



## EDITORIAL

It is several months since the appearance of the last Newsletter and there will no doubt be some ready to blame a dilatory editor for this state of affairs. However let me say at once that I have no intention of writing the Newsletter myself and if it is to be a thriving institution it must depend on your contributions. In fact to a great extent it depends on a small number of people who time and time again respond to my requests for articles. This is wrong. Far more is needed from the body of the club and indeed from some more senior members, if the intervals between publication are to get shorter. As a start it would be helpful if every meet leader made it his duty to complete the form that is sent out to him. Even if the meet hasn't been particularly exciting write briefly what was done and who attended. There are no minimum standards of english, or length, or anything else. I will print, within reason, anything that is sent to me.

However judging by the attendance on recent meets, perhaps it is not surprising that nothing is being written since nobody is doing anything to write about. Surely attendances cannot have been as bad at any time in the history of the club, especially considering the nominal membership of 120 plus. The weather has of course not been good, but this in itself is an insufficient explanation. No meet (apart from the 14 Peaks walk) has been well attended for many months; several attendances have dropped below ten and on one occasion the meet leader himself didn't turn up. Even the best attended meets are usually swollen in numbers by non-members. As a whole the picture is pretty pathetic. In the past I have attempted to write some reasonably vitriolic editorials, but the response has been staggering in its indifference. So I continue to despair as to what is happening to the club.

In the April 1970 issue of the Newsletter I attempted to analyse the Oread N.C.'s position in terms of British Mountaineering and questioned whether in fact we could look forward in the seventies and eighties to the same fruitfull development we had enjoyed in the first 21 years of our existence. I concluded that this would depend on the encouragement given to the younger members, but that in essence it depends on the overall enthusiasm of the club. Now, only two years later, I can see little to provide much optimism. I see little to change the view expressed in the March 1971 Newsletter that we still owe too much to the older members, who increasingly are now fading from the scene.

The fact is that, as with society in general, the climbing scene is changing at an ever increasing rate. In this context what role can the Oread play and will it be able to change fast enough before being pressured out of existence?

More leisure time and increased affluence have enabled more people to participate in climbing and related activities. It has also meant that many people with only casual interest in mountain areas are nevertheless jamming the approach roads, filling the caravan sites and leaving a trail of litter behind them. It might be said that the opportunity for a wider cross section of people to enjoy our national heritage is in itself a good thing. Yet if there is an equal right for all people to use our wilder countryside, just as there is a right to participate in electing our government

or to have an equal opportunity for education, there is also the need to maintain a certain responsibility in exercising that right. If we fail to preserve the mountain areas from the increasing pressure on them, in the end no one will gain and we will all be the losers.

The escalation of economic activity that has provided the increased affluence does in itself exert a pressure on the mountain areas. The spread of pollution and in general the focus on ecology have now become very much "in" subjects which receive considerable exposure in the media. There are plenty of examples of so called "developments" that have an effect on our activities - the various hydroelectric schemes in North Wales (the decision has now been taken to raise the level of Llyn Peris by 5 ft. as part of the latest pump storage scheme; Cwm Croesor and Carreg Alltrem get a reprieve, but only temporarily), the prospecting by R.T.Z. near Dolgelly, the Keswick by-pass, the cement works at Hope, even the new roundabout on the approach to Baslow.

I believe that the increasing numbers of people in the hills and the spread of industrial schemes in mountain areas are facts which we must come to terms with. But it is not sufficient to respond by merely standing, like Canute, on the edge of the sand trying to turn the tide by making futile noises of disapproval.

It is a sign of the times that we are all too ready to opt out, to follow slavishly and selfishly the narrow groove of our own existence, leaving the task of clearing up the mess to the other person. It is equally so in mountaineering. The task of protecting our interests is left to the B.M.C. which struggles on with a pitifully small budget in a hopelessly bureaucratic way. But what do you care? Would you be prepared to write to your M.P. opposing any of the schemes mentioned above? Would you contribute towards the legal costs of defending our interests against the C.E.G.B. or the Department of Environment or the Manchester Water Board? Have you in fact done anything at all? I believe that a club such as ours which once may have functioned as a launching pad for expeditions or a means of getting out into the hills has no longer the need to fulfill such roles. Nevertheless it should not remain merely as a social club, but instead perhaps we should be taking a more active role in the preservation of the hills and crags.

The fact of more people indulging in climbing has of course meant widespread improvement in technical standards and changes in emphasis. A forthcoming conference on 'Modern Mountaineering' will include papers on 'Media and the Mountains'; 'Scottish Ice Climbing' and 'Solo Climbing'. These seem well chosen as areas which have seen the most startling changes in recent years. As mountaineering becomes more sophisticated and specialised there is a sharper emphasis on ethics. Two recent incidents serve to illustrate the changes that are taking place. One is Ed. Ward-Drummond's free ascent of White Edge in Dovedale and his insistence that this should now be renamed as Easter Island to make a "distinct break with the dubious past of artificial climbing...to discourage anyone from looking upon this ascent as being merely an alternative way to do the former White Edge...I do believe that this is an entirely new route of mine since the whole concept of free climbing alters the meaning of the route as such." For many who have grown up with the knowledge of White Edge in its traditional context this may appear

unpalatable and indeed irrelevant. Nevertheless it forms an interesting contrast to the other incident in which the Vice-President (who is also a co-author of the guide to Chatsworth Edge) discovered a youth placing a peg by the crux on High Step at Chatsworth. An argument ensued in which Mr. Burgess maintained that a 20ft. route, albeit a highly technical one, which was originally led without protection (none was available) should not be debased in this way. If the climber was not sufficiently confident to make the move, he should retreat. This argument had no effect on the youth who maintained that as he knew several people who had injured themselves on this route some form of protection was justifiable. He was clearly the sort of person who was prepared to fall off on Cloggy (which is steep enough to keep the rock well out of the way of falling climbers) quite indiscriminately. The gap between their two viewpoints was wide and remained unbridged, but perhaps the final comment lies in the fact that the peg so placed (and left behind) was removed easily by hand! Perhaps today's climbing clubs have a role in bridging this kind of gap and providing some kind of sense about ethics.

The Mountain Schools, Outdoor Pursuits Centres and other 'authorities' who provide 'instant adventure' have a heavy responsibility to bear for introducing people to the hills without weighing in the balance the consequences of doing so. The position is well expressed by Gwen Moffat writing in the Sunday Telegraph recently about the Cambrian Way, the proposed way marked path between Cardiff and Conway, now under consideration by the Countryside Commission:-

"We inveigh against hydro-electric schemes, mining, widened roads, conifers (all in the national parks), but the people who love the hills, yet travel only on designated paths, are themselves wearing them away. Already parts of the Pennine Way have had to be closed to prevent further erosion by feet - and now there is talk of a Cambrian Way: signposted, way-marked, official..."

"We who revel in wilderness are damned as an élite and selfish minority. But mountains are for adventure not regimentation.... We who wander from Cardiff to Conway on compass bearings and without artificial aids are not opposing others doing it, we are merely suggesting they should find their own way."

In the past the Oread may have had a purely functional role; in the future it may need to be more evangelical in preserving our environment, our standards and in encouraging a greater acceptance of the responsibilities involved in participating in mountaineering. Nevertheless in the face of all these developments I am inclined to be pessimistic and I am tempted to agree with those who said:-

"There is scarcely anything around us but ruin and despair"

"Everything is tending toward a convulsion"

However, since these mournful statements were expressed by respectively, William Pitt in the 1790's and Earl Gray in 1819, perhaps we should cheer up-things have always been worse!

I should like to record my thanks to Shelagh Bridges and Sue Taylor for their help in typing stencils.

This meet must surely stand out, for the Leader at any rate, as the biggest "NON-event" of the year, for, having described in glowing terms his intentions in the Oread Circular, to wit: "There is camping at the farm. Ugh!!" -- Mr. Burgess turned up at Black Rocks on the Saturday afternoon without venturing into the meet area at all.

His attendance at Black Rocks notwithstanding, those regular acquaintances of the Meet Leader should have been forewarned, for was it not a fact that Mr. Burgess had already reached maximum points in the 'One-Day-Only-At-The-Weekend' stakes for 1971 and could possibly be forgiven for forgetting that in this era of easy, comfortable, pluto and auto-cratic living, there still existed those people who had to rely on "Shanks' Pony" or the "Thumb" to achieve their destination.

It must also have been refreshing for the prattlers of outdoor keenness and enthusiasm to find that in this day and age a prospective Oread could travel from Chesterfield to Cratcliffe by these methods - passing the comfortable Heathy Lea in the Saturday forenoon and arriving after lunch at the designated spot. Unhappily, he was the ONLY ONE THERE .....!! What thoughts did he have then, Dear Member, as he retraced his weary steps under the racing clouds and the darkening evening sky to reach at last the succour of the Derbyshire Hut and a 'Chamberspot' of tea ?? What Dark Thoughts suffused his brain as he bathed his reddened feet in the plastic bowl, or turned uneasily upon the Kayfoam bed ? We may never know, but suffice it to say that, while this victim of the first debacle was nursing his wrath and aching feet, the perpetrator was setting in motion the chain of events that was to lead to further scenes of human endeavour. Read on...

At the Party (I did mention there was a party in Derby that Saturday night, didn't I ?), the Meet Leader (CRATCLIFFE), after his afternoon on the Rocks (BLACK), was feeling expansive (BEER). With several pints under his belt and a crooked smile on his lips, the fateful words flowed smoothly: "If you all come out in Denis and Kens' cars tomorrow, I can bring you back and they can go straight home to Manchester. (Denis Davis and Ken Beetham were two friends from the Karabiner Club who were to climb with the team on Sunday). The die was cast and the happy, inebriate Players left, their cups o'erflowing and their pint pots empty, to the various homes that awaited them, secure in the knowledge of the 'morrow's plan.

Fate, however, in the guise of a four hour cloudburst delayed the early start next morning into the beginning of the afternoon. One member, one Hon. member and their guests duly arrived at Cratcliffe and, for three hours, amused themselves on the crag and the various boulder problems that abound. They saw noone, but several cars parked on the top road in the distance testified that a number of people were about. "Probably all gone for a walk into Bradford Dale, seeing that it was raining this morning", they decided. The Manchester team left and the remaining Derbeans walked over the fields to find the Meet Leader's car in the gathering gloom. IT WASN'T THERE -- IT NEVER HAD BEEN !

"He'll be waiting down on the bottom road" said the All-Time-Believer devoutly, so back they rushed. An hour later as the second rainstorm lashed into his winter woollies, the All-Time-Believer shuffled his feet, his facts and his opinions and became blasphemous. "God rot him, we'll

walk", was the decision and the trio set out in an increasingly damp wind for Wirksworth. Space does not permit a full description of their suffering or language during this time, but it is sufficient to say the journey was not without incident.

The Five-to-Seven was, happily, a bit late starting out and, as the trio grasped the handrail and swung aboard, the memories of bygone eons flooded back: the upper deck full of climbers, the back seats piled high with Ex-WD rucksacks, the front ones being used for brewing, the inevitable clashes with the conductors and the letters to the Press. They mounted the stairs eagerly, the ghosts of yester-year panting at their heels. A red-faced man in a Pacamac gazed at them stonily from the back seat. A callow youth with spots placed his arm protectively round an overweight girl and the rest of the seats were moodily empty. So much for memories. The trio moved to the front and gazed bleakly through the steamy windows. The conductress punched the tickets and took Hank's name and address because he was Two Bob short and, finally, the One-with-'Flu reverse-called his wife, who collected them from the Derby bus station and tried not to smile.

Those attending the Meet, in order of Suffering, were:- Billy Beveridge, Derek Carnell, Nat Allen, Hank Harrison, Denis Davis and Ken Beetham. Burgess stopped home and made himself ill at yet another party on Sunday afternoon.

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OGWEN MEET February 4th - 6th.

Dave Guyler

With memories of previous Ogwen meets and of the miserable, wet conditions of the previous weeks, nay months, little surprise was noted on Saturday morning when a wet mist covering Ogwen valley presented itself. However, sturdy Oreads are not to be deterred (not always) and parties set off for various far flung areas of the Ogwen Valley.

A party consisting of Derrick Burgess, Don Cowan, Don Chapman, Gordon Wright, Mike Key and the Meet Leader set off in a northerly direction towards the Carneddts. On reaching the lake above Glan Dena and being directed by Burgess (who assured us he knew the way) to keep following the edge of the lake, a gully, the exact position of which is not fully known, was followed to a point somewhere on the Carneddts. However, after much preliminary dithering and circular walking ('a right fiasco' - COWAN), Carnedd Dafydd was found. Conditions on the summit were near arctic and in no way resembled those prevailing in the valley.

The rest of the day passed uneventfully with a circuit of the Carneddts and descent to the valley via Craig-Yr-Ysfa.

Derek Carnell and Paul Bingham set off for the Idwal Slabs and gained height by way of Ordinary Route. They then walked into the Nameless Cwm, climbed Knife and Arete and descended via the Gribben Ridge.

Rumour has it that Carnell found some gear, as he greeted everyone coming down from the hill with a smug look and a cry of "Bet you haven't found four quids worth of gear today".

Jack Ashcroft, Trevor Bridges, Ron Deardon, and Mike Turner walked up to the Nameless Cwm and ascended to the Glyders, returning via the Gribben Ridge.

Sunday dawned fine and clear, but mist rolling up the valley drove everyone to a relatively early start. The ascent of Tryfan brought everyone above the cloud into warm sunshine and spectacular views. Various routes brought the party to the summit. Chris Radcliffe, Pete Scott, Pete Holden, Trevor Bridges, Derrick Burgess and Don Cowan ascended Grooved Arete - but not without incident. Pete Scott dislodged a "grand piano" on the lower reaches of the climb and petrified people standing on the eastern terrace. Chris Radcliffe was later heard to remark "I was more frightened than on the Eiger".

Jack Ashcroft, Derek Carnell, Gordon Wright and Paul Bingham ascended North Buttress, Ron Deardon and Mike Turner ascended via the Eastern Terrace and Mike Key and the Meet Leader ascended via North Ridge.

After resting on the summit and waiting for the party to rejoin, Glyder Fach was ascended via an icy Bristly Ridge, where a string of Oreads swarmed over two roped parties. During the descent to the valley via the Gribben Ridge, the following was heard from Trevor Bridges:- "Get yer 'and off that foothold or I'll smash yer".

Chris Radcliffe, in an attempt on the world record Gribben Ridge descent, was believed, over a section of about forty feet, to be accelerating at something like thirty two feet per second, collecting a bruised shin and a broken rucksack strap on the way.

Gordon and Margaret Gadsby, Anne Hayes and April Sawyer were seen near the Milestone Buttress. They had arrived late in the day and had made the ascent of Tryfan.

Altogether a very enjoyable weekend.

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LANGDALE - February 25th - 27th.

Paul Bingham

Jean and myself failed by mere seconds to reach the Skelwith Bridge by closing time on Friday so, internally dry, externally wet, we continued on to the campsite. Only four or five tents were found - none of them Oreads, so in damp conditions the tent was pitched.

We awakened to a dry Saturday and discovered many new neighbours - none of them Oreads. Leaving the porridge to splutter on the stove, the Meet Leader, to confirm or allay the nagging fear that he had done a Handley and turned up on the wrong weekend, raised a one man search party and, to his relief, discovered at the other end of the field Ron and Kath, Chris Taylor, Bill Beveridge, Mike Key, Gordon Wright and Graham ?

The whole troupe (apart from Kath whom we left behind to use her charms to dissuade the ever present Langdale jobs - complete with portable T.V. - from raiding our tents) set off for the tops via Middlefell Buttress. We carried full combat gear because Mike and Gordon, having arrived on Thursday, had heard pub talk of there being vast snowfields lurking up there in the mist. En route to the O.D.G. we were nearly mown down by Rusty (in yet another new car) who, grabbing what he thought to be a bag of sliced apples, hurriedly joined us.

Having performed several new appendices to the Kama Sutra it was declared impossible to climb the initial chimney with sac and axe. The experts who had done the route before walked 20 feet up the gully, left their sacs at the top of the chimney and then, in order not to cheat, returned down the gully and climbed the correct route. The others did likewise. When I eventually emerged at the top of the route, the early arrivals were straining at the leash. The circus set off traversing towards Dungeon Ghyll, after crossing which lunch was declared. Ron, Billy and Graham had devoured all their food during their earlier wait at the top of the climb and so continued along the proposed route. After lunch (during which Rusty's bag of apples turned out to be half cooked spuds) we continued on our way to a frozen Stickle Tarn. From here we made a quick dash to the tops via Jacks Rake. The thick mist on top produced a barrage of compasses in an attempt to locate Harrisons Stickle. Two stray Lancastrians collected en route kept disappearing into the clag, circulating and then rejoining us for "another look at the map, please". After christening numerous hummocks "Harrisons Stickle", we eventually came across the genuine article, descended a sloppy snow slope and returned to camp via Dungeon Ghyll.

Meanwhile, back at the campsite, the Gardiners had arrived and gone walking with Kath on the south side of the valley.

Kath's birthday (Ron offered to buy her a sandwich) was the excuse for a few pints and games of darts in the Skelwith Bridge followed by a chippy expedition to Ambleside.

In spite of overnight rain, Sunday managed to keep fine. Ron, Rusty, Chris, Bill, Mike, Gordon, Graham and Paul went in search of snow, whilst the President led the low level expedition downstream to Elterwater where that Bass trained nose combined with excellent timing ensured that lunch was taken in a pub.

The high level mob hammered up The Band. Whilst the meet leader was content in the belief that the troops supported his ideas of climbing one of the gullies on Bowfell, when the time came to leave the voie normale for the traverse, excuses such as "we are too far above the traversing line" and "the snow's not very good" resulted in everyone but Gordon and myself remaining on the path. The rebels continued over Bowfell to Angle Tarn, then slid down a snow slope and so back to camp.

Back in the snow Gordon and myself (at exactly the right height for traversing, but admittedly in rather wet snow) enjoyed a really worthwhile traverse to Bowfell Buttress. Using lack of rope, smallness of party and condition of snow as excuses, we opted for the larger, easier North Gully in preference to Bowfell Gully. A pleasant climb topped with a double decker cornice led us to the top of Bowfell from where we retraced our steps down The Band. En route we met the two wandering Lancastrians from yesterday. Since they didn't ask for "another look at the map", we assumed that they had not spent the night out.



Looking back on the weekend, I am beginning to wonder. Consider the following facts:-

- (1) Everyone else camped at the other end of the field (apart from the Gardiners who arrived on Saturday and took pity on us).
- (2) On Saturday everyone ran on ahead and left me at the rear.
- (3) Accusations of professionalism were used as excuses for not playing more than one game of darts with us.
- (4) On Sunday all the high level team except Gordon (he's a teacher so is more civilised than the rest) tricked me into doing a snow climb whilst they shot off in a different direction.

Either my failure to reach the Skelwith Bridge before closing time made me an outcast for the weekend or my best friend should be telling me something - after all we did go up BOfell!

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LETTER TO THE EDITOR

March 1972

Dear Sir,

I understand that some members have recently been critical of the way that the Derbyshire hut has allegedly been used more by guests than Oreads, and feel that Heathy Lea should only be available to members of the Club.

While it was decided by the Committee that the hut would not be available for Block Bookings from other clubs, I would like to point out that, without the revenue obtained from those guests present with members, the income from Heathy Lea would have been minimal; and furthermore, a lot of the renovation and improvement work would have taken longer. The barn floor, roofing timbers and slates, and cable circuits are all jobs that members Guests have helped with.

It seems to me that "value for money" would be the thing that discerning people aim for, and in these days of rising costs, anything that brings in revenue for the club AND HELPS TO STABILISE THE ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION, is to be welcomed. Of course, it is a question of degree but I have yet to learn of any member arriving at Heathy Lea and being turned away, or sleeping on the floor except from choice. The sad fact that Heathy Lea has been singularly neglected, sleeping wise, by Oreads this year should make us grateful that at least some of the costs have been recovered in Guest Fees on the empty weekends.

May I at the same time thank the Hut Gardens regular guest, Miss Kathleen Tebbitt, for washing and cleaning the Derbyshire Hut more times than any of our members, including those who are so free with their criticisms.

Yours etc.

Derek Carnell.

It was during a short walk in the lower British hills, that recollections of the cranial carousements of the minds of those various subscribers who have worn the name 'Tricouni', highlighted a possible shortfall in the scope, if not the content of one of the earliest of their dissertations. The motivations of those who fall have been carefully (and one hopes humerously) analysed, but what of those who climb? Surely they are also motivated by common urges! It would seem that a basic (I nearly said baser) link must exist propelling such varied examples of the plainsman into the desertion of his prairie of safety and the acceptance of a life of verticality and conflict with the laws of Newton.

Those various justifications for the manifestations of their art which are put forward by mountaineers when interviewed by laymen or their inferiors, ranging in scope from philosophical to pecunary, can be discounted out of hand. Whillans climbs well with Haston. Whillans as a job; Haston for the profound experience. Where can the common link be found?

The flood of thought lay stemmed for a considerable time; whilst the laborious researches necessary in investigations of this kind revealed no clues. Then without warning it became clear. Revealed as was Radium to Curie, during a chance reading of one of the lesser known works of Englands formost naturalist poet of the 18th and 19th centuries.....

"Thou wear'st upon thy forehead clear  
The freedom of a mountaineer."

(Wm. Wordsworth, Memorials of a tower in Scotland 1814. )

Of course, it couldn't be more simple: Freedom of the open spaces, of high and low situations, yes: but what of freedom in it's 'Modern' sense? Could it be that the urge to climb is as sexual in origin as the motivations promoting falling, but engendered by needs outside the heterosexual 'front' that each and every mountaineer strives so hard to reinforce at every opportunity? Consider.....

"Auf den Bergen ist Freinheif !"  
("Freedom is on the mountains" Goethe)

"All flesh is grass, and all the goodliness therof is as  
the flower of the field."

(Old Testament \* Solomon 40,6.)

The standard James edition of the English Bible can also be compared with effect to the standard French translation of about the same period. From Proverbs R.Sc., come the following translations from original sources....

English - "Who never climbed, never fell"

French - "Who never rode, never fell"

It would seem then, that a truly Freudian urge could well be the binding factor which draws the mountaineer from so many walks of life! As yet, however it is undefined; equally identifiable as a homo, or heterosexual drive. Consider though, that in general climbing is accomplished by pairs or teams of the male gender. This in itself suggests interesting relationships; relationships which have been so elequently summarized by our old friend Raymond Colledge, who despite all our efforts, must again be quoted by 'Tricouni', but in this instance however, I assure you only because of his profound knowledge of Latin!

"Nec vidisse semel satis est;  
juvat usque morari, et conferre gardum,  
et veniendi discere causas!"

(Nor is it enough to have seen him once; it is a pleasure ever to linger by him, and to come to close quarters with him, and to learn the causes of his coming!) Swallows Nest 1969.

Furthermore, how often can anything but criticism be heard of one climber by another? Seldom, if at all can one climber be heard extolling the talents and achievements of another....

Die Bewunderung preist, aber  
Die Liebe ist stumm!

(Admiration praises, but love is dumb)

Perhaps, however, the best support to the present argument comes as it should from the recorded words and actions of members of this illustrious company of nymphs. It is noted for example that on or about the arrival at long last of dear Reg at the appointed Alpine place in the summer of '69, one Christopher Taylor (who had been waiting for him from the previous year), was heard to resort to the lines of one of his more reputable forebears, Mr. Samuel Taylor (Coleridge).

"Thou most awful form!  
Risest from forth thy silent sea of pines,"

(Hymn before sunrise in the Vale of Chamouni - Contemporary spelling.) Was the frustrated lad referring to the backcloth of mountains; or to Reg himself, who we recollect had sprouted a veritable "sea of pines" about his chin; or was he referring to other more covert portions of 'Boots' anatomy? That he should choose to quote from a 'Hymn' is significant!

It is further recorded that once upon a time, in ages past, George Reynolds used to climb. His contemporary activities can only be guessed at however, when records reveal that on one occasion he spent two hours and forty-three minutes belaying a totally inadequate gentleman on the first pitch of Ordinary Route at Brassington. His eventual arrival at the stance was greeted with these most suggestive words of Mr. Samuel Pepys....

"When I at last beheld thee,  
Mine heart did leap within me,  
And the bonds about my loins were greatly loosed!"

Of course he could have been dying for a slash!

As for Tommy Green and Jungle John Dench, they seem to have been engaged (?) in a personal attempt to verify this theory by their own efforts! Not content with blatantly avoiding contact with other climbers as much as possible throughout the past year, and hiding themselves away on deserted crags, Dench we understand, quite recently fell for Green in a big way in Wales. The situation becomes so obvious in fact, that one normally reticent elder of the club was heard to remark at the Wilmot....

"You know the real reason why Dench has been trying to knock off Marge, is to get Green out of her bra-straps!"  
For what purpose, might I ask?

"Ita amicum habeas, posse ut facite fieri hunc inimicum putes"  
(So poses your friend, as though you thought that he might easily be transformed into an enemy.)

Such a discourse would not however be complete without due regard being

given to the state of affairs as it stands between the long, the short and the tall, namely Rot, Scabcliffe and Phew! Not content in throwing a huff whenever 'she' puts the mockers on a weekend with Rot, old Scab (an affectionate nickname derived from his horny and thick skinned character!) elected himself giver away, best man and chief bridesmaid for the May festivities, and threatened to stand as chief objector on the grounds of breach of promises made in the exit cracks (where else might I ask)! In view of this howelse could one conclude, but to quote the lyrical free adaptation of Wordsworth's "Lines above Tintern Abbey" which were discovered watered into the snows of the Second Icefield.....

"The tall rock, the mountain, and the deep and gloomy Scottie;  
Their colours and their forms were then to me an appetite,  
a feeling, and a bottie."

BLIND CLIMBER

Who can feel the warning sun  
Without the urge to dance and run;  
But not to see the dawn once more;  
To die a better thing?

And who can feel beneath his touch  
The form of granite warm and rough  
And fail to look with searching eyes  
For ways to reach the top?

How can you pause with danger near  
Beneath the focus of your fear  
And still decide to gamble all;  
The choice a better thing?

Climb while you can and play the guy  
who sees his life as live or die,  
And give no thought to in-between  
With half your senses gone.

The loneliness with sightless eyes  
For me is lack of earth and sky  
Which sharpened hearing makes the worse;  
A bird, a stream, the sea.

Now through my life I wait for death;  
Release grows near with every breath,  
For as the spark of life goes out  
God grant that I shall see!

CLIMBING AT TATER DU, LAMORNA (CORNWALL)

We have been asked by the B.M.C. to say that the owner of this crag and the surrounding land has no objection to climbing there, but the track to Tregiffian Cottage is private property and there is no right of way.

THE 1ST HIGH PEAK MARATHON or  
"I'M ONLY HERE FOR THE STEW".

Jack Ashcroft

It was during the Christmas festivities when judgment is likely to be impaired that my eye caught an advertisement in a well known climbing magazine - 'Derwent Watershed Walk - 40 miles - Teams of 4'. "Ah", I thought "this is where Pretty will come into his own with protege Janes as his lieutenant. I was wrong of course. Mere mention of the Derwent Watershed prompted a typically guarded reaction from Pretty. "What's that" and then a few curt words implying one could walk from the confluence of the Derwent with the Trent around the watershed and back again. "It meant nothing". No point in further comment I thought. Janes was more positive and with the volubility we all associate with Janes, said something about 'idiots'. Radcliffe couldn't afford the registration fee. Cowan was honest and admitted he liked 'the hill' to himself at his own pace. Now I knew this of course. All men of the establishment - "frightfully in-fra-dig old man", "What self respecting mountaineer" etc. - kind of thing. In spite of all, a team did emerge after an 11th hour crisis when George Rhodes had to withdraw due to a knee injury and Roger Redfern of Chesterfield was laid low with septicaemia. The final four were Eric Wallis, Clive Russell, Brian Metcalf and myself.

It was Friday night, 21st April. There were an assortment of characters gathered in Edale Village Hall. There were the Gruntfuttock Ferklers, The Octavian Drooblers, Clayton-le-Moor Harriers (A & B teams) and a Welsh team Cymry (no doubt Williams men I thought) the Furty Darters - whom we were unanimously determined to keep ahead of. 'Shame' I thought 'we haven't got "The Pretty Shufflers" with us'. We supped coffee - our regulation equipment was checked (moment of mild revulsion) - map, compass, whistle, bivvy bag each, one 2 man tent and 1 sleeping bag per team. We were each issued with check point cards (moment of further revulsion) to collect a series of 'autographs' around the route.

Soon after midnight, our team No.20 was called and we were ushered into a dormobile to be transported to the cross roads at Yorkshire Bridge. Another team shared the transport. It was Ted Dance and his Rucksack Club colleagues. "Four days for the Pennine Way" I thought. "I'll walk back over Stanage to Sheffield and a good night's sleep. Maybe Pretty was right in his inference". There was a crowd milling at the start with teams being 'released' at intervals of a minute or two. 'Team 20'. It was 00.47 and so we strode down the road and then the steady plod up the steep path through the forestry plantation towards the summit of Win Hill. It got a little congested at the final stile. I noticed a figure hesitate a second on my left - but only a second. It was Ted Dance who simply glided over the wall whilst the rest of us grovelled around the stile.

Once over the summit we dropped down to Hope at a goodly pace and soon found the field had spread out. We were on our own. We walked up Lose Hill. It was a perfect calm moonlight night as we noted the number on the summit observation obelisk. The walk along the ridge to Rushup Edge was unbelievably fine in the brilliant moonlight. I had an audacious thought as I looked down on Edale. I wondered if Herr Hooley was down there manning his post - maybe with horse at the ready to charge up Jacobs Ladder in the event of a call out. Hamish has his dogs in Glen Coe. Why not Chuck's horses in the Peak?

The first manned check point was on Rushup Edge. We collected our first signatures at 3.14. Cloud came in as we made our way for Brown Knoll and it became decidedly dark. Eric had got the bit between his teeth. We'd got times and magnetic bearings worked out for the whole distance. Whether it helped or not at this stage I don't know except that Eric took the lead and we just walked with rhythmic speed over Brown Knoll past several doubting teams to arrive at Edale Cross check point. There was a suggestion from the older and of the team that the pace was too hot for 40 miles and so the pace eased a little as we walked up to Kinder Low. I looked back over Brown Knoll to see a torch light procession over the plateau. "Oh, how the Oread Elders would shake their heads disapprovingly", I thought. As we made our way to Kinder Downfall, the half light came. It was a unique experience to be at the Downfall as dawn came. The clear sky we'd enjoyed earlier was no longer with us and the view to the north was dense black cloud. Below us was Kinder Reservoir presenting an interesting spectacle in the early morning light. We pressed on for Mill Hill and into the mist. A moment of crisis when trace of a path disappeared. Compasses out, but we needn't have bothered; the mist cleared just long enough for us to see the drop to the col and the summit of Mill Hill beyond. We were offered a drink of water by the checkers at Mill Hill. It was ice cold, but like nectar and thoroughly appreciated. We then had a steady hour's walk to Snake Road Top during which time a team jogged past us. Training shoes - nylon track suit trousers - nylon sacs about 9 inch by 9 inch. So much for the regulation check before we left Edale and the strong mountain boots' requirement.

At Snake Road Top we checked in at 6.40 and refreshed ourselves with the provided coffee and choice of bread, cheese, sausage and hard boiled eggs. My thoughts wandered to Phil Faulkner who always delighted in checking times on Marsden Rowsley - 14 peaks and other such walks. They do it for you nowadays Phil and issue you with a detailed breakdown of everybody else's time as well.

We were soon on the move again into the cloud of Bleaklow. We started with the Gruntfuttock Ferklers, but they grunted ahead and we found ourselves checking in at Bleaklow Head alone. Compasses out and now bound for Bleaklow Stones. Eric, the true mountaineer, would not be deflected from his compass bearings as we battled our way through the groughs. The less unethical of the party kept an eye open for the neat pole as it loomed up out of the mist. We arrived at check point Bleaklow Stones without error. Undoubtedly I thought this is where Dave Williams would have strayed if only to maintain his record.

It was after this that the curse of Pretty was upon us. We should have walked north east for  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile or so and then due north for the next check point at Far Black Clough. However, we went too far in the mist and during a clearing we found ourselves too far to the east. "Was Pretty in the vicinity", I thought. Grains-in-the-Water for instance - contemplating his navel and philosophizing. We shall never know, but I will always suspect.

We about turned and made our way to the check point and then around Swains Head to Outer Edge in a snowstorm. It was 10.22 at Outer Edge and a refreshment point again. Soup, bread, cheese and cake served by pleasing young ladies. I thought Janes would have returned at this point to help with the washing up or some such pretext. We were away within 15 minutes and a spell of sunshine as we strode above Bull Clough and the site of the old shooting cabins. The memory of my first visit to Bullstones

passed through my mind when Derrick Burgess, Don Chapman and myself walked from Fox House one December Saturday afternoon. We walked from Wheelstones in the dark. Don the first time out on an extremely weak ankle, having broken it a couple of months previous. I'd rubbed blisters up on the undersides of both heels due to the stockings I was wearing. It was a painful walk that Saturday night, and black as pitch.

From Bull Clough we traversed Margery Hill and then made our way (not the best on reflection) to a check point on the Bradfield Path. It was then a steady walk to Back Tor and a check point just beyond Wheel Stones. Rusty commented "You're walking like an old man, Ashcroft". I didn't challenge the accusation. We had a couple of minutes rest before the final check points at Moscar and High Neb. As we walked past Stanage End, the weather improved considerably. We could see the whole route we had walked and undoubtedly The Peak from this aspect is very fine indeed. The sun came out fully as we secured our penultimate signatures. We ran down from High Neb in a moment of sudden exhilaration and then a steady walk down the road, past Panlingtons Plantation - the site of many a Marsden Rowsley bivvy. The walk down to Yorkshire Bridge was pleasant though I must admit it seemed a fair distance. The weather was fine and the lush cultivation of the Hope Valley contrasted vividly with the desolate Kinder - Bleaklow - Derwent Edge route our walk had taken us.

The two younger men were a 100 feet or so ahead of Brian and myself as we approached the road junction. They disappeared around the corner and Brian commented "If they are gentlemen, they will wait for us". "Not on your life", I said, but how wrong I was. They had waited and we walked across the road together to check in. It was 14.32. Jean Russell welcomed us with a flask of coffee and we found time to visit the Yorkshire Bridge for a noggin of ale.

Back at Edale beef stew and two veg., rice pudding and stewed apples, all served by charming young lady students under the direction of a 2nd lieutenant (female) OTC Sheffield University. Brian was so taken with the service that he obtained the signatures (and I believe Halls of Residences) of all the kitchen staff.

God, Pretty and Janes, what you missed! Might I suggest you inaugurate the Greater Derwent Watershed Walk next year. You could at least manage i/c Kitchen.

Now for the sordid bit. Trophy for 1st place went to Ted Dance and team - 10 hrs. 26 mins. We managed a modest 13 hrs. 45 mins. being beaten into 7th place by the Bolton Colleges Staff team who returned 13 hrs. 43 mins. (I told Rusty we should not have stopped to remove that stone from his boot). The last team came home at 18.38. Altogether 32 teams set out, 11 of which retired. Detailed results were posted the following week (by popular request), but the organisers do not wish to stress the competitive side. What became of the Furdy Darters? They blew themselves out at an early stage.

It was in 1956 that A.H. Griffin, the well known Lakeland author and journalist, circulated mountaineering clubs advertising a similar event to the High Peak Marathon in the Lakes. Bob Pettigrew and Dave Panlington showed interest at the time, but I think they were 'advised' otherwise. Doug Cullum commenting on the proposal at the time summed up 'the Trial will be at best a stiff test of route selection and stamina and at worst a day of healthy exercise under rather artificial conditions. In any event it will be a very much better outlet for surplus energy and high spirits than that other strenuous activity known as Rock and Roll'. Fair comment, but did my friend Pretty take heed of those words?

(Fourteen Peaks Meet - 9th-11th June)

When Ken Hodge first approached me about leading a meet, & somehow I ended up "volunteering" to lead a 14 Peaks weekend, I only expected a handful of idiots to turn up. In the event, when everybody assembled at the hut on Saturday night (and Sunday morning!) there were 33 members and guests present. Of these about 20 actually set off on the walk and most of the others were involved as support parties. Six members and one prospective member completed the walk - a fairly creditable performance, I think, especially considering the weather.

After much bickering at the Wilmot, the walkers split into two parties, 9 starting from Snowdon and 11 from the Aber end. The Aber walkers set off in two separate parties.

The weather on Saturday was typical of a December day. Very cold, with a strong northerly wind and frequent prolonged downpours of rain. The tops, and a large part of the bottoms too, were in cloud for most of the day.

The Snowdon contingent left Pen-y-Pass at about 10.15pm on Friday night. The first set back came when the causeway was found to be flooded, necessitating walking round the end of the lake. Having reached the other side we were joined by a lady of the Wolverhampton M.C. Aged in the region of 50, she had taken off boots and socks and had waded across the causeway. She was on her eighth 14 Peaks walk! We felt rather humble.

The rest of the way to the summit was just a thrutch which took us to the top by about 12.30am. Here we found a very relieved Gordon Wright in occupation. Thinking he was behind the rest of us, he had set out at the run. When he found no one at the top he thought he had been conned into going up by himself.

The least said about the midnight bivvy, the better. It was very cold and windy with showers of rain. Few people got more than an hours sleep and the only light note came next morning when Mark Hayhurst, who had spent most of the night gently snoring away, claimed he had not slept a wink.

We left the summit of Snowdon about 5am and bombed down to the Pen-y-Pass by about 6.30. It was raining by this time so most of us cooked breakfast in a half built public convenience of the future! It was ok apart from drips of rain from the roof which was not yet completed. Dave Weston, Roy Sawyer and their friend Tom, however, were welcomed in the warmth and comfort of Dave's caravette by Pam who provided coffee and breakfast such that I am surprised they ever got going again. We were joined at this stage by Reg Squires who due to various misadventures (good planning?) had failed to reach Wales in time to go up Snowdon on Friday night.

At 7.30 we set off again for Bwlch Tyfan via Llyn Cwm-y-ffynnon and the Miners track. This proved to be the nice easy ascent I had hoped for, except when Mark stepped into a bog and I thought we were going to need a tractor to get him out. By the wall at Bwlch Tryfan we dumped our sacks and all except John Mellbourne made a rapid ascent and descent of Tryfan. John decided that if he went he would start to suffer so he guarded our sacks until we returned. He then left for Ogwen with Tom who had also had enough.

Bristly Ridge was used as the ladder to Glyder Fach and the Glyder Fawr was reached without difficulty, except for slithering on the rocks and boulders which felt as if they were verglassed. A compass bearing got us down to the Devils Kitchen where Dave, Roy and Colin Hobday decided discretion was the better part of valour and left for the Ogwen fleshpots. This left Gordon, Mark, Reg, prospective member John Vooden and myself to flog on. Y Garn took its toll and by the time we got to Elidir Fawr, I think we all felt Ogwen was our limit. After a rest we returned to Foel Goch. The climb back up is the main weakness of my route, although it only took 15 minutes. From the top a scree gully and a traversing path were used to descend easily and quickly to Ogwen Cottage which we reached about 3.15pm, 1/4 hour behind schedule.



Next day Gordon, Bev and Kath actually went off and did a couple of routes on Dinas Mot. Everyone else was content to go to Black Rock Sands where Burgess' Beauties beat the Wellbourn Wanderers by 27 to 9 or thereabouts.

In conclusion, I should like to thank the support parties for the invaluable role they played. I am sure all the walkers, successful or not, will agree with me that the knowledge that tea and food is waiting at a certain point is a great morale booster, especially when the going is tough.

BURBAGE MEET, 18TH JUNE

Clive Russell

This meet was a welcome relic of bygone days in that a small select group within the club were prepared to turn out in appalling weather conditions and do something without being hard enough to burn off the meetleader! The venue was an old favourite belonging to the "Baslow gritstone era" and most of the performers were flourishing the old red gritstone guide minus the back cover and about 20 pages. The activity consisted of blundering up and down about ten steep cracks and slabs, wearing muddy old boots and slithering about on lichen covered rock. Fisher was seen to resort to artificial aid by grabbing a wire sling with both hands when on the point of peeling, but otherwise the meet was conducted on impeccable lines.

The heroes who turned out are cited below:

- Jean and Paul Bingham
- John Fisher
- Reg. Squires
- Ron, a prospective member
- Ken Hodge appeared, sent Doreen up a route and promptly withdrew.

Jean Russell and Anne Hayes struggled up to the rocks to clock in and provided shelter and beverage afterwards.

B.M.C. PERSONAL ACCIDENT INSURANCE

Benefits: £1000 on death or total disablement; £10 per week for 26 weeks on temporary disablement; up to £50 medical expenses.

Premium: 35 per year.

A.J.N. PERSONAL ACCIDENT INSURANCE (not B.M.C. sponsored)

Benefits: £2000 on death; £2000 on loss of limbs and £20 per week for 52 weeks.

Premium: £2 per year, but minimum of £25 per club (therefore at least 12 members per club have to participate).

B.M.C. ALPS RESCUE INSURANCE

Cover up to	£100	per climber per rescue	£2.50	)
"	£200	"	4.25	)
"	£300	"	5.50	)
"	£400	"	7.00	)
"	£500	"	8.75	)

For up to three weeks (June-September).

DETAILS OF ALL THE ABOVE INSURANCE POLICIES CAN BE OBTAINED FROM PETE SCOTT

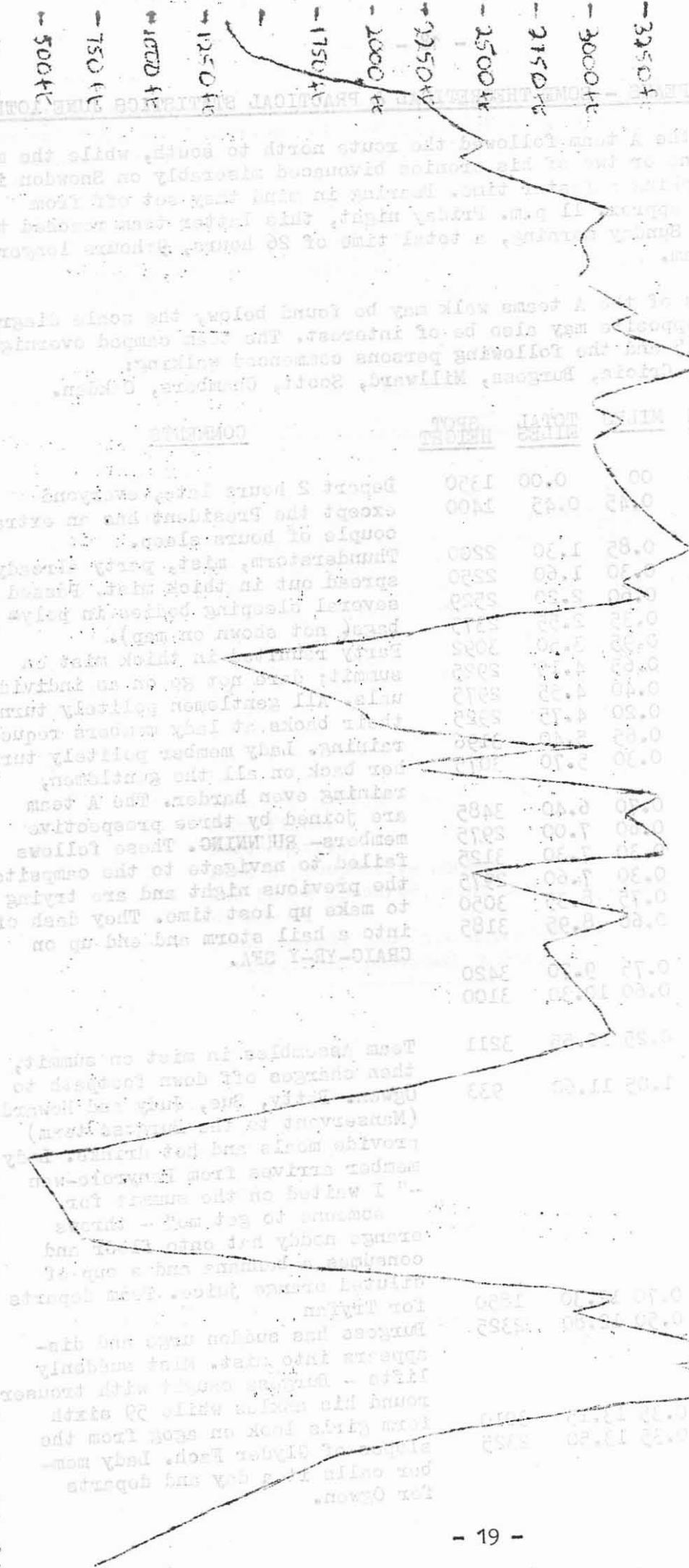
THE FOURTEEN PEAKS - SOME THEORETICAL & PRACTICAL STATISTICS JUNE 10TH '72

This year the A team followed the route north to south, while the meet leader with one or two of his cronies bivouaced miserably on Snowdon in the hope of making a faster time. Bearing in mind they set off from Pen y Pass at approx. 11 p.m. Friday night, this latter team reached the hut at 1 a.m. Sunday morning, a total time of 26 hours, 9 hours longer than the A team.

An analysis of the A teams walk may be found below, the scale diagram of the route opposite may also be of interest. The team camped overnight at G.R. 7217 15 and the following persons commenced walking:  
The President, Cricia, Burgess, Millward, Scott, Chambers, Oakden.

<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>TIME</u>	<u>MILES</u>	<u>TOTAL MILES</u>	<u>SPOT HEIGHT</u>	<u>COMMENTS</u>
Campsite	0600	00	0.00	1350	Depart 2 hours late, everyone except the President has an extra couple of hours sleep.
Wall N.T.		0.45	0.45	1400	
Boundary		0.85	1.30	2200	Thunderstorm, mist, party already spread out in thick mist. Passed several sleeping bodies in poly* bags (not shown on map).
Carnedd Ddelw		0.30	1.60	2250	
Drum	0645	0.60	2.20	2529	Party reunited in thick mist on summit; dare not go on as individuals. All gentlemen politely turn their backs at lady members request, raining. Lady member politely turns her back on all the gentlemen, raining even harder. The A team are joined by three prospective members-- RUUNNING. These fellows failed to navigate to the campsite the previous night and are trying to make up lost time. They dash off into a hail storm and end up on CRAIG-YR-Y SFA.
Col		0.35	2.55	2375	
Foel Fras	0720	0.95	3.50	3092	Party reunited in thick mist on summit; dare not go on as individuals. All gentlemen politely turn their backs at lady members request, raining. Lady member politely turns her back on all the gentlemen, raining even harder. The A team are joined by three prospective members-- RUUNNING. These fellows failed to navigate to the campsite the previous night and are trying to make up lost time. They dash off into a hail storm and end up on CRAIG-YR-Y SFA.
Col		0.65	4.15	2925	
Carnedd-uchaf		0.40	4.55	2975	Party reunited in thick mist on summit; dare not go on as individuals. All gentlemen politely turn their backs at lady members request, raining. Lady member politely turns her back on all the gentlemen, raining even harder. The A team are joined by three prospective members-- RUUNNING. These fellows failed to navigate to the campsite the previous night and are trying to make up lost time. They dash off into a hail storm and end up on CRAIG-YR-Y SFA.
Col		0.20	4.75	2925	
Foelgrach	0800	0.65	5.40	3196	Party reunited in thick mist on summit; dare not go on as individuals. All gentlemen politely turn their backs at lady members request, raining. Lady member politely turns her back on all the gentlemen, raining even harder. The A team are joined by three prospective members-- RUUNNING. These fellows failed to navigate to the campsite the previous night and are trying to make up lost time. They dash off into a hail storm and end up on CRAIG-YR-Y SFA.
Col		0.30	5.70	3075	
Carnedd Llywelyn	0830	0.70	6.40	3485	Party reunited in thick mist on summit; dare not go on as individuals. All gentlemen politely turn their backs at lady members request, raining. Lady member politely turns her back on all the gentlemen, raining even harder. The A team are joined by three prospective members-- RUUNNING. These fellows failed to navigate to the campsite the previous night and are trying to make up lost time. They dash off into a hail storm and end up on CRAIG-YR-Y SFA.
Col		0.60	7.00	2975	
Y r Elen	0900	0.30	7.30	3125	Party reunited in thick mist on summit; dare not go on as individuals. All gentlemen politely turn their backs at lady members request, raining. Lady member politely turns her back on all the gentlemen, raining even harder. The A team are joined by three prospective members-- RUUNNING. These fellows failed to navigate to the campsite the previous night and are trying to make up lost time. They dash off into a hail storm and end up on CRAIG-YR-Y SFA.
Col		0.30	7.60	2975	
Col		0.75	8.35	3050	Party reunited in thick mist on summit; dare not go on as individuals. All gentlemen politely turn their backs at lady members request, raining. Lady member politely turns her back on all the gentlemen, raining even harder. The A team are joined by three prospective members-- RUUNNING. These fellows failed to navigate to the campsite the previous night and are trying to make up lost time. They dash off into a hail storm and end up on CRAIG-YR-Y SFA.
---		0.60	8.95	3185	
Carnedd Dafydd	1015	0.75	9.70	3420	Party reunited in thick mist on summit; dare not go on as individuals. All gentlemen politely turn their backs at lady members request, raining. Lady member politely turns her back on all the gentlemen, raining even harder. The A team are joined by three prospective members-- RUUNNING. These fellows failed to navigate to the campsite the previous night and are trying to make up lost time. They dash off into a hail storm and end up on CRAIG-YR-Y SFA.
Col		0.60	10.30	3100	
Penyrole-wen	1040	0.25	10.55	3211	Team assembles in mist on summit, then charges off down footpath to Ogwen. Betty, Sue, Judy and Howard (Manservant to the Burgess team) provide meals and hot drinks. Lady member arrives from Penyrole-wen -" I waited on the summit for someone to get me" - throws orange noddy hat onto floor and consumes a bannana and a cup of diluted orange juice. Team departs for Tryfan
Ogwen	1110	1.05	11.60	933	
	1155				Team assembles in mist on summit, then charges off down footpath to Ogwen. Betty, Sue, Judy and Howard (Manservant to the Burgess team) provide meals and hot drinks. Lady member arrives from Penyrole-wen -" I waited on the summit for someone to get me" - throws orange noddy hat onto floor and consumes a bannana and a cup of diluted orange juice. Team departs for Tryfan
	1200				
Llyn Bochlwyd		0.70	12.30	1850	Burgess has sudden urge and disappears into mist. Mist suddenly lifts - Burgess caught with trousers round his ankles while 59 sixth form girls look on agog from the slopes of Glyder Fach. Lady member calls it a day and departs for Ogwen.
Col		0.50	12.80	2325	
Tryfan	1310	0.35	13.15	3010	Burgess has sudden urge and disappears into mist. Mist suddenly lifts - Burgess caught with trousers round his ankles while 59 sixth form girls look on agog from the slopes of Glyder Fach. Lady member calls it a day and departs for Ogwen.
Col		0.35	13.50	2325	

Sea Level  
- 450 ft  
- 500 ft  
- 750 ft  
- 1000 ft  
- 1250 ft  
- 1500 ft  
- 1750 ft  
- 2000 ft  
- 2250 ft  
- 2500 ft  
- 3000 ft  
- 3250 ft



- DRUM
- FOEL FRAS
- CARNEDD-UCHAF
- FOELGRACH
- CARNEDD LLYWELYN
- YR ELEN
- CARNEDD DAFYDD
- PENYROLE-WEN
- OGWEN
- LLYN BOCHLWYD
- COL
- TRYFAN
- COL
- GLYDER FACH
- GLYDER FAWR
- LLYN Y CWN
- Y GARN
- ELIDIR FAWR
- NANT PERIS
- YNYS ETTWS
- GRIB-GOCH
- CRIB-Y-DDYSGL
- SNOWDON

Glyder				
Fach	1430	0.55	14.05	3262
Col		0.40	14.45	3125
Glyder				
Fawer	1450	0.55	15.00	3279

Scott siezes control of party in mist and leads it off along the bearing of a N.T. boundary instead of a footpath. Sudden views of Dinas Mot and Llanberis Pass causes revolution and Scott is deposed.

Lyn y Cwn		0.45	15.45	2350
Y Garn	1600	0.80	16.25	3104
Col		0.50	16.75	2450
Elidir				
Fawr	1715	1.65	18.40	3030
Nant Peris		2.10	20.50	350
Y nmys				
Ettws	1840	1.55	22.05	575
	1710			

President and Millward retire to Vaynol Arms on hearing others have raced on ahead. Remaining four, Oakden, Scott, Chambers and Burgess leave Ynys Ettws. Age begins to tell but Burgess staggers bravely upward groaning, "It might be my last chance". Rest of team force Mars Bars and orange juice down his throat at regular intervals. Scott nearly pukes over his 9th Mars of the day. Burgess's moment of triumph Party slinks round side of cafe too tired to attempt the summit block. Two members make it to the pub - the others are unable to walk.

Grib-goch	2045	1.20	23.25	3023
Crib y				
Dyysgl	2130	0.70	24.25	3496
Snowdon				
Railway		0.25	24.5	3258
Snowdon	2145	0.40	24.90	3560
Hut	1100	3.10	28.00	625

ONE IS SURPRISED AT THE EPIC QUALITY OF SUCH A WALK. BELOW ARE A FEW FINAL STATISTICS AMONG WHICH READERS WILL DOUBTLESS NOTE THAT THE EXPEDITION MERELY ENTAILS WALKING DOWNHILL FOR 730FEET.

Total Horizontal		28miles
Total Uphill		11330feet
Total Downhill		12060feet
Net Fall		730feet
Gross rise and fall		23390feet
Low point	Nant Peris	350feet
High point	Snowdon	3560feet
Descent from Penyrole-wen to Ogwen		2000feet
Descent from Elidir Fawr to Nant Peris		2675feet
Descent from Snowdon to the Hut		2950feet
Ascent from Ogwen to Tryfan		1775feet
Ascent from Nant Peris to Grib-goch		2675feet

ANON

TOO MUCH BEER, BUT WHAT A WAY TO GO.

R. KINGSHOTT

(An account of a weekend in the South African Drakensbergs.)

NOTE! Afrikaners standard challenge when speaking English is "Did you got a licence?"

We departed the Benoni at 8.00pm. on Friday evening. After a stop at 8.30 for petrol at Heidelberg, we started the long run to Harrismith, 150 miles away and the next town with petrol stations open. In this distance there are only two small villages. Much of the journey is through the wastes of the Orange Free State, where all the God fearing Afrikaaners go to bed soon after sunset.

During the drive Bernard, the only South African amongst us, tried to convince us that the "Kaffirs" (natives) preferred being kicked around by the Afrikaaners, (or Dutchmen, Hairybacks, Crunchies or Yarps) rather than being treated as fellow human beings. He lost that argument and then had to endure a general discussion criticising South Africa; dealing with such subjects as gross inefficiency of industry, banks and government departments and the general bad workmanship in South Africa, (all of which he eventually agreed with, having spent fifteen months in England recently.)

11.00pm saw us at Harrismith. It was with some misgivings that we set off to Witsieshoek and the Drakensberg. On a previous trip to these mountains we had visited the Royal Natal National Park driving in, during darkness, as far as the end of the dirt road. Whilst preparing breakfast next morning we were met and challenged by a Warden, "My name is Nash, did you know that for driving into the park during the hours of darkness you are liable to a twenty pound fine, also did you get a permit to walk and climb here?" On stating that we had no permit we were told to report to the office between 8.30am and 4.00pm. and sign in, although by various devious methods we avoided doing this.

On this occasion we were following dirt roads leading to a vast carpark at 7,800 ft. From information gleaned from the Mountain Club of South Africa the only restrictions to access were, "Carry a passport, in case the Lesotho border police check on you, and pay 50 cents at a gate 10 miles from the summit car park."

Thirty miles of dirt road from Harrismith we reached Witsieshoek where a large sign proclaimed "Drakensberg Pleasure Resort 22 miles, gate 12 miles." We were now in a Bantustan (native homeland) and expected to be stopped at any time and asked "Did you got a licence to be here?" Our luck was in, we reached the gate shortly after mid-night and found it open. On rounding the final bend into the car park an amazing sight greeted us... two buses from Pochefstroom Boys High School, a dozen cars and scattered around in great disorder, lots of bodies in sleeping bags.

The night was fine but cool, so we decided to continue with our original plan and walk up to the plateau hut as soon as we had sorted out our gear. Tony said "Right lads lets share out this food" I answered "What food? you're sharing ours, I catered for three" He replied "Howard and I catered for you, how much beer have you got?" "Six large cans". "We've got twelve". Bernard said "I've got six" "Right, we'll take five beers each, drink one now and leave a load of food in the truck."

Around 2.00am. we started the slog along the pony track which took us around the base of the Sentinal and contoured along the base of a line of bluffs until it petered out at a formidable South African hazard, a 106 rung chain ladder of doubtful strength which at one point went up a overhang. After a quick snack of chocolate we decided to risk life and limb, climbed the ladder and emerged on the Lesotho plateau.

The hut which we reached around 4.00am., was a stone building with a thatched roof, oval in shape and divided into three rooms. It had been erected by the Natal Mountaineering Club in the mid nineteen thirties. Inside the floor was liberally spread with straw for sleeping on.

Next morning I crawled out of my sleeping bag and staggered outside. The whole area around was thronged with people, most of whom seemed to be setting off for their days activities. The Afrikaaners from the room at the other end called "Goeie More."

I went back inside and collected the remainder of my breakfast, a few biscuits and a can of beer, then outside into the sun again to eat and drink, (the first time I've had beer for breakfast, how refreshing it was.) Around the hut lizards were darting between the rocks. Further away lay the edge of the plateau and beyond that, but 5,500 ft. lower, the hills and Kogpies of Natal and the flat lands of the Orange Free State.

The Drakensberg escarpment must be one of the most fantastic hill walking areas in the world. The main drawback is that it is made of rock that is so rotten that only a handful of climbs have been recorded, but what is lacking in this respect is more than amply compensated for in size, remoteness and scenery. The approach from Harrismith is always a thrilling experience. One sees an impenetrable looking wall of rock stretching southwards as far as the eye can see, and this is from a point 40 miles away. As one moves closer so details become apparent. The wall of rock is seen to be about 1,000 ft to 2,500 ft. high and is only the culmination of the scarp face. Numerous valleys radiate from the foot of this wall and these then pass through gorges in the lower 'Bergs', a series of sandstone hills rising to 7,500 ft. Because of the nature of this rock it weathers easily, producing weird shaped outcrops. This 'Lower Bergs' area is criss crossed with numerous paths, which are made by natives travelling between their fields, Kraals and trading stores.

As one leaves this area and approaches the foot of the Bergs so the tracks disappear. The only means of travel then is big boulder hopping along a river bed until one has gained sufficient height to break out onto the luxuriant grassy slopes. Any attempt to leave the river bed before reaching this grass is generally defeated by the profuse vegetation, a mixture of thorn bush, cactii, creepers, proteas, elephant grass, aloes, braken and giant tree ferns.

The final approach to the summit plateau is generally up a narrow boulder strewn gully, with the walls on either side weathered into overhangs or tottering pinnacles. The biggest surprise comes on reaching the top and finding that the Lesotho plateau is not a true plateau, but rolling hill country very reminiscent of Northumberland. It was along the top of the escarpment at the edge of the plateau that we were now preparing to walk.

Towards midday the four of us set off, first to the 2,800 ft. Tugela Falls about half a mile away, then we followed the edge eastwards to the Eastern Buttress and Devils Tooth. Below us on our left lay the Royal Natal National Park. During the heat of the day we stopped for tea and food, sitting on the edge of the plateau, overlooking the Mweni Valley with Cathedral Peak 30 miles to the south, but seeming much closer in the crystal clear air.

For our return journey to the hut we decided to visit Mont aux Sources, the highest point in the Republic of South Africa, 10,800 ft. so we set off over a broad col, which led to a glen that would take us to our objective five miles away. On the way we passed several storks and a small herd of semi-wild Basuto ponies. On reaching the junction of our glen and the Khubedo river (a major tributary of the Orange River) we halted for water. It was getting late, 5pm., but no amount of chiding could get the party moving for nearly half an hour. Most of this time was taken up by resting and looking for a frog free pool from which to drink. At last we were moving again. Before us lay a Scottish type hillside up which we had to slog for two miles. This eventually brought us out on a broad ridge leading directly to the summit of Mont Aux Source. A twenty foot scramble brought us onto the summit 10 minutes before sunset (due at 6.50pm). We wasted no time and a fast pace was set in order to reach the hut before dark, as at these latitudes there is virtually no dusk, darkness arrives 30 minutes after sunset.

Much to our surprise we could see no-one at the hut when it came into view. "Funny" I thought, "there ought to be someone about especially as there had been so many people that morning." Wondering what had happened we plodded on and on opening the hut door we were greeted by a most amazing sight...everyone else had gone to bed. The time was 7.40pm.

In our usual English manner, we set about livening things up, and by the time we had finished our meal it was 10.00pm. We turned in and four more Yarps, complaining of the cold outside (55°F) crammed into our room which was 10ft. square and now contained fifteen people.

We awoke to another fine bright day. The Yarps had departed by now, leaving their litter behind them, very typical of South Africans. Feeling in a charitable mood we spent some time cleaning up in and around the hut and burning the rubbish. Today was to be our big day, we proposed to climb the Sentinal. A walk across to the Tugela Falls, then westwards round the plateau edge, brought us to a descent gully leading across a col to the peak.

First a climb of fifty feet at severe standard to a ridge, then a traverse leftwards on a small grassfield to a seven foot vertical rock band. We then followed a diagonal ascent of a second large grassfield which terminated at a short ridge. A thirty foot diff climb, with a 1200 ft. drop on our left led to a "Traverse of the God's" for eighty feet. Finally, a short scramble up a gully brought us out on the summit a plateau eighty yards by one hundred and fifty yards.

We quickly made our way to the summit cairn then spent the next two hours sun-bathing and brewing tea. The views from the top were superb, the visible horizon must have been 150 miles away. Our descent was not without incident, as at the bottom, whilst reversing the climbing pitch, Bernard did his first abseil, and it was nearly his last since he only clipped in one rope.

We collected our sacks and had a pleasant walk back to the car park. It was 4.30pm. when we arrived and everyone else had gone home. We finished the day by drinking the one beer we each had left in our rucksacks. Eventually we set off on the long drive back to civilisation. To Johannesburg, The Golden City, with air pollution worse than any I know in Britain, motorists with a kill or be killed attitude to life, and the only 'gold' in the city being a result of sand blowing off abandoned mine dumps. Oh to be back in the hills again!

Members of the party: Bernard Schumacher (SA) Tony King, Howard Haines and Roger Kingshott (all British).

THIRLMERE MEET, 23rd - 25th June

Chris Radcliffe

The almost perpetual run of bad weather has been effecting most weekends and the Thirlmere meet was no exception. No doubt deterred by the weather prospects only half-a-dozen members turned up, together with a prospective member and three friends.

When Paul Bingham and I arrived on Friday night we found Brian Cooke the only other person in residence. The field at Low Bridgend Farm, no doubt idyllic in those lazy hazy days of summer, was now a quagmire in places and the cars threatened to sink up to their axles. Although St. John's Beck lapped only a few inches below the edge of the field, we pitched tents, hopeful that the waterlevel wouldn't rise significantly during the weekend. A little later Gordon Wright arrived with Trevor Bridges and then Trevor's friend Colin Pritchard rather optimistically brought his dormobile down onto the field. He soon lost traction and had to stay where he was until a small army of people was gathered on Sunday to push him out again. Billy Beveridge in his inimitable style had cadged a lift which got him to the camp site at 5 a.m. on Saturday morning. Alan Downes and his friends Dave Hear and Geoff Wicks failed to find the camp site on Friday night and showed up Saturday morning when the beer had had time to wear off.

Saturday was dry at valley level, but the cloud was low and the hills uninviting. I felt convinced that the heat wave would begin the following day, so I decided to leave Castle Rock alone and instead led a team to Raven Crag. This was covered with green slime, running with water and looked as though it had never been climbed on before. Together with Paul and Brian I grasped my way up Anarchist with socks over P.A.'s in an attempt to maintain some contact with the rock. Sounds of peg bashing from Gordon and Billy who were on Valedictory, and shouts of disgust from Trevor who was doing Genesis with Colin, indicated that they too were absorbed by the climbing.

It was three rather bedraggled parties which arrived at the top of the crag and all readily agreed to my suggestion that we should go somewhere to "dry off". My own solution to this problem was hardly appropriate since I decided that my Alpine training programme would benefit from an ascent of Sandbed Ghyll on Bramcrag, followed by a flog over Great Dodd. In the guide this 500ft. Mod. is described as a pleasant climb with magnificent rock scenery and a waterfall pitch. This was something of an understatement since the whole climb was one continuous waterfall and half the time we had to climb straight up it and the rest of the time was spent



amidst the magnificent scenery, performing tenuous traverses to avoid the worst of the waterfalls. We were hardly any drier on top. The long grass slopes leading to Great Dodd were tedious in the extreme and now we were exposed to the rain driven by a fresh south-westerly, so it was with some relief that we dropped down to Sticks Pass and so back to camp.

Gordon and Billy had opted out of my excursion and gone to Castle Rock instead where they found the South Crag dry and they climbed the Direct, Via Media and the Girdle. Climbing on Castle was a pleasure I was reserving for Sunday. Some hope. With sickening inevitability torrential rain was falling when we awoke on Sunday morning. When it eased off slightly around 11 a.m. we decided to push all the cars out and when this operation was completed, left for Keswick to walk up Skiddaw and salvage something for the day. We left the cars at Millbeck and followed the steep gully to Broad End; tiring on the calf muscles but more interesting than the ordinary route. Then we flogged up the scree to the summit ridge. As the day before, wind and rain made it a reasonably rigorous exercise. We descended the ordinary route past Little Man, then traversed Howgill Tongue and crossed Appleshwaite Gill to regain our ascent path.

Hardly one of the most memorable weekends, but I think we made reasonable use of the time and at least it could be written off as a useful training weekend.

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#### B.M.C. MAGAZINE

"Mountaineering", published continuously since April 1947, has seen its last issue in Vol. VI No. 5, which appeared just before Christmas 1971 and has now ceased publication.

It is replaced by MOUNTAIN LIFE, a new glossy feature magazine of general appeal to all mountaineers. The B.M.C. attaches great significance to this new development, but the new magazine is not just a mouthpiece of the B.M.C. as it is being run professionally on a fully commercial basis by West Col Publications.

Pete Scott has complimentary copies which are available for any member to look at. If anyone would like to receive copies on a regular basis every two months (Cost 25p each), please let Pete know.

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#### FOCUS ON MODERN MOUNTAINEERING

A "mini-conference" with the above title has been arranged by the B.M.C. to take place in Manchester, at the Lesser Free Trades Hall, on 1st November 1972, beginning at 7.30 p.m. There will be three lectures - Media and the Mountains (Ken Wilson), Scottish Ice Climbing (Bill March), and Solo Climbing (Alan Rouse), and an exhibition of mountain and outdoor art. Anyone wishing to exhibit their paintings should contact Brian Royle (Platt Bank, Leaden Knowle, Buxworth, Chinley, Derbyshire) for further information. Tickets will probably cost 50p.

16th Welsh Walk, 1972 style

It was a truly imperial and -1111- half dozen who met at the New Inn New Bridge-on-Tye on the evening of Friday 7th July. The events of the weekend were to prove some more elite than others, but then that will depend on your views on plutocracy and "blessed are the poor for they shall inherit the earth" etc.

The mistake was obvious from the start. Unintentionally the planned route nipped the corners of four 1 inch o.s. sheets and listed on the meets circular gave the impression of distance. Quote from Harry 'Paul Gardiner led a meet over this "desert of Wales", years ago. The first 10 miles are purgatory - monotonous. The country north is magnificent Fred, You'll need your gum boots'. Dave wasn't too sure where he'd been before but our sensitive Welsh bard warned the Meet Leader he was being conned. James puffed contentedly on his pipe and said "We know where we are going - further west". Paul Bingham stood silently, supped his ale, observed all.

There is much that could be related between 22.30 hrs Friday and 10.30 hrs Saturday. Sufficient to say we left the cars just north of Bryn on the 1000 ft contour with the most remote part of southern Britain behind us - by car. Fortunately the coffee break called for at this juncture was not prolonged and we were away into the mist before the rain came at 11.00 hrs. It was a near thing, but the Welsh Walk 1972 had been saved.

The events of the day served only to prove that certain participants were suffering from acute hydrophobia and yet this was difficult to reconcile with the recurrent mention of the coast, Aberystwyth and a desire to plod up valleys following streams. However, Dave Williams, Paul Bingham and myself attained the summit of Plynlimon whilst Harry, Peter and Fred skirted the peak and went ahead in the inclement conditions to find a suitable camp for the night.

It was 19.00 hrs when Dave, Paul and myself arrived at the pre-arranged rendezvous of the bar at the George Borrow Hotel (2 star) Ponterwyd. The advanced party announced with gentlemanly confidence they had booked in for the night! Williams was astonished - was obviously distressed and sat behind his ale stunned. Mr. James tried to alleviate the situation by suggesting there was a little bed and breakfast place down the road! It was obvious real leadership was called for and after an aperitif or two the gentlemen departed for dinner and the youthful Paul took the initiative and led the men for a nosh in more natural surroundings some distance behind the hotel.

We gathered again after food for liquers and cigars. The hospitality was excellent at the George Borrow and it was the early hours of Sunday morning when "each retired to his own".

The weather was superb on Sunday. Relax - was the watch word, so often quoted as we ambled over the ridges and through gorges. The only time a moment of tension was experienced was when Harry came face to face with a Herefordshire bull in a field of cows. The bull won.

On leaving Bryn at 17.45 hrs the weekend had been noted a Two Star meet. What of next year? 4 star maybe, Harrogate or Leamington Spa - with a Georgian flavour?

FUTURE OF THE PEAK DISTRICT

Colin Hobday recently visited a forum to discuss the future of the Peak District and the problems it faces. The conference was somewhat vague, but the implications especially on access and camping are so vital to the Oread that the subject was discussed at length in a recent meeting of the Committee. A full report will be published in a future issue of the Newsletter. Meanwhile if you know of any public footpaths which are not being walked please give details to any member of the committee.

NEW CLIMBS 1972

Vol. 1 of New Climbs, edited by Tony Moulam and Dennis Gray has now been published. This volume covers Dorset, the Peak District, the Pennines and Ireland. Copies are obtainable from the B.M.C. Office Room 314 (Third Floor), 26, Park Crescent, London. W1N. 4EE, at a price of £1 + 6p post or from normal trade outlets.

INDOOR MEETS

- The following is a provisional list of next seasons indoor meets:-
- 3rd October. Members Evening
  - 7th November Forum led by Dennis Gray
  - 5th December Film Evening
  - 9th January Ski evening
  - 6th February Lecture T.B.A.
  - 6th March Preview of the Alpine meet venue 1973.

On leaving Glyn at 17.45 hrs the weekend had been noted a two star meet. That of next year? A star maybe, Harrogate or Leamington Spa - with a Georgian library?

The weekend was superb on Sunday. Blair - was the watch word as often quoted as we angled over the ridges and through gorges. The only time a sense of tension was experienced was when Harry came face to face with a Hampshire bull in a field of cows. The bull won.