the Irizar Islands! Although we made all haste off the mountain, it took us an hour to descend; the time must have been spent on the middle section. The sun was very low in the sky when we

set off back to Base and the moonlight helped us back over the last mile or so.

Being primarily a static Geophysical Observatory, little sledging is done from the Argentine Islands but it is arranged that all base members are able to spend a fortnight out during the spring. So it was that in October Ted, Brian Porter and myself left Base hoping to visit an area only once previously visited and that over 50 years ago by Dr. Charcot's 'Pourquoi Pas?' Expedition. According to their account they had been unlucky with the weather having had over six feet of snow during their fortnight's manhauling to the head of the Wiggins Glacier. Surely with a dog team we could accomplish as much and the weather could not be worse. Couldn't it! After 'A Problem of Weather' we can consider ourselves lucky but the warm weather with eight to ten feet of accumulation almost brought us to a halt. We had five days lying up at our third camp and during the fortnight threequarters of the daylight hours were spent in enforced supine inactivity. On the occasions that we moved our progress depended on gouging a furrow through the snow rather than sledging and usually in semi-whiteout conditions.

We left on 5th October and sledged up to Petermann Island in the afternoon, crossing Penola to camp on the mainland at the foot of the 'Ramp' that evening. The following day we made two journeys to carry all but our emergency depot, onto the 'field' 1,500 feet up between Mt. Scott and Mt. Shackleton. After two days' whiteout we moved across the 'Field' to Camp 3 below Chaigneau Peak.

A morning spent digging out the tent and supplies and an afternoon's burrowing saw us at the foot of Shackleton's north ridge, Camp 4. The following day was fine and clear and we 'skijored' up to the head of the Wiggins Glacier to confirm Charcot's observation that there was no obvious route onto the mainland plateau though one possibility did offer itself to further investigation but the weather did not allow us to pursue this. The good weather did not last but we made our last camp at 2,500 feet at the junction of the Wiggins and the Leay Glaciers the next day.

When so close to success the bad weather returned but we had one fine afternoon and were able to follow an easy snow ridge up Mt. Shackleton. From Base the mountain offers a fine aspect with slender, fluted ridges rising up to the summit.

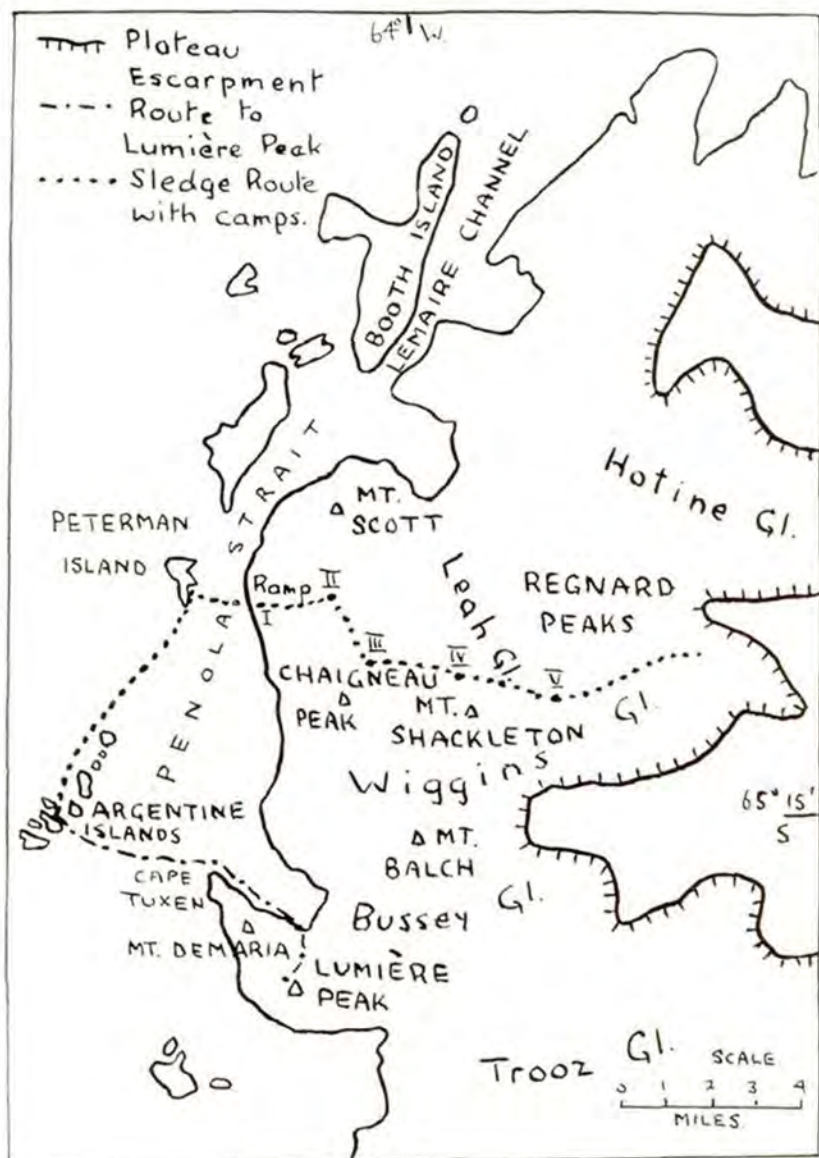
We had hoped that a worthy route could be climbed but the heavy snowfalls had put the other ridges in shocking condition so we were lucky to find any feasible route. Perhaps a better route next year!

On return to Base the weather improved, and during November there were many long clear days with the temperature low enough to provide superb ski-ing surfaces.

Soon after that another clear night found Peter, Ted and myself heading for Mt. Scott. The sea-ice had a thin covering of powder snow which provided us with a perfect surface. We reached the northernmost Irizar Island and then swung right, across Penola to the foot of the Ramp. There were many penguins on the move, they, like ourselves considering night-time more pleasant for travelling than by day. We covered the six miles to the Ramp in about two hours. We envied a seal lying stretched out on the ice awaiting the sun. The sea-ice at the foot of the Ramp was broken up into large floes by the pressure from the ice-cliffs on either side. After a cup of coffee from the flask, we put skins on our skis and set off up the Ramp. At the top we turned left (our sledge route to the 'Field' led round to the right of the SW buttress of Mt. Scott), and skied on over gently rising snow towards the upper part of the glacier which falls down from the summit of Mt. Scott. After a mile and a half the gradient increased and we headed up to the right of an icfall splitting the glacier down the centre. The sun had risen sometime earlier but we were still in the shadow of the ridge on our right. The sky ahead had cleared leaving just thin wisps of cirrus illuminated beautifully by the sun. The surface of the snow all the way was fine and hard with just a thin covering of powder. We gained much height in this steep middle section and rose into the sunlight with only a few hundred feet above us the summit.

The low angle of the sun showed clearly the sea-ice and icebergs to the south in the Grandidier Channel and to the south-west, the ice-cliffs of Renaud Island. There remained just a few hundred feet of snow to climb and we side-stepped up this to be rewarded by a most glorious view to the north.

Its sudden appearance made this view even more marvellous. At our feet lay Girard Bay and the Lemaire Channel with bergs appearing as sand, then Booth Island with its jagged snow peaks and across the Bismark Strait, Mt. Français on Anvers Island topped with high cloud. Round to the east,



ARGENTINE ISLANDS AND ANTARCTIC MAINLAND

stood Mt. Cloos and, beyond the Hotine Glacier, which rose as a broad highway to the Plateau, towered Mt. Matin. Behind the tumbling ice-falls of the Leay Glacier stood the Regnard Peaks with Mt. Shackleton, not so impressive from this angle, looking down on Nozal Hill and the 'Field'. Beside Mt. Peary, an outpost of the Plateau, the dark aiguille of Mt. Balch peered down on Mt. Mill and beyond Lumière and Demaria, range upon range of snow peaks, tinged blue in the haze, stretched to the horizon. I gazed and gazed, trying to impress permanently on my mind the whole breathtaking panorama.

After exhausting the photographic possibilities, we crossed to a more eastern summit. A further half hour here and we retraced our tracks down, down, down the 3,000 feet to the Ramp. In long traversing zig-zags we swept down the glacier, not without incident, and all too soon were finishing off the coffee at the bottom of the Ramp. Two hours in the boiling sun (back to Base) and so ended a fine ski-mountaineering day.

A few days later, Peter and I left Base one evening to 'have a look at' the mountains behind Demaria and arrived at Cape Tuxen as the sun was setting, just over an hour before midnight.

We negotiated the lead at the entrance to Waddington Bay and then had a mile's good ice before meeting the chaos of leads and ice-blocks at the back of the Bay. There was no plan other than to land at the foot of the col behind Demaria if there was no landing further back. As it happened we decided to carry on and, after passing through a mile of broken ice, having to remove the skis at times to scramble over blocks, made a landing on a rocky promontory just short of the ice-cliff of the Bussey Glacier. It was a relief to get out of the turmoil in the Bay and we found that the snow was excellent, being able to support us on foot. After walking up onto the level part of the glacier, we were able to pick a way through crevasses to the foot of a peak between Lumiere and the Table. This was a tremendous rock buttress with about 2,000 feet of very, very steep rock! After skirting round to the left of this, we gained a small combe leading to a col between Lumière and the rock peak. There was a great deal of avalanche debris at the mouth of the combe and we passed quickly over this. The combe was a most awe-inspiring place with rock and ice of

the Central Peak on the right and ice-cliffs and walls falling down from the upper snowfields of Lumière on the left.

It was perhaps a rather forlorn hope but we had hoped that a route onto Lumière would be possible from this side as although the peak could probably be climbed easily from the east via the Bussey Glacier this would involve more than a day's climbing. A bergschrund ran right round the coombe and above this the snow became quite steep. It appeared that a rock gendarme would prevent access to the upper part of the ridge from the col and I decided to try to climb the face above the bergschrund and then to traverse onto the ridge above the impasse. After 500 feet of 50-60° snow requiring just a single stroke of the axe to form a step, the slope continued on rock. The prospect of this was quite encouraging but after climbing for only a short distance on this, its extremely loose nature made it obviously impracticable in the time available. So after a most enjoyable night's climbing we came down only a few hundred feet from the summit. Perhaps the route from the col may be more suitable if the gendarme can be climbed. Whichever goes will provide a fine direct route up Lumière Peak. We were back down at the Bay by 4.30 a.m. and skied out into the sunlight as the rays were just coming down over the mountains.

It was a warm and thirsty ski back to Base, which we reached at 6.30, just in time to start the day's work.

HIGH LIFE IN THE HIMALAYA

Nancy Smith

Danny Kaye, playing the little man out of his depth, was once asked: 'Do you know the Himalayas?' and answered 'Er . . . oh, yes, adored him, hated her.' Of course, he wasn't a member of the Fell and Rock and wouldn't know that in almost every journal you can read about yet another Himalayan Expedition. I suppose that's why the Editor has asked me not to write an account of the Jagdula Expedition, 1962 but about 'my impressions—if any'.

'If any' indeed! What an appalling thought to cover the adventure of a life-time. Going to the Himalayas is a true adventure, no matter how many people have been there before. It's the tops!

In the last house in India, just on the frontier at Nepalganj, we stayed with Momaji, which is American-Hindu for 'Mum' and she said we were the tops. That was before we'd started! This American missionary fed us right royally on four meals a day and hot baths and missionary zeal. We each had to say grace in turn before our meals. She was sweet.

It took us ages to get through the customs and as Dorothea* was getting through the last sheaf of forms, I sat squashing mosquitoes and gazing down the fly-ridden, dusty street. There were the ponies setting off with our loads, some going straight on through the village, some turning right and going past the blue Hindu temple in quite a different direction. At this time I was still subject to qualms of anxiety, the sort of worrying I'd brought with me from the west. Would we ever see our valuable equipment again? And all those highly-selected and carefully-arranged high-altitude light-weight boxes? I confessed my anxiety to the others, none of whom had seen what I had seen. They completely ignored my remarks, such was their acclimatisation to the ways of the East. (They had travelled by road before Denise and myself. We flew out at the last minute.)

Next day we caught up with the ponies and half of them were missing. I didn't even say 'I told you so!' I had learned my lesson. They would turn up. What matter that we had no tents for the night? We had mosquito nets. Dorothea said

* Countess Gravina. The other members of the expedition were Barbara Spark, Pat Wood, Denise Evans, Jo Scarr and Nancy Smith.

we looked like a row of mutton chops, with fly-proof covers on. Ponies whinnied and pawed the ground and some broke their tethers and stampeded. There were tigers in the jungle around our clearing. Denise did an imitation of a leopard breathing close by and my hair stood on end. I felt like a mutton chop.

We got up at 3.30 a.m. No sleep was possible anyway and the ponymen wanted to be off. We walked through the warm-smelling jungle, imagining rhinoceros, tigers and snakes in the dark. It was full of strange noises and I was tingling with suspense, and the sheer excitement of being in another world. Then, quite suddenly, it was dawn and we could see. There were bright green parakeets fluttering around. We woke up and the dream was still true.

At breakfast time, after six hours' walking, we found the other ponies and our old sirdar, Dawa Tensing. Everything was there and nothing was lost. Nothing was lost on the whole expedition except Dawa's binoculars and we got him a new pair afterwards. Dorothea's rucksack was lost for a night but found again the next morning. That was after our climbing, on the way back. A yak had tossed it off his back without anyone noticing.

There was a Saddu who lived on the banks of the Rapti River who, they said, ate nothing but meat off the bodies of people who had died of smallpox and been thrown in the river. The people go miles on a pilgrimage to see him. We bathed in the Rapti River and didn't find out till afterwards that it is teeming with crocodiles who also live on the bodies of smallpox victims and so have a taste for human flesh.

After that, dysentery. The others told me it was my fault for swallowing the Rapti River water while I swam. Hot sand, drying wet bodies and then the fiery sting of sunburn. Poor little ponies with great sores on their backs and legs, seething with flies. I annointed them with gentian violet jelly and at any rate that kept the flies off. The pony-men rubbed each others' sores with the purple, too. Poor pony-men; half the time they were carrying their ponies' loads up the steep hillsides for the ponies fell and had to be pushed and pulled and reloaded and shouted at constantly. And there was no water, no water all day on this long up-hill track and the hot plastic water-bottles with their chloramine-disinfected

contents tasted foul in a mouth dry and sticky. Oh, for those snowy peaks of the High Himalaya 200 miles of dreamland away . . . away from the dust and the heat and the flies. And yet, it was on this day of dysentery that Dhaulagiri was there. We saw it for the first time over 100 miles away through the rhododendrons. Dreams and diarrhoea; damnation, and yet, somehow delight peeped through.

One night we came to a col. We had come too far and had to go back down as the ponies needed the grazing lower down. Tents up and lots of little camp fires glowing all round as pony-men, Sherpas and Memsahibs all ate their evening meal under the stars. Afterwards, they sang; monotonous half-tones and a ding-dong rhythm and the pony-men danced for us. Their ponies wear a leather neck band with little bells attached. These are taken off at night for peace. The men tied the bells round one ankle and danced the harder.

At our breakfast halt one morning Pat found a Praying Mantis. I played with it for an hour or more. Denise regaled us with lurid tales of its abominable sex-life, while Pat and I admired its clean lines, straw-like beauty, gnashing jaws and delicate praying hands. The insect world in Nepal stretches one's credulity. Can such things really be?

Going through the villages where no white women had been seen before, the people were naturally curious. After a while we realised that their primary interest was whether we were men or women. So Denise learned how to say in Nepali 'I am a woman!' The locals were delighted and came running out of their houses, laughing and pushing to hear this fine statement in their own language. Of course, after a time or two, Denise wanted variety, so she went through the next village calling 'I am a man! I am a man!' This went down equally well.

We didn't have a 'March in'. We walked 200 miles through an unknown land. We were just happy wanderers going over range after range to the north, often losing ourselves, each other and the coolies through the many distractions of beasts, plants, snakes, views and insect life. Then we had to find our mountain. We explored the Jagdula gorge and couldn't find it. We went round to the other side of the range to the East up the Garpung Kuola and there it was. This took eight days.

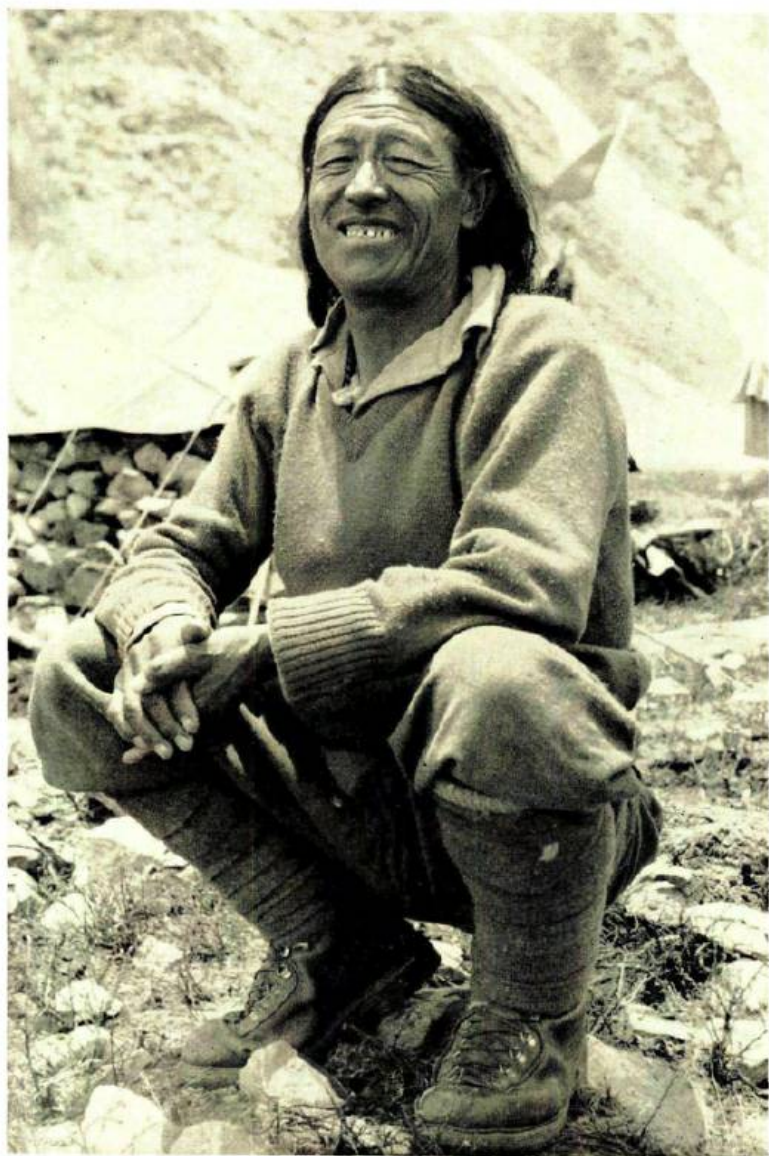
Our Peak in the Kanjiroba Himal is 21,135 feet high and was approached from a previously unexplored valley to the east of the Jagdula River in N.W. Nepal. It is about 80 miles north west of Dhaulagiri. We set up five camps in all. Then we climbed our peak in much the same way as other people. Jo Scarr, Barbara Spark, Pat Wood and Nancy Smith reached the summit on the second attempt in May 1962. On the first attempt Jo Scarr, Denise Evans and Nancy Smith reached a point on the ridge about one and a half hours from the top but had to retreat in a blizzard.

Kagmara I, our second big peak at 20,000 feet, was climbed by Dorothea Gravina, Denise Evans, Pat Wood and Nancy Smith about 10 days later.

Three other peaks, Dawa's Peak, 17,000 feet, the Twin Peak, 18,000 feet and Dorothea's Peak, 17,500 feet, were climbed by most of the party beforehand, acclimatising. Also climbed were Kagmara II (Dorothea, Pat and Jo), Kagmara III (Denise, Barbara and Nancy) and Triangular Peak (Jo, Denise, Barbara). Each is about 19,000 feet. Our Sherpas came, too, on all but the Twin Peak. Our climbs were not an assault. We learnt to know this valley and its surrounding peaks. We did some surveying and cairn-building and Jo made a map.

Back at lower Base Camp after climbing our peak, one by one the snow bridges across the river were caving in as the snows melted and the river became more swollen. One day, we went over onto the superb Kagmara range, to the south, exploring, route finding and photographing our peak. We crossed the last remaining snow-bridge in the early morning. While we were high up on the mountain, Dawa, who had stayed in Base Camp, noticed that this last snow bridge had gone. We were cut off and by the end of the day the river would be rushing, strong and deep. So he set to and made a bridge for us, a cantilever bridge such as we had seen at regular crossing places. Hours of work with heavy well-chosen stones. There was no wood for a final log across the top but it was an easy step over the two-foot gap and far better than the difficult and dangerous crossing we would have had with a sure wetting in icy melt-water. Just one of the many ways in which our Sherpas cared for and looked after us.

The mountains are of fantastic beauty, yet in detail they are a stony, snowy waste, a desert place. It is indescribable



Nancy Smith

DAWA TENSING, VETERAN SIRDAR

and uncanny coming down again after weeks up there. A blade of grass is something you might never have seen before, amazing. Then whole clumps of grass, azaleas, primulas, scrub trees and undergrowth; woods, flowers and butterflies. The rich smell of fertility after the clean bare outlines. You feel that nothing, ever again, will be jaded or lacking in wonder.

To Kaigaon again, the nearest village to our mountains. On a windy day we gave the village folk our surplus interleaved toilet paper. They flung it into the air again and again. Young and old were scampering around the field scattering it gaily and soon the whole valley seemed full of a rather large-sized blowing confetti. We were all affected by the general delight and laughter. We also gave them soap and they liked our tooth paste, but I think they ate it.

On our walk-out to the east, to Pokhara, we travelled round to the north of the Dhaulagiri massif, with yaks to carry our loads over three high passes. Yaks are timid and temperamental beasts and not at all keen on carrying loads. How to load a yak? First catch your yak! This takes ages; sometimes it took all day and we didn't move camp at all! Then stealthily creep up and tie a loop round the front legs. He then keeps still. Next two sherpas hold one horn each, while two more tie on the loads. Now the front legs are untied and, as like as not, the yak will charge and leap and toss till he has shaken off the load and the whole process has to be gone through again.

One of our camps was high up on a shoulder of Dhaulagiri, overlooking the plateau of Tibet. There were military encampments of Tibetans down below us and some men in camouflage shirts came snooping round our tents. But we were busy playing leap-frog to settle our evening meal, and took no notice. They went away and we had no incident but afterwards Mingma, our cook, told us he had seen firearms hidden in the folds of their clothes and they were Chinese.

Everything impressed me in Nepal, even the leeches. I know Wordsworth wrote a poem about a leech-gatherer at home, but still, I'd never met one. Those last few days we met hundreds, lying in wait for us on the path, one end waving to catch us as we passed. A dirty nigger-brown colour, soft, flabby and revolting. The bigger ones had yellow stripes and all had a powerful sucker at one end and a painless puncture outfit at the other. More primitive than slugs, yet remarkably

speedy in their movements. Denise had a theory that if she ran fast enough they wouldn't catch on, but they did, and when engorged and dropping off, were even more revolting. D.D.T. did not deter them. We put a ring of the powder round us when we picnicked but they dropped on us from above. We stopped to eat wild strawberries in the forest and were sent on our way by the leeches, dripping blood. Perhaps all this blood-letting, after our spell at high altitudes, was just what we needed to bring us back to earth again.

Of course, we missed the train at Nepalganj. We went racing down the road in Momaji's jeep, raced the train and caught it further down the line, dripping with sweat in the pre-monsoon humidity, with the temperature 112° Fahrenheit. Denise's pale blue frock wouldn't be fit to be seen in Delhi at Claridges so she changed into her pyjamas (the accepted every-day wear in Nepal). Almost too late we realised we had to change at Gonda. On the crowded platform in front of us was a naked Saddu—naked except for a long beard and a tiny bit of red cloth round his loins. 'No you can't photograph him, it's not allowed on railway stations,' said Denise. I hadn't said a word! Then she was suddenly embarrassed. A smartly dressed European was looking her up and down, still in her pyjamas. The return of self-consciousness and a rapid change into pale blue frock again and back to civilisation; speed, bustle, crowds, beggars, pickpockets, money, tickets, planes . . . 14,000 miles at great height in a Boeing 707, effortless and frightening after 500 miles on foot reaching considerable height with a great deal of effort.

It's a humbling experience to climb high mountains. Humbling, too, to live with the Sherpas and coolies, yak men and pony men. To see and know how simply they live; not just once in a while, like us, but always. Sometimes, I felt that we, with our long arguments and discussions, our intellectual froth, were not a bunch of educated ladies amongst a wild ragged dirty people but rather that we were the uncultured wild savages. They may be dirty and poor by our material standards but are richer in the things that really matter. Happy, content and kind, always ready to help one another, modestly and simply without obstinacy or argument, or ever taking offence and with a wisdom, dignity and good manners not so common in the west. As Dean Inge said:

'Civilisation is a disease which is invariably fatal.'

CLIMBS OLD AND NEW

David Miller

Exploration has continued during 1962 with great vigour, as will be seen from the list of new routes. However, it is noticeable, and not surprising, that the spate of new routes on the bigger and more popular crags is slowly dying, although Hiraeth on Dove Crag, and Central Pillar on Esk Buttress (both by P. Crew) take terrific, exposed lines on steep rock and have great technical difficulty.

It is noteworthy that both these routes were climbed without artificial aids and pitons. Unfortunately the same cannot be said for many other new routes.

The past few years have seen more and more leaders carrying a bundle of pitons on standard routes. This has led to their quite unjustified use on routes even down to Severe grading by climbers who wish to lower the route to their own level of ability.

The severe winter of 1962-63 proved to be a good one for climbers. Many waterfalls were frozen and gullies filled with ice providing conditions unknown for many years. A number of fine ascents were recorded from various districts.

A more serious aspect is that the action of the frost has loosened much rock on the crags. Obviously the normal amount of loose rock on newer routes will be more dangerous, but it is also possible that previously safe rock will have loosened, and great care should be taken, even on well-frequented routes, to prevent accidents.

BORROWDALE

LOWER FALCON CRAG

THE NICHE 180 feet. Very Severe. First ascent 20th August 1962. A. Liddell, R. McHaffie (alternate leads).

Starts right of Dedication, under the big niche in the centre of the face.

- (1) 70 feet. Climb diagonally left and then directly up the centre of the wall to a piton, level with the floor of the niche. Piton belay.
- (2) 40 feet. Climb the corner to the level of the roof. Traverse the right wall and get onto the gangway beyond the roof (2 pitons). Step right after a few feet on the gangway into a smaller niche.
- (3) 70 feet. Step back onto the gangway and ascend direct past a piton runner to a slightly impending wall. Continue over this on good holds and up to the top.

The Niche has had at least two further ascents each using 1 piton on each pitch. It is considered really hard.

GRAINS GHYLL

WHIT'S WALLS 140 feet. Very Difficult. First ascent 4th October 1959. D. A. Elliott. Starts 10 yards right of Whit's End.

- (1) 70 feet. Ascending traverse left for a few feet, then straight up the wall to glacia.
- (2) 55 feet. Cross the glacia to a short steep wall, ascend this to crest of ridge which is followed to a grass ledge.
- (3) 15 feet. The third wall of the climb, as for Whit's Ridge.

CASTLE CRAG

LYRE 100 feet. Severe. First ascent 25th September 1962. D. A. Elliott, W. Young. Starts to the right of Disillusion where the rock is strangely pock-marked. Cairn.

- (1) 65 feet. Straight up the wall to heather terrace and block belay.
- (2) 35 feet. The smooth corner left of the belay is rather harder. Pull over a small overhang to belay on holly.

FALCON CRAG

INDICTUS 240 feet. Very Severe. First ascent 7th October 1962. T. Martin, J. Young. Situated on the Upper Falcon Crag. Starts at the right hand side of the large ledge across the crag, and beneath a small overhang. The route uses a crack running from right to left.

- (1) 70 feet. Climb easy rocks to the overhang. Pull into a small niche and using the crack move up and left to beneath a loose overhang. Traverse left for 20 feet, then step up and move right to gain a groove. Climb this to ledge below and to the left of an overhang.
- (2) 50 feet. Climb between the overhangs (loose) then up to tree belays.
- (3) 120 feet. Ascend the easy arête above, then easy slabs to the top of the crag.

GREATEND CRAG

SLIME CORNER 220 feet. Very Severe. First ascent 7th March 1959. J. A. Austin, B. A. Fuller.

1, 2, 3 pitches as for Redberry Wall.

- (4) 35 feet. From the belay climb up a few feet and cross a delicate traverse line to a short steep corner on the right. Up the corner to grass and a tree belay.
- (5) 75 feet. Up the corner crack above to an overhang. Dubious blocks here. Continue up the corner until the crack overhangs, black and wet. Traverse left down a sloping gangway to a belay. (This is just above the belay above pitch 5, Redberry Wall.)

- (6) 110 feet. Climb the rightward-slanting groove just above the gangway back to the crack at the block overhang. Pull into the crack and continue up in the same line to a belay at the top of the rib on the right.

GOWDER CRAG

Voo'DOO 270 feet. Very Severe. First ascent 11th March 1962. R. McHaffie, A. Kew, A. Liddell. Starts 30 feet or so left of Gowder Buttress and takes the line of prominent green grooves running up the centre of the crag.

- (1) 80 feet. Climb onto a little flake at the foot of the groove then ascend direct to a block belay. Two pitons are used on the last few feet.
- (2) 80 feet. Move left for 10 feet to the foot of a groove; up this and move right at the top to a tree belay.
- (3) 30 feet. Traverse right to the foot of a big block. Tree belay. This is part of the Girdle.
- (4) 80 feet. Gain the top of the block and climb the hanging groove above until a move right can be made into a crack. Follow this to a tree belay.

BOWDERSTONE CRAGS

WODEN'S THREAD 130 feet. Mild Severe. First ascent 5th January 1963. C. W. Greenhow, J. S. Williams. Starts

- 6 feet right of Bowderstone Pinnacle Gully behind large tree, cairn.
- (1) 15 feet. Ascend awkward slab (or easier groove on right) to earth ledge.
 - (2) 30 feet. Continue up left flank and scoop to yew tree ledge.
 - (3) 30 feet. Climb the wall above swinging right to gain tree. Follow groove to large oak.
 - (4) 55 feet. The stepped crack behind holly on right, the wall ahead, or the chimney on left all lead up to the final wall.

BUTTERMERE

HIGH CRAG

BUTTRESS 190 feet. Very Severe. First ascent 23rd September 1962. J. J. S. Allison, L. Kendall. Start at the bottom tree below the centre of the crag.

- (1) 15 feet. Ascend the corner to a grass ledge and block belay.
- (2) 25 feet. Climb the crack behind the belay (awkward) to two small caves. Chockstone belay.
- (3) 50 feet. Pass the overhangs by using the rib between the caves and follow the chimney crack beyond to another small cave.

- (4) 100 feet. (Crux) Ascend the rib on the right for a few feet to a resting place and line runner. Traverse right to a piton and sling (in place) and use these for aid to reach the groove above.

Leave the groove on the left and ascend easy slabs to the top.

GRASMOOR

DOVE CRAG

GULLY The unclimbed gully mentioned in the Guide. 230 feet. Very Severe. First ascent 8th July 1962. J. J. S. Allison, L. Kendall.

- (1) 70 feet. Climb the chimney exiting through the hole behind the chock-stone. (Some loose rock.) Scramble up gully.
 (2) 30 feet. Climb the easy crack.
 (3) 70 feet. Continue up gully bed to vegetated cave, which is left by difficult moves on left wall. Piton belay.
 (4) 60 feet. Traverse out onto right wall and climb the slabs to easy ground. Scramble to top.

BUCKSTONE HOW

ALEXAS 180 feet. Very Severe. First ascent 2nd September 1962. P. Crew, B. Ingle. This is the groove capped by a large overhang left of Cleopatra.

- (1) 80 feet. Swing into the groove from the left over loose rock. Over a hard bulge and up to a ledge on the right. Move left under the overhang and up to a ledge. Traverse right to a stance on Cleopatra.
 (2) 100 feet. Up groove on left. Cleopatra.

CONISTON

DOW CRAG

NIMROD 250 feet. Very Severe. First ascent 2nd June 1962. D.M., D.K. Starts about 40 feet right of Giants Crawl below a shallow groove.

- (1) 100 feet. Move into the groove from the right and climb it to a large flake. Continue for 15 feet passing an overhang to a flake. Traverse horizontally right to a small ledge and then move diagonally right across a slab into a groove. Piton belay.
 (2) 50 feet. Step right and climb the wall above to a flake at 15 feet. Move left into the main groove and climb its left wall to grass ledges on Giants Crawl.
 (3) 100 feet. Move into the main groove above from the right and climb it via an awkward corner to a small ledge. Ascend the

crack above for a few feet to a spike and tension out left from it across a wall to an arête with a small ledge a few feet up. Step up and move left under an overhang and up onto grass ledges.

(UN-NAMED) 120 feet. Very Severe. First ascent April 1962. L. Brown, A. Mchardy. Starts at the foot of the prominent groove left of Unfinished Symphony. The second pitch is the obvious continuation of Unfinished Symphony.

- (1) 60 feet. Climb the groove direct until the ledge on the Girdle is reached. Belay up on left.
- (2) 60 feet. Follow the girdle right for 25 feet to the foot of a crack. A strenuous move leads to a good spike, then continue up to the crack beneath the overlap. Step right and swing over the overhang to the extreme left end of the slab on Eliminate A. Climb the slab to the belay on Eliminate A.

DEEPDALE

HUTAPLE CRAG

EXHAUSTION 135 feet. Very Severe. First ascent 1st August 1962. A. J. Maxfield, D. F. Price. The climb lies up the left hand edge of Hutaple Crag overlooking East Hutaple Gully. Seen from below as a curving slab with a corner on its right, and a steep wall bounded by a chimney on the right of this again. The East Wall climb is followed for its first 3 pitches.

- (4) 40 feet. East Wall is followed until it is possible to move into the left-ward slanting chimney mentioned in the guide.
- (5) 30 feet. The chimney is followed until it is possible to break out onto the left wall where there are two or three small ledges. On the second of these will be found a belay, about 15 feet left of the chimney.
- (6) 25 feet. Traverse left on a slightly descending line and round the corner overlooking East Hutaple Gully. Follow a grass rake into the corner where there is a good chock belay in an overhanging crack.
- (7) 40 feet. Climb the corner by layback until the angle relents. Traverse right and straight up the crack to the top. (This pitch is much harder than the rest of the climb.)

SCRUBBY CRAG

HROTHGAR 80 feet. Very Severe. First ascent 29th May 1962. N.J.S., L.J.G., O. Woolcock. Starts from the belay above pitch (3) Hrothgar, traverse 20 feet along ledge to the right to below an apparent weakness. Up 20 feet to ledges. Traverse right and ascend a bulge on small holds. (Sling used by leader.) Continue straight up, followed by 30 feet scrambling to good belay.

DOVEDALE

DOVE CRAG

HIRAETH 300 feet. Very Severe. First ascent 10th June 1962. P. Crew, B. Ingle. (Alternate leads.)

Starts just right of Dovedale Groove at the left hand side of a steep slab.

- (1) 80 feet. Climb a crack to the top of the slab, and traverse right, almost horizontally for 30 feet, past a large loose block. Up a shallow groove on the right of the block to reach a grass ledge at its right end. Piton belay.
- (2) 40 feet. Climb the wall above and step right into a groove. Up to a small stance and chock belays.
- (3) 50 feet. Up to a sloping ledge on the left. Straight up the shallow green groove, with a difficult overhang, to a grass ledge on the left.
- (4) 50 feet. Move left and up a short overhung corner and slab to a spike. Traverse right and descend a groove to a small stance.
- (5) 80 feet. Climb back up the groove then up a steeper groove on the right. Move right and up an overlapping slab to finish.

Dovedale Groove has had a long awaited second and third ascent. A loose block was removed from the first pitch.

Extol has had at least three ascents and is possibly the biggest undertaking on the crag owing to loose rock and lack of protection.

Hiraeth, the hardest route technically, is on good rock and better protected. It has now had at least two ascents.

DUNNERDALE

WALLOWBARROW CRAG

WEST BUTTRESS 240 feet. Very Severe. First ascent 29th December 1962. I. Stromberg, J. W. Rostron.

GIRDLE (Alternate leads.) Starts well up the left side of the buttress at a large obvious flake and traverse below a line of overhangs two thirds of the way up the crag.

- (1) 30 feet. Up right or left side of flake to pinnacle belay.
- (2) 90 feet. Move up right then continue the traverse moving slightly down across heathery grooves to the skyline rib. Up this, or the groove on its left side to a small spike. Traverse round the rib on the right across a groove then to the next rib using a thin crack for the hands. Round this undercut rib and descend a 6-foot crack to a small slab below. Move right and descend a groove for 10 feet and traverse right to a small stance. (Poor belays, piton used.)

- (3) 15 feet. Traverse right across a wall to a block belay.
- (4) 30 feet. Descend a crack for 10 feet and traverse right to a small grass ledge below some steep mossy slabs.
- (5) 45 feet. Move up a wall to a sloping mossy ledge on the left. Then onto the lower slab (flake for a runner on the wall above). Move right and up the overlap using a crack to the upper slab. Traverse diagonally right to the top corner of the slab and descend 6 feet of heather to a belay.
- (6) 30 feet. Last pitch of Thomas.

EAST BUTTRESS 545 feet. Very Severe. First ascent 16th
CHAIN September 1962. J. Jenkinson, J. Rostron.
(Alternate leads.)

- (1) 80 feet. Pitch 1, Wall and Corner.
- (2) 40 feet. Climb on to the flake and traverse left up into a mossy corner, then awkwardly up a crack behind a small oak. Break out left to the belay at the top of pitch 3, Trinity Slabs.
- (3) 50 feet. Descend pitch 3, Trinity Slabs.
- (4) 40 feet. Descend pitch 2, Trinity Slabs.
- (5) 90 feet. Step up and traverse 20 feet left on rock, then heather. Move into the centre of the slab, then up on good but mossy holds to a large oak on a terrace.
- (6) 50 feet. Descend grass leftwards for 15 feet and then climb the overhanging wall to the Logan Stone Ledge. Descend leftwards down the gangway to the belay above pitch 4, Logan Stone Route.
- (7) 40 feet. Move left to the end of the ledge. Up the overhang and traverse left on good holds to the belay above pitch 2, Nameless.
- (8) 60 feet. Ascend pitch 3, Nameless, to a large block belay.
- (9) 95 feet. Traverse a few feet right and climb the groove, then traverse to a horizontal crack above a mossy wall. Cross this using a crack, then from the ledge, up the cracks above to finish up a rib.

A number of other routes have been done but they are not worthy of mention.

SEATHWAITE BUTTRESS

This is the small compact buttress which is on the left of the path from Wallowbarrow to Seathwaite Church, situated about half way between the Duddon and the Church. It is a very pleasant buttress with three obvious cracks.

SNAP 105 feet. Very Difficult. First recorded ascent
17th November 1962. J. Rostron, L. G. Sullivan (alternate leads), (but was being climbed by OBMS Eskdale in 1951. First ascent unknown.) Starts up the left of two cracks about 6 feet apart at the foot of the buttress.

- (1) 35 feet. The crack then grass and mud to holly.
- (2) 30 feet. Up the crack behind the holly and at 20 feet traverse right into the wide crack forming the pinnacle. Small spike belay.
- (3) 40 feet. Chimney up the chockstone, then to the top of the pinnacle. Step across onto the wall, move round the corner on the right and finish up an awkward little wall.

CRACKLE 125 feet. Hard Severe. First ascent 5th January 1963. I. M. Stromberg, K. M. Thompson.
Starts at the foot of the obvious arête up the centre of the buttress by a large holly tree.

- (1) 85 feet. Climb the arête and holly tree to a groove on the right. Climb the groove (runner) to the overhang, and traverse left on good footholds to the arête. Swing round the arête and climb to a small rock stance (runner). Follow grass ledges to the left and climb a wide sloping crack to a chimney. Belay 6 feet higher in the chimney.
- (2) 25 feet. From the belay block, traverse right across the slab to the arête again. Climb straight up to a large ledge. This is the top of the pinnacle. Block belay.
- (3) 15 feet. Climb the arête above the belay to grass ledges.

ESKDALE

ESK BUTTRESS

BLACK SUNDAY 305 feet. Very Severe. First ascent 17th June 1962. J. A. Austin, E. Metcalf (alternate leads), N.J.S. Takes the obvious crack and groove line on the left of Square Chimney. It is often wet. Start as for Square Chimney.

- (1) 95 feet. As for pitches 1, 2, and 3 of Square Chimney.
- (2) 20 feet. Up to a belay below and to the left of the prominent bulging mossy crack.
- (3) 90 feet. Climb the overhanging crack and make an awkward exit out onto a glacia on the right (running belays). Back into the crack again which is climbed for a few feet until it thins down. Make a long stride to the left to a thin slanting crack which is climbed to a good resting place under the overhangs. Traverse back right to the crack and pull awkwardly round the overhangs onto the wall on the right where good holds lead up to a rock ledge and belay.
- (4) 55 feet. Straight up the corner crack above, the difficulties ease at 30 feet, when more broken rocks lead up to a stance and belay on the left.
- (5) 45 feet. Above is a mossy scoop. Climb the wall on the left of the scoop to the top. Belay 30 feet back on the terrace.

CENTRAL PILLAR 475 feet. Very Severe. First ascent 17th June 1962. P. Crew, M. Owen. Start as for Bridges Route (1-4).

- (1) 90 feet. Easy scrambling up slabs.
- (2) 80 feet. Climb the small buttress on the right of mossy slabs and traverse left on grass to a belay.
- (3) 70 feet. Up the steep groove above, move left and up another steep groove.
- (4) 45 feet. Step left up steep crack past a jammed flake to good ledge and belay.
- (5) 70 feet. Climb up for a few feet to a good inserted chock. Traverse diagonally right till the rock gets steeper and step round a nose to a ledge with small flake belays.
- (6) 30 feet. Up the groove above, step right and up a mossy slab to spike belay.
- (7) 60 feet. Traverse right under steep wall and up to a very small ledge. Move left, protected by a peg, over a large block and up the wall above to a narrow ledge which leads right to a grassy bay.
- (8) 30 feet. Up the wide crack on the left.

GARGOYLE DIRECT 250 feet. Very Severe. First ascent 3rd June 1962. D.W.E., M.M., K.B. The climb starts directly below the gargoyle at the lowest point of the buttress between Gargoyle Groove and Gargoyle Stairs.

- (1) 120 feet. Moderate climbing to the large bilberry ledge, passing a dead tree on route.
- (2) 130 feet. From the left-hand edge of the ledge, scramble up to heather ledges below the steep wall. Climb the wall left, then up a crack to a good spike for running belay. Move right to a long sloping ledge, then up a small steep crack for 15 feet and move awkwardly to a resting place on the left. Step left onto the rib and continue on good holds, passing a spike for running belay until a difficult balance move leads to the ledge, below the Gargoyle. Ascend the short crack on the left of the Gargoyle and belay on large block.

THE RED EDGE 240 feet. Very Severe. First ascent 17th June 1962. J. A. Austin, N.J.S. (alternate leads), E. Metcalf. This route follows a very impressive line up the steep shallow groove in the left bounding rib of the steep wall left of Square Chimney. It is actually the right hand arête of the Chimney of Frustration.

Starts as for Frustration.

- (1) 40 feet. As for pitch 1 Frustration.

- (2) 130 feet. Ascend the chimney of Frustration for 15 feet until a thin short flake crack in its right wall leads up to the rib. The shallow groove in front is climbed until at about 85 feet a small square cut overhang bars the way. On the mossy rib on the right is a small spike. Step out and stand in a sling on the spike. Layback up for a few feet and then step back left into the groove above the overhang. Climb it, and in a few feet it deepens and becomes easier with a good crack in the back. Follow this to a grassy stance and belay on the right.
- (3) 70 feet. Move up and to the left, more easily, to ascend the arête to the top.

HERON CRAG

GORMENGHAST This climb is rapidly becoming a 'classic'. It is long, sustained and on good rock, and the crag is at a low altitude.

DIRECT START 40 feet. Very Severe. First ascent 30th July 1961. J. A. Austin, E. Metcalf.

Much better than the original start. Takes the steep wall direct from the foot of the buttress to the ledge at the top of pitch 2.

DIRECT FINISH 50 feet. Very Severe. First ascent D. Whillans.

Pitch (5) 50 feet. After passing the jammed flake, do not traverse right, but go straight up the wall on small holds until better holds lead right to a good ledge.

- (6) Straight up from belay on good holds to the top.

FLANKER 215 feet. Very Severe. First ascent August 1961. J. A. Austin, E. Metcalf (shared lead).

Starts at a large white scoop about 60 feet right of Bellerophon.

- (1) 20 feet. Up to a ledge at the foot of the scoop.
- (2) 85 feet. Gain the tiny ledge up on the right and climb directly up to good ledge. Belay on top of the large pinnacle on right.
- (3) 75 feet. Traverse left until it is possible to pull onto a gangway leading back right, which is followed to gain the crack overlooking the belay. Exit left then climb out on the right wall to a belay on second ledge.
- (4) 35 feet. Immediately above the belay is a small square cut overhang. Pull round to the left and climb straight up to the top.

STEERPIKE 60 feet. Very Severe. First ascent 22nd September 1962. C. H. Tayler, T. D. Leggett F. A. Wedgewood. Starts 50 feet left of Babylon at the lowest point, of buttress and provides an interesting variation start to 'Side Track', though harder than the rest of that climb.

- (1) 60 feet. Climb the overhang with difficulty and after 25 feet traverse round the edge on the right on slightly doubtful holds to a small niche. Climb the steep mossy wall above, traversing delicately right after 20 feet to a ledge with a peg belay. (Foot of steep wall, pitch 2, Side Track.)

HARDKNOTT CRAG

The crag just above the top of Hardknott. Five minutes from the road on the Eskdale side.

STORM GROOVE 115 feet. Very Severe. First ascent 5th June 1960. J. A. Austin, J. M. Austin. In the centre of the crag is a groove which stops about 60 feet from the ground. Running down from the groove is a wide streak of moss. This is the line. Starts just left of the mossy streak at a steep shallow broken groove.

- (1) 45 feet. Climb the groove to its top where an obvious traverse line runs across to the right. Follow this to a stance and belay.
- (2) 50 feet. Climb up above the belay until an awkward move enables the ledge at the foot of the big 'V' groove to be gained. Climb the groove to a grassy stance and good line belay on the right.
- (3) 20 feet. The groove above to the top.

LANGDALE

GIMMER CRAG

IF 165 feet. Very Severe. First ascent 10th May 1962. P. R., R. Blain. Takes a line between

Kipling Groove and 'F' route. Second pitch artificial.

- (1) 35 feet. Climb the pitch which leads to the stance, as for Kipling Groove.
- (2) 80 feet. Over small overhang above, then continue straight up for 35 feet. Move right with difficulty on loose piton to reach a small spike for sling and etrier. Climb up to good spike, then straight up groove above to small ledge. (Piton belay.)
(12 pitons were used on the first ascent, but it has since been done with 6.)
- (3) 50 feet. Move out left round an exposed corner; traverse for 15 feet to the handjamming crack on Kipling Groove, which is ascended to the top.

PAVEY ARK

ARCTURUS 305 feet. Very Severe. First ascent April 1962. J. A. Austin, E. Metcalf. Start just left of Deception.

- (1) 25 feet. Up to a belay just left of and below the groove of Deception.

- (2) 95 feet. Traverse left along the ledge for 3-4 feet and then climb the very steep wall for 15-20 feet until it is possible to step left to a good foothold just below the slab. Climb up past a piton and slightly left to a tiny ledge. Traverse horizontally left and climb the second crack to an awkward landing in a niche. Up right then back left to the holly belay on Alph.
- (3) 35 feet. Step right across the overhang and climb a steep shallow right-angled groove to a small ledge.
- (4) 40 feet. Climb the crack on the right to a narrow ledge then go up to the grassy ledge above.
- (5) 40 feet. Traverse along the ledge to the right beneath the overhangs until it gives out in a delicate and exposed slab. Cross this slab and step down to a ledge.
- (6) 70 feet. Climb the rib above the right end of the ledge to easier ground and the top.

Astra, which is possibly the hardest route in Langdale, as well as having a reasonable length, has been repeated a number of times.

WHITE GHYLL

HASTE NOT 75 feet. Very Severe. First ascent P. Allison.
DIRECT START Starts 20 feet right of the ordinary route. Up the slab to the right corner, move over the bulge, and after 15 feet move right using a big flake and up onto the nose. Continue up the corner and follow the gangway left (part of the traverse) for 20 feet to third belay of Haste Not.

NEULANDS

RED CRAG

LEFT WING 135 feet. Severe. First ascent June 1962.
ROUTE L. Kendall, J. Arkless (alternate leads). Starts at the left-hand side of the upper crag below a prominent grassy groove which runs past a large flake. October Slab Continuation lies 10 feet to the left.

- (1) 90 feet. Pull into the groove with the aid of a little tree. Step left and climb the wall to a running belay at 60 feet. A short traverse right follows, and a movement is made into a smooth chimney. Follow this to a stance and belay on the flakes tip.
- (2) 45 feet. The crack behind the flake eases after 20 feet, and scrambling leads to the top.

RIGHT WING 70 feet. Mild. Very Severe. First ascent
DEVIATION 17th June 1962. L. Kendall, B. Snowdon.
 Forms a direct finish to Kremlin Grooves
 Continuation. It starts from the right end of a block ledge overlooking a gully at the top of pitch 3 of that climb

- 70 feet. Good holds lead to a bulge at 20 feet (spike runner). Move right and get into a little niche where a piton runner will be found. Pull out of the niche into a squatting position below a second bulge then traverse right onto a sloping shelf. Pull over a wall and climb the short slab behind a spike on the right to the top.

THIRLMERE

BIRK CRAG

The most obvious of the small crags near the head of Thirlmere on the west side.

LITTLE BUTTRESS CLIMB 160 feet. Just Very Severe. First ascent 16th June 1962. N. J. S., Miss R. Collier. The crag consists of an arête with steep walls and grooves to the right. The climb takes the arête direct, starting at the lowest point of the crag.

- (1) 80 feet. Make an ascending traverse to gain the right rib of the buttress. (Sling used for aid.) Climb this to a break which leads to the left bounding rib, and up to a prow.
- (2) 80 feet. Up the arête to bilberry ledges.

WASDALE

LOW ADAM CRAG (Screens)

THYROXIN 175 feet. Very Severe. First ascent 24th September 1962. D. A. Elliott, W. Young (alternate leads). Starts just right of Adrenalin.

- (1) 25 feet. Pull over the overhang and up a slab moving left to belay.
- (2) 40 feet. Traverse left across a steep slab and up its left edge to block belay.
- (3) 65 feet. Move up and left to holly. Pull into the overhanging crack above and where this widens, step right over the bulge and into a groove. Ascend directly to flake belay at top of pitch 4 Adrenalin.
- (4) 45 feet. Climb the crack left of the belay, which leads to a steep wall; this is climbed to belay on ridge. Scrambling leads to top of crag.

PIKES CRAG

PILLAR FRONT 350 feet. Very Severe. First ascent Easter 1962. J. A. Austin, J. M. Austin, D. W. Austin. Start as for Citadel.

- (1) 60 feet as for Citadel.

- (2) 80 feet. Climb straight up above the ledge to an overhang at 15 feet crossed by a crack. Climb the bulging crack to a resting place on the left. Avoid a couple of loose flakes by climbing on the left wall, then gain the crack again and follow it to the top of the Pillar. (This is a junction with Citadel and might be used as a direct pitch.)
- (3) 150 feet. Climb up to the left (belay 70 feet), then traverse left into a steep right-ward facing corner; this is climbed on good holds to a belay near Juniper Buttress.
- (4) 60 feet. The steep wall above on the right is split by twin cracks, climb these to the top.

SCAFELL

EAST BUTTRESS

PHOENIX Very Severe. First ascent 17th June 1962.

VARIATION D.M.

From top of first pitch. (Instead of starting up Ichabod and swinging back on a peg.) Climb the crack in the corner and pull over the prow to a ledge below the main crack.

ICHABOD There has been a second ascent of this fine route.

SCAFELL PINNACLE

DEEP GHYLL SLABS

SLAB CLIMB 150 feet. Very Severe. First ascent J. J. S. Allison, R. J. Mansfield. The climb starts midway between Jones's Route from Deep Ghyll and Central Route.

- (1) 80 feet. Climb the steep wall with some difficulty to reach the slabs. Follow these to a belay to the left of the pile of blocks.
- (2) 70 feet. Traverse left and easily climb the groove to the right of Gibson's Chimney.

KEY TO INITIALS

K. Brannan	L. J. Griffin	D. Miller	N. J. Soper
D. W. English	D. Kirby	M. Monk	

ESKDALE

HERON CRAG

Spec Crack was described in *Climbs Old and New (F.R.C.C. Journal, No. 56, 1962)* as starting 30 feet left of Bellerophon. It actually starts 30 feet right of Bellerophon.

IN MEMORIUM

B. BEETHAM	..	..	..	1919-1963
P. D. BOOTHROYD	..	..	..	1920-1962
Mrs. H. C. BRYAN	..	..	..	1919-1963
C. F. BUDENBERG	..	..	..	1923-1963
Mrs. A. CRAIG	..	..	..	1912-1962
A. DENT	..	..	..	1920-1962
Mrs. B. EDEN-SMITH	..	..	..	1919-1963
G. W. T. H. FLEMING	..	..	..	1919-1962
T. FOULDS	..	..	..	1927-1962
J. A. GRIFFIN	..	..	..	1946-1963
Miss D. B. KIDD	..	..	..	1949-1963
P. F. KING	..	..	..	1927-1963
T. G. MACPHEE	..	..	..	1927-1963
G. F. MCLEARY	..	..	..	1908-1962
J. T. MITCHELL	..	..	..	1925-1963
H. R. PRESTON	..	..	..	1936-1963
E. O. RANSOME	..	..	..	1924-1962
D. J. SIMM	..	..	..	1938-1962
B. TYSON	..	..	..	1930-1962
G. WILSON	..	..	..	1917-1962
J. A. WRAY	..	..	..	1919-1962

MRS. B. EDEN-SMITH 1919-63

Before joining the Club in 1919 it would appear that Mrs. Eden-Smith had little or no interest in either fell-walking or rock-climbing. Her 'sporting' instinct, due no doubt to the Irish blood in her, seems to have found an outlet in horseriding, motor-cycling, lawn tennis, hockey (County player) as well as cricket, at which game she could bowl a good length and stylishly handle a bat. She was especially fond of

swimming (continued into her seventies) and once swam across Windermere Lake from Lowood. In contrast, she loved music, and was a capable violinist.

Naturally, such a superbly fit person took to the new sport like a duck to water, and, as far as I know, Mrs. Eden-Smith was never found wanting when participating in fell-walking or rock-climbing. It was a delight to see her lissom figure moving gracefully on the hills and one could not fail to admire her stamina, which seemed never to flag even on the longest day. In this respect I particularly recall a day in the Scottish Highlands when we bagged fifteen tops and ascended nearly 8,000 feet in less than ten hours. Her power of endurance was put to a more severe test on a similar excursion, when, owing to heavy rain that had persisted all day we had to wade across a swollen Dee in order to reach headquarters that night. It needed considerable courage to take the plunge, but fortunately for us, perhaps, the danger was lessened by the presence of two small islets (barely awash) in mid-stream and a judicious use of these proved of great assistance in our struggle across the torrent.

This readiness to face any risk was also exemplified when she and I made the first ascent of Moss Ghyll Grooves. In order that the leader might avoid a run-out of about 80 feet (from the Oval to the Lookout) she undertook a precarious and belay-less stance some 15 feet higher, thereby boosting the morale of the leader. How much easier it was, with someone at hand, to take that delicate step across to the Pedestal!

However, adventures of this kind did not affect her innate modesty—one of her characteristics. Perhaps graciousness was her outstanding quality and it won over all those with whom she came in contact.

It is sad to relate that one hitherto so active and companionable should be laid low (by reason of a leg amputation) for the last six months of life, during which period she had the further distressing experience of losing her son. It seemed that fate was cruel towards the end, but her trials were borne with fortitude. Mrs. Eden-Smith leaves a memory of bright companionship for those who were privileged to become acquainted with her through the medium of the hills.

H. M. KELLY

P. D. BOOTHROYD 1920-1962

By the death of Douglas Boothroyd in his 90th year our Club has lost one of its greatest members, and I use this term because from the day he joined, when he was 47 years of age, he was an active member and a constant attender of Club Meets. He was never a rock climber, but his knowledge of the Lakeland Fells, which he walked from 1895 onwards, can have been rivalled by few. Boothroyd was an unassuming man and probably few members know of his very generous support for the acquisition of the Club Huts and of his gift to the Club in 1928 of a large number of copies of a booklet of Climbing Songs which he had printed at his own expense for use at Meets.

Boothroyd was the head of one of the oldest businesses in Southport, where he was a Justice of the Peace and had during his long life been connected with many Official and Charitable bodies. He was a staunch Congregationalist, and whilst deploring any laxity, had a great understanding of the difficulties of modern life, especially its effects on the lives of young people.

A great family man, he was never so happy as when he took his wife and children for weekends and holidays to his beloved Lakeland. They all shared his love of the district and during his lifetime there were no fewer than 12 members of his family who were also members of the Club, which I think must be a Fell and Rock record.

During the last four years of his life he suffered first from a severe illness causing temporary paralysis in his left leg, followed a year later by a fall in which he broke his thigh. Both of these disabilities he overcame with characteristic courage and determination.

To many of our members Douglas Boothroyd was affectionately known as Grandpa and his passing has left a great blank in many hearts. Our sincere sympathy goes out to the members of his family, who, though suffering a grievous loss, can look back with happiness on the times they spent together.

J. C. APPLEYARD

J. A. WRAY 1919-1962

Jack Wray often walked in the Lake District during the 1914-18 war and probably before. About the end of the war

he met some Fell and Rockers—I believe Graham Wilson was one—who introduced him to rock climbing. Jack was in his early forties. His working life was spent as a Yorkshire quarry-manager and owner and the life had given him a kind of built-in aptitude on rock. He was soon leading very severes, preferring face climbs which suited his very tall, slim build. In 1924 he made 'E' Route on his favourite crag, Gimmer. It was his only notable first ascent.

About this time and for many years he climbed regularly with George Basterfield, Donald Ollershaw and Frank Spencer. His only visit to the Alps was in the middle twenties, with George. They had a wonderful time climbing *Monta Rosa*, guideless, returning home with badly blistered faces, to their disgust and to the delight of their friends. His climbing swan song, when over sixty, was to lead Frank Spencer up *Hiatus* of happy memory.

His interests were many, golf, fishing in Scotland with John Whiting, Halifax Canine Society and later he was president of his bowls club.

Jack was a character, bright, cheerful and very outspoken. People sometimes misunderstood his downright ways but he soon made friends, as soft-hearted downright people do. We younger members loved him. He was never dull. One day, half way up *Bowfell Buttress*, a small stone from above hit his magnificent nose. Whilst we held him and tried to staunch the gore, his roaring could be heard all down the valley.

He and his little wife, Hilda, attended most Annual Dinners and were in *Borrowdale* at *Whitsuntide*. Hilda was charming, witty and with a great and unaffected courage matched Jack. Even when she knew she was long past her estimated time after an operation, she came to *Borrowdale* and the Dinner meets. Failing physically but still delightfully pert, head high and no nonsense. So we say farewell to two grand people who 'cheered our boyhood up the hard-won height' and who live in our memory gay and full of light and laughter.

E. WOOD JOHNSON

GRAHAM WILSON 1917-1962

With the passing of Graham Wilson the Club has lost one of its most faithful and helpful members. He was born at *Stockton Heath*, near *Warrington*, on 20th August 1895, his

father then being Assistant to the Town Clerk of Warrington. He was educated at Denstone College and on leaving was articled to his father who was then Town Clerk of Tynemouth. The First World War intervened and Graham served as a Sub.-Lieutenant in the R.N.V.R., mostly in the Mediterranean. Thus it was not until 1920 that he was admitted as a solicitor and was appointed Assistant to the Town Clerk of Warrington, as his father had been previously. There he worked until 1925 when he was appointed Deputy Town Clerk of Hull. In 1926 he married Miss Marjorie Hulme of Warrington, and in 1930 he obtained the appointment of Town Clerk of Maidstone where he remained until his retirement in 1958.

Although Graham became a member of the Club in 1917 it was not until he was demobilised that he was able to attend his first Meet, which was at Coniston in February 1919. I met him two years later when I had the good fortune to be invited to spend a weekend at the Ackerleys' Hut in Langdale. Graham was one of the party and had already had much more experience on the hills than I had, not only in the Lake District but in Skye with Howard Somervell and other members in 1920. A firm friendship, which was to last for forty years, soon developed and it was not long before we were meeting and climbing together whenever the opportunity offered. Having spent so many happy days on the hills with him I know how much the Club meant to him. He was certainly one of those who contribute even more to the Club than they get out of it, for during almost the whole period that he was a member he was serving the Club in one way or another.

From 1922 to 1924 he was on the Committee. He was Secretary from 1933 to 1935 and again on the Committee from 1938 to 1940. From 1933 to 1935 he was a Vice-President, with P. D. Boothroyd, and from 1944 to 1946 he served as President, the first post-war Dinner being held with Graham presiding. It was in 1946, during Graham's presidency, that the first and one of the most successful of the Scottish Meets was held in Arran. For twelve years, from 1923 to 1935, he was Assistant Editor of the Journal, which duty included in particular the obtaining and supervising of advertisements and the distribution and sales of the Journal to non-members. From 1924 to 1927 he wrote the regular article 'Climbs Old and New' for the Journal. Amongst the other services which

he rendered to the Club was his valuable work on a small sub-committee of lawyers to whom, in 1938, was entrusted the revision of the Club Rules in order to provide for certain serious omissions. At the special meeting in London which inaugurated the British Mountaineering Council he and F. Lawson Cook represented the Club and for some years after its formation he continued to represent the Club on the Council.

We shall remember Graham not only for the service which he rendered to the Club but for his delightful personality and good humour. He was always excellent company both on the hills and back in the valley. Even in the most trying circumstances I never knew him to become ruffled or impatient or to say anything unkind either to or about anyone. He was a capable climber and leader and always most particular to see that the party was properly belayed. He was blest with a most retentive memory and for years after doing a climb he could describe almost every move and hold. Although he enjoyed doing a climb which was new to him he was quite content to do the same climb time after time. He always said that his favourite climb was the Needle Ridge and that there was no place like Wasdale at Easter. He was very good with beginners and many of his friends will feel grateful to him for their first climb.

For the last few years he had been advised by his doctor to avoid doing anything too strenuous and had therefore taken up fishing as an alternative to rock climbing. It was while he was on his second fishing holiday in Norway that he was taken ill and he returned home rather earlier than he had intended as he was to be elected President of the Rotary Club of Maidstone in July and was anxious to be well for the occasion. In hospital his chief concern was to be well enough to attend the Fell and Rock Dinner in October, but he passed away on 30th August, just ten days after his 67th birthday.

Graham is survived by his wife, a son and two daughters to whom, in their great loss, there goes forth the deepest sympathy from all those members of the Club who enjoyed the privilege of his companionship, and of knowing and admiring the many engaging qualities of a most gracious personality.

RAYMOND SHAW

BENTLEY BEETHAM 1919-1963

Bentley Beetham was a boy and for over 40 years a master, at Barnard Castle School. During his youth he was always keen on wild life and especially on birds. It was in studying and photographing bird life that he first went in for climbing rocks; he made some magnificent pictures of birds, as those of us who have seen his slides know. He wrote several books on birds, the best-known of which is "Our Banished Birds". He soon found that one can climb for pleasure and adventure apart from studying birds, and in 1919 he joined the Fell and Rock. It was about that time that he began climbing in the Alps; and Bower, Meldrum, Beetham and myself persuaded Solly to take us to Chamonix and introduce us to Alpine climbing. Solly was then over sixty, but still a fine mountaineer, and we learned a lot from him, which we at once proceeded to use by making guideless ascents of many of the Alpine peaks in the early 1920's. In 1924 Beetham was selected for the Everest expedition, and had very bad luck, with a severe attack of sciatica which came on just as the serious climbing was about to begin. He managed to limp up to Camp Three, with great pain, in time to see the first attempters coming down, and the whole expedition was severely handicapped by having our best climber forced into inactivity while we second-raters did our poor best with the mountain. In the years following, Beetham and his companions climbed in Norway, the Tatra, Dauphiné, the Tyrol, and especially the High Atlas of Morocco which he visited four or five times, and which he probably knew better than any other British climber. An accident to his ankle on the Grandes Jorasses would have made anyone else a cripple, but not Beetham. He went on climbing, and as we all know, he worked out many new routes on our Lakeland rocks, especially in Borrowdale. The assiduity with which, armed with spade and iceaxe, he removed tons of earth from handholds to make the climbs safer was proverbial in Fell and Rock circles. All these climbs were done with an increasingly painful ankle; and frequenters of Shepherd's Crag and Combe Ghyll have to thank the persistence, courage, and ingenuity of Beetham for nearly all their climbs. One day on Raven Crag gully he fell and broke his skull in six places, and his right wrist. He was unconscious for three weeks—but he made a recovery and went on climbing. But recovery was never complete, and his

last year was spent in a nursing home with gradually failing health of body and mind; death came on 5th April as a merciful release, and his ashes are scattered on the rocks at the top of Shepherd's Crag, which will be a perpetual and fitting monument to a fine climber, a good friend, an unselfish companion and a brave man.

T. H. SOMERVELL

J. A. GRIFFIN 1946-1963

Not many members of the Club would know James Arthur Griffin of Barrow, and later of Kendal, for he did not attend meets and only occasionally the annual dinner. But he loved the hills and chose for his retirement a small house on the edge of the district where he could see them now and again. He always encouraged his sons to enjoy the mountains and when the elder of them began rock climbing in about 1928 he made it his business to find out what it was all about. He was then about 45. We rarely allowed him to lead but in his fifties, and later, he went up many routes on Dow and other major crags and often shamed us by his courage, if not by his finesse. I remember his keen disappointment on one occasion when, after doing the rest of Eliminate B with rare determination he found himself unable, despite half an hour's struggling, to get across Central Wall. In his later years he was unable to do any climbing or much walking but on his 70th birthday he held me to a promise to take him up Helvellyn, up Striding Edge and down Swirral—a mountain he had surprisingly missed. He died in his 80th year, not far from the mountains he loved; and we will always remember him for his kindly encouragement and quiet determination.

A.H.G.

G. GRAHAM MACPHEE 1927-1963

It is ironical that George Graham Macphee after overcoming so many hazards in his fifty years of mountaineering should lose his life on a holiday excursion to Mount Teide in the Canaries. He died in February 1963, soon after his sixty-fifth birthday.

He was born on 5th January 1898, the son of a Glasgow doctor. His early studies were interrupted by the Great War; he enlisted at the age of seventeen and for four years served as an officer of the Highland Light Infantry and a pilot in the Royal Flying Corps. He was nine months a prisoner of war.

After qualifying as a doctor in 1924 he embarked upon a career in dental surgery so varied, enterprising and distinguished as to consume the entire energies of an ordinary man, yet his interests by no means ended in his professional work, and besides marriage and family life with two sons and two daughters the mountains laid their claim upon him and he was throughout his life an indefatigable and gifted climber, whose name, by association with many great routes in the Alps and classic rock-climbs in Britain, has an important place in the lore of mountaineering.

He always made the best use of his time. He had the alpinist's acute awareness of the value of every minute, and each day on the hills was planned and exploited to the full. He set high standards for himself, and for other people, and it was typical of his thoroughness and determination that on "doing the Munroes" he visited every top of every mountain, and that when he climbed Ben Nevis, Scafell Pike and Snowdon in the same day, he did all the driving himself. He did not suffer fools gladly, yet whatever great climbing plans were afoot among the pundits of the sport, he could always find time to join and promote the beginners' meets of the Liverpool University Mountaineering Club, the fecklessness of whose undergraduate climbing must sometimes have been a sore trial to him. He was a stern critic of the generations of young climbers he met in this way, but he never lost patience and by his insistence on good behaviour, responsibility and safe technique he set a fine example in the best traditions of mountaineering. As president of the Club for thirty years he took an active role throughout, and when he felt that he could no longer do so, resigned rather than remain a mere figure-head. His influence was clearly to be felt at the Club's annual dinners, which were excellently run and very enjoyable.

He was prominent in many learned societies and climbing clubs, principally the Scottish Mountaineering Club, of which he was President, and the Alpine Club, of which he was Vice-President. He was also president of the British Mountaineering Council and the Liverpool Athenaeum. As an alpinist he was internationally known, and particularly for his remarkable descent with F. S. Smythe of the flank of the Peterey ridge. He was a great initiator of new rock climbs, in his earlier days as a bold leader and in later years as a most strong support to younger men. Many of his exploits, such as his solo ascent

of the Aiguille Noire de Peterey, he kept dark, but one at least, his first descent of Moss Ghyll Grooves with its 'irreversible' move on to the arête, he was glad to record for the sake of the succinct entry 'M.G.G. G.G.M.' in the hut book.

It is easier to list Graham Macphee's achievements than to give a full picture of his powerful and restless nature. He had some almost puritanical qualities, and seemed to regard life not as a small eternity but as a limited period in which 'the immortal garland is to be run for not without dust and heat'. Though he was irrepressibly adventurous, discipline played a large part in his life, and he had a relentlessly logical mind with no time for sentimentality and humbug. His gentle voice could be disconcertingly incisive.

He enjoyed being mysterious, and told his wife of his work for his M.D. only on the day of the degree ceremony. He was most punctilious and courteous, with a respect for society and its conventions; yet he never accepted conventions uncritically, and could set a precedent, as, for example, in punctuality as a hospital consultant. In some ways a shy and modest man, he was nevertheless a charming and good-humoured host who liked entertaining. He could not be 'all things to all men' and had pronounced likes and dislikes, but he valued friendship and gained not only the admiration of those who knew him well, but also their affection. Six years before his death he moved from his riverside house in Liverpool to Heversham, in sight of the Langdale Pikes, but lived to enjoy only a few weeks of complete retirement. By his unfortunate death the Club has lost one of its most eminent members.

TOM PRICE

C. F. BUDENBERG 1923-1962

The sudden death of Chris Budenberg by a heart attack in his home at Hale, Cheshire has shocked and grieved a wide circle of friends. A nephew of the late Mr. B. S. Harlow, a Vice-President of our Club, he was a welcome member of a climbing-party of intimates who in the early days met in spring and autumn to walk and climb in the British hills, particularly the Lake District.

Educated at Clifton and Cambridge he joined the family business, a well-known firm specialising in the manufacture of

gauges and thermometers and in due course rose to be the head of the firm.

He was a man of untiring energy and enterprise; his interests were many and his travels whether on business or pleasure were world-wide. One would get a post-card from New Zealand, Australia, Africa or America, to be followed some weeks later by one from some remote fishing-inn in Sutherland.

On our Lakeland hills which he dearly loved, he was a competent and safe cragsman and in the Alps a sound and reliable companion on the rope. His Alpine travels were extensive, ranging from summer climbing in the Graians and Chamonix and the Central Alps to winter tours in the Engadine on ski.

His love of hill country was supplemented by his keenness for ornithology and trout fishing and much of his leisure was spent among the mountain lochs of Argyll and Sutherland.

Happy in his married life and family, he was about to retire and take things more easily after a full and useful life.

J. OSBORNE WALKER

THE YEAR WITH THE CLUB

Jack Carswell

The meets of the year were not blessed with the best of weather. In spite of this meets were generally well attended, and even on the worst days the records show that some parties were on the hills.

The year began as it was to continue. At Mungrisedale in January high winds and rain, mist and deep snow were the order of both days. Persistence (or obstinacy) and prolonged work with map and compass brought parties to the summits of Great Calva, Saddleback by Sharp Edge, and even, by judicious chauffeuring, Skiddaw.

The large number of members who attended the joint meet with the Rucksack Club in Langdale in February blamed the heavy rain of the Saturday and the blizzard of the Sunday on the Manchester contingent. In spite of the weather parties visited all the local tops, Bowfell Gully and Pavey Ark. The new showers in Raw Head were fully appreciated.

Even at Eskdale in March the blue skies which we have come to expect of this meet deserted us, but although no climbing was done every one of the fifty-odd people present was on the hills on both days.

At Easter too, when meets were held at all the Club huts, little climbing was recorded. At Moffat, a new venue, at the beginning of April, not the least source of interest was the unique spiral staircase in the hotel. However, in this district which was new to most people, the gale-force winds, alternating with sunshine, only served to heighten the interest of exploration.

It is pleasant, however, to record that the Welsh meet enjoyed a weekend of fine weather. (Good even for Wales, according to Geoff. Barker, and this year Cumbrians could hardly argue.) This was a joint meet with the M.A.M. Glan Dena was full and some of the fifteen or so Fell and Rock members stayed at the nearby farm. A well-run meet, according to its leader, with no dramatic incidents. He goes on: 'No one was killed, no one was lost, no one was even tight, which shows the moderating influence of the Welsh

climate on the savage Cumbrian character.' At least our members were delighted to climb on Tryfan and the Glyders, the Three Cliffs and Craig Cwm Silyn in sunshine, and to enjoy M.A.M. hospitality.

The permanent fixtures, Borrowdale at Whitsuntide, Coniston in July, Wasdale in September and Langdale at New Year, attracted the usual large crowds and fair weather. At Coniston a shadow was cast over the whole meet by the fatal accident to Ross Porteous. Before the accident some good climbs were done. In Borrowdale a great amount of climbing was done on Gable, in Birkness Combe and in Combe Ghyll, while the Hut Secretary and John Street did the 3,000's.

The joint meet with the Y.R.C. at Clapham was marred by circumstances outside the control of either club, mainly the growing popularity of pot-holing. It proved impossible to get permission to go down Lancaster Pot, the main objective. Permission was granted by the land-agent for Bar Pot, but this proved to be a double booking and the resulting congestion spoiled everyone's day. The only excitement was a minor rescue, of a member, trapped, but fortunately unhurt, by a fall of rock.

One of the most successful meets was at Brotherswater in November, very much the first meet of the winter. Considering the season and the venue there was a remarkably large gathering. On both days there were walkers out on High Street and Helvellyn, and climbers in Dovedale. Everyone agreed that the little hotel coped wonderfully, and resolved to repeat the meet next year. What more could one say of a meet?

SCOTTISH MEET 1962

The 1962 Scottish Meet, the seventeenth of its kind, was held at that excellent hotel the Alexandra at Fort William. Although the arctic conditions of 1955 were not repeated, the accent was again more on mountaineering than on rock-climbing owing to heavy snow conditions on the Ben Nevis face. A surprising amount of new ground was covered in mainly good weather.

The meet was a most distinguished one. At one time or another there were present the President of the Alpine Club, the President of the F.R.C.C., five ex-Presidents and three Honorary Members, besides several ex-Presidents of the Wayfarers Club. Also in the party were a few non-distinguished members.

On the first day a concerted move was made to Polldubh in Glen Nevis, from where Sgurr a' Mhaim (3,610 feet) was climbed. Opinions as to the best route varied somewhat, but ultimately Geoff Barker and Dick Cook did a round of summits finishing at Steall, whilst the Plints, the Spilsburys, Phil. Porritt, Milligan, Shaw and Webb decided that one peak was enough for a first day. Supervised by Lawson Cook, who was once again at the Scottish meet with his wife Winifred, the remainder went up or down the Glen according to their respective whims and fancies. Eventually most members again foregathered at Polldubh where Gladys Cook, logical successor to Theo. Burnett and Bentley Beetham in that line, held one of her volcano tea-parties. Much of the high morale and stamina of the members in the next few days was due to the feeling that somewhere in the valley was tea waiting, however late the descent.

On the following day all went to Glenfinnan. One party climbed Sgurr nan Coireachan I (3,133 feet), the usual unusual member also climbing Sgurr Thuilim (3,164 feet) 'for exercise'. An unaccountable lassitude overtook another party doing the Streaps (2,988 feet) and, in spite of spirited exhortations from their leader at each summit, not all managed to enjoy even a distressingly late dinner. The walkers, or car-riders, had meanwhile explored the Glen or gone to the coast.

Monday was an off-day and a visit was made to Kingairloch, the Village of the Dogs, involving a picnic on the beach. The canine population easily outnumbered the humans in the village. Whilst most were distinctly pleased to see the party, one bitch correctly identified a member as one of the leaders responsible for the motley crew invading her peaceable hamlet and attacked him with grievous results. At night Howard Somervill gave an entertaining talk, illustrated by excellent colour slides, on a recent visit to the Far East by himself and Peggy.

Next day Aonach Beag (4,066 feet) and Aonach Mor (3,999 feet) were ascended by one section whilst the main party drove to Glen Creran. Seven members climbed Beinn Fhionnlaidh (3,139 feet), whilst the non-climbing members investigated the beauties of Glen Ure. Graham and Jean Macphee had appeared unexpectedly the previous day, and Graham went up a ridge of Ben Nevis with Geoff Barker reporting an estimated 12 feet of snow on the summit.

Wednesday was the only doubtful day for weather. A party of eight started for Ben Nevis but the expedition was not crowned with success because of icy conditions and mist. Bill Clegg, quietly efficient, took a party to Loch Quoich where rain came down in torrents; after social coffee at the Tomdoun Hotel however, we were indebted to him for miraculously producing a fairly fine day, and four members climbed Gleouraich (3,395 feet) in very cold but dry conditions. At night Dick Cook showed a selection from his fine collection of colour slides.

On Thursday the previously rebuffed Ben Nevis party this time got to the summit, the Plints, Phil. Porritt and Ruth Spilsbury by the ordinary route and Raymond Shaw and Harry Spilsbury by Coire Leis. A very ruddy-faced and glowing party monopolised the alleged Nevis table at dinner that night. The remainder went up to Glendessary at the head of Loch Arkaig, from where Barker, R. Cook, Macphee, Preston and Webb climbed Sgurr nan Coireachan II (3,125 feet). Gharb Chioch Mor (3,365 feet) was also climbed by a portion of the expedition. The Wells sisters upheld the nautical reputation of the Scottish meet by sailing down Loch Sheil in magnificent weather.

One of the highlights occurred on Friday when Louise Pryor, a hardy and popular veteran of the Club, went up the mist-shrouded Ben Nevis with Howard and Peggy Somervell. To do this at 78 years of age was a remarkable feat which few of us can hope to rival, especially in quite difficult conditions. Dick Plint at last was able to slip away to do some successful fishing. Others inspected the long Allt Coire Adair near Loch Laggan, where R. Cook, Shaw, Spilsbury and Webb went up Poite Coire Ardair (3,460 feet) and then to the snow- and mist-covered plateau of Creag Meaghaidh (3,700 feet). For a considerable time four shadowy shapes might have been seen trying to locate the main cairn and ultimately the enormous and curious 'madman's cairn' allegedly built in remembrance of a wife. Molly FitzGibbon gave a talk at night on 'The National Parks of the U.S.A.' which aroused considerable envy at her good fortune in being able to see them and admiration of her most unusual slides. The President and Jean Arnison made one of their meteoric visits, complete with curiously housed dog, departing again on Sunday.

On Saturday all the party drove again to Glenfinnan where some repeated the Loch Sheil boat trip. Most of the climbers went up Sgor Craobh a Chaoruinn (2,543 feet), and Sgurr Chiubsachain (2,784 feet) was also climbed. Later, as the party foregathered for volcano tea, Margaret Hicks, with her flair for things agricultural, effectively supervised the rounding-up of a large herd of straying cattle. Fortunately the formidable and ferocious-looking bull did not come up to expectations.

The last day was easily the warmest of the week. The Plints and the Spilsburys knocked off Stob Ban (3,274 feet) whilst the rest visited the northern shores of Loch Lochy. After a deceptively easy start up the Allt a' Choire Ghlais, the path became more and more reminiscent of a steep Malayan jungle. The perspiring and demoralised party split up in the wildest disorder and proceeded to shed its members. Ultimately R. Cook and Barker climbed Sron a Choire Ghairbh (3,066 feet), Shaw made a solitary ascent of Beinn Tee (2,966 feet) and, in between sleeps, Preston and Webb did a slow-motion climb of the modest Meall nan Dearcag (2,262 feet). The final tea gathering by the stream, under the wing of Gladys Cook, was a triumphant ending to the 1962 meet.

GEORGE H. WEBB

ANNUAL DINNER 1962

F. H. F. Simpson

For the last time in a distinguished career as Dinner Secretary Lyna Pickering sent out her annual message on 30th September. Although above the signature of Secretary Charles Tilly, the document belongs to the Dinner Secretary who requires applications on the sub-joined slip (which please detach) to reach her by first post three weeks later. Then the machinery starts, and in another month the Club sits down to eat.

The Friday display of colour slides was more congested, more entertaining and informative than ever before—waterfalls, glaciers, volcano kettles, coloured jerseys, mountains, indeed all one could wish on a wet evening. The rain fell steadily for much of the time until early on Saturday, when the wind turned to the North and Keswick awoke to a chill air and snow on the big fells. Those who were out that day enjoyed the only prolonged sunshine of the weekend, against the backdrop of autumn colour, blue sky and white ridges.

The stars were bright above the Market Place and a shrewd draught blew through an open window to chill the Albion Hall. The President and Treasurer, guided by the Secretary, prodded at the window and pulled the cords without success. A new scientific principle was demonstrated—Arnison's law—showing that the length of an Annual General Meeting is directly related to the temperature of the Hall—55 minutes, and this year without fireworks. The Officers' reports passed quietly into the record, with a brief sparkle when the Treasurer announced that for the first time for 14 years there were no arrears of subscriptions. A shy but by no means nervous Dick Cook was elected President. He received a warm greeting and hoped to prove worthy of the honour—as if anyone thought that he might not! Edward Wormell was the new Editor, and J. Renwick the new Dinner Secretary; two new brooms with no dust to sweep, for their predecessors had set high standards. A new Committee was appointed by ballot, the coming meets approved and the loose ends tidied up, and the Albion Hall abandoned to the north wind.

The extension adjoining the Royal Oak dining room displayed all its finished glory and contained an appendix rather than an overflow of diners. The ranks of tables were reduced by one in the main room, but nevertheless the polite struggle

for seats ran its usual course. The one-time wine-waiter relaxed in the President's chair and beamed upon the assembly. His able lieutenant Harry Griffin moved around with the same polished grace, skirmishing safely with swift, soup-laden waitresses. We demolished the familiar bird with assorted vegetables including one (or two) roast potatoes—the bold and hungry few demanding three. Coffee was served well before 9.0 p.m. and after the Loyal toast, there came the public acclaim of J. Stables, J. B. Wilton and H. B. Lyon, three original members, who rose to receive generous cheers.

After the interval the President plunged with boyish enthusiasm into the proceedings, quite undeterred by occasional blasts from a celestial trumpet given out by a new and somewhat sensitive public address system. He welcomed all the guests, and introduced the chief guest, Mr. Kenneth Steen, Planning Officer for the Cumberland area of the Lake District National Park, adding a number of alternative and slightly improbable meanings to the letters carried by Mr. Steen after his name.

In proposing the toast of the Club, Mr. Steen explained that he had been outplanned by the President; he was appearing as understudy for Dr. Gaston Reboufatt, and his attempt to avoid the engagement was made at the exact moment when the President's telephone developed a defect and thus went unheard. The speaker referred to the links between the Board, of which our worthy Librarian was a most diligent member, and the Club, and the many different interests which had to be reconciled in balancing preservation with public enjoyment. Landowners and farmers had shown willing co-operation, but this tolerance called for a sense of discipline, from visitors of every kind. The Club had a great and lasting influence upon the relationships, and was clearly conscious of its responsibility. He felt that he had much to learn from the Club, and the invitation to propose the toast was a great honour, particularly because planning and planners were often unpopular.

The President opened his breezy reply with a reference to suggestions for shorter speeches. He had applied this with some success to Committee meetings, and hoped for some praise at the end of the evening. He was unable to cope with those who hammered pitons into Black Crag, and played a transistor radio in Sergeant Crag Gully. The modern craving for background music for all human activities must be resisted

like all other invasions of peace and solitude. In this respect we had a powerful ally in Kenneth Steen, who was an open-air man who liked to take his family into the hills. The President stressed the advantages which spring from the energy and devotion of the officers. The Journal proved beyond doubt that the Club was both healthy and active, but a few new 'moderates' would be welcomed by the older members. The President told a funny story, gave thanks for the experience and pleasure of his completed period of office, and translated a Spanish proverb which declared that a buxom widow must either get herself married, buried, or shut up in a convent. He admitted its irrelevancy.

The toast of the Guests and Kindred Clubs was proposed by R. G. Plint who explained the perils of invitations to other Clubs' functions. Secretaries were cunning. First the flattering invitation, next the unexpected requirement as to dress, and lastly the request for a speech and the tribulation of preparing it. Membership of more than one Club gave the advantage of free dinners but with all the risks attached. The Club guests were all most welcome, and would be spared for one year at least, the usual defamatory disclosures.

J. H. Hirst replied, thanking R. G. Plint for the unkind remarks which he had not made. The chief guest had spoken of the Club's concern for peace and solitude, and there was at that moment evidence of this to be seen in the hotel lounge where E. W. Hodge was reading a thriller. A few hours earlier he had experienced extreme cold and discomfort on Dick Cook's tour of Causey Pike; now he and his fellow guests enjoyed an impressive warmth and friendliness, which it was his pleasant task to acknowledge.

Before the great social exchange began the President thanked Mr. Peverett, the new manager, and Mrs. Peverett for their help and hospitality. The talking and the rain started about the same time, and the rain continued for much of the weekend, making Sunday a day for motoring and lingering over tea, and, of course, solitude in cloud.

The evening star was J. A. Jackson, whose quite astonishing presentation, 'Music among the Mountains', combined colour slides with tape recordings, and ranged from our own mountains to the great ranges of Asia. His audience was enthralled, and a new dimension was added to the experience of many of us who have no hope of travelling so far.

LONDON SECTION 1962

Yet a further change greeted us in the New Year, for hardly had it been ushered in when Mabel Burton departed at breathtaking speed to take up her new appointment in Addis Ababa. We hear that she is doing very well and has already taken part in one expedition into the mountains. Her departure resulted in the election of Ursula Milner-White as the new Hon. Secretary and Treasurer, to whom we wish every success.

The walks this year have brought one or two innovations. On 18th February Margaret Darvall led us through the rolling Chiltern country from Amersham to Wendover, accompanied voluntarily by a large dog whose owner normally moves in the House of Lords. So gratified were we by this attention that we met together again—without the dog—on the evening of 7th March to view our colour slides. John Clements showed us many fine views of the Lake District in particular, and our grateful thanks are due to Margaret Darvall for entertaining us to such an interesting evening.

Our traditional joint walk with the Rucksack Club took place this year on the Berkshire Downs on 18th March. This fine area offered us distinctly bleak conditions, and tea which Alan Stewart had arranged with such foresight at Goring proved doubly welcome. The elements continued to be unkind on our next walk on 8th April on the South Downs (led by the Walks Secretary in the absence through illness of Jim and Joyce Beatson), for the south-westerly gale proved so strong that some members had difficulty in either speaking or standing upright on Seaford Head. By contrast, on the subsequent walk on the North Downs on 6th May an exclusively feminine party was led by Ruth Gelber in a thick mist.

A new venture was a trip by river to Greenwich on 20th May. Winifred Goy made it possible for us to enjoy to the full the wealth of history in Greenwich, and we are much indebted to her for her efforts to make the visit such a success and providing a delightful tea.

We have had two climbing meets this year. From the M.A.M. Hut in North Wales on 2nd and 3rd June good days were had on Idwal Slabs and Glyder Fach, followed by the Horseshoe under unusually pleasant conditions. This proved a most successful weekend. A few weeks later we visited Dartmoor, and whilst we did not exactly romp up Hound Tor and Haytor, these short rounded climbs were certainly interesting. A day on the Dewey Stone in company with the Commandos was most illuminating.

Our remaining walks have included a further delightful visit to the Chilterns on 15th July, led by Margaret Mayfield, and a summer visit to the South Downs on 19th August in the knowledgeable hands of David Hill. We returned to the Berkshire Downs on the

23rd September with Ursula Milner-White with wonderful views from Inkpen Beacon, and on 14th October after an Indian Summer walk in Hertfordshire, we were entertained to tea by Professor and Mrs. Garrod. A joint walk with the Pinnacle Club in Epping Forest on 11th November saw the full beauty of the late autumn colours, and merged imperceptibly into darkness.

We foregathered for a further slide show of our holiday activities by courtesy of Margaret Darvall on 7th November, including some fine pictures of Southern Rhodesia by Robert Tyssen-Gee, films and slides of the Zillertal Alps in Austria by John Clements, and many others.

At the Annual General Meeting which was held before the Annual Dinner at the Connaught Rooms on 8th December, Dr Alastair Gebbie was elected a member of the Committee. Both functions were presided over by our Chairman, Robert Tyssen-Gee, and at the Dinner 57 members and guests were present. We were honoured to have Howard Somervell as Principal Guest, and were also pleased to have with us as other guests: Donald Murray from the main Club, Mary Starkey (Ladies Alpine Club), Alan Blackshaw (Climbers Club), M. Wilkin (Cambridge University Mountaineering Club) and J. Lovering (Imperial College Mountaineering Club). Alastair Gebbie in a witty speech proposed the toast of the Guests and Kindred Clubs, and Howard Somervell responded. After the time-honoured toast of Absent Friends had been proposed by the Chairman at 9 o'clock he reviewed the events of the year. He mentioned the losses the Club and the Section had sustained in the deaths of Graham Wilson, Diana Kidd and Dorothy Thompson, who will be greatly missed.

The Dinner Walk was led by the Chairman in bright sunshine over a most attractive part of the Chilterns from Wendover to Amersham. This provided a fitting close to an active year for the London Section.

URSULA MILNER-WHITE
PETER LEDEBOER

CLIMBS AND EXPEDITIONS

ALPS

Members made full use of the wonderful 1962 season, and many fine routes were done. Among those reported were the following.

Aiguille du Moine, East face; Aiguille du Peigne, North ridge; Aiguille du Chardonnet, Forbes arête; Dent du Crocodile, East ridge; Aiguille Noire de Peuterey, West face, Ratti-Vitali route; Rochefort ridge. (John Hartley, with R. D. Brown).

Aiguille du Midi, South face. (Paul Ross, with D. Whitham.)

Petit Dru, North face. (Geoff. Oliver, with E. Rayson.) North face by the redoubtable Fissure Allain. (Dave Roberts, with I. S. Clough.)

Piz Badile, North-east face. (Dennis English, with D. Milnes, and Tony Greenbank with W. F. Dowlen.)

Salbitschijen, South ridge and East ridge. (Tony Greenbank, with W. F. Dowlen.)

Mont Blanc by the Peuterey ridge. (Richard Morton, with S. Bonham Carter and others.)

On the Salbitschijen climbs (subject of an article in this Journal) the following technical details may be of interest.

South ridge—T.D. with three or four pitches of Grade V. Height 500 metres. Guide-book time, 7 to 8½ hours. Approach 1½ hours. Descent easy, about one hour, involving an easy glissade and some very loose rock.

East ridge—Standard D., comparable to the Badile North ridge. Height about 500 metres. Guide-book time 6-8 hours. Descent as for the South ridge. Many of the difficulties can be avoided by turning movements.

Of the Peuterey ridge, which was done only after alarms and excursions with a rescue party on the Dames Anglaises, Richard Morton has sent the following account.

We left the Gamba hut at about seven, and crossed the Fréney glacier. A rope of three in front showered us with loose rock as we climbed the top part of the long couloir. Luckily we all had crash-hats and were unhurt. We reached the Dames Anglaises at midday, and decided to press on and bivouac further up the ridge, leaving the five-man hut to the three Germans. We quickly negotiated the loose rock on the flanks of the Aiguille Blanche, and reached the snow summit well within the guide-book time. The descent to the Col Peuterey took a long time as we got slightly off route and the ice-slope required care. Eventually by tying two ropes together we managed to abseil down and reach safer ground below the bergschrund.

A pit, just large enough for six of us to sit with our heads below snow-level, was dug with the aid of crash-hats and pans. By this time it was dark and large clouds were building up, soon turning into thunder and a snow-storm. We spent a surprisingly comfortable night with a cup of soup, meat, pom mash or coffee arriving at hourly intervals from a very inefficient gas stove. We awoke to find it still snowing, ourselves almost buried and enveloped in thick cloud. A large breakfast of porridge, bread and jam, and coffee was eaten, and we set out. No one mentioned retreat, realising that the Aiguille Blanche with snow covering the loose rock was not the safest of routes, and that the descent to the lower Fréney Glacier had been too much for four of Europe's best climbers only twelve months before.

The initial rock was climbed without much difficulty, but when we reached the summit slope, which was ice with a thin layer of snow and a continuous stream of new snow running down it which immediately obliterated every step, we began to move more slowly. The solution appeared to be to move singly, using ice-pitons for belays, and lobster-claws while moving. Unfortunately we had only four ice-pitons, so that two of the ropes had to climb together, using the same belays. This made progress rather slow, and the slope seemed endless with the leading rope just visible, always two hundred or so feet above us. After several false alarms they eventually reached the cornice and climbed it without difficulty.

The wind was so cold that as soon as we climbed over the top of the cornice all our clothes froze into suits of armour, which made walking rather difficult. The summit of Mont Blanc was quickly passed, the only sign that we had reached the top being a few bits of paper and orange peel. The descent to the Vallot proved much easier than we had expected. The hut appeared as a glorious haven of warmth for the first five minutes, but when we had removed our crampons and anoraks we soon realized that the temperature was well below freezing-point, and we spent a very miserable night with six wet people huddled under two blankets.

ANTARCTIC

In last year's *Journal* a letter was printed from Bob Lewis written in the Argentine Islands in the Falkland Islands Dependencies (now the British Antarctic Territory). In this he mentioned that only two peaks on the mainland opposite the islands had been climbed. The uncertain postal service from Antarctica has now produced from him an article, which is printed elsewhere in this *Journal*, and the following notes written in November, 1962.

At the end of August and during September three parties were out sledging over the sea-ice near the coast or on the mainland,

each for about ten days, but bad weather curtailed their movements. During this time we were able to do some magnetic-survey work among the Islands.

The three of us forming the last sledging party left on October 5th for the Mount Shackleton area. We had a lot of bad weather and enforced lying-up in the tent; even when the weather was fine the deep, soft snow made progress very hard work for the dogs and ourselves. We covered similar ground to that of Charcot's Expedition in 1909, the only other people to visit this area. They were in search of a route through the escarpment onto the Grahamland Plateau, but without success. There are still no routes from the west other than at the extremes of the peninsula at Hope Bay and Marguerite Bay. We might have been more successful, however, but the weather prevented us from testing our proposed route. On one fine afternoon we were able to make the first ascent of Mount Shackleton by an easy snow ridge from our fifth camp at 2,500 feet. It was a disappointing route as the peak has a fine aspect from Base, with slender, fluted ridges rising to the summit at about 4,500 feet. We returned to Base on the 20th and the weather improved.

During November the weather was much better and, with twenty-four hours of daylight, I was able to make a number of ski-mountaineering trips to the mainland. On the 20th we made the first ascent of Mount Scott, about 3,000 feet, in fine conditions early in the morning. Other climbs included ascents of Demaria and an attempt on Lumière Peak by a face route.

Now the birds are returning to nest and we have plenty of penguin eggs again. We hoped that the *Shackleton* would be able to make an early visit to the ice-edge, now only four miles distant, to bring us some mail, but she was delayed in Montevideo and so it looks as if we will not see a ship until near Christmas when the *John Biscoe* comes to relieve us.

So my first year has flown by and I have not done half the things I intended. Next year will doubtless be even more hectic.

ANDES

Alf Gregory and Harry Stenbridge visited South America earlier this year. In intervals of photographing flowers, Indians and Inca ruins they found time to 'knock off a couple of peaks of about 18,000 feet, one of them new', and crossed and recrossed the main Andean watershed by tremendous 16,000 foot passes. They took five pack-donkeys, one pack-horse and twenty days basic food, living otherwise off the country. It is hoped to print an account of this in the next Journal.

EDITOR'S NOTES

The past year has seen several changes, both in the *Journal* and in the Club generally. After six years as Editor, Muriel Files has handed over to the present writer. She has continued to give unsparingly of her time, help and advice, and the Index to Volume XIX which is issued with this number is entirely her work. Without her assistance the new Editor would have found his task impossible. As it is, the late appearance of this *Journal* is largely his fault, although some factors were outside his control. It is hoped, however, that if contributors of articles, permanent features or illustrations can produce their copy by the end of February, it may be possible to issue the next *Journal* before the summer holiday period. Articles on the Lake District, and good photographs of modern routes in the District would be particularly welcome.

The late Graham Wilson has been succeeded by Wallace Greenhalgh as Assistant Editor; he will concern himself particularly with the advertisements and the distribution of the *Journal*. Peter Moffat, after nine years spent deciphering hut and hotel log-books, has handed over the difficult task of compiling *Climbs Old and New* to David Miller. Dick Plint, having managed the Club finances for 15 years (two of these as President also) with marvellous skill and wisdom, has resigned from the office of Treasurer. Lyna Pickering, too, has handed on the organization of the ever-growing Annual Dinner and, one hopes, some of her 'know-how', to Joe Renwick.

This year the Committee has elected to Honorary Membership Dr. G. Barlow, A. Gimson, H. B. Lyon and J. B. Wilton. These are the four surviving Original Members who are not already Honorary Members. (The others are G. D. Abraham, C. Grayson and J. Stables.) It is my privilege on behalf of the Club to offer congratulations to them all.

The *In Memoriam* list this year is long and includes the names of many well-known and respected members. Some of these were reported shortly before the time of going to press; it is hoped that Obituary Notices will appear next year. We are indebted to our Honorary Member, the late P. D. Boothroyd, for a legacy of £50, with a suggestion that it might be used for the Salving House, a hut for which he

had great affection, and indeed opened. Bentley Beetham also remembered the Club in his will, with a gift of £5,000, but with no suggestion as to how this might be used.

It has been decided to revise the Lake District rock-climbing guide-books, and a start is being made with the Scafell guide. This will probably be followed by the Langdale volume. Any members who have constructive ideas are asked to write to the Guide-book Editor.

The Alpine Club is continuing its series of 'Guides to the Alps' with *Selected Climbs in the Dolomites*, which is reviewed in these pages. The General Editor of this series, E. A. Wrangham, Harehope Hall, Alnwick, Northumberland, would welcome members' criticisms of this volume, and also any up-to-date information about approach-routes, huts and climbs in the Dauphiné and Oberland areas for which it is hoped to publish guides in 1964 and 1965.

The Club Huts continue to thrive, not least the two Cottages. Considerable damage was done to our land at Brackenclose in August, 1962, when Lingmell Ghyll altered its course and damaged the bridges. Prompt repair work was done in co-operation with the National Trust, and the immediate threat of further erosion has been averted. A scheme for the prevention of flooding at Raw Head has been completed. At the Salving House the new Warden is Boyd Berrie. The installation of electricity at Birkness has been extended to the Cottage. For some reason the transformer was erected in front of the Cottage window, instead of in an agreed position, but when the attention of the Electricity Board was called to this mistake the transformer was moved to its present position.

Among several gifts to the Library is one of over 100 books from Mrs. Simm, in memory of her husband, our member, the late D. J. Simm. Some of the Hut bookcases will be enlarged, and additions and replacements made to the Central Library.

Lastly, with great pleasure, we congratulate A. B. Hargreaves on being appointed to the Planning Board of the Lake District National Park, Sir John Hunt on becoming President of the Climbers' Club, and Peter Moffat and Hilary Simmons on their marriage.

ED. WORMELL.

September, 1963

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1962 - 1963

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