



OREAD

THE JOURNAL OF THE OREAD MOUNTAINEERING CLUB

1981 - 1982

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Cover Photo: Martin Roome on Golden Yardstick (VS, 5a), Wildcat Crag.

The Ego Trip

Anon

Gob-smacked! - We gawped and gaped out over the bonnet of the car as we breasted the col. The profusion of wild, serried ranks of yellow granite buttresses thrusting boldly beyond the trees was just so impressive and stunningly beautiful. Forgetting momentarily its permanence and my ephemeral existence, I rushed to capture some of it in my little clicking box. This image-gathering traps but one dimension only of the sublime totality of nature.

We rushed about excitedly - discovering fresh vantages through the trees or from atop a rocky eminence, until the thirst was assuaged and our craving to take it all in dissipated. We just had to stay there the night and camped on the short-grazed, green grass amongst the wide-spaced evergreens; where the wind stole the heat of the sun and shrieked and moaned through the boughs which it had severed and distorted over years of restlessness. Obvious spasms of tumultuous rage within tempestuous gales had shorn off the top of many a tree and left trails of dismembered boughs. Other tents were dotted about, some lone but more bunched in little groups. The largest grouping was inhabited by rock climbers - I watched them return to camp in geared pairs and I wondered at their exploits. Most seemed to be young lads and then I spotted the bearded elder (G.) who looked to be their mentor.

Having established camp, I sauntered over to enquire of their doings. They were Germans and fortunately G. spoke good english and I was able to talk with him. I played the climbing low key - but with just sufficient interest and divulgence of inside knowledge to suggest the possibility of some experience. You could almost see the impression reflected in their eyes - English tourist making out he knows a little of our sport - or maybe - perhaps - could he possibly be one of us?

"Have you come here to climb?"

"Not really - I am on a holiday with my wife."

"Do you climb then?"

"A little."

"Do you like to climb?"

"Yes - but I have no equipment except a pair of E.B.'s."

"Food's ready," came the cry from our tent and I bade my farewell.

Whilst we were sipping our coffee, G. came over to our tent and enquired whether I would be interested in accompanying their group on a climb in the morning. I purred - the bait had been taken - they were interested in this Englishman. After a few polite generalities, he broached the subject of the grade of difficulty I would like to climb at. Now I was in the hot seat - I had seen that they had all the modern rock gear - they might all be young hot-shots - I played it down the middle and suggested that grade V might be suitable. This turned out to be the right move as he had in mind an excellent V Sup. of 200 metres which was a fine climb with a difficult first pitch which had only succumbed after some considerable effort on his part.

Next morning, the steady, cool breeze wafted over us as we lazily sorted some

It is two years since the production of 'Oread 1980', during which time the Club has seen a steady influx of new and prospective members - this is reflected in the contents of this Journal where a number of the authors' names will be unfamiliar to older Club Members. It is reassuring and encouraging, though, to see many familiar names, and I hope that a balance which reflects the diverse spectrum of Club activities has been achieved - I feel that the re-introduction of Meet Reports to this Journal has helped in this respect. It is inevitable that a majority of contributions will come from those Members with whom the Editor is regularly in contact - some of these contributions freely offered, others only forthcoming after a little pressure! I hope those involved feel the results are worthwhile. Despite the usual problems of getting people to put pen to paper, it is encouraging to note that there are more than thirty contributors to this Journal - a healthy response, even over a two year period. This response reflects well the current state of the Oread - there are Oreads out every weekend in this country (as many as sixty on a Meet), Oreads active in the Alps and other overseas countries, and there is a strong calendar of Oread social events (culminating in the Annual Dinner - as usual a sell out).

But what of the future - the mainstay of any strong, progressive mountaineering club is its calendar of Meets and the attendances achieved on those Meets. It is to be hoped that a balance can continue to be achieved here which not only caters for all tastes but which tends to unite the various sections within the Club. For this to be effective a change in outlook is called for in some sections of the Club - too many Members glance through the Meets List and mentally write off half the Meets as not being for them. If everyone was a little more flexible in outlook and was prepared to try Meets which, in previous years, they have always missed, they might be surprised at the results. The Members who tend towards the walking and mountaineering Meets could well find they fare quite well on what are ostensibly the 'rock athletes' Meets - conversely, the latter might discover that there are rewards to be gained from a good mountaineering day which they had not thought possible. In the long run, this could only serve to strengthen the Oread as a Club and to avoid any tendency towards, to quote the words of a previous Editor, 'an amorphous association'. We must all remain aware of the need for the expanding Oread to grow together as a Club, hence maintaining the spirit which has characterised it in recent years.

John O'Reilly, Editor. 18.11.82

Acknowledgements: My initial thanks must go to all those people who provided material for the Journal and who are credited therein. Beyond this, there are a number of people without whose work it would have been impossible to produce this Journal. Pete and Marion Northcote put many hours into what was to be the 1981 Journal. Unfortunately, for a variety of reasons, this did not appear in print - their work, however, formed a strong basis for the current production. Pete also provided printed titles for all the articles and the cover. Mike Pearce put in much, and at times frustrating, work on the production of black & white photos from slides, and Jean O'Neill provided ever ready copying facilities. Colin Hobday organised all the printing of the photos and the cover, while Pete Scott did likewise for the bulk of the text at Kedleston Road, as well as organising and helping with the collating. Beryl Strike provided cartoons to order, as did Eileen Darley with alpine sketches. I also received much general advice and support from Jill Towle, Mike Pearce, Pete Scott and Ruth Sigley.

Photo Credits: My thanks to the following who provided the original photos and slides used in the Journal - Jack Ashcroft pp. 95, 96 - Pete O'Neill p. 76 - John O'Reilly p. 10 top - Mike Pearce Cover & p. 31 - Chris Radcliffe pp. 32, 39, 40 - Gail Searby p. 75 - Robin Sedgwick pp. 9, 10 bottom left & right, 55, 56.

gear under the warming, early sun. Apparently, it was an easy half-hour uphill to the cliff and a few of the lads had left before us. I was a little apprehensive that my concept of an easy half-hour uphill might not match that of more youthful limbs - but once we set off no supermen emerged to set a pace.

Our route took us through a bouldering and small crag wonderland - rugged granite boulders littered the hillside which was also more than adequately provided with incredibly fissured and weathered crags 25 to 75 metres high. A cragsman's paradise basking beneath a clear blue sky - only minutes from a road and absolutely deserted. As Nat would say - "the best cragging you've never climbed on, youth". Below us gleamed the sun's reflection from the magnificent cloud-sea which filled the valleys to the brim, and behind all this were cliffs 300 metres or more high.

The walk up was soon over and we arrived beneath our particular crag to find our route occupied by two of the lads who were just about to start the first pitch. This was a superb corner crack which widened to off-width as it steepened to beyond the vertical and ended in a ledge at 25 metres. It soon became apparent to me that the youth attempting the pitch had about as much idea of hand-jamming as the average Oread! Watching his efforts of strenuous and insecure grappling with the edges of the crack made me restless and I could barely contain myself as my fists clenched and unclenched in eager anticipation. In an effort to be helpful, I called up that wearing a wrist-watch would not help as the crack widened. The point was lost and the leader proceeded to lunge for a wedge and secure himself by standing in a sling. Beyond this he could not progress and had to call for assistance - friends traversed in to the ledge above and dropped a top-rope, but even with this he managed to fall off. My German friend then looked at me and enquired whether I wished to lead the first pitch; obviously, he was not certain how I would react to this performance. God, I could not wait. I selected a few runners, ensured I was belayed and I floated into the crack - buoyed by my pent-up desire to climb. The jamming was good until just below the wedge - the crack widened and technique came into play - I reached high above the ignored wedge and distorted my hand deep into the crack, hiding the grimace with a contrived grin. I carefully placed my first runner somewhat higher than the wedge. Not a sound - the Huns were silenced and they rolled their protruding eyeballs from over the edge of the ledge above. Too strenuous to stay and admire being admired, I laybacked and bridged the upper crack and carelessly heaved onto the ledge, absorbing the adulatory remarks in the easy manner to which I had grown accustomed!

God - climbing is good. I was really enjoying myself. Ego-tripping on superb rock with a transient audience; but not just that - the climbing was opening a pressure valve - I was getting lighter and power was beginning to surge through my system. I followed an easier pitch and now we were held up by the party in front. I could not be restrained - I stepped round a rib and stood at the foot of a shallow chimney which soared up and vanished into a rounded groove. Some bye-pass this, I thought, as I friction-bridged across diverging walls to reach the shallow groove above. The entry to this was bold and technical, involving a strenuous, rounded layback and fast movements to reach more secure ground. Once over this, I eased the thumping heart with rapid deep breaths as I stood there simmering like a pressure cooker and, at this, the Huns exchanged quick words. I pushed on past their withering leader as I rejoined the voie normale.

Above this, the climbing was less fierce but of excellent quality, of great variety in superb situations. From an arete I saw some of the other lads

attempting an impending 90 metre diedre capped with a small roof, which they thought was unclimbed. My vantage enabled me to see a thin crack continuing right through to the top - a perfect line.

My friend was pleased to have done our climb again - particularly as we did it in a time and style much improved on his first attempt. These moments had been snatched because they had to break camp that afternoon to drive off to another area and, as we descended, we could see all the lads returning to the camp. But I was hardly able to control my inner urge to climb and deviously manoeuvred our descent to pass the foot of the 90 metre diedre. At its foot I casually mentioned that it would be a fine thing to climb - which gained agreement from my companion but also the sorry acknowledgement that we did not have the time to attempt such a thing. I turned the screw - he was my captive second - he had to want to do the climb - without words from me he understood my desire to do the route. He was under pressure from my vibes and he also desired the route - had not his lads retreated from it? His ego too was tempted - but if only time allowed. He asked how long it would take - without hope in his voice.

"One hour." I said confidently - as if I knew.

He was so incredulous at this short time that he was prepared to believe me. How the mind can accede to a dogma for the unfathomable! A race against time on unknown rock in search of credibility. One hundred and fifty feet eased by in measured pleasure of solid technical rock - the clock was losing on its steady pace.

The steepening groove above was an impressive and alluring prospect with a jutting roof to close the sky. But little iron men nested in the crack as evidence of homo sapiens having passed that way before.

The presence of the in-situ pitons gave me a marvellous opportunity to ostentatiously ignore the use of such devices and to show how stoppers were a viable alternative. Out under the roof, the crack was too thin for finger ends and only iron-aid was left; so unwilling for this resort, I pushed across the left side wall and cranked on exiguities to gain a groove through the overhang. It was done and I was extended on this technical pitch; but it had been a revelation to him of style and all accomplished just within the hour - my credibility affirmed!

Back at the camp, impatient youths questioned our delay - but language was no barrier to my understanding their awe as G. related our success on the diedre. I modestly accepted their congratulations as 'ego' screamed inside me at the momentous pleasure of it all.

The Bridge

Paul Stidever

This short article is dedicated to those who share Paul Gardner's view that "bouldering is the ultimate form of mountaineering", and is a way of pointing those who are unaware of its existence to an interesting local training ground. I have included technical grades as an approximate guide, a '#' indicates that the grade has been nominated by a second party, as at the time of writing I still haven't managed to get up the thing! As can be seen from the diagram, the bridge in question is the one clearly visible from the Rowing Club entrance looking back towards the city centre.

BLANC WALL

Routes on the clean face, furthest from the Rowing Club, are described from left to right (numbers refer to the diagram).

1. WALKER SPUR 4a

The easiest route on the face, taking the left-hand arete. Progress is made using both walls. Exit via the railings. Harder variations can be found by eliminating either wall. Using the clean face only, the route goes at 4b, whereas the dark face under the bridge goes at 5a.

2. ROUTE MAJOR 4c

Direct up the left-hand side of the next buttress. Escape by traversing left to the railings, or continue boldly up the parapet.

3. CENTRAL PILLAR 5c

An interesting problem with many variations and nearly as many rules. A line up the buttress without using holds on any of the blocks which go to the edge of the buttress provides good sport.

4. BRENVA SPUR 4c

Direct up the right-hand side of the buttress. Finish direct for that grippy exposed feeling.

5. AMONE SLAB 5a

Using the two holes move up the left-hand side of the main wall. Finish by traversing left.

6. EPERON DES COSMIQUES 4c

Ascend the middle of the wall to two good holds at the top. A long reach is helpful. Finish as for 5.

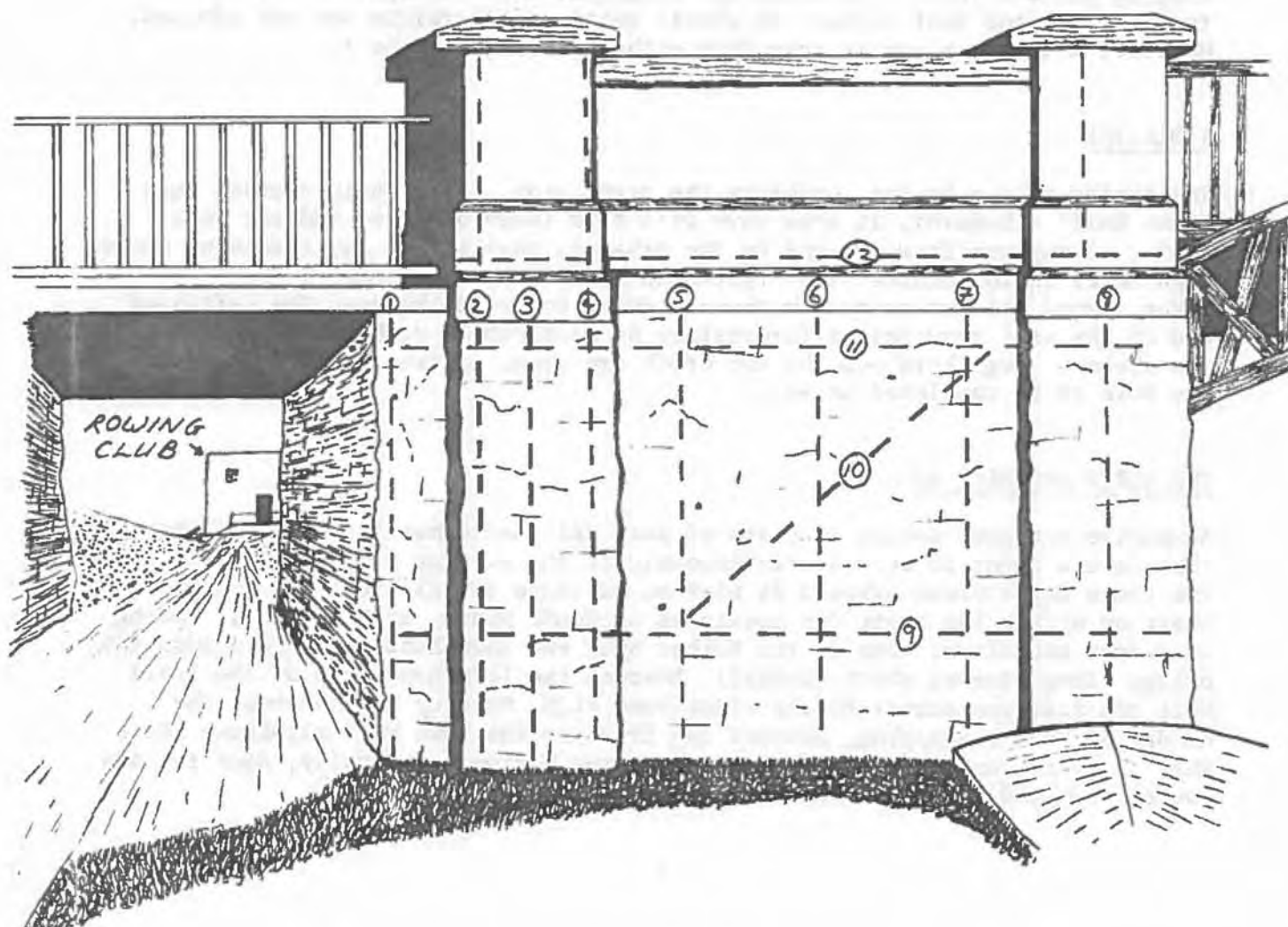
7. TOUR RONDE (North Face) 5a

The right-hand side of the main wall on greasy holds. Finish as for 5.

8. AMERICAN DIRECT 5a

The right-hand buttress by any means possible. Finish boldly up the corner.

The face provides good, short traverses on clean rock, rarely found on this outcrop.



9. ROUTE MINOR 5b

A low-level traverse, normally done from left to right. Easy if you're small.

10. LES ECANDIES 5b

A traverse starting at low-level on the left and moving up to finish at a high level on the right. Can be done equally well the other way round.

11. ARETE DES COSMIQUES 5b #

A high-level route, can be done equally well in either direction. Resist the temptation to use the parapet ledge.

12. MIDI-PLAN TRAVERSE 4c

Hand-traverse the lower sloping ledge, from right to left. The higher ledge provides interesting fun for the suicidal or drunk, but should be avoided if in neither of these states.

Other traverses on this wall are left for the true explorer to find at will.

WALL OF THE EARLY MORNING LIGHT - Honest!

The inside of the bridge, river side, provides endless practice for those who wish to perfect their wire-brushing technique. Most straight-up routes terminate at the roof without an abseil point and therefore are not advised. However, a traverse can be made from either direction at 6a #.

TROLLTIND

The inside of the bridge, opposite the river side, is slightly cleaner than 'Dawn Wall' - however, it does have it's fair share of loose and wet rock. Again, a traverse from one end to the other is possible at 5a, involving quite high moves in the centre. The right-hand arete can be ascended at 3c, and also makes a good descent route for those wishing to avoid the mud. The left-hand end of the wall provides an interesting 5a mantleshelf problem, if only the one obvious large hold and the top brick are used. A lower pinch grip allows the move to be completed at 4c.

THE SUPER INDIRECT 6a

A massive traverse taking in parts of each wall and demanding great stamina. (This route ought to be done continuously in one evening. Any longer spent on the route might prove awkward as bivvies en route are difficult to find!). Start on either the Arete des Cosmiques or Route Minor, on Blanc Wall, moving away from the river. Move up the Walker Spur and then hand-traverse across the bridge (long-sleeved shirt useful!). Descend the left-hand side of the Troll Wall and traverse across to the right-hand side. Move up and re-cross the bridge by hand-traversing. Descend and traverse the Dawn Wall rejoining Blanc Wall to finish on the traverse avoided at the beginning. Finally, dash for the Rowing Club and a thirst quencher - you deserve it.

* * * *

Obviously, areas of the bridge have been omitted - the area behind the tree facing the Rowing Club, the areas on the far side of the river, and the river-level traverses. These have been left for future boulder devotees to discover, as the routes already covered will provide an interesting evening out. Bridge Bouldering, for god's sake, don't knock it - it might fall down.

P.S. Do the lot in one evening and you'll accumulate more Gaston points than Sedgwick in a season.

* *****



Old Man of Hoy

Robin Sedgwick



The Team: Ted Wells, Dave Owen, Derek Bolger, Robin Sedgwick, Pete Scott, Helen Griffiths, Martin Roome, John O'Reilly.

THE OLD MAN OF HOY



Pete Scott starting the crux second pitch.



Martin Roome, on the descent, pulling back onto the stance after abseiling down the overhanging second pitch.

A cold, windy April morning sees the two bleary-eyed halves of the team rendezvous in the small harbour at Scrabster after the overnight drive from Derby. Our half is lucky to be there, after near benightment with an empty petrol tank at Stirling, but from here on in John O'Reilly's organisation slips into gear and runs with the regular precision normally only associated with Dave Wright's right elbow.

Vast heaps of ropes, rucsacs and food are piled out of the car boots and trundled onto the ferry. We are eight in number altogether - Scottie doing his efficient presidential bit but looking more like Biffo the Bear in his Helly-Hansen suit, the tiny team of Dave Owen and Helen Griffiths dwarfed beneath huge extendable rucsacs, travel organiser John with Martin Roome, and our secret weapons Derek Bolger and Ted Wells. Their role is to ensure that no matter what the weather throws at us, we'll get up the route. Oh, and myself glowing with pride in the fact that I am to climb the famous 'Old Man', attached to the same rope as another famous 'old man', the esteemed Scott.

The two-hour ferry crossing to Stromness on Mainland, the largest island of the Orkney group, brings two disappointments - firstly, a bar that sells only canned beer and, secondly, an announcement from the Captain that rough seas mean we'll be going through Scapa Flow, thus missing out on a view of the 'Old Man'. Once we've hit the swell, out of the harbour, we agree with this idea, and John keeps us amused with Mike Pearce stories concerning the latter's sea sickness on the Lundy ferry and Markeaton Park Lake.

By the time we've got the gear off the ferry in Stromness, John has Stevie Mowat and the 'Scapa Ranger' waiting for us and we're off on the switchback half-hour trip to Hoy, crashing through the breakers, eyes nervously scanning the surface for Argie periscopes or approaching Exocets. It's a simple matter to unload the gear onto the tiny jetty and thence onto the waiting mini-bus. Half-an-hour's drive on narrow twisting roads brings us to Rackwick Bay and our accomodation for the week.

The following day is damp, cold and windy but with the prospect of an improvement on the way. We decide to postpone our attempt on the 'Old Man' and, instead, Scott issues us with a man-day ration pack of apple, cheese and Mars Bar and leads us off on a forced march around the island - in retrospect, a pleasant day bringing an appreciation of the barren solitude of Hoy, and impressive views of the 'Old Man' and the monstrous cliffs of St. John's Head.

Our third day on the island brings little improvement in the weather, only a forecast suggesting worse to come. 8.00 am therefore sees a race over the mile of track to the 'Old Man'. Ted and Derek assume pole position and, while Pete and myself are still on the steep, grassy descent, Ted is cruising his way up the crux second pitch.

The strong wind that has battered us on the way across the cliff tops is, mercifully, calmer at the base of the pinnacle, but the air is filled with snow flurries and it's bitterly cold. Woolly hats and ski gloves seem to be the order of the day, and I'm wearing more clothing than I normally do for an ice route on the 'Ben'.

Following on the heels of John and Martin, I magnanimously offer to lead the first pitch - no heroic gesture, this, however. It means that I get to lead three of the five pitches - the pleasant, solid, well-protected ones. Pete gets the crux second, an overhanging offwidth, and the long, friable, diabolically-

protected fourth - it always pays to do your homework before-hand.

The first pitch is easy and leads to a commodious stance. The second is something else. An airy, steep traverse on big holds bringing the first blast of exposure, fingers freezing on the cold sandstone. A steep, bulging crack, turned by an airy rib on the right, leads to an easy chimney. A steep pull out left on poor jams is the crux and forty feet of wedging and bridging up an offwidth lead to the stance. Pete leads it steadily. I unashamedly pull on a wedge on the crux, deciding that prevailing conditions allow the use of the Alpine code of ethics - Pete later admits he did likewise!

As I bridge the top part of the pitch, Derek slides gently past on his way down. Later that evening over a celebratory glass of wine he had an amusing tale to tell -

"As I was coming down, there was Dave Owen leading the second pitch. He was jammed in the chimney below the crux - all you could see was a white face and a pair of bulging eyes. He had just realised that all the remaining protection on the pitch was on wedges and chockstones - and he had no tapes left. When I told him I didn't have any either, his eyes bulged even more. Then I said Ted had them and would be down after me, and he suddenly cheered up."

Dave, by the way, has a reputation for mangling his hands in cracks - but he had prepared himself by taping the backs of his hands and knuckles Yosemite-style. It worked a treat - the backs of his hands remained unscarred. He ripped his thumb to pieces, however!

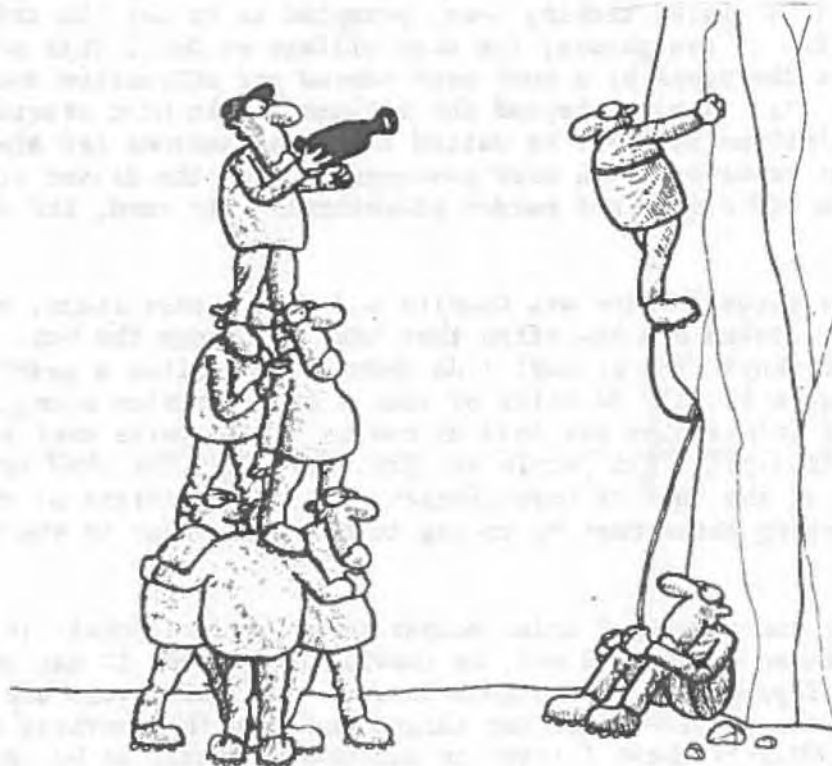
The next two pitches are in complete contrast. The third is easy, pleasant, and well supplied with big runners, whereas the fourth, despite a reasonable level of technical difficulty, has an embarrassing lack of gear - two runners in 150 feet. Fortunately, Scott rose to the challenge and we're soon ensconced on a large ledge at the bottom of the final corner. From below, it looks impressive, vertical with an overhang at half height. In execution, it proves to be one of the best pitches anywhere. Rock with the texture and quality of best gritstone, huge jugs, superb jams and an over-abundance of immaculate protection - a pitch for the connoisseur. John and Martin are already on top and the four of us spend ten minutes taking the obligatory summit photos, causing amusement to Derek on the cliff top as cameras are passed back and forth in time-honoured 'will you take one with mine' fashion.

It's now raining and we head downwards, passing Dave and Helen, still on the fourth pitch, on our second abseil. The abseil down the second pitch is really wild. The overhanging and traversing nature necessitates the leaving of a fixed rope, but Ted and Derek had removed this and tied the abseil ropes off at the next stance, the top of the first pitch. The 'ab' is free all the way, with some exciting hand-over-hand to gain the stance at the end. Martin comes down behind us muttering about "400 feet of overhanging hell". One more 'ab' and we're back on the deck and scuttling off through the rain to join Derek and Ted on the 'subs bench', a driftwood seat in a peculiar rectangular cave resembling a football dug-out.

Half-an-hour later, a resounding cheer goes up from the six climbers now huddled on the bench as Dave and Helen complete the tricky second pitch abseil. A further half-hour and all eight of us are posing for the final group photos on the cliff top against the background of the 'Old Man'.

The following day we vacate the island. As the only ferry from Stromness is at 8.00 am, an overnight stay is negotiated in a boarding house. John's plausible tongue excels - hot baths, eight in a room and a monstrous cooked breakfast the following morning, presided over by a maternal landlady who stuffs us full of food and refers to John as either 'The Captain' or 'the handsome one with the thing on his chin' - all for £2.00 a head.

On the ferry home, we all crowd onto the deck as the sea mists slowly drop and cling ethereally to the base of the 'Old Man', while the last frames of innumerable rolls of film are shot off by eight cameras. Whatever the attributes of the 'Old Man' as a mere route, its setting, situation and nature add so much charisma. I always used to think that a 1000 mile round trip to Hoy was an awful long way to go for 450 feet of climbing. That statement remains true, but the 'Old Man' is more than a mere 450 feet of climbing; so much so that it is worth the travel, and more. It is, as the Californians would no doubt say, "A Total Experience".



The Hills of Jura

Gordon Gadsby

Whilst spending our Easter holidays on the Isle of Islay, Frank Goldsmith, Rick Eagles and I decided to spend a day on the hills of Jura. The next day we made an early start to catch the first ferry from Port Askaig to Feolin on the Isle of Jura. We arrived at the picturesque little harbour at 7.10 am after a thirty mile drive. The tiny village was deserted except for two men operating the ferry. Although not due to sail until 7.30, the driver made it clear he was in a hurry to depart. We scrambled aboard, our bootlaces still undone, and with a hoot we were away, only to roar up the slipway onto Jura's rugged coastline ten minutes later. Waiting on the rough road were several cars and a mini-bus load of passengers all bound for Islay. Now we understood the ferry's early departure. As we left, the jovial boatman, with twinkling eyes, offered Rick one of the lifebelts - "You'll be needing this for the bogs" he said laughingly. We bade him good-bye and went up the slipway to the road, aware that the sky was overcast and that dark clouds were moving in quickly from the west.

Our original plan had been to climb one or all three of the Paps of Jura by heading straight across the six miles of bog and moors. However, seeing the mini-bus still with its engine ticking over, prompted us to ask the driver if he could take us as far as Craighouse, the main village on Jura. This would enable us to traverse the peaks by a much more varied and attractive route. "Sure I can, in fact I'll take you beyond the village to the best starting point for the mountains" he replied. We waited there for another ten minutes in case the ferry was returning with more passengers, then the driver slipped into gear and we were off along that narrow adventurous main road, the only one on Jura.

We soon found out our driver's name was Charlie and what a marvellous, voluble character he was. Rick asked him how often they have to change the bus. "They!" he retorted, "Who are they? It's my bus! I do about 27,000 miles a year" he went on, "although there is only 24 miles of road." As we rattled along, Charlie was a mine of information and told us how in recent years deer seemed to have become more important than people on Jura. Also that the road towards the famous whirlpool at the Gulf of Corryvreckan was in a bad state of repair with many people damaging their cars by trying to drive too near to the whirlpool.

Jura is 28 miles long and roughly 8 miles across at the widest point. It is a very wild and mountainous island and yet, as Charlie explained, it has more than its fair share of good weather, so good in fact that palm trees and fuchsias grow in many parts. Charlie loved the island and said that nothing would induce him to leave. "Here's where I live" he announced proudly as we passed through Craighouse. "We have some great ceilidhs here on winter evenings." The island's total population is only 250 and most of them live in or near Craighouse.

Five minutes later, Charlie pulled up by a bridge beyond the deerfence. "Cheerio" he called, after we paid him 50p each for our ride. "Have a great day out and don't miss the last ferry from Feolin". Then, with a roar of engine



APPROACHING SUMMIT OF BEINN AN OIR 784m (HILL OF GOLD),
BEINN SHIANTAIDH 755m IN BACKGROUND

and a wave, he was racing back to Craighouse. Charlie having put us in a light-hearted mood, we tightened up our rucksack straps, stepped down from the road towards the river and started walking due west into the wildest part of Jura's lonely mountains.

The wind was strong in our faces as we tramped steadily upwards toward the sombre-looking shapes of the three highest peaks, Beinn an Oir (785m, 2571 ft.), The Hill of Gold - Beinn Siantaidh (2477 ft.), Consecrated Hill - and Beinn a'Chaolais (2407 ft.), Hill of the Kyle. Each one was capped with a grey, rain-laden shroud. Because of their striking cone shapes these three peaks are known as the Paps of Jura; they are composed of fine-grained quartzite which weathers into angular fragments and covers the mountain sides in greyish-white scree.

In just over an hour we reached the wind-blown waters of Loch An T-Siob where we had to lean into the wind to make progress along the lochside towards the protecting flanks of the mountain. A few minutes more and we were sheltered against the hillside. "Look at the sea" called Frank as we sat resting in the bracken. Down below, the surface of the sea was being blown in many directions by the westerly gale and making unusual patterns when seen from our position at over one thousand feet high. "Never mind the sea, look up there!" yelled Rick above the roar of the wind. At first I couldn't see the large mountain hare as it was so well camouflaged against the grey quartzite rocks, then it darted off to a safe distance. During the next half-hour we saw at least a dozen hares but, despite crawling on my hands and knees in several directions, I never managed to get a really good photograph of one.

We moved on up the very steep hillside towards the highest col on Jura at 1,500 feet. It was free of wind and we walked easily between the two peaks of Beinn an Oir and Beinn Siantaidh in a northerly direction, passing several small lochans on the way. Above us, the peaks were completely covered in fast-moving clouds; it was cold and on our left we could hear the waves of wind crashing against the ridge. After a short consultation we decided to go for the highest peak, Beinn an Oir, by the long and interesting north ridge. Carefully, we contoured the mountain in a westerly direction until we reached the broad lower section of the ridge. Below us through the mist we could see the blue-grey waters of a small lochan, and in the distance the northern deer forests of Jura were bathed in the first sunshine of the day. Once on the crest of the ridge, upward progress became difficult, especially for Rick who is 6ft 5ins tall. The wind rocked us from side to side, the view completely disappeared and, worst of all, it started to rain.

It took us an hour to cover a distance that would normally have taken about fifteen minutes, so that when some large crags loomed up out of the clouds, we were thankful to flop down below them into the haven of a grassy hollow. "Have you ever known it worse than this?" yelled Rick as he struggled into his waterproof anorak. Frank and I grinned, agreeing that it was bad but certainly no worse than mountain weather we had experienced in the Cuillins, Cairngorms and on the high plateaux of Bleaklow and Kinder Scout. "It'll soon clear," I assured him, remembering the sunshine I'd seen earlier.

Ten minutes later, my hoped-for transformation took place. Excitedly, we clambered up the dripping wet crags to see fantastic views in all directions. The whole north end of Jura, the Isle of Colonsay and parts of Islay were bathed in sunshine, and in the east the huge wet mass of Beinn Siantaidh dominated the scene. The large cairn on its summit could be clearly seen. Looking south,

we could see our ridge curling upwards towards the summit. The wind was as strong as ever but we felt well-fed and lighthearted as we made for the top and the shelter of the large, circular cairn in glorious sunshine. Just before reaching the summit, we saw the ruins of two substantial buildings and a rough causeway said to have been laid by Ordnance surveyors many years ago.

The third of the Paps was now directly in front of us but obscured by thick cloud; in fact, the whole south end of our Pap was also cloud-covered, making our choice of descent route a tricky proposition. At last we decided on an adventurous way down by the great one thousand, five hundred foot scree gully that splits the south face of Beinn an Oir and is well seen from Port Askaig on Islay. This descent proved interesting but not difficult and within the hour we had reached the Na Garbh Lochans and again were in sunshine.

Time was running out now, as the last ferry left Feolin at 5 pm, and we still had six miles of the roughest bog and moor in Britain to cross. We made it with minutes to spare, tired, wet, but happy after crossing four streams, numerous ravines, balancing across bogs on turfs heads and also falling in one. Our friendly ferryman laughed his head off when he saw the state of us, but really the laugh was on him as he had never been on the Hill of Gold!



So What's the Rush

Mike Pearce

Flat on my back outside my tent at Fiva Farm, after an appalling thirty-two hour epic of bad route-finding and rain, I was reading Shipton ("... we sauntered up the last three thousand feet to the col ...").

A tall, thoughtful-looking figure came into view along the path from the river. He nodded an introduction. I stood up on aching legs.

"Hello," he said.

"Hi."

"You are a climber?"

"Yes."

He nodded over my shoulder towards the Trolltind.

"You have climbed the Troll Wall?"

"No."

"It is very big."

Was this a question or a statement?

"Yes, five thousand feet."

"Hmm ... five thousand feet. To-morrow I jump off."

Stunned silence. Suicide? Crazy?

"Err ... jump off the Troll Wall?" I said.

"Yes, with a parachute. We will sky-dive."

That's how it started. He was joined by three friends who had been inspecting their landing site in a nearby clearing. Steve emerged from his tent and we all sat swapping beer and experiences long into the evening. Comparing their sport with ours, slowly realising there was an empathy between us; an empathy born of participating in a sport considered abnormal by many. Sports which are so addictive that people often give up a normal life to spend all their time, money and effort following their dictates. People who can give different answers to the questions "What do you do?" and "How do you earn your living?"

Inevitably, conversation came round to the age-old question. Disguised at first in that brand of American-English peculiar to the Swedes.

"So what's the rush?"

As I wasn't going anywhere it took me a little time to realise that the word 'rush' meant excitement or thrill. In other words 'Why do you do it?' I tried, and failed, to explain and ended up offering to take them climbing. They seemed keen and then asked us if we would act as Sherpa/guides for their jump.

At three o'clock the following afternoon we started the four hour slog through melting winter snow, to the line of weird pinnacles and summits that guard the top of the Troll Wall, and from which it takes its name. Following the 'Troll Highway', a vaguely-cairned track across steep ribs and gullies, we arrived at a small flat col, with a smooth-topped block hanging over the wall, undercut by five thousand feet. We crawled towards the edge, stomach and mind sucked down by a mile of vertical rock.

Silence.

Steve and I ... awestruck. The others - who knows? How do you feel when you contemplate walking off a five thousand foot wall with only a few pounds of nylon technology strapped to your back?

Waiting.

The three Swedes sat huddled together in a small niche, quiet and still. Was it cold or fear that made them sit hugging drawn-up knees like antenatal triplets? A tear, pulled sideways across a cheek by the wind. Steve and I tiptoeing around, whispering to each other, setting up belays and camera positions. Afraid to intrude as they psyched up for their jump.

Sudden decisive action.

"O.K., let's do it."

He's striding across to his parachute. Strapping it on. Checking it in the same way I check my harness before a big abseil. He walks to the edge and paces three steps carefully backwards, like a long jumper. This must be the longest jump.

Immobility.

He stands fists clenched. Utters the universal expletive "FUCK."

Immobility.

First step - slowly. Second step - quicker. Third step - push. There is no fourth. He hangs for a fraction of a second, committed, face down over magnetic emptiness.

He didn't fall. The huge, silent hand of gravity stretched lazily up from the screes and snatched him downwards. His mouth opened in a great cry "SKY - DIVE!" The sound stretched and distorted by the acceleration into a primitive bird-like scream. He flashed down the wall head-first. Then his flight seemed to slow - almost to stop - as his distance from us increased. He hung spread-eagled on the air for eternal seconds. Time slowed.

Fear rising in me like a drug. He's blown it. He's frozen up. Can't pull his chute. Oh Jesus - he's going to die. All the cameraderie of the last few hours washed away in a rip-tide of shock, stomach twisting, eyes blurring.

And still nothing happened. Seconds passed like minutes. I felt nothing but total involuntary concentration on the tiny figure, motionless below. Then it came, from thousands of feet below, a rippling, flapping crack. A great whoop as his parachute opened perfectly eight seconds after take-off. He seemed to move again as the nylon wing converted downward motion into a slow, outward drift. The long silence shattered by our yells of relief, heart beating again, time speeding up, screaming like a kid. And for that moment, I was a kid, free and uninhibited to yell in harmony with other wild, free beings. Only the chill wind and dying sun to laugh at us.

So what's the rush?

Man small
Why fall?
Ground call
That's all.

Mountaineering with a boy: 1981

Tony Smedley

By the beginning of 1981 Vincent had achieved 14 years, my height and about half my mass. From a climbing point-of-view this had to be a good thing, which I suppose was some compensation for the ever-rising food bill.

Late in 1980, the family decided that it would spend the three weeks' 1981 summer vacation in Arolla. At that point, Vince and I made a conscious decision to climb together and attempt to rise a little above the eternal snow plods which, due to family considerations, had been the main feature of the last two years' alpine efforts.

Obviously, fitness mattered and I considered it would be better to spread the training programme over the time between Christmas and our departure, rather than concentrate the whole effort into the week before we packed, which has been my usual approach to these things. I also felt that it would probably benefit the sports plan if, this year, I avoided falling off my motorcycle (or anything else for that matter). Well, much thought was given to training, which started rather spasmodically. We allowed a five-week break after Christmas, to let things settle, then made a trip to Wales and climbed a route up the Trident face of Snowdon one splendid, sparkling Saturday. Alas, Sunday produced the rain which featured so strongly in the early part of the year, and was spent wandering rather disconsolately on a desolate beach.

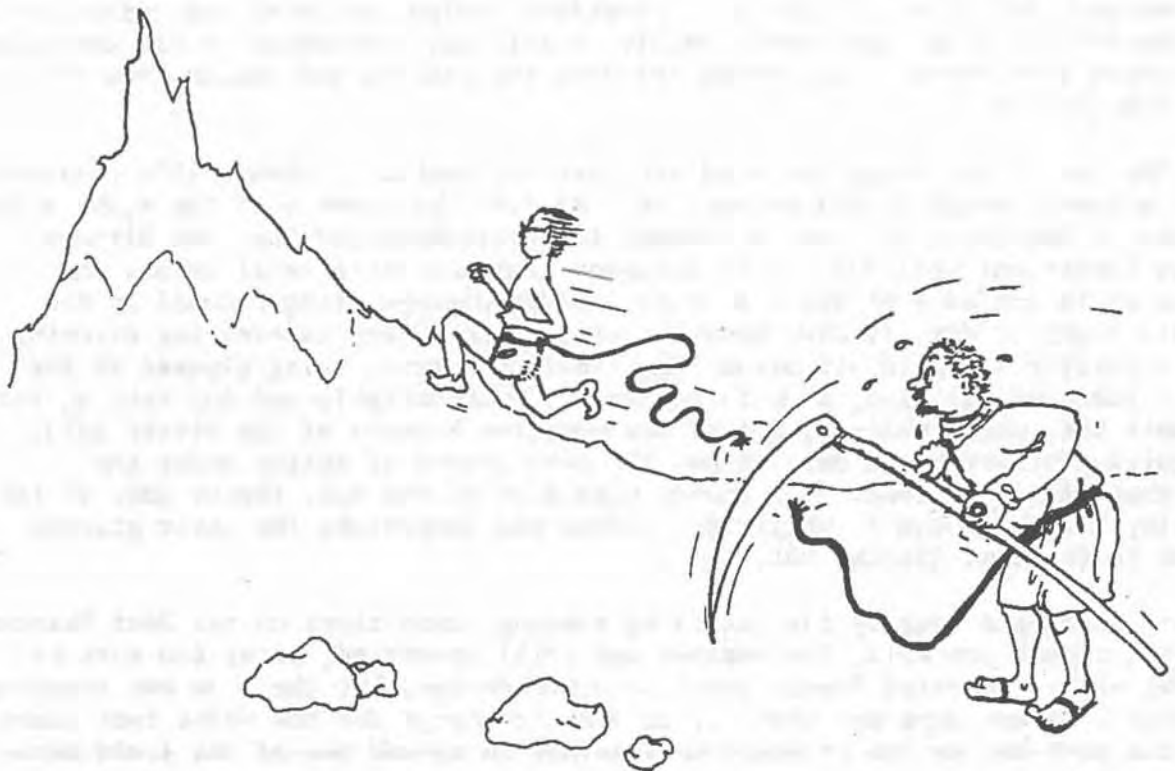
The Lakes at Easter were fascinating for the early part of the week, and it was so hot that we spent a day in Keswick seeking suncream, which was sold out. The family settled for ice-cream and went back to the hills. Some good walking was achieved, including an ice-plastered Sharp Edge, but by Wednesday the weather looked decidedly odd. Most of Thursday was spent in the vicinity of Swinside (because of the falling snow, just a shower). Friday blew a full blizzard and produced really exciting driving conditions for the following day's drive home by way of Long Hill and Hartington Moor.

A week was spent in Skye at Spring Bank Holiday to improve rock-climbing technique, but we all developed a vile chest infection (except Vincent, the perpetrator of the wretched thing, who recovered the day we set off), so little was done apart from a couple of short walks up to the ridge and a wheezy ascent of Sron na Ciche by way of Cioch West and Arrow. By July, however, things were progressing reasonably well, a serious regime of peat bogs, Pedigree and Brassington was having some effect and we felt we were performing tolerably well for an old man and a boy.

And so to the Alps. When we arrived at Arolla, it was raining with a cloud level at about 700 metres - enquiries revealed that this had been the situation for several days. Nothing was in condition and the beer was foul. Suitably discouraged, we set out to investigate the truth of the latter point which was

verified after a two-litre test sample. However, it transpired that we were lucky - the weather changed, next day dawned clear revealing vast quantities of fresh snow and the temperature in the valley had fallen to freezing point by nightfall.

The Pigne d'Arolla dominated the camp-site. A fine-looking peak with a F. grade route up it's eastern flank, ideal for the family. Mid-day saw the tribe plodding steadily towards the Vignettes Hut - well, three of us. The boy was ahead with Chris Bryan trying to halve the hut time. Only a feeling of deep responsibility for my wife and daughter, coupled with the inability to go any faster, restrained me from joining the competition.



Morning - and the faint light of dawn saw the family group on the ice-covered balcony of the hut. Roping-up confusion reigned for 10 minutes whilst gloves, gaiters and crampons were sorted into sets and finally we followed the general exodus into the dawn. Fiona (my daughter and, at 13 years, the youngest of the tribe) complained that we were going too fast and kept guiding the rope under my crampons to prove it, Vincent complained that we were going too slow, and Barbara complained non-specifically. O.K. - situation normal, so why do I do it?! Snow conditions were better than I had hoped for and in the trench which led to the top I seldom sank more than crutch deep, although excursions to either side were discouraging.

Dawn was superb and the summit views extensive, ranging from the Matterhorn to Mont Blanc. The Walker and Croz Spurs stood out noticeably, and the Oread team on the North Face of the Petit Mont Collon were seen to be doing well. Ten photographs and a Mars bar, then down to the Hut by 10.00, with the snow really coming into condition. A quick brew at the Hut, then down again to civilisation with showers, beer and ice-cream.

A day's rest and try again. A pre-selected route this time, the Aiguille de la Tsa East Face, with the boy. The route had already been climbed by an Oread team, who reported lots of soft snow with clear rock where it mattered, which sounded encouraging. A steady walk up to the Bertol Hut in deteriorating weather, with sacs rendered heavy by pegs, ice screws, down gear and other climbing impedimenta, the real need for which was probably open to question.

The weather deteriorated further during the night and by morning it was cloudy-warm and blowing a gale, but we decided to press on and see how the day developed. Bev Abley joined us at breakfast, helped us drink our coffee and offered to join us, apparently unable to stir any enthusiasm in his companions, so there were three of us struggling down the ladders and chains from the Hut to the glacier.

In the lee of the ridge the wind was less noticeable, although it's presence was evident enough in the plumes trailing from the summits of the 4,000 metre peaks to the east, the Dent d'Herens, the Matterhorn and the Dent Blanche. Snow conditions were fair as we followed Paul and Roy's trail across the glacier to the base of the Tsa, which seemed disappointingly small in the broad light of day. It did, however, produce some very interesting climbing in a totally splendid situation. The final 20 metres, being exposed to the full force of the wind, made things rather uncomfortable and any stay on the summit was, unfortunately, out of the question because of the bitter cold. A quick photograph and descent was the best course of action under the circumstances, followed by a steady plod back to the Hut, thence down to the valley for Vince and I, whilst Bev joined his companions for their planned trek to the Dent Blanche Hut.

Bev's team were down by the following evening, conditions on the Dent Blanche having proved too wild. The weather was still unsettled, being too warm at night with a reported freeze level at 4,000 metres, but the snow was receding rapidly. It was apparent that, if no drastic change for the worse took place, in the next day or two it would be possible to ascend one of the 4,000 metre peaks without undue difficulty. We felt either the Italian Ridge of the Matterhorn or the Dent Blanche offered the best chance of success - we finally settled for the Dent Blanche, mainly because it was nearer and we could make a better assessment of conditions. Bev elected to join us again for our attempt, which indicated the high degree of faith he had in our ability, or his complete lack of discrimination, the point-of-view depending on whether you asked Vince or anyone else on the camp-site.

Sorting gear again - trying to compromise between the minimum for safety and the maximum we could carry. Did we need two hammer axes? Was there room for the giant Nikon SLR? Decisions made, the midday sun found us toiling up the initial zig-zags of the six-hour Hut walk. Our 18.00 hours arrival at the Hut coincided with that of a Brit team from Birmingham University just down from the Dent Blanche after a successful, but lengthy, twelve-hour round trip. They had experienced no really desperate problems, but the poor snow conditions

had made the going slow, and the ice in the couloir which gave access to the ridge was green and brittle at about Scottish Grade III, and needing special care. Oh well, we would see. I was very pleased with my new Rupal climbing axe. Vincent had inherited my old Nanga Parbat, which I knew was adequate, and we had a Chouinard ice hammer between us. Within the hour Chris Fitzhugh arrived, having traversed the mountain and completed the descent in two-and-a-half hours, avoiding the couloir by descending the ridge direct - this achievement sounded distinctly encouraging. Chris helped us over our language difficulties with the rather intractable guardian, and continued his descent. We turned in with an early start in mind.

We were away by 5.00, a reasonable effort considering the obstructive attitude of the guardian, and daylight found us at the bottom of the couloir. The ice was indeed brittle and I found the abseil posts at rope-length intervals very welcome, providing good security. Two-and-a-half rope-lengths took us to the ridge, which provided good climbing on excellent rock interspersed with poor snow.

The crux, a rock pitch, was free from ice and presented no particular problems at about severe. By 11.00 hours, we stood beneath the summit cone. The weather was still fine and it had frozen slightly above 3,500 metres, but a storm was slowly building up behind the Matterhorn and we could hear distant thunder. By mid-day we attained the summit, which we shared with two other ropes of two. We didn't hang about on the summit in view of the impending storm. A quick burst of photography and down to the rocks below, closely followed by two Germans, who insisted in trying to pass us but, because of their lack of speed, succeeded only in making the rope handling very complicated as we moved down the ridge together. Eventually, they went off route descending below a small gendarme, which we climbed over, and one of them fell a fair distance accompanied by a lot of rock and flying gear. His companion did a good job of fielding him and we met again on the ridge above the ice couloir. Fortunately, he had sustained no serious injury, although his fingers were badly cut up. Our offer of adhesive dressings was politely refused, so we progressed down into the couloir whilst they traversed over the last gendarme, following the ridge directly. The descent of the couloir was without incident, which I must admit was a relief, and we traversed out to relatively easy ground, with the pleasing realisation that we could reach the Hut without undue problems even if the storm did overtake us. Descending steadily, we arrived on the Hut balcony at 18.00 hours, a total of 13 hours climbing. Rather slow, but considering the snow conditions and the delay factor inherent in a team of three, not an unreasonable effort. Vincent, particularly, went very well, climbing quickly on the rock and handling the rope impeccably. None of us was particularly tired so physically we had a good margin.

We arrived at the pre-arranged rendezvous with Kath Abley at the termination of the Ferpectle road about four hours later than Bev's estimated time of arrival (I have long since ceased trying to estimate my return time from anywhere). To my surprise, Kath was there with both of her children and a bottle of beer from Barbara - a very welcome sight - particularly as the weather was now deteriorating rapidly and it was starting to rain.

The subsequent weather pattern settled into bright mornings with a storm in the afternoon. More snow was being deposited on the higher peaks, and climbing anything else of significance was definitely not on. Swimming in the pool at Nax and aimless photographic-orientated wanderings were the order of the day until, as a final fling, the family made their way up to the Dix Hut with Don

and Wendy Pryor, the aim being to ascend one of the snow plods in the area. The walk to the Dix was very spectacular, particularly the flowers, but we experienced the now regular afternoon storm, which had still not cleared fully by morning. In the event, Don, Vincent and I climbed La Lurette in cloudy conditions which occasionally cleared to reveal tantalizing glimpses of the great 4,000 metre peaks now hopelessly plastered with fresh snow.

This proved the termination of the holiday from a mountaineering standpoint. The family enjoyed an excellent meal in the village with the Pryors the evening before we left for the U.K. and the journey home was uneventful. In retrospect, the most terrifying aspect of the whole holiday was not the diabolical conditions experienced on the North Circular, which probably produced the gravest risk to life and limb, but rather the awful realisation that the lad is now climbing at least as well as his dad.



Oread Favourite Routes

Keith Gregson

The following is a summary of the replies to my request for 'best routes'. The method used to combine and grade the climbs was a simple one - I gave 10 points to the first route in the list, 9 to the second, and so on. The result of adding together all the scores produces a 'graded list'. I tried various other methods (which gave very similar results) and, eventually, concluded that the simplest was the most appropriate.

You will recall that I first tried this exercise in 1981 for our local area and I have kept that survey completely separate, but include the result for interest sake. I include five tables:- the first three list the best climbs in order, the other two include all the climbs mentioned in the 1982 replies and are arranged alphabetically.

I have only included routes in the graded lists if they were mentioned by more than one person. An interesting comparison may be made between the 1981 and 1982 local climbs lists. In general, the climbs are very similar, thus giving some weight to the method of compilation. However, there is an obvious major difference, that of the sudden rise in favour of Sirplum in Cheedale. I can only surmise that the Oread have suddenly discovered it! My feelings are that the 1982 data comes from a wider selection of climbing ability (and a slightly larger number of opinions) and that the 1981 data came in the main from the younger, more active (at the present time) end of the club - hence some of the more mind-blowing entries. It is gratifying to see that one has to look beyond the first 20 routes in the 1981 list to find a route which is not included in the more recent list.

It would be possible to go on at great length about the methods of analysing and presenting the results of such surveys. No doubt one could do better by taking into account the experience and ability of contributors, but as I said in my initial appeal the object was to provide a talking point (and, doubtless, an argument or two).

I wonder if anyone has done all the routes on any of the lists; or even all the routes up to, say, Severe, etc.. The British list would seem to pose quite a challenge, and contains a lot of very fine routes - a better selection than 'Classic Rock'?

Many thanks to everyone who contributed. Hopefully, the results will pose a few challenges, cause a few discussions, and bring back a few memories of days on the crags. If so, then the object of the exercise will have been achieved.

Local Routes - Classified - 1981

1	Debauchery - High Tor	HVS	56	5
2	Great Crack - Duke's Quarry	VS	51	7
3	Original Route - High Tor	HVS	36	4
4	Chee Tor Girdle - Cheedale	VS	36	6
5	Suicide Wall - Cratcliffe	HVS	35	4
6	Cummerbund - Ossam's Crag	VS	33	4
7	Heather Wall - Froggatt	S	32	4
8	Broken Toe - Earl Sterndale	VS	32	4
9	Central Wall/Thorn - Beeston Tor	VS	30	4
10	Cataclysm - Wildcat	VS	28	4
11	Beeston Eliminate - Beeston Tor	HVS	28	3
12	Simeon - Dovedale	VS	28	3
13	Cat Walk - Wildcat	HS	25	4
14	Hollybush Crack - Stanage	VD	24	2
15	Valkyrie - Froggatt	HVS	23	3
16	Valkyrie - Roaches	VS	23	3
17	Darius - High Tor	El	22	2
18	Broken Toe - Wildcat	VS	20	2
19	Meditation - Beeston Tor	El	19	2
20	The Thorn - Beeston Tor	VS	19	3
21	Phoenix - Shining Clough	VS	18	3
22	Lime Street Direct - Willersley	HVS	17	4
23	Black Slab - Stanage	S	17	2
24	West Wall - Beeston Tor	VS	16	2
25	Right Unconquerable - Stanage	HVS	15	3
26	John Peel - Dovedale	HVS	15	2
27	Christmas Crack - Stanage	S	15	2
28	Birch Tree Wall - Black Rocks	VS	15	2
29	Derek's Dilemma - Wildcat	VS	13	3
30	Manx - Wildcat	VS	13	2
31	Medusa - Ravensdale	VS	13	3
32	Lyons Corner House - Millstone	HVS	12	2
33	Pothole Wall - Willersley	VS	10	2
34	Via Principia - Shining Clough	S	9	2
35	Mississippi Direct - Stanage	VS	8	2
36	Private Targets - Hall Moor Quarry	El	6	2
37	Great Harry - Lawrencefield	VS	4	2
38	Elder Crack - Curbar	HVS	3	2

Local Routes - Classified - 1982

1	Sirplum - Cheedale	E1	47	5
2	Cat Walk - Wildcat	HS	37	5
3	Beeston Eliminate - Beeston Tor	HVS	37	5
4	Inverted V - Stanage	VS	34	5
5	Heather Wall - Froggatt	S	33	6
6	Chee Tor Girdle - Chee Tor	VS	33	4
7	Suicide Wall - Cratcliffe Tor	HVS	31	4
8	Simeon - Dovedale	VS	31	4
9	Darius - High Tor	E1	28	3
10	Debauchery - High Tor	HVS	28	5
11	Medusa - Ravensdale	VS	26	5
12	Black and Tans - Roaches	S	26	4
13	Broken Toe - Earl Sterndale	VS	23	3
14	Cummerbund - Ossam's Crag	VS	22	3
15	Original Route - High Tor	HVS	21	3
16	Central Wall/Thorn - Beeston Tor	VS	21	3
17	West Wall - Beeston Tor	VS	20	3
18	Via Dolorosa - Roaches	S	19	2
19	Lime Street Direct - Willersley	HVS	18	4
20	Great Chimney - Hen Cloud	S	18	2
21	Great Crack - Dukes Quarry	VS	17	3
22	Valkyrie - Roaches	VS	16	3
23	Green Gut - Froggatt	HS	16	4
24	Wildcat Girdle - Wildcat	HVS	15	2
25	Meditation - High Tor	E1	14	2
26	Cataclysm - Wildcat	VS	14	4
27	Broken Toe - Wildcat	VS	14	2
28	April Crack - Stanage	HS	14	2
29	PMC 1 - Gardoms	S	14	2
30	Inverted Staircase - Roaches	D	13	2
31	Central Wall - Beeston Tor	MVS	13	2
32	Hollybush Crack - Stanage	VD	12	2
33	Lobo - Wildcat	VS	12	2
34	Apple Arete - Gardoms	S	11	2
35	Trafalgar Wall - Birchens	VD	10	2
36	Valkyrie - Froggatt	HVS	9	2
37	Robert Brown - High Tor	E2	8	2
38	Golden Yardstick - Wildcat	VS	8	2
39	Bond Street - Millstones	HVS	7	3
40	Goliath's Groove - Stanage	VS	7	2
41	Pothole Wall - Willersley	VS	5	2
42	Maud's Garden - Roaches	VD	5	2
43	Long Climb - Brassington	S	4	2
44	Octopuss - Wildcat	HVS	4	2
45	Sphynx - Wildcat	VS	3	2
46	Garrotter - Willersley	VS	3	2
47	Birch Tree Wall - Black Rocks	VS	3	2

British Routes - Classified - 1982

1	Dream of White Horses - Gogarth	HVS	64	7
2	Direct Route - Dinas Mot	VS	57	10
3	Main Wall - Cymr Las	HS	47	7
4	Gimmer Crack - Langdale	VS	40	5
5	Tophet Wall - Gable	S	25	4
6	Cloch Nose - Applecross	VD	24	3
7	Sirplum - Cheedale	El	24	3
8	Bow Shaped Slab - Pembroke	HS	23	3
9	Darius - High Tor	El	23	3
10	Flying Buttress - Dinas Cromlech	D	23	3
11	Doorpost - Bosigran	HS	20	3
12	Cenotaph Corner	El	19	2
13	Moss Ghyll Grooves - Scafell	VS	18	2
14	Integrity - Skye	S	17	2
15	First Pinnacle Rib - Tryfan	VD	17	3
16	Troutdale Pinnacle - Borrowdale	S	15	3
17	Pinnacle Wall - Craig yr Ysfa	HS	15	2
18	Spiral Stairs - Dinas Cromlech	D	15	3
19	Cloch Direct/Arrow - Skye	S	14	2
20	Hammer - Etive Slabs	VS	14	2
21	Old Man of Hoy	HVS	14	2
22	Crackstone Rib - Carreg Wastad	S	13	2
23	Cemetery Gates - Dinas Cromlech	HVS	13	2
24	Mickledore Grooves - Scafell	VS	11	2
25	Napes Needle - Gable	VD	10	2
26	Rib and Slab - Pillar	S	10	2
27	Albion - Lundy	VS	10	2
28	Army Dreamers - Pembroke	HVS	10	2
29	Avalanche/Red Wall - Lliwed	VD	9	2
30	Chee tor Girdle	VS	9	2
31	Great Slab - Cloggy	VS	8	2
32	A Climb - Ilkley	VD	8	2
33	Diocese - Chair Ladder	VS	8	2
34	Merlin - Tremadoc	VS	7	2
35	Tennis Shoe - Idwal	VD	7	2
36	Pinky - Moelwyns	VS	6	2
37	Tennis Shoe Direct - Idwal	S	6	2
38	Tensor - Tremadoc	HVS	6	2
39	Tower Ridge - Ben Nevis	D	6	2
40	Scratch - Tremadoc	VS	6	2
41	Bishop's Rib - Chair Ladder	HVS	5	3
42	Corvus - Borrowdale	D	3	2

Local Routes - Alphabetical - 1982

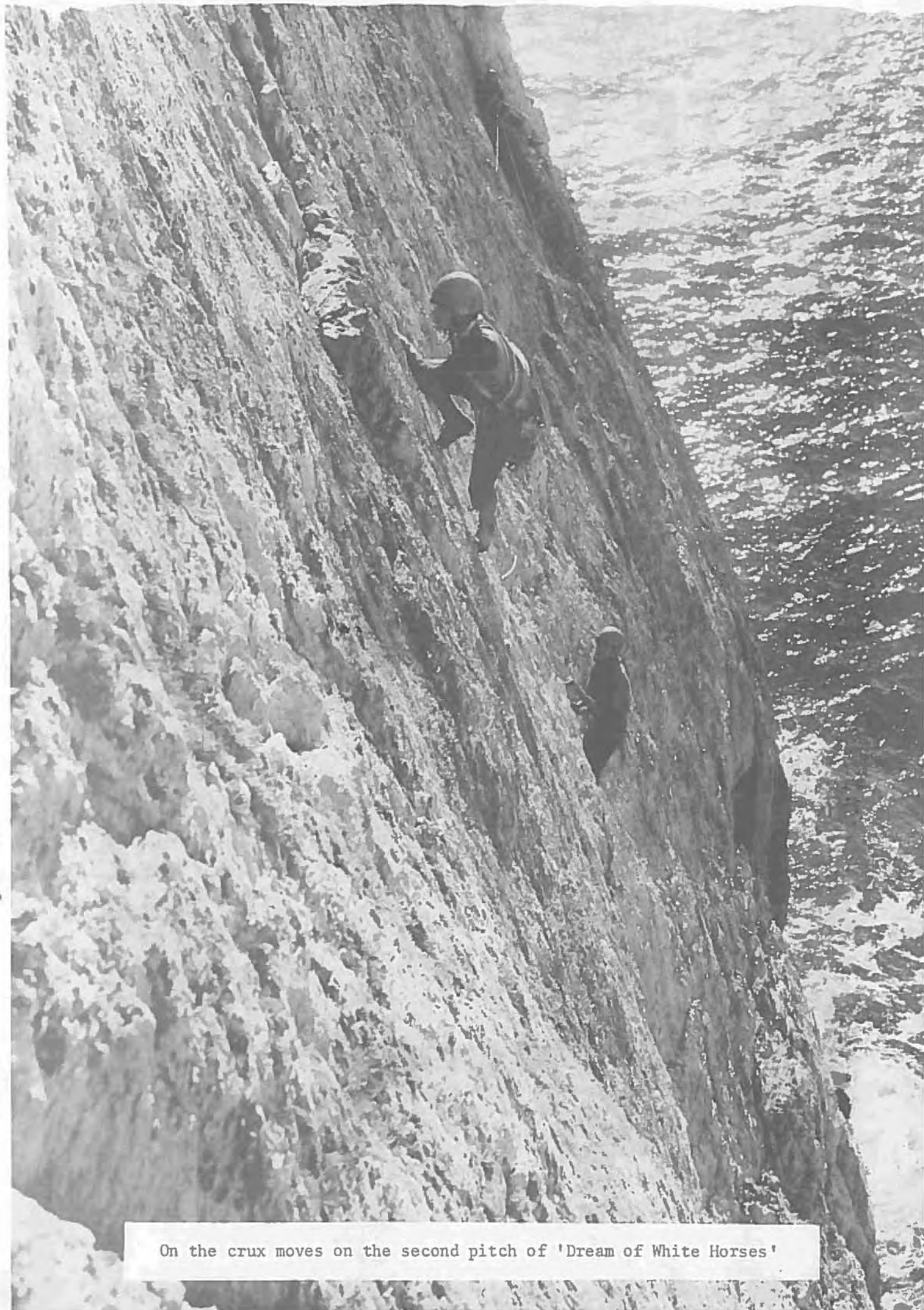
Allen's Slab - Froggatt	S	Great North Road - Millstones	HVS	Silicon - Dovedale	VS
Amazon Crack - Burbage	VS	Green Gut - Froggatt	HS	Simeon - Dovedale	VS
Apple Arete - Gardoms	S	Gunners Groove - Birchens	D	Sin - Stoney Middleton	VS
April Crack - Stanage	HS	Gymnic - Ravensdale	VS	Sirplum - Cheedale	E1
Batchelors Left Hand - Hen Cloud	HVS	Heather Wall - Froggatt	S	Slab and Crack - Froggatt	D
Beeston Eliminate - Beeston Tor	HVS	Highlight - High Tor	HVS	Sloth - Roaches	HVS
Bertram's Chimney - Beeston Tor	D	Hollybush Crack - Stanage	VD	Snakes Alive - Dovedale	VS
Billy Wizz - Lawrencefield	XS	Inverted Staircase - Roaches	D	Southern Rib - Raven Tor	VS7
Birch Tree Wall - Black Rocks	VS	Inverted V - Stanage	VS	Sphynx - Wildcat	VS
Black Grub - Beeston Tor	E3	Jackdaw Grooves - Wildcat	VS	Staircase - Laddow	M
Black Velvet - Roaches	VD	Jeffcoat's Chimney - Roaches	D	Stonnis Arete - Black Rocks	S
Black and Tans - Roaches	S	Jitter Face - Stanage	VD	Suicide Wall - Cratcliffe Tor	HVS
Bond Street - Millstones	HVS	John Peel - Dovedale	HVS	Sundowner - Froggatt	HVS
Brassington Crack	S	Kestrel Cracks - Roaches	HS	Technical Slab - Roaches	VS
Broken Toe - Earl Sterndale	VS	Lamplight - High Tor	HVS	Ten Craters of Wisdom - Dovedale	VS
Broken Toe - Wildcat	VS	Lean Mans Superdirect - Black Rocks	VS	The Bender - Earl Sterndale	VS
Campanile - Dovedale	S	Lime Street Direct - Willersley	HVS	The Brain - Curbar	VS
Cat Walk - Wildcat	HS	Lobo - Wildcat	VS	The File - Higgat Tor	VS
Cataclysm - Wildcat	VS	Long Climb - Brassington	S	The Thorn - Beeston Tor	VS
Central Buttress - Black Rocks	VD	Long Climb - Laddow	VD	Three Pebble Slab - Froggatt	HVS
Central Climb - Hen Cloud	S	Lyons Corner House - Millstones	HVS	Tiger Route 1 - Wildcat	VS
Central Trinity - Stanage	VS	Lyons Corner House Direct - Millstones	HVS	Tiger Tim - Wildcat	VS
Central Wall - Beeston Tor	MVS	Maud's Garden - Roaches	VD	Tower Face - Stanage	VS
Central Wall/Thorn - Beeston Tor	VS	Meditation - High Tor	E1	Trafalgar Wall - Birchens	VD
Chatti Chimney - Wildcat	S	Medusa - Ravensdale	VS	Traverse - Windgather Quarry	?
Chee Tor Girdle - Chee Tor	VS	Monument Gully - Birchens	D	Tris - Ravensdale	HS
Chequers Buttress - Froggatt	HVS	Moyer's Original - Gardoms	ES	Valkyrie - Froggatt	HVS
Christmas Crack - Stanage	S	NMC - Gardoms	S	Valkyrie - Roaches	VS
Concluser - Ravensdale	HVS	Nine Lives Wall - Wildcat	HVS	Valkyrie Direct - Roaches	HVS
Covent Garden - Millstones	VS	Oak Tower - Birchens	HD	Via Dolorosa - Roaches	S
Crack and Corner - Stanage	S	Octopuss - Wildcat	HVS	Via Media - Stanage	VS
Crew Cut - Millstones	VS	Original Route - High Tor	HVS	Via Principia - Shining Clough	S
Cummerbund - Ossam's Crag	VS	PMC 1 - Gardoms	S	West Wall - Beeston Tor	VS
Darius - High Tor	E1	Pearly Gates - Stoney Middleton	VS	White Rose Flake - Agden	VS
Dead Tree Wall - Gardoms	S	Pedestal Crack - Froggatt	VS	Wildcat Girdle - Wildcat	HVS
Debauchery - High Tor	HVS	Pocket Symphony - Beeston Tor	E1	Wobblestone Crack - Burbage	VD
Delicatessan - High Tor	E1	Porthole Direct - Birchens	S	Xanadu - Millstones	HVS
Dereck's Dilemma - Wildcat	VS	Pothole Wall - Willersley	VS	Zapple - Yarncliffe	HVS
Five Finger Exercise - Cratcliffe Tor	E2	Puma Passage - Wildcat	VS		
Flying Buttress - Stanage	D	Pupilla - Wildcat	VS		
Garrotter - Willersley	VS	Queen's Parlour Chimney - Black Rocks	HVD		
Glory Road - Stoney Middleton	S	Rainbow Crack - Hen Cloud	VS		
God - Willersley	HVS	Raven Rock Gully - Roaches	D		
Golden Gate - Stoney Middleton	VS	Raven Rock Gully L.H. - Roaches	MVS		
Golden Yardstick - Wildcat	VS	Right Route - Roaches	D		
Goliath's Groove - Stanage	VS	Right Unconquerable - Stanage	HVS		
Great Central Route - Chee Tor	HVS	Robert Brown - High Tor	E2		
Great Chimney - Hen Cloud	S	SOS - Agden	VS		
Great Crack - Dukes Quarry	VS	Sail Chimney - Birchens	HVD		
Great Harry - Lawrencefield	VS	Saul's Crack - Roaches	VS		

British Routes - Alphabetical - 1982

A Climb - Ilkley VD
 Agaga Groove - Buchaille Etive Mor S
 Aladin Sane - Trowbarrow VS
 Albion - Lundy VS
 Angel Pavement - Craig y Berra VD
 April Crack - Stanage S
 Army Dreamers - Pembroke HVS
 Arrow - Pembroke EI
 Avalanche/Red Wall - Lliwed VD
 Babylon - Moelwyns VD
 Beeston Eliminate - Beeston Tor HVS
 Bishop's Rib - Chair Ladder HVS
 Bow Fell Buttress VD
 Bow Shaped Slab - Cloggy VS
 Bow Shaped Slab - Pembroke HS
 Bracket and Slab - Gimmer HS
 Brant Direct - Grochan HVS
 Campsite Crack - Agden S
 Carnage - Malham HVS
 Carnival - Buttermere HVS
 Cat Walk - Wildcat HS
 Cemetery Gates - Dinas Cromlech HVS
 Cenotaph Corner EI
 Central Groove - Dewerstone VS
 Chee tor Girdle VS
 Cioch Direct/Arrow - Skye S
 Cioch Direct/Integrity - Skye S
 Cioch Nose - Applecross VD
 Corvus - Borrowdale D
 Crackstone Rib - Carreg Wastad HS
 Craig Ddu Wall - Tremadoc VD
 Crib Goch Buttress VD
 Crucible - Cwm Silyn HVS
 Cuillin Ridge -
 Curving Crack - Cloggy VS
 D Route - Gimmer Crag S
 Darius - High Tor EI
 Debauchery - High Tor HVS
 Delicatessen - High Tor EI
 Diagonal - Dinas Mot HVS
 Diocese - Chair Ladder VS
 Direct Route - Dinas Mot VS
 Dives/Better Things - Dinas Cromlech S
 Doom - Craig Cowarch VS
 Doorpost - Bosigran HS
 Dream of White Horses - Gogarth HVS
 Eliminate A - Dow Crag VS
 Eroica - Pentir Head ES
 Eve - Borrowdale HVS
 Final Groove - Swanage HVS

First Pinnacle Rib - Tryfan VD
 Flying Buttress - Dinas Cromlech D
 Fool's Paradise - Gowder Crag VS
 Galactic Co-ordinator - Pembroke HVS
 Gambit - Clogwyn y Person VD
 Gimmer Crack - Langdale VS
 Girdle of Pillar VS
 Great Chimney - Hen Cloud S
 Great Crack - Dukes Quarry VS
 Great Eastern - Scafell VS
 Great Slab - Cloggy VS
 Great Slab - Pembroke North VS
 Great Western - Almscliffe HVS
 Great/Bow - Cloggy VS
 Grooved Arete - Tryfan VD
 Hammer - Etive Slabs VS
 Hardd - Carreg Hyllidrem HVS
 Haste Not - White Ghyll VS
 Highlight - High Tor HVS
 Integrity - Skye S
 Jack of Diamonds - Cowarch HVD
 Jungle - Cowarch HS
 King Kong - Wintours Leap HVS
 Kipling Groove - Gimmer HVS
 Kirby Wall - Gogarth VS
 Kirkus' Route - Cwm Silyn VS
 Lime Street Direct - Willersley HVS
 Little Chamonix - Borrowdale VD
 Long Layback - Harrison's Rocks SA
 Lynx - Wildcat HS
 Main Wall - Cynr Las HS
 Malbogies - Avon Gorge HVS
 Malham Main Overhang A3
 Mallory's Slab and Groove - Skye S
 Mars - Moelwyns VD
 Martini Crack - Agden S
 Medusa - Ravensdale VS
 Merlin - Tremadoc VS
 Mickledore Grooves - Scafell VS
 Moss Ghyll Grooves - Scafell VS
 Murray's Climb - Dow Crag S
 NW Arete/P Route - Gimmer VS
 Naismith's - Bhastair Tooth VD
 Naples Needle - Gable VD
 Neclace - Dow Crag S
 Needle - Shelterstone ES
 New West - Pillar HD
 Nightwatch - N. Yorks. HS
 Old Man of Hoy HVS
 Olympic Slab - Tremadoc HVS

One Step in the Clouds - Tremadoc VS
 Ordinary Route - Cwm Silyn D
 Paradise Street - Swanage S
 Pink 'un - Pembroke South VS
 Pink Void - Baggy Point HVS
 Pinky - Moelwyns VS
 Pinnacle Ridge - Gilleann - Skye D
 Pinnacle Wall - Craig yr Ysfa HS
 Poor Man's Peuterey - Tremadoc S
 Poseidon - Gogarth VS
 Praying Mantis - Goat Crag HVS
 Queen's Parlour Gulley - Black Rocks D
 Red Wall - Gogarth ES
 Red Wall - Pembroke S
 Reptilian - Pembroke HS
 Rhead's Route - Crib Goch VD
 Rib and Slab - Pillar S
 Right Angle - Pembroke S
 Rock Idol - Pembroke EI
 Rosa Pinnacle Direct - Arran VS
 Rusty Slab - Pembroke HS
 Satan's Slip - Lundy HVS
 Scansor - Windcliffe HVS
 Scratch - Tremadoc VS
 Shangri-la - Baggy Point HS
 Sirplum - Cheedale EI
 Skylight - High Tor VS
 Sobrenada - Grisedale VS
 Sou' Wester Slabs - Arran VD
 Spiral Stairs - Dinas Cromlech D
 Suicide Wall - Cratcliffe Tor HVS
 Sundowner - Froggatt HVS
 Sunset Crack - Cloggy VS
 Tealeaf Crack - Roaches S
 Ten Degrees North - Dinas Mot E2
 Tennis Shoe - Idwal VD
 Tennis Shoe Direct - Idwal S
 Tensor - Tremadoc HVS
 The Arrow - Pembroke EI
 The Cracks - Dinas Mot HS
 Stretcher - Huncote Quarry HVS
 The Sheaf - Cloggy HVS
 Tophet Wall - Gable S
 Tower Ridge - Ben Nevis D
 Troutdale Pinnacle - Borrowdale S
 Twinkler - Pembroke N. VS
 West Wall - Beeston Tor VS
 West Wall Climb - Pillar VD
 Whisker - Wildcat VS
 White Slab - Cloggy EI
 Wrinkle - Carreg Wastad VD
 Yankee Doodle - Land's End E2
 Yogi - Tremadoc VD
 Zero - Scout Crag VD
 Zig Zag - Castle Crag VS



On the crux moves on the second pitch of 'Dream of White Horses'

OREAD Interview

PETE SCOTT



Pete Scott has been an active climber for over twenty years and his climbing career has reflected the changes that have occurred in this time, epitomised by the change from the era of the drilled nut, when a good VS was a worthy achievement, to the situation today with a plethora of gear and ascents of Extremes commonplace. Twenty years ago, Pete was secretary of the Leeds University Climbing Club and today he is President of the Oread Mountaineering Club, illustrating as well the contribution he has made to help others share his enjoyment of the mountaineering scene. But it is as an Alpine mountaineer that he is chiefly noted, after an impressive series of major ascents in the late sixties and early seventies, including the classic North Wall routes of the Matterhorn, Jorasses and Eiger. He was interviewed for the Journal by Robin Sedgwick and Pete Northcote.

Chris Radcliffe.

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OREAD JOURNAL: *When did you start climbing?*

PETE SCOTT: I suppose I started climbing when I was about 14 or 15 and a member of the School Cadet Force. Four lads out of the Corps were listed for arduous training but one fell ill and couldn't go, so I said I would like to take his place. We camped in Borrowdale with one of the schoolmasters and thoroughly enjoyed it.

Before that, you didn't have any history of fell walking, or anything like that?

Not fell walking as such, but certainly the outdoors. For the first 15 years of my life, I had holidays with my parents in the Yorkshire Dales, particularly Wensleydale and Wharfedale. The affinity with the countryside was there, and though we didn't necessarily go to the seaside every time, there was always a holiday in the Yorkshire Dales. When I eventually joined the Scouts, there was local camping, plus an annual camp when we went to various places in England and it was just a general outdoor life, so the affinity developed from quite an early age.

You have a reasonable history of the outdoors then. What was the first route you did?

The first route. I can't really remember whether the first route was Jack's Rake and Gwynn's Chimney on Pavey Ark, or whether it was Broad Stand, but it was one of those two. It was probably a combination of something like Middlefell Buttress, and Jack's Rake and Gwynn's Chimney. I remember being absolutely terrified sitting on this little ledge - it must have been somewhere on Gwynn's Chimney.

So climbing wasn't something that you had an actual affinity for - it is something that you have had to work at.

It was something that I wanted to do, certainly, and I was highly motivated to do it.

Is this because of having to uphold the Cadet Force tradition - of arduous training, that is?

No, no, I don't think it was anything to do with the Cadets - it was very personal. I wanted to be a climber, because I was always shoved around at school when it came to competitive sports, like football and cricket. I quite liked cricket, but football I hated; all that cold and mud, and being shoved in at full-back and all the rest of it. Cross-country running wasn't too bad because there you could be on your own a bit, but certainly climbing was something that was quite different.

After this introductory session in the Lake District, you carried on climbing when you got back to Yorkshire. You were living in Heckmondwike at this time.

There wasn't a lot of opportunity to go rock climbing, and my main aim then was to wait until I got to University for the actual rock climbing and mountaineering - my main motivation for going to University was so that I could join a climbing club.

You had already decided by this time that that was going to be it.

Yes. I did quite a lot of fell walking after that - arduous fell walking - things like the Four Inns, the Boy Scouts walk; I did that several times. But rock climbing - not too much. We did have a cotton rope which we could use for top-roping and going out on local crags, but we didn't do a tremendous amount - what little rock climbing I did was with the Scouts. So it wasn't until I went to Leeds that I started rock climbing properly.

You did things the old-fashioned way, with the apprenticeship in walking and other lesser pursuits.

That's right - getting to know the mountains and learning to travel in the mountains safely and competently. Yes, very much the old tradition.

When you went off to Leeds - which year was it - presumably middle to latish 1960's?

Well, I hate to admit it, it was 1961.

1961! And so, when you got to Leeds, presumably you became involved in the University Club.

That's right, the first thing I did was to join the climbing club and go out on meets - I think one of the first was in Derbyshire. I have visions of going in a coach - a Wally Arnold coach - from Leeds to Derbyshire somewhere. I think it might have been Dovestones, which is actually Yorkshire, or Lancashire - where the hell is Dovestones? Anyway, it was Dovestones as opposed to Lovestones Quarry, and there was this dreadful mist, and blowing wind and drizzle. I found it quite hard climbing gritstone in those conditions.

The thing that every climber probably remembers is his first VS lead - what was yours?

Oh Yes, I remember it well - I even wrote an article about it in the Leeds University Climbing Club Journal. It was Gordian Knot in White Ghyll.

How long had you been rock climbing, serious rock climbing, up to that point?

Probably a year, but I had done a lot of climbing. I was determined to try and raise my standard, but then things were different in those days, psychologically, and hence if you climbed VS you were God. I looked up to these various people - they were climbing VS's and they were God!

What would be your typical rack of gear?

Probably about three hawser-laid slings and perhaps two nuts - yes, drilled-out railway nuts. Real nuts as opposed to wedges or whatever.

So, for your first year, you were an active member of the L.U.M.C.?

That's right - I tried to do a lot of leading and it was with a minimum of gear. I climbed a lot on Shepherd's Crag, and even hitched up from Leeds to climb on Shepherd's, and things like that.

Why Shepherd's?

This was one of the crags that I had been introduced to by this master earlier on, so it was familiar territory. It was a nice spot as well and there were lots of easy routes. The big breakthrough came though when I led Napes Needle, which was a V.Diff but I was leading all the time, and I think this was the secret.

Was Napes a physical or psychological breakthrough?

I think a psychological breakthrough in actually leading the route, because it's quite steep and it's exposed. Also, there was this motivation of climbing a route because it was a known name.

Wasn't it at Leeds that you met Chris Radcliffe?

Yes, that's where I first set eyes on Radders, although I didn't associate very much with him in those days. He was doing some weird subject like Sociology and Politics or Economics, and I was a technologist in the Textile Department, so we were really worlds apart. Although I did become a bit more closely associated with him when, after having spent my first year in a grotty flat, I moved into the same Hall of Residence as him and, in later years, after I had been there two or three years, we did get together and we went to Norway.

Did you do anything good there?

Well, it was quite a pioneering sort of holiday, about 250 miles north of the Arctic Circle. Not 'good', I suppose, in the modern idiom but, nevertheless, quite entertaining from a personal point-of-view - we did do some new routes in a mountaineering vein. The Oread had been there earlier on. That was my first recollection of hearing about the Oread, but to me the Oread didn't mean very much apart from being a group of people who had been to Norway. Even later on, when I came to Derby, I really wasn't aware that the Oread were the focus of mountaineering in Derby.

You finished at Leeds then, in about 1964?

I didn't actually finish in 1964 because after getting a first degree, I went on to do a second degree by research and I didn't leave Leeds until 1966.

What sort of standard were you climbing at then?

I suppose in the modern sense, Hard VS. In those days some of the now Hard VS's were Extremes, and I suppose one of the most delightful days of my rock climbing career was leading an Extreme called Cemetery Gates - I suppose it's Hard VS these days. The Gates to me was one of those, how shall I describe it, there are certain events in your rock climbing career which you can probably describe as orgasmic and I think leading Cemetery Gates was one of those occasions. We had had several days of heavy rain in the Llanberis Pass and we had been psyching ourselves up to do this Cemetery Gates, because it was quite a big thing in those days, and the weather cleared one morning. We tossed for who was going to lead the main pitch and I got the lead. I led it quite comfortably up to the highest stance on the little ledge and whacked a peg in for extra security. The feeling of, I suppose, it's total self-actualisation, standing on the ledge in the sunshine after having led that pitch, after having psyched myself up for it for three days, was one of those really exciting moments in my rock climbing career.

These days it's a nut every three or four feet on a pitch like that - how many runners did you have on it?

Well, I don't know. I had quite a lot of runners, but they were in the traditional style - hawser-laid slings and the odd drilled-out nut.

When was your first trip to the Alps?

Oh yes, that was in 1963. There was a colleague at Leeds University and he knew a gang of people from St. Mary's Hospital in London - medical students who were going out to the Alps in an old ambulance. I thought, well this is probably quite a good idea - to go with a crowd of people who have been before, and if there are a lot of people there, safety in numbers and all that. So I went with this gang to Zermatt and the Pyrenees, and had an exceptionally good holiday. I suffered a bit, I seem to recollect, from things like altitude and change of diet and the sun - things that I had not really come across much before.

You don't get a lot of those in Heckmondwike?

No, not a lot. I remember being quite proud of the fact that I climbed the Hornli Ridge on the Matterhorn in my first alpine season. I suppose that is the thing that stands out most. I think my mother was secretly quite proud as well - she used to think and say that climbing was dangerous and all the rest of it, but I think she was quite proud of the fact that I had climbed the Matterhorn. I was quite chuffed!

From then on, going to the Alps was a regular thing every year, was it?

Yes, more or less, apart from odd skirmishes in other parts of the world. The second alpine season, I think I went to the Bregaglia and the Dolomites, but with somebody different that time.

Was your attitude at this stage to go as far as you could in the sport, if I'm allowed to call it a sport?

No, I don't think so. There were always psychological constraints with respect to having been slightly brain-washed by the rest of society into thinking that my main objectives in life were my 11-plus, Grammar school, a University degree and then a good career with a good, safe company. That was a sign of success. I did succumb to this brain-washing which, in retrospect, was sound commonsense given the circumstances, but there was also an element of over-caution which, I think, did prevent me going further afield climbing-wise. There was an occasion where I was invited to go to South America, to Patagonia, to climb a mountain called The Fortress, and this was a successful expedition, but I refused on the grounds that my career came first. That was late 1966. The team was Ian Clough, Dave Nicol and Chris Jackson. It was this conflict all the time. The other pressures of society conflicting with climbing and I swung away from climbing, whereas nowadays people say stuff it and go climbing, given the opportunity. In retrospect, I should have done that, knowing what I know now.

Put yourself in the position now, with the same up-bringing, same background,

do you think your attitude would be different, or do you think it would be the same? Do you think it has become respectable in a way to put a reasonable career to one side and go off climbing?

Yes, I think it has. But, of course, the time to do it is when I should have done it - when I had just graduated and not now, when jobs are hard to come by, and you can't just say 'stuff the job' and walk back into one in six months time. I should have done it then and not now. So, to answer your question, I probably wouldn't do it now.

Do you regret making that decision and looking after your career? In retrospect, how far have you progressed in your career, was it a bad decision then, or was it a decision that you are glad you made?

I think it was a bad decision, but now I take a very philosophical view on life and I have no regrets as such. I am sure there's more to life than climbing and, if you get in a narrow channel focused on climbing as the be-all and end-all of your existence, I think you ought to turn round and examine your philosophy on life.

How would you regard this philosophy in looking at some of the top rock climbers of today, like Ron Fawcett whose life, whose day, is incomplete if he doesn't go climbing?

Of course, Ron Fawcett is quite right in what he is doing because if you are going to succeed, then you have to focus 100% of your being on what you are trying to achieve. Because of what you say about Ron Fawcett, that his day is not complete without having done so much climbing, that is why he is succeeding. But what I am saying is that if you take someone's life as a whole then that is only one small element of their life. Is he going to be like that when he's forty? I doubt it. I am sure he will still be an excellent climber, but will have discovered other things in life.

When did you first start to get into the harder Alpine routes?

This is quite interesting. Like most climbers, I did a lot of reading and, having been to the Alps for quite a few years I had done one or two routes which were of a modest standard but nevertheless still had something of a name, such as the North Face of the Dru - a good, classic route. It's a very popular route now, but in the mid to late 1960's the North Face of the Dru had not got such a reputation for quality. Nowadays it's highly regarded amongst British alpinists, not particularly as a hard route, but as a route of quality - a Classic. In the 1960's it wasn't really known or regarded as such by the majority of climbers, and the climbing of it was quite a personal milestone to me - I think I climbed it in 1968. In 1969 I was on holiday with another colleague from Leeds University, Ron Lake, and we climbed the North Face of the Matterhorn. Having read lots of Alpine books, especially Rebuffat's *Starlight and Storm* where he lists six classic North Faces, one is aware of what are regarded as being the classic hard routes, such as the North Face of the Matterhorn, the Walker Spur and the North Face of the Eiger. I had read all about the North Face of the Eiger - it never occurred to me in a thousand years that I would climb it, but having climbed the North Face of the Matterhorn, it suddenly sprang to mind that, maybe, with a following wind, it would

be possible for even me to climb the Eiger, and that's exactly what happened a couple of years later.

You did that with Radders - how did you come to team up with him on the Eiger?

Well, the chap I climbed the North Face of the Matterhorn with teamed up with Pete Holden a year later, and I was climbing with Chris Radcliffe. We went to try and climb the Eiger in 1970. We were stormed off it - we didn't get any further than the Difficult Crack. But the following year Chris and myself just returned alone and succeeded.

You had good conditions on it?

I have always had good conditions on the classic harder routes that I have climbed.

Is that something that you wait for, or have you just been lucky?

I think a combination of both - certainly a combination of both. Three days we went out to climb the North Face of the Matterhorn and two days we came back; the third we went. So it's not just a question of luck, it's a question of, to a certain extent, experience.

How much psyching up - if that's the right word - did you need to do for the Eiger, or was it a natural progression that you felt within yourself after the Matterhorn?

Yes, I think it was very much a natural progression. You do go stage by stage. I think this is a classical approach - I have always taken a classical approach to climbing. I have a feeling that some climbers that are newer to the game go straight out to the Alps, read up the books and think about the thing much more objectively, and say "I am capable of climbing this route" having looked at the objectives, and go out and do it.

They are probably approaching it as a technical problem rather than considering the mystique of years gone by, and the attitude of other people.

Yes, I'm sure that's right. But I certainly enjoyed the approach that I took because it was like stepping back in history. So you read a book, and read it and read it and read it and then, suddenly, there you are stepping through the pages of the book. What I am talking about, of course, is reading 'The White Spider' and then going out and climbing the North Face of the Eiger.

Leaving aside the mystique, what's the Eiger like as a route?

Well, we picked spot-on conditions and, between the Swallow's Nest bivouac and the bivouac on the Ramp, we had a cold, clear day so there was no falling rock, no objective danger as such. The ice was ice and the rock was rock, and everything was glued into position. Technically it wasn't all that hard, it was just that the consequences of a mistake are more realistic. The consequences of a break in the weather would be appalling, because it is about 30 pitches either up to the top or back down to the bottom, which is a long way.

How did you feel after the Eiger? For most Alpine climbers, it must be the ultimate achievement in the Alps.

That's right. I suppose I floated on air for about 12 months afterwards.



Two French climbers and Pete Scott at the Swallow's Nest Bivouac on the Eiger. Photo: C.Radcliffe



Pete Scott on the Second Icefield on the Eiger. Photo: C.Radcliffe

Did you feel that your motivation in the Alps had gone?

Yes, I think so. To a certain extent, having realised my limitations as a climber, I suppose I must have felt that climbing the Eiger was reaching pretty much the limit of what I was able to achieve in the Alps - not the limit technically, but the limit in a broader sense.

So there were no other harder classic routes that you felt that you wanted to do?

Oh I think so, yes, because at that stage I used to work on, not the modern Rebuffat factor (which is the 100 best climbs in the Chamonix area), but the classic Rebuffat factor, which is the Big Six and at that stage I hadn't completed the Big Six. I still had the Walker and the Cima Grande to do - I still have the Cima Grande to do. I climbed the Walker Spur a couple of years after I climbed the Eiger, so if anybody in the Oread feels like taking me up the Cima Grande sometime, I'm in the market.

Is there anybody in the Club that has done the Big Six?

I think Pete Holden is in the Oread and I'm pretty sure that he has done the Big Six - probably in one season, if I know Pete.

How many seasons did you have climbing with Radders in the Alps?

Not all that many actually. I have climbed with all sorts of people in the Alps. I am quite a sociable climber and I do like to climb with different people - no disrespect to Radders, of course, he is a very amiable companion and we have been through thick and thin together, but I do like to climb with different people. Seasons with Radders? Perhaps half-a-dozen in the Alps, but that's only a proportion of the seasons that I have climbed in the Alps.

The thing I am thinking about is that a successful Alpine partnership is a rare thing - you have to find somebody that you get on with very well and once you find that suitable partnership, you hang onto it. I just wonder how that partnership came to break up.

Well, the partnership came to break up through domestic forces, I suppose. It happens to most climbers that if and when they decide to get married, these domestic and social forces come into operation and it's most difficult, particularly if the other half of the climbing partnership is a bachelor, which of course Radders is. I think that unless you are very lucky, conflicts in one form or another develop, which obviously it's very difficult to go into.

We have talked about rock climbing and we have talked about the Alps. Have you done much on British Ice?

Not at all, and the only experience I had there was with my friend Radcliffe again. For the whole of one week, I really thought my last moment had come. Probably because I was still climbing on what were relatively Whympers-type axes - I really did find it most un-nerving and most unsatisfactory from the security point-of-view; no belays and a feeling of insecurity all the time I

was climbing. I went out and spent some money and now I have one of these modern curvy ice tools. I suspect that if I did go ice climbing now, my confidence might be restored somewhat. I couldn't really understand why people I perhaps considered to be not such good climbers as myself seemed to be getting up Scottish routes which I, during my week's climbing with Radders, found absolutely terrifying. A couple of years ago, I borrowed a pair of these terrordactyls and went on to the Bossons Glacier for an hour, and I suddenly realised - it all came to me in a flash, I realised why this phenomena in ice climbing has occurred, and it really was the equipment.

So we can reckon to see you on Zero and Point Five in future years?

Well it's all possible - it all depends whether I can persuade someone to take me and give me a bit of confidence to start with.

It just seems strange that you have done so much in the Alps, and yet so little in Scotland.

I think it's a different ball-game. I think technical ice climbing in the gullies of Ben Nevis, or even on the faces of Ben Nevis, is rather different than climbing the North Face of the Eiger. If you took a chap who had been weaned on Scottish ice and shoved him on the North Face of the Eiger with a couple of terrordactyls, I don't think he would be any better off than I was with my Whymper axe. It's a different approach.

How about rock climbing these days, the modern rock athlete element which is spreading in climbing and which is starting to creep into the Dread.

A personal opinion. Well, I've nothing against people who wish to be rock athletes - I shall never be one myself - I quite enjoy bumbling along at Hard VS 5a - this is not what is deemed the domain of the rock athlete. I find it physically impossible to climb the routes that rock athletes climb. I don't know why, but there is something in my physical make-up which inhibits me (!!! Ed.).

Do you think that this rock athlete approach is spreading? There are a lot of Dreads who now circuit train, weight train, and work out on the Bridge.

There may be a lot of people doing that, but I don't consider that there are all that many rock athletes.

Isn't it very much a change of emphasis. At one time a climber prided himself on the fact that he didn't train and that he had a hang-over when he went out climbing on a Sunday morning and if you turned out in a pair of tracksuit trousers five years ago, you would have been laughed at.

Well, I certainly wouldn't laugh at anybody who turned out in tracksuit bottoms to climb on a railway bridge. Change of emphasis in a changing world, isn't it, and to aspire to excellence through high motivation can never be a bad thing. This is merely a facet of man's advancement since the beginning of time. Man has always had to adapt and change and examine himself. A life that hasn't been examined isn't worth living and, if you are going to make any ad-

vancement in rock climbing, or technology, or trips to the moon, you are going to have to adapt and change your approach to the problem. I think this is just what has happened in rock climbing and the duffers like me have been left behind. However, the beautiful thing about mountaineering in all its facets, which includes rock climbing, is that it is an individual sport. I can have ecstatic days on the hills climbing at my standard, as can the rock athlete on a railway bridge. Your V.Diff man can have an ecstatic day on Bumbly Hill (that's the Idwal Slabs), as can any of the Oread by just going for a walk; and, to me, it's all the same thing - it's just a different approach. It boils down to personal satisfaction.

\$64,000 question - what about chalk?

If it's confession time, I must confess that I have had the odd dabble - not in this country - but where nobody could see me, 5000 miles away in some sneaky corner of America. Some people are under the misapprehension that when you climb on granite it's going to be nice rough rock, and the friction's going to be great, and this I found not to be the case. Climbing in America in a temperature between 80 and 100 degrees fahrenheit, I found that the granite slabs were very, very smooth and slippery, and the odd dusting of chalk on the fingers did make all the difference. So, I would say that chalk is good stuff if you're on granite or hard climbing.

So you're not using it in this country?

Well, the standard I'm climbing at, I don't often need it ("The times they are a-changing" Dylan - Ed.).

Where are your favourite climbing areas in Britain - where do you like best?

I think Almscliff could never be far from my heart because that's where I was weaned, from the climbing point-of-view. Swanage - it's always sunny and a beautiful environment, and the routes are steep, good, with big holds, a nice seaside environment and not very crowded; you can get away from the hordes there. One thing I object to on crags is people shouting their mouths off, particularly when I don't know them, and I do quite like a peaceful atmosphere on the crags.

Both of the crags that you have mentioned are very steep and very strenuous. Is that the sort of climbing you like?

Oh no, not at all. I should think I am probably one of the weakest members of the Club as far as arm strength is concerned.

Not enough evenings on the railway bridge!

That's right. My style of climbing is not of the strenuous nature. I don't mind it being steep as long as it's got good holds and one can rest. Certainly strenuous climbing is not my favourite sort of pastime. Apart from that I am quite happy to climb anywhere, and there are lots of places in England and Scotland where I haven't really touched rock and would certainly like to do so, for instance, Cheddar Gorge, Gogarth, most of the Scottish crags.

Have you never climbed on Gogarth?

I have climbed on Gogarth, but I've not done very many routes there.

What are your impressions of the Oread at the moment?

The Oread, to my mind, is in a very healthy state. When Radcliffe and I were in our early days in the Oread in the early 70's, we didn't consider it to be all that healthy because we weren't recruiting a lot of young people. In those days Pretty was God, Janes was the court jester and Burgess was an up-and-coming hard climber, but there was no young element coming in to the Club. Radcliffe used to write very strong Editorials in the Newsletter that we produced, complaining about this and asking what was going to be done about it. Now, I think, the reverse is the situation - we don't see enough of Pretty; Janes I haven't seen out on the crag for years, Burgess is still getting out, but the main driving force of the Club, climbing-wise, lies with the younger people, both male and female; these are the people that are getting out climbing on Club Meets. My only worry now, and I mentioned it at one of the Annual General Meetings a couple of years ago, is that although the old order changes yielding place to new, that old order should still be encompassed within the Oread environment, simply because I look upon the Oread as a Club having great breadth and depth - now this covers all activities, such as walking, ski-ing, photography, rock climbing and mountaineering. It also encompasses people from many facets of society and a broad spectrum of ages, and it would be a pity to me if the Oread suddenly became a group of people who were in a particular age range, say 16 to 40, and the older element faded away. We do see them at the Dinner, but I would like to see them on Meets more regularly. We do now have founder members on the committee, though, as well as younger people. I personally find the Oread a very satisfactory club to be in and I always have done. I find the fact that the Oread is there is rather a nice thing because no matter how much you get involved in the hassle of everyday living, you always know that the Oread is there. You can go out, you can get into the hills, or you can go down the pub, and it's a great facility.

How did you first come into contact with the Oread?

That's curious in that I'd been down in Derby for two years and didn't really know that the Oread existed as such in the Derby area, and at that time I was a very keen climber. I suppose I was still attracted by the Leeds University Climbing Club scene and I used to commute back to Leeds because I had a lot of friends there - it was only after a couple of years as things began to change that I began to cast around more seriously for a club in the Derby area. To start with, it was Nottingham that I went to and found the Polaris Club, but it didn't seem very satisfactory from my point-of-view. I think Dennis Gray suggested finding the Oread, and I met a chap called Ray Colledge at Almscliff. He said that I would find the Oread in Derby. I made contact and, for a couple of months, nobody spoke to me apart from a couple of ladies in the Club who tried to make me feel welcome. I went down week after week. I knew I could climb but I wasn't going to push myself on people, and basically they ignored me until one evening there was a members' slide show and I thought 'Oh well, I'll crack this one once and for all' and took along about six selected slides; one of a wall, one of a slab, one of a crack, one of a mountain and showed these slides judiciously. It immediately had the startling effect of Ray Handley, who was the President at the time, rushing over after the slides, shaking me by the hand and saying "I'm Ray Handley, the President of the Oread Mountaineering Club, I'm pleased to meet you". For anybody who feels that they are not being made as welcome as they feel they ought to be in the Oread, then some subtle technique like this is probably worthwhile. I did find it a difficult club - when I joined the Club there wasn't so much of a young set.

How do you think it is for somebody coming down to the Club today?

It is probably easier. The thing that is important for anybody coming down to the Oread is to get out on Meets. You'll never make progress by just coming down to the pub. You must get out on Meets, develop something in common and you've then got something to talk about. It is marginally easier now because there are more younger people in the Club, and it is mainly younger people coming along to join. But it's no use coming down to the Club and talking about mountaineering - you've got to get out and be seen to be active.

How do you see the Club going in the future?

In the immediate future, I can't see the Club being affected too much by change. The only constraints I see are economic ones which might shift the emphasis in the economic running of the Club, and also the way in which we approach Meets.

You mean the rise in petrol prices?

That's right, social changes. As far as the strength of the Club Membership and people wishing to climb, I can't see in the foreseeable future - we are talking about five years now - that there are going to be any major changes. I think it will carry on very much as it always has.

Could you tell us something about the Kenya trip?

Well, not a lot happened on the Kenya trip. We went out there with certain objectives, namely to climb Mount Kenya by one facet or the other and then spend some time looking around Kenya itself. When you have got high fixed costs, you like to try and, if not inter-act with the natives, at least view them and take an interest in a different culture, and see some different geographical aspects of a place. I think, in retrospect, we achieved all of those things. We were fortunate in making contacts out there - we met an Oread member who's known to quite a few club members, Bill Kirk. Going abroad and visiting a place like Kenya, though it's interesting and I think very worth the brass you spend, sometimes makes me wonder about this lemming-like urge to go to the Alps every summer or to somewhere different like America or Kenya or the Himalayas. I don't know whether I am getting old or maturing or what, but I feel that I would like to stay at home one summer and spend the annual holiday, three weeks or whatever, just climbing in England or Scotland. I feel there's a lot to be had from our own country. I don't feel any kudos or bullshit value from having been to Kenya - I just enjoyed it.

A lot of people thrive on the kudos aspect of a pastime or pursuit, but going back to basics, personal satisfaction is still very important in climbing.

Yes, I think so. I just sometimes wonder whether I'm getting old, finding that this is more important than the kudos aspect. The fact of just enjoying it as you go along is becoming more important. I have had quite a long spell of not climbing regularly over the past two or three years, and now I'm back into climbing almost every weekend, I'm thoroughly enjoying it. But it's not necessarily just the climbing of routes every weekend, it's the general broader aspects of mountaineering - the social side of it.

Climbing has fulfilled something for you. If you hadn't taken up climbing, would you have found some other interest?

I suppose I tried all sorts of things when I was a youngster. I was quite keen on cricket. I played a little bit of tennis, but only fringe. Football, I didn't like. Running, well I just did a little bit. I think climbing was something that I latched onto simply because all the other things that I tried, which most of my peers at the time took to, I didn't like - I suddenly found something which was magic - climbing. And I just took to it like a duck takes to water. What would I have done if I hadn't found that - I would probably have joined the Rambler's Association or the Tennis Club. My mother was always encouraging me to join the Tennis Club - "You meet such nice people. We used to always go down the Tennis Club, we had wonderful times down there". I never did join the Tennis Club!

Look at all those frilly white knickers you've missed.

Well exactly, yes. That's one aspect of climbing which is rather different from a lot of activities and pastimes that the male of the species takes part in. You don't find much crumpet hanging about under green, dripping overhangs when it's horizontal sleet in the middle of winter, do you?



A Turn to the Right

'Rock' Hudson

On leaving the Vignettes Hut, the hard crisp snow indicated a good frost, whilst above, the twinkle of many stars fortold that we should enjoy a perfect alpine day. Chris Bryan set a good pace over the smooth slopes leading down to the Vignettes Glacier. Derek Mountford and I followed; not letting him gain on us, but neither being able to reduce that ten-metre lead.

It was the first route of the 1981 holiday and we were heading for the N.E. Ridge of the L'Eveque which appeared to be a suitable starter for providing an indication of the conditions on which to base climbs to be done in the following weeks.

We gained on the other parties, passed them and were quickly nearing the flanks of Mt. Petit Collon, which was now appearing in the pale light of dawn. Glances to the right. Curt comments, 'it looks all right!', followed by a similar detached 'Aye, not bad'. We continued following the tracks. Some hidden pretext allowed a change of pace and thus we found ourselves close together, enabling each of us to notice the others glancing to the right. The north face was now distinct, its icy features producing a beckoning line. We continued, perhaps without that clear sense of purpose, but we each knew. A glance in front showed the track trending to the left - we had turned to the right, but no comment was required from any of the party as we made our way up the steepening slopes below the north face.

The last rucksack was swung onto a back, the axe picked up, and we turned towards the centre of the face at a point to one side of the apex of blocks formed by an avalanche. We reached the steepening ground and moved together on hard neve, the rhythm only being broken when negotiating the deep runnels. These soon passed into smooth slopes, which swept upwards to a distant skyline, while below the late parties were still following that now narrow ribbon of a path.

With increasing angle, we decided to pitch and a peg was solidly placed, which allowed the leader to move off and quickly reach the next stance - another good peg. The steep front-pointing continued and, with increasing light, the panorama widened, while the distance to the adjacent right-hand ridge showed that we had gained considerable height.

For some while the snow conditions had deteriorated, the neve reducing to only a thin skim loosely adhering to the now granular and brittle underlying ice. The pegs would not hold, sending off large splinters of ice, so only a scoop could be made at the contact of neve and ice; a less than useful loop of rope being wrapped around the head of the axe, which had with great reluctance penetrated a few centimetres in the ice. Looking up, the leader made progress more slowly, his crampons hiding all but the edges of his sac, while small appendages swung axes with little effect into the now 'granular sugar'. The last few pitches had reached an angle of 55/60° and progress was even slower, but the last of the rock perched on the adjacent ridge was below us and we could cut a little right to a snowy shoulder a little distance below the summit.

The sun was warm, the views rewarding, the sardines welcome, the water refreshing, while the 'turn to the right' the best decision of the day.

Venery

Brian West

The following fable contains more than thirty named routes. A pint to the first person to find them all.

Thunderball Ted leant against the bar, debauchery uppermost in his mind, as he recounted tales of the hard years to a group of spell-bound young climbers, innocents one and all.

"God, it was hell in those days" reminisced Ted. "You had to do it in tricounis, y'know, and they didn't half make a mess of fishnets cost you a fortune, I can tell you. Then there was the risk, of course. None of your 'in-situ' protection; it all had to be pre-placed...still, it had its compensations; there was a lot more virgin territory around then. Why, I remember one night in Laddow cave when.....

He stopped abruptly. Framed in the doorway, her celestial twins vibrant in the lamplight, stood not-so-wee Doris. What a humdinger! One of Ted's private targets for countless years, a five-finger exercise with Doris was the highlight of his more lurid fantasies.

With a feline grace she entered the room. The drink in Ted's hand, a taste too bitter for his liking, shook uncontrollably.

"Snakes alive, I'd give a pint of blood for that, lads," rasped Ted a man possessed. As he turned from his expectant audience, ribald encouragement followed him:

"Gripper," advised one.

"Grasper," urged another.

"Frigga," came a voice from the back.

"Just like Martin," thought Ted wryly. "He always was a crude bas-tille!"

Swinging into action with his usual aplomb, he cornered Doris adroitly.

"Halo," he ventured. "I'm Ted, but you can call me Thunderball."

"I'll call you 'Twat in a cliff-top cottage' if you can't do better than this," came the tart rejoinder. "Nowanda you never get anywhere with a line like that!"

"Oh, Pollux!!" breathed Ted, taken aback. "A real cool cat! Shall I take it to the limit or boot and run?"

Doubt assailed him. "Not as young as I was," fretted Ted, his determination waning. "Get pumped pretty quickly these days....would I be able to lead it clean? P'raps even have to yo-yo it, perish the thought!"

His moment had passed. Disdainfully, not-so-wee Doris brushed him aside and moved to join Rupert, a haughty young rock athlete, chalked-up to retain his grip on a damp beer glass.

"Beginner's luck!" cursed Ted enviously, as he watched Doris trying to distract Rupert from the 'Good Beer Guide' spread before him. "Ah well, I suppose there's always Bachelor's Left-Hand and Whillans' Blind Variant!"

"Welcome to hard times, Ted,"

sympathised Martin. "Perhaps she's just kinky for Friar's Balsam; increases the friction, y'know anyway, what would you give her? apart from the obvious, I mean!"

The light of enthusiasm re-kindled in Thunderball's eyes:

"Extreme, I'd say. Three stars

at least! Technically a bit beyond me these days. Back in the hard years though, could have been a different story! Why, I remember one night in Laddow Cave when....."

Answers and / or libel actions to B. West Esquire.



'English Style'

Pete Holden

Beer and a 'Four Seasons' pizza seemed just reward for the emaciation endured on an Alpine Classic. The pizza restaurant seemed to be the life-centre of the Dolomite resort of Alleghe. There Howard and I enjoyed a taste of the good life; and we relaxed into a general soporific glide induced by post-prandial digestion of a rich fungi pizza made slightly volatile by the addition of a long, cool, lager beer. Thus fixed, we glowed with this back-to-the-womb gratification (symbolically, you coarse nymphs!). Now you come to mention it - yes, those beautiful young Italian girls did add a little something to the atmosphere - for Howard, of course (I am too old!).

"May vee jjoin yuw?" asked the older of the dandily-dressed pair who were relinquishing their table for others. Not being particularly bigoted about men in Rupert Bear trousers - and feeling safe in a public place - we generously nodded to the vacant bench seat as they climbed over it's back.

I recognised the older of the two from seeing his curly mop decorating the inside of a ubiquitous VW Camper parked up in the village. This image had stuck because of the caption on the back door of his van which read - 'Go climb a rock'. Whether this was meant as an advert for the sport or was a gesticulation substitute I was not quite sure.

The seemingly necessary conversation was started with my less than original opener - "Where do you come from?". "Stuttgart" replied curly!

Devilish cunning, these foreigners. Was that checkmate in two moves only? Well, what the hell do you know about Stuttgart? Not to be foiled so quickly, I remembered the door caption - I mentally aligned this clue with the fact that we were in the Dolomites and devastated them by the next move -

"You are here to climb the mountains?"

"Jah, jah - you also?"

Well, isn't life amazing - two pairs of males eating and drinking in Alleghe and they have both come to climb the mountains!

Introductions ensued - we understood and coped with Karl but Berndt was a bit guttural for a gaseous stomach - international detente was at risk as we burped and belched our way around this particular handle. The conversation launched, we lurched conventionally from one inessential to another for a few moments until Karl fired the conversational equivalent of an 'Exorcet'.

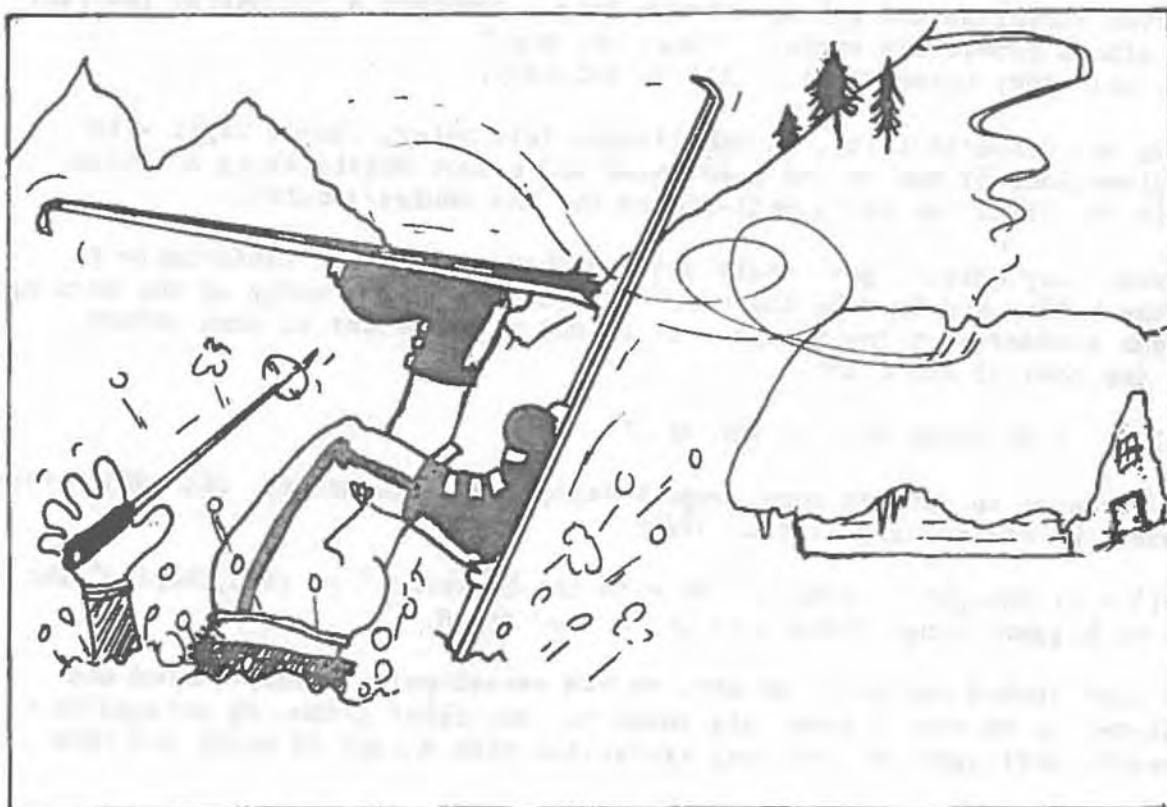
"Do you know 'Smiler'?" he shot out unexpectedly.

We gaped open-mouthed - then the realisation dawned. "'Smiler'," Howard gasped. "You know 'Smiler'?" (Howard's got a degree - he's bright!)

Quickly we pieced the bits together and, incredibly, it transpired that 'Smiler's Brother' shared a flat with Berndt in Stuttgart. The conversation was enervated - 'Smiler' was the catalyst that set off a whole series of anecdotes and hilarious

tales. Karl regaled us with stories of three English characters - 'Smiler', 'Smiler's Brother' and 'Jimmy Jewel'. The latter will be remembered by the Stuttgarter climbing fraternity for two particularly outstanding qualities - his speed and competence on rock and, more dramatically, his speed and incompetence on skis. It came as a small surprise to me to discover that the Germans have a sense of humour and enjoy a rollicking good prank - but it was of no real surprise to discover that their pranks are imbued with a hefty potential for sadistic pleasure. This is well illustrated by this tale about 'Jimmy Jewel' and his first ski lesson. True to form, 'Jimmy' took the challenge of all slopes offered and, without bothering with the distraction of practising turns, he dashed straight downhill and crumpled into whatever he could to achieve deceleration. So far, so good, until his pranky, exhibitionist German friends decided that they would give a whirl to the slightly more advanced technique of 'chalet-roof jumping'!

The cartoon illustrates the general idea and, I think, portrays the deceptive innocence of the concept when viewed from above.



Karl assured us that the emergency services extricated 'Jimmy' with typical German efficiency and that his broken leg was given the best treatment possible in the hospital.

"Very funny - Jah, Jah.!"

Substitute 'Radders' for 'Jimmy Jewel' and even the Oread might laugh!

Having set the stall with such amusing little tales the conversation turned to

comments on the splendid thunderstorm going on outside and we commented that it was a bad day for climbing.

"Yes," agreed Karl, "the rain made the rock slippery on the easy-angled ground."

We were astounded. "You mean to say that you have been climbing today?"

"Yes - but it only involved short sections of Grade VI." (A 500 m. route!)

They piled on the agony by telling us that they had made a climb on every day of the past week - we forgot the good days and only remembered the torrential rain falling some of those days. We felt the impact of their question to us before it arrived - short of a power cut and a quick dive for the door, we could see no way out of the inevitable. It was our turn to give evidence.

"And you - you have been out for how long?"

"Just one week." We tried to make it sound somehow shorter than their week!

"Ah, good. And how many climbs have you made?"

We shifted uneasily in our seats - bilious gases erupted from our queasy stomachs. We collected ourselves and put on a brave face - composed a nonchalant indifference and almost carelessly stated - "Just the one."

"Ah, so!" they unisoned, a little quizzically.

Struggling for respectability, we embellished this naked, single digit with great explanations of how we had spent time and effort establishing a tented camp up at the Tissi Hut to be well-placed for the routes (route!).

Unimpressed, they quietly gave their opinion that it was more comfortable to stay in the valley and to make the short walk to the climbs early in the morning. Our systems shuddered at the prospect of a 1000 metre ascent at dawn before reaching the foot of the climb.

"Vell - vich climb vass it you do?!"

Was this a chance to recover some respectability? We were unsure. Did 1925 routes still count? We had nothing else to offer.

"Well - we thought we would start with the Solleder," we said, hoping that the hint of bigger things would hold us in good stead.

Our only card turned out to be an ace. We had earned points. They smiled and congratulated us on such a fine, big route for our first climb. We relaxed back in our seats. Karl gave us a knowing expression with a hint of mirth and said -

"English style."

"What!"

"English style."

"You know," he said, "we Germans go out every day to train for the big routes - but never feel fit enough for them. But you English go straight onto the big routes and then do nothing but rest for the next big route. It's a difference in style. We get very fit. You get very tired."

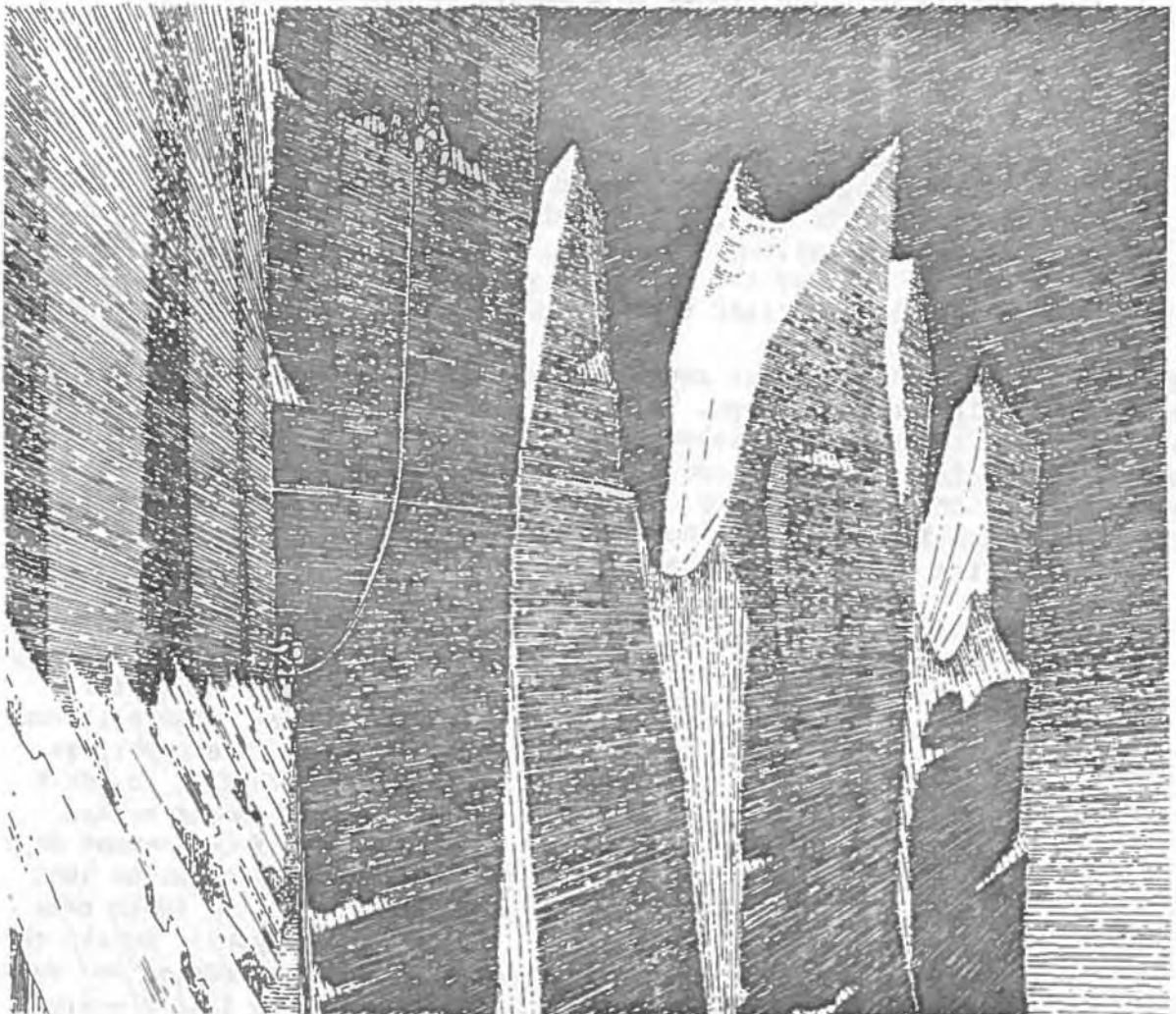
After this introduction to German philosophical thought, the next paper will address itself to an exposition of the Nietzschean concept of mountaineering as exemplified by Zarathustra -

"I am a wanderer and a mountain-climber (he said to his heart), I do not

like the plains and it seems I cannot sit still for long.
And whatever may yet come to me as fate and experience - a wandering and
a mountain climbing will be in it: in the final analysis, one experiences
only oneself."

The English vernacular might render the translation as -

"Balls to the lot of you - I'm going climbing."



International Rock Athletes, Youth

Paul Gardner

It was just beginning to get warm as we reached the foot of the route. We were well aware that being Easter we were not fully fit and had arrived early to give ourselves a long day to climb the 1100 feet of cracks, grooves and chimneys which curved up in an unmistakeable line from the point where we now sat.

Four days earlier, at about the same time, we had been hammering across northern France in a small, red G.P.O. van full of sound. It had been music all the way from the moment we launched into a silent, damp Calais at three o'clock in the morning to arriving at the La Palud campsite at ten o'clock in the evening. 'Brown Sugar' had echoed round the hold of the ferry, innumerable tapes ran as we moved south into hillier landscapes, 'Travelling Man' as we curved down the Route Napoleon; all this led us to the deep, golden-yellow Gorge of Verdon. It was a blur of dozing, driving and eating, with the pounding of the wheels and the beat of the music. We also wired up the exhaust, charged the carb, and fixed the timing.

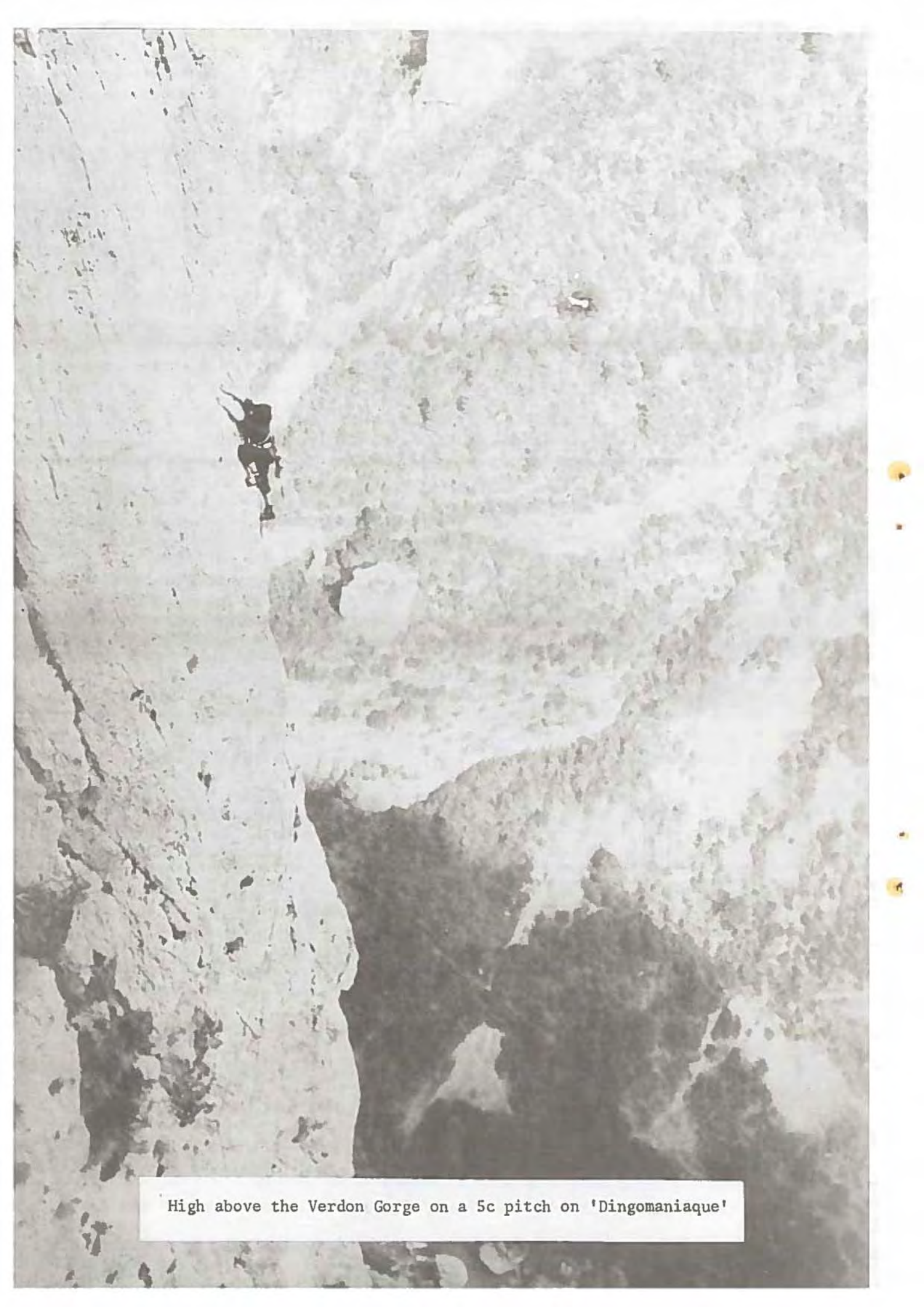
'Le Demande' is one of the longest routes in the Verdon, making its compelling way up the full height of the Gorge. To reach it's foot involves a walk in from the Couloir Samson through the intense darkness and hidden puddles of the tourist tunnel. Pete Holden, our team coach, had woken us before dawn in the frosty cold and driven us to the tunnel end. He left us just as the sun was coming over the horizon melting the frost and warming the air. The van was to be driven round and left at the top of the route.

We had met Pete in the bar a few days earlier. He and Howard had been driven off the Eiger - it was too warm. We were all camped on some open ground by the river after being driven off the campsite by the mayor - the campsite wasn't open because it had no hot water, the solar panels being elsewhere. The mayor was very excited about us being there, so much so that we couldn't understand his machine-gun delivery. We heard rumours of his anger but experienced it in the early morning of our second day. Robin attempted to get him to slow his speech down but he just wandered off - something snapped and the teacher in Robin came out - "Hey, come here sunshine, I'm talking to you!!" Unlike the lower band fourth years at Bemrose he was not impressed and went off to throw stones at some Swiss next to us. We loaded everything into the van and moved off down the road.

Two Czechs with big shoulders and taped hands set off ahead of us. We climbed as two ropes of two, Mike and John following Robin and myself. We agreed to swing leads and so I set off up the first pitch. It was a thin crack/groove and soon led to the stance. Although the route follows one single line, beginning as a



On the fourth pitch of the Verdon classic 'Voie de la Demande' HVS 5a



High above the Verdon Gorge on a 5c pitch on 'Dingomaniaque'

crack and ending as wide chimneys, it curves round so that at first only the first few hundred feet are in view. The pair ahead of us had disappeared by now.

Pitch followed pitch with complete disregard for Livesey's attempts to define or grade them. Only sections stand out in the mind and even their order is now a jumble. There was one pitch where progress involved scrambling from one twisted sappling to the next, barely touching the rock for twenty or thirty feet, marvelling out loud at the strength of these twigs. Stances came and went, some spacious, others a peg and a horizontal, twisted twiglet. One such stance separated two magnificent groove pitches; leaning out and bridging out of 'goutte d'eau', clipping pegs, deciding which ones to miss to avoid running out of your fingers, being aware of the river getting further and further below, but feeling so secure that the space was part of the joy.

Finally, this came to an end as the crack, in a remarkably short distance, became a chimney. However, the evil moment when the chimney had to be tackled was put off for a while by a traverse out of the line to avoid a desperate struggle in an off-width, overhanging chimney-crack. A little overhang led to a beautiful airy traverse back in above the route without crack. A stone dislodged by Robin bounded clear to the foot of the chimney-crack. A stone dislodged by Robin bounded was, the traverse must have been superb before some hammer-swinging vandal had smashed the pockets' sides in to 'improve' the holds, marking the grey rock with yellow scars. After this the chimney was unavoidable.

Pete had briefed us on these chimneys. Absolutely smooth, he said; no gear, he said. When he was there, Chris Gibb had failed. We gasped, "Chris Gibb!" He had knee-jammed the back crack deep inside, in shorts. "In shorts!" Our eyes were as wide as saucers. No gear, he said. Don't bother taking any big stuff, he said. Fortunately, we disregarded this piece of advice. Take a number nine hex.

Actually, the walls of the chimney were not smooth, rather they had the texture of pebble-dash. After this pleasant surprise, the thirty feet to the first runner did not seem too far, particularly as its placement was obvious every time you looked up.

It was around about this time that we realised that Mike's white helmet was not allowing us up as it had been up until now. We had ceased swinging leads early and I had led from then. I asked Robin where they were but he couldn't see anything either. We were nearing the top, though the climbing was not easing. Beneath us, a grunting noise was coming up the chimney and a bronzed man with steam coming out of his ears appeared. Mike and John had been passed! It came very suddenly. One moment I was pulling onto a ledge with a short rope and the next I was on the top. A deeply channelled limestone pavement stretched down to the thorn bushes which masked the road. We had finished it. Now we could look forward to the bar.

The first time we walked into the bar at La Palud we knew it was one of those unusual few places throughout the world where you immediately feel at home. Rather like the Padarn or the Moon - looking round the clientele you either know them or have seen them in the magazines. The locals sit there as if this eccentric multi-national crowd didn't exist. We were most impressed by the

number of nubile young ladies and soon began a 'Bivvy-Mate-of-the-Month' competition. In fact, we spotted the winner quite early on. She was never bettered. Alas, she never knew!

The speeding Swiss finished soon after us and brought up his various associates, who all congratulated each other in a deep, guttural tongue. For a moment it seemed vaguely familiar, then we realised - we had been followed up the Demande by 'The Swedish Chef'.

After a further wait, Mike and John appeared. Thunder sounded in the distance but there was no sign of rain - that came the following day. We did not dare work out how long we had taken - after all, it was the beginning of the year - and we made our way down to the van parked conveniently close by. E.B.'s came off, trainers went on, and we made our way into the village for some cold beer, red wine and a well-earned 30 franc meal.

SOAPBOX

Every weekend during the winter months, we seem to read in the newspapers of ill-fated climbers who have been killed on the mountains in adverse weather conditions. Couldn't there be a "closed" season for climbing during the winter just as there is for some other sports?—S. Jones: Hawarden, Clwyd.

I thoroughly agree with you—and I'm sure all the people who have to go out and rescue these climbers would, too! K.M.

Woman's Own - Letters Page - Feb. 1980

My Introduction to High Tor

Jill Towle

Despite my aching knees and weak arms, I took up John's offer to climb on High Tor.

The first major route of the day was getting to the bottom of the crag - grovelling through mud and undergrowth until we finally arrived at the bottom of 'Original Route'.

I managed to clamber up to the tree, to which I was promptly attached and ordered to hang from. Once we'd sorted the ropes out, which took quite a while owing to the fact that I was tangling them slightly, we were ready to begin. After the smoke had stopped coming out of John's ears, he started the route. It didn't take him long to traverse out, then back into the groove. At this point he yelled down "Don't fall off until you get into the groove" to which I replied "I'll do my best".

After the rope had made it's way up to the stance, came the moment of truth - it was my turn. There was no turning back, no time to unclip and climb down, so up I went. I pottered along and back again towards the groove - the move into the groove wasn't too bad once I'd thought about it; it took me quite a while to suss it out, and my leader yawning didn't help matters - but I made it. Once I was in the groove the steepness of High Tor came into it's own. I needed a few rests on the rope but managed to climb to the stance, in what I felt was a pretty good style.

The stance was in a fantastic position, looking onto the crag and across the Derwent Valley. It was worth doing the route just to sit on the stance.

My leader trotted off again sideways, leaving me to admire the view and hang onto the other end of the rope. The second pitch was a bit on the loose side so, when my turn came, I certainly expected to grab a portable handhold and disappear down the crag. Nothing like that did happen - I made it to the top of the crag and promptly flaked out.

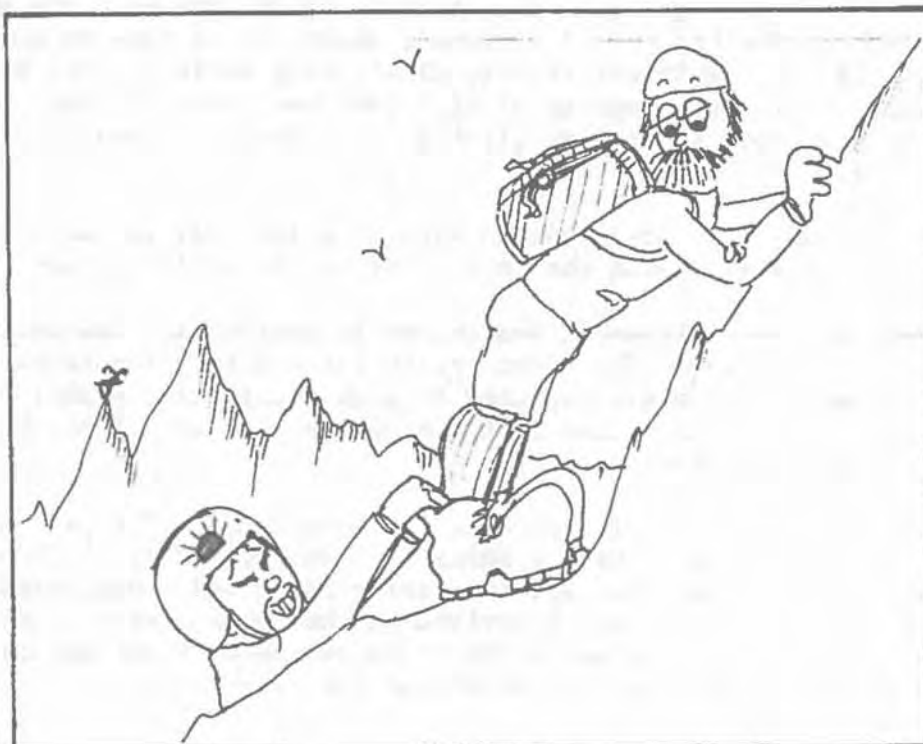
I managed to revive myself to start the epic route back down. The path was somewhat muddy but I coped with that by swinging from tree to tree! It was a short section of climbing down that got the better of me and I descended it faster than I had intended. Finally, I arrived at the bottom where I collapsed next to my sack, until I was informed which route was next on the agenda - 'Entropy' which meant a trek along the bottom of the crag.

I didn't touch the rope this time, so we didn't have to search for any knitting pins to sort it out. In the meantime our man Ron appeared, inspecting some hard routes. He had his dear wife in tow, who was yelling various forms of abuse at the poor chap.

Back on 'Entropy' John shot up the route making it look easy, so I presumed that I wouldn't have too much trouble. Little did I know that it had a few hard moves. On one section the holds ran out, leaving me no option but to make a move and pray that there would be something to wrap my fingers around before I peeled off backwards. I survived that move, only to be faced with a layback crack. It was a fantastic edge, but it wasn't appreciated by my poor knackered arms. I got so far up the crack and somehow lost contact with the rock. Due to my partner being awake I fell all of two inches. The prospect of a cup of coffee when I got to the top kept me going, successfully from then on.

After that welcome drink we decided to take on another route - 'Skylight'. The first pitch of 'Skylight' was overcome without too much difficulty on my part - it was the second pitch that provided the entertainment. My leader set off and after a time he selected a runner which he decided to drop on me. When my turn came, I didn't have as much protection to take out as I might have had. I attempted the route, but it was a case of drifting onto the rock, drifting off it and, occasionally, drifting upwards. Sometime later, I arrived at the top of the crag.

High Tor is an amazing place. If you decide to go, let me know and then I can tag along on the blunt end.



The Alps



Alps '81: An Observation

Mike Jaggs

This year the Oread hill-bashing machine appeared at Arolla, Visp and at Chamonix, comprising a broad cross-section of members and abilities. The family units all camped at Les Hauderes in the comparative comfort of the local campsite. One or two others, such as Matthew Peacock and myself, went higher to Arolla and enjoyed the general squalor (non-changing of underwear, non-washing, etc, etc) of the small campsite there. From Arolla we enjoyed superb views of Mont Collon, Pigne d'Arolla and the Aiguille de la Tsa- these views literally from the tent door. Some others camped up by the pumping station near the Collon glacier, no doubt being able to sample the delights of fresh marmot pie! (I could never even catch one!).

Many routes were done in the, initially, less than perfect conditions, and it was not surprising to arrive at various huts to find the inevitable 'BMC/Oread' entry in the logbook. In fact, half the fun in arriving at huts was to see if we'd got there first. Quite often we found we had - this was just luck, and we had plenty of luck, because it was multi-star enjoyment on nearly every route we did. Apparently, the week before we arrived, one foot of snow had fallen, and this was reflected in the plastered appearance of many peaks, notably the Dent Blanche - rock routes were declared either dangerous or 'be careful' by Hut wardens. For instance, we received very solemn warnings from the warden at the Aiguille Rouge Hut, an amazing and very friendly large lady. Still, she was right, there were some hairy moments for us on the way down - choss, no belays, you know the sort of thing.

However, the situation quickly improved in the next two weeks of continued excellent weather. Most of the Arolla/Les Hauderes mob appeared at the Vignettes Hut and generally did the Pigne d'Arolla and the superb L'Eveque, to which I gave 9 stars (10 being Max.). Superheroes Rock Hudson, Derek Mountford and Chris Bryan did the North Face of the Petit Mont Collon. We also wanted to do this, having had a close look at it from L'Eveque, but lack of cash, food, and bunk drove us down. No matter, we went straight for the Aiguille Rouge Hut next, and had a great time chatting to Dutch and Swiss couples. I found that that Hut had by far the best atmosphere, a place with character. Generally, we were amazed by the scope and variety available from this Hut - rock for the rock men, peak bashing for others, bigger 14,000er's such as the magnificent Dent Blanche which Bev Abley and Tony and Vincent Smedley were lucky enough to grab in reasonable conditions, but we missed out on (being on the Aiguille Rouge at the time) for yet another year. Oh well, still in excellent weather, it was down to the valley again for us for a top-up of booze, a few laughs and a bath.

Next, it was up to the Tsa. Our friends, being impoverished students, humped their tent up there and camped on the glacier snout. We pampered ourselves in the Hut with warden service. Having done the West Ridge of the Dent de Tsalion, we were also broke again (the Hut was owned by the guides and expensive), so back to the valley with our few remaining pennies with a great mob of Brits we had met at the Tsa. We had a good time cataloguing what various people had left behind/dropped i.e. my guidebook (dropped), someone's waterbottle (left) and

someone else's lens filter (dropped), etc - someone will make a fortune from the junk up there, I'm sure.

Our next stop was the Dix Hut, a lovely walk up a long path and over the ladders on the Pied de Chevre. Unfortunately, the extent of the thawing was only too evident as we squelched over the glacier to the Hut. Surprise, who should be there but 95% of the Oread - after a fight to find somewhere to eat, I was wondering if we'd get a bunk but most of the people turned out to be 'day-trippers' so there was plenty of room. The next morning it was very firm underfoot as we did Mont Blanc de Cheillon, this time with Colin Barnard and Jack Ashcroft. A 10-Star route this - a bit of rock, a superb ridge, and a short pitch of V.Diff at the end. Even if this bit did look like grannies' knitting after the massed assault of the Mad Brits (masquerading as the Oread), it didn't detract from the pleasure - as I say, 10 Stars. Rock and Derek meanwhile did the complete traverse - good planning, there, lads. Well, back over those ladders again and down to the valley. We'd managed 6 routes in all - a good endorsement for next year's possibly more ambitious plans. Still, ambitious plans are sometimes wrecked by conditions, as Pete O'Neill and Dave Wright found when they went to look at the North Face of the Matterhorn, before heading off for the South of France. Perhaps all the bigger peaks were out of condition.

Well, it wasn't all climbing. A break in the weather occurred after two weeks and we retreated to Les Hauderes to join the mob. We timed it just right for a bit of 'Spot the Festival/Parade' and of course Swiss National Day, which I enjoyed immensely being a fan of firework displays, sausages, booze, watching dancers in National Costume, more sausages and even more booze! The only disadvantage being that I don't understand a word of French. The speeches seemed awfully long, as the kids with their bangers endorsed. I especially liked the hillside bonfires, with fireworks exploding silently in the distance - very ethereal. What next but open-air swimming pools, especially the one at Nax - perfectly placed in a natural suntrap - breathtaking drive up there too. It seemed weird to look at dark clouds over Arolla whilst we sunbathed.

However, back on the campsite, it was "Oread Sports" time. The games consisted of 'star skipping', cricket, softball singles and doubles, and the dirtiest game of football I've ever been in. The general idea seemed to be to wreck the opposing team by any means possible i.e. break legs, necks, etc, and sometimes to score goals. Alas, the rain finally stopped the game (with our side losing) and we all limped back to the tents for the savlon/deep heat.

The next major treat in between the raindrops/clag was the infamous "Fondue Meet". This consisted of a large contingent of the Les Hauderes mob masquerading as rumbling stomachs. Well, everything took so long that I was beginning to think they'd just milked the cow - en route to making the cheese (and I had starved myself especially after all the flowery tales of oceans of gooey cheese). This state of desperation was not helped by two anaemic-looking young ladies who, sitting at the end of our table, left 70% of a lovely bowl of potatoes, plus other goodies. I swear Peacock had the same plan as me (and he was right next to the plate!) but the flashing eyes of other hunger-crazed Oreads must have frightened him off. So, making do with a fresh beermat (vanilla flavour) and someone else's crumbs (non-descript flavour), I suffered. It finally arrived and was very good, and everyone was very nice in letting me have first dip, as by now Ruth's right arm was beginning to look like a steak - and I think she'd noticed this. Still, the wait did spoil it a little for me.

Well, the crappy weather dragged on as that type of weather does and it began

to look as though we'd had our lot. Dave Penlington and sons tried Petit Dent de Veisivi but came back down with tales of even worse clag, and finally headed home via Belgium, to do some rock climbing (no trouble with route identification there - Dave tells me every route has a little name-plate to identify it! - whatever next.). We hung around for a rendezvous with our friends (who were at the Bouquetins bivvi) and by the time we left, everyone else was long gone. One last look at the Blanche, by now everything bathed in clear sunlight on a nice bright day, and we headed back - via France and a bivvi amongst the war memorials and the harvest, and back to Blighty. All in all, an excellent three weeks, good peaks, good company, good laughs - now, where are we going next year?

* * * * *

Those present (throughout the Alps) - my apologies for any omissions.

K.Bryan, C.Bryan, L.Bryan, M.Bryan.
 C.Barnard, M.Peacock, M.Jaggs, B.Strike, I.Brindle.
 D.Williams, L.Burns, J.Welbourne, L.Welbourne, H.Welbourne, R.Welbourne.
 M.Theobald, J.Theobald, R.Hudson, D.Mountford, K.Muskett, J.Muskett.
 Don & Wendy Pryor, Jack & Janet Ashcroft, C.Fitzhugh, R.Beadle.
 Tony Barbara Vincent & Fiona Smedley. Bev Kath James & Gareth Abley.
 Gordon Margaret Ricky & Peter Gadsby. Dave Nigel & Roger Penlington.
 Matt Maureen Damen & Liza O'Brian. Paul Jean & Michael Bingham.
 Pete Lancaster, Roger Larkam, John O'Reilly, Dave Owen, Chris & Jan Wilson.
 David Judith Jennifer Susan & Robert Brown. J.Winfield, T.Hardwick.
 Martin Musson, Al Ames, P.Dyke, Dave Helliwell, Dave & Thelma Wright.
 Roy Jill Heather Susan & Christine Eyre. Pete & Jean O'Neill.
 Gordon & Pauline Wright, Keith Gregson & Eileen, Ron & Yvonne Sant.



Routes Climbed 1981 Season

Switzerland Arolla Area

Peak/Route

Pigne d'Arolla (3796 m.)	K.Bryan, M.Bryan, L.Bryan, M.Peacock, C.Barnard, M.Jaggs, D.Williams, R.Eyre & Jill, B.Abley, G.Gadsby, H.Welbourne, J.Welbourne, M.O'Brian, K.Muskett, J.Muskett, P.Bingham, C.Fitzhugh, R.Beadle, Don Prior, Wendy Prior, B.Strike, I.Brindle.
L'Eveque (3716 m.)	K.Bryan, L.Bryan, M.Jaggs, M.Peacock, C.Barnard, R.Eyre, P.Bingham, R.Hudson, C.Bryan.
Dents de Bertol (3547 m.)	C.Barnard, G.Gadsby, L.Welbourne, J.Welbourne, D.Prior, W.Prior, D.Williams, D.Brown, J.Ashcroft, M.O'Brian.
Mont Blanc de Cheillon (3870 m.)	J.Theobald, I.Brindle, C.Barnard, J.Ashcroft, M.Jaggs, M.Peacock, K.Bryan, L.Bryan.
Cheillon Traverse (3870 m.)	R.Hudson, D.Mountford.
La Luette (3548 m.)	J.Ashcroft, M.O'Brian, G.Gadsby, C.Barnard.
Traverse, La Luette & Le Pleureur (3703 m.)	R.Hudson, D.Mountford.
Aiguille Rouge (N.Peak) (3646 m.)	M.Jaggs, M.Peacock, K.Bryan, C.Bryan, D.Mountford, R.Hudson, D.Penlington Roger Nigel, J.Winfield.
Dent de Tzalion (W.Ridge) (3589 m.)	M.Peacock, M.Jaggs, D.Penlington Roger Nigel.
Traverse, Dent de Tzalion - Tsa (3589 m.)	P.Bingham, R.Eyre.
Pointe de Vousson (3490 m.)	M.Peacock, M.Jaggs.
Aiguille de la Tsa (3668 m.)	T.Smedley, V.Smedley, P.Bingham, C.Bryan, J.Theobald, R.Eyre, B.Strike, I.Brindle.
Dent Blanche (SW Ridge) (4357 m.)	T.Smedley, B.Abley, V.Smedley.
Dent Blanche Traverse (W & S Ridges) (4357 m.)	C.Fitzhugh, R.Beadle.
Petit Dent de Veisivi (3184 m.)	D.Penlington Roger Nigel, P.Bingham, R.Eyre.
Petit Mont Collon (N.Face) (3538 m.)	R.Hudson, C.Bryan, D.Mountford.

Tete Noir (2979 m.)

G.Gadsby, M.Gadsby, R.Gadsby, P.Gadsby, Matt & Maureen O'Brian Darren & Lisa, J. & M. Theobald, J.Ashcroft, Janet Ashcroft, Paul Jean & Michael Bingham, R.Welbourn H.Welbourne, L.Burns, M.Peacock, J.Brown, D.Brown & family, M.Bryan.

Mont Collon (Traverse via W.Ridge) (3637 m.)

C.Fitzhugh, R.Beadle.

Switzerland Visp Area

Porthengrat

D.Owen, T.Hardwick.

Weissmeiss (N.Ridge)

D.Owen, T.Hardwick.

France

Mont Blanc (Ordinary Route) (4807 m.)

K.Muskett, J.Muskett, P.Scott (solo).

Aiguille de l'M (NNE Ridge) (2844 m.)

D.Owen, T.Hardwick, P.O'Neill, D.Wright, P.Lancaster, M.Musson.

Aiguille de Chardonnet (Forbes Arete) (3824 m.)

D.Owen, T.Hardwick.

Aiguille d'Argentiere (N.Face) (3902 m.)

P.O'Neill, D.Wright, A.Ames, P.Lancaster, M.Musson, P.Dyke.

Mont Blanc (Bronva Spur) (4807 m.)

D.Helliwell, C.Wilson, R.Larkam, J.O'Reilly.

Chapelle de la Gliere (S.Ridge) (2663 m.)

D.Helliwell, C.Wilson, R.Larkam, J.O'Reilly.

Pointe Lachenal (SSE Face) (3613 m.)

P.Scott and party.

Aiguille de Midi (Arete des Cosmiques) (3800 m.)

P.Scott and party.

Traverse, Lonspitze (NE Face) & Nardelgrat

A.Ames and party.

Old Brenva

John O'Reilly

"For Christ's sake, how much further, Chris!?"

"Just keep going - almost there now!"

A none-too-gentle tug at my harness and I realise there are no more loops of rope to quietly lengthen the gap between myself and Rog. I stagger on - the state of stumbling exhaustion has existed for hours or at least it seems that way, as my detached mind wonders at the continued movement of my body.

A mixture of memories and emotions replace thoughts of physical effort as the struggle continues - "you might as well get fit on a big climb as get fit for one" sounded so simplistic, so logical, in the alcohol-induced comfort of the Bar Nash as to be not worth contesting. The initial sweep of enthusiasm at the thought of the Brenva Face, dampened by the doubts at the memory, and stronger image, of a close friend shivering, freezing, storm-bound and not surviving on the same route. The fleeting vision of sunny limestone crags dispelled abruptly by another knee-deep blunder, confirming the aching realisation of lack of fitness.

The knowledge begins to form, now too tired to argue or be annoyed about, that I had been conned - "Okay, I agree, we're in no fit state to climb the last 1500 feet, but we will have to climb over that mound by those rocks before we can traverse" - the mound seemed to go on and on and on

..... the knowledge now complete as the mound no longer exists and Chris admits we're on the summit - the summit of Mont Blanc, the highest mountain in Europe, by a classic route - but there is no view, no euphoria, no summit photos, just a gently throbbing head, aching limbs and the reality of an immediate, wind-buffed, staggering descent - attempts to concentrate on the insidious tangle of stiffening ropes, views only of three meandering bodies, but visions of shelter, a brew, sleep, sunshine, warmth - strangely, perhaps naively, no doubts that we would get down safely.

Something else to look at and concentrate on now as the swirling cloud and snow reveal occasional glimpses of the descent path, a few incongruous rock features and then the Hut - clumsy, stumbling crampons on steps slightly too steep, banks of snow outside and in, spreading a thin layer of intrusive spindrift over the creaking floor, a floor covered by the debris of countless grateful climbers - grateful for a windless haven, grateful for an imperfect tin box which would give any health inspector palpitations, grateful in some cases for another chance. The Vallot Hut, still over 14,000 feet on the now stormy flank of Mont Blanc, but a place to relax, to feed, to sleep.

The slow, lethargic job of releasing bodies from ropes, harnesses and boots - the re-assuring purr, then roar, of the original petrol stove ('guaranteed to clear a large corner in a crowded hut') - Snod crouched over his temperamental 'baby' producing nectar in the form of soup and pasta, Rog already too far gone to eat his share but there are no shortage of takers.

Twelve hours of fitful sleep seem to pass quickly amidst increasing storm noises - difficult to believe the Hut can possibly stand up to the battering, the noise now louder as we decide to sit it out - nature calls, visibility still bad, difficult to stand

..... mid-morning, the emergency phone informs us the storm will worsen into the afternoon. Another brew, the tedious defrosting of frozen leather, solid mitts and stiffened ropes occupies too much time - unco-operative crampons, awkward harnesses, clumsy knots and a start is made.

Initial buffeting eases as height is lost, visibility increases, the rope is coiled in favour of freer movement, we suddenly feel much better for sleep and loss of height, the Gouter Hut provides the best coffee we've tasted in months and the price seems irrelevant.

Already, we are thinking and talking the climb down to size, already we are forgetting the aching summit plod, already the thoughts of another long route if the weather holds

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Some thoughts on the Brenva Spur, Mont Blanc, August 1981.
Dave Helliwell, Roger Larkam, John O'Reilly, Chris Wilson.



Alps '82: An Observation

Mike Jaggs

Twelve short months have passed by since my last deliberations, and we are on the road again. This year's venue is Champex, a short drive from Italy's Grand Paradiso and the French Alps. As expected, the 'A' team have headed for Chamonix - hard rock and crowds. For us it is a high, pretty-isolated small village. The skiers frequent the area in winter; I suppose it is a stopping-off point for the high level routers on their way to Zermatt (a route I'd love to do one year). We drove across from Derby almost non-stop - 'we' being John Gresty, Julia Goldsmith (and teddy bear) and myself - John providing the transport.

We reached the Swiss border in the early hours of Sunday morning and watched the thick mist rolling about on Lake Geneva. Little did we know that this was a harbinger of doom as far as the weather was concerned. Pressing on, we reached Champex by early afternoon to find 'Oread Tent City' in development, several of the family units having installed themselves in the corner of the site allocated to us. We found ourselves a comfortable pitch and set off to explore. Champex is certainly a picturesque, though rather touristy, village, with a pretty little lake - boating and fishing being among the main interests. A few hotels, bars, gift and other shops complete the scene. Having raided the local store for bread, cheese, etc., we bought maps and sat around to await further arrivals. We had still not even seen a hill, let alone a mountain, as the mist and clag cruised gently just above tree level. However, morale was still high, further fuelled by John Theobald's graphic descriptions of the previous week's glorious weather, blue skies glistening, soaring peaks, etc. At this stage, I was raring to go. However, the more the familiar faces arrived, the wetter it got - at least, we had plenty to read. In keeping with this kind of weather, we festered for a day or two - the debate was how high the clag went. Only one way to find out!

With Ken and Linda Bryan, and Kath and John Muskett, I set off for the Ornay Hut. Our objective was to traverse La Portalet with our gear, and drop down to the Trient Hut (further up the glacier) and do the Aiguille du Tour the next day. This we achieved, although the traverse of La Portalet left a little to be desired. Described as a pleasant route (F.) of about two hours, it turned out to be a minor epic - something like three grades harder and taking three times as long. My opinion of the guidebook took a dive (it turned out to be worse than useless). It seems to me that its editor is either a homicidal maniac or a climbing version of Sebastian Coe. After the abseil we were forced to make, I stopped believing the guidebook. Couple this with the facts that we couldn't see anything for our ever-present 'friend' the mist and were climbing on appalling choss most of the time - to the relief of one and all, the summit eventually arrived, providing some fabulous views (particularly of the Chamonix Aiguilles). All that remained was a further col and a glacier trudge to the Hut.

Next day turned out fine, with a pleasant and uneventful walk up the Aiguille du Tour (guidebook correct this time!). Unfortunately the girls didn't make the trip, a pity as the views were spectacular.

That was the extent of my climbing around Champex. I talked with others about doing more routes but these did not materialise. Others got a few more routes in - John Gresty and Chris Jonson managed to fit in all they had planned to do. The weather closed in again, with thunderstorms coming in from the south-west on roughly a three-day cycle - nothing, therefore, had much chance of coming into condition. I hoped to have a crack at the Grand Combin - which we saw on a couple of fine days - but the weather beat us to it (it was plastered with snow the day we left). Mont Blanc was also out of the question.

There seemed to be quite a lot of Hut tripping, access to a well-trodden path being by means of the local telepherique - once an hour if you were lucky and special runs for large enough parties!

The Oread ardour dampened with the ever soggier weather, and people began to look for alternatives. Some favoured moving further into Switzerland, notably Roger Larkam and Pete Wragg. Others opted for Italy, the Paradiso. John Gresty and myself headed for Belgium, having heard from Dave Penlington about the good quality climbing there. We reasoned that we would outrun the bad weather - for a while at least, and get a bit of cragging in. And so the Oread was flung to the four winds, so to speak. For myself, the second week spent in Belgium saved the holiday. I was very pleasantly surprised, as we arrived in the Ardennes, to find beautiful rolling countryside, thickly wooded and with charming little villages scattered in the valleys. The cragging was great, some nice limestone to be found at Hotton (pronounced 'Hooton' by locals) and at Soy ('sie'). At Hotton, the routes are even pegged and with route names on little plaques! A very pleasant area, with most of the crags by the river - the crags were usually on the south of the river whilst on the north were fabulous show caves, notably Rochefort with its guide/comedian, classical 'son et lumiere' and hot air balloon!

All holidays, however, come to an end and we headed back through France to pick up Julia, who'd gone to the Paradiso, in Arras. A good chance here for getting booze in at the local 'Mammoth' store. Our rendezvous was spot on time, so we pressed on for home.

I found the Alps disappointing this year. As always we are at the mercy of the weather, and we can do nothing about that, but Champex was far from the ideal venue - not having other villages nearby, it was either make do or travel a fair way into Martigny for an evening out or a drink. The final sickener came when we came to pay for the campsite - ripping people off seemed to be the order of the day, charging for large tents when small tents were used, etc - very unsatisfactory. Still, the National Day celebrations were fun - with magnificent fireworks lighting up the little lake, and delicious Gluhwein not only in town, but at Tent City too! Let's all hope for better weather in '83 and a crack at those routes which keep escaping us!

* * * * *

Those present in Champex - my apologies for any omissions.

Gordon Margaret Ricky & Peter Gadsby, Bev Kath Gareth & James Abley.
John Ruth Lisa & Helga Welbourne, Gordon & Pauline Wright, Julia Goldsmith.
Mike Sue Lucy & Simon Wren (& Helen), Colin Uschi Stephen & Annette Hobday.
Chris Sue Alex & Lydia Jonson, John & Kath Muskett, Roger Larkam, Pete Wragg.
John Gresty, Mike Jaggs, Matthew Peacock, Adrian & Kevin, Rock Hudson.
Colin Barnard, Dave & Roger Penlington, Matt Maureen Lisa & Damen O'Brien.
Ken Margaret & Linda Bryan, John & Margaret Theobald, Jill Towle, Ruth Sigley.
Roy Chris Jill Heather & Sue Eyre.

Routes Climbed 1982 Season

(mostly serious but, due to the nature of the season experienced by most people, some not so serious)

Champex Area

Ecandies Traverse	R.Larkam, P.Wragg. R.Hudson, D.Penlington, R.Penlington.
Mont Dolent, E.Ridge	R.Larkam, P.Wragg. R.Hudson, D.Penlington, R.Penlington.
Traverse, La Portalet	K.Bryan, L.Bryan, J.Muskett, K.Muskett, M.Jaggs, M.Wren.
Aiguille du Tour	K.Bryan, J.Muskett, M.Jaggs, J.Welbourne, G.Gadshy.
Aiguille Purtscheller (S.Ridge Integral)	D.Penlington, R.Penlington, R.Hudson.
Petite Velan	D.Penlington, R.Penlington, R.Hudson.
Mont Velan	D.Penlington, C.Barnard, R.Hudson.

Chamonix Area

Drus, Traverse (D)	M.Wynne, R.Sedgwick. J.Blackledge & party.
Moine, E.Face (Contamine Route)	J.Blackledge & party.
Petite Jorasses, W. Face (1st half - more or less)	M.Wynne, R.Sedgwick.
Aiguille de l'M, Couzy Route	D.Owen, J.O'Reilly. J.Blackledge & party.
Traverse, Midi to the Trident Hut	M.Wynne, R.Sedgwick.
l'Index, S.Ridge	D.Owen, J.O'Reilly.
Aiguille de Peigne, Papillons Ridge	D.Owen, J.O'Reilly.
Azone Slab, about 6 pitches or so (quote: 'Desperate')	M.Wynne, R.Sedgwick.
Chapelle de la Gliere	M.Wynne, R.Sedgwick (including new 3 pitch direct start - 'Cosmic Traffic Lights' E1 Sa.)

Switzerland and Other Areas

Civetta, Solleder VI	P.Holden, H.Lancashire.
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Civetta, Phillip-Flamm, IV plus.	P.Holden, H.Lancashire.
Dent Blanche, N.Face	P.Holden, H.Lancashire.
Monch, N.W.Buttress (Nollen Route)	R.Trossider & party.
Doges Palace, N.Face 1st Brit. Ascent	P.Lancaster, S.Lancaster, P.O'Neill, J.O'Neill.
Tour d'Ai, Chimney & the Arete (Leysin)	S.Carter & party.
Miroir Slab, Direct.	S.Carter & party.
Aiguille Argentiere	S.Carter & party.
Arete de Belvedere, (Verdon).	P.Lancaster, P.O'Neill.
Traverse, Bridge of Sighs, 1st British.	P.Lancaster, S.Lancaster, P.O'Neill, J.O'Neill. D.Sedgwick, D.Parnham, L.Freestone, Dot's Mum.
Ciarfaron, N.E.Ridge	K.Bryan, L.Bryan.
Grand Serra	K.Bryan, L.Bryan.
Casnil, E.Ridge (Walter Rische Route)	K.Gregson, M.Pearce.
Monte Rosso, Traverse (WNW to S Ridge)	K.Gregson, M.Pearce.
Traverse, Gorge d'Ardecche (N to S)	R.Larkam, P.Wragg.
Mt. Argentine (nr.Bex)	D.Penlington, R.Penlington, R.Hudson.
Rosenlanistock Englehorner.	S.Carter & party.
Ecrins, N.Face, Whymper Route	R.Larkam, P.Wragg.
Mont Aiguille, S.W. Pillar, Vercors	R.Larkam, P.Wragg.
Via Ferrata de Guiseppo Tofana di Mezzo.	D.Wright, A.Ames.
Cima Grande, NNE Ridge 1st Half (hard half!)	D.Wright, A.Ames.

And last, but by no means least, a British attempt on the "Telepherique Route" to the Plan de l'Aiguille - retreated due to bad weather. The retreat involved two stormy bivvies at the Pierre d'Orthaz before a retreat to base camp near Monte Chair ladder.
D.Hellwell, C.Wilson.

Chamcrags

Mike Wynne

A brief guide to some of the crags within striking distance of Chamonix, worthwhile expeditions on the sunny days between the storms if the pool has got boring, and someone has kicked the football into L'Arveron.

	GUIDES CRAG	CRAG X	ARGENTIERE	LAC BAIT	AMONE SLAB	SALEVE	PIERRE D'ORTHAZ
Location	Chamonix Sud	N.E. of Source of Arveron	N. End of the Aiguilles Rouges	6 km. S.W. of Cluses	Swiss Val Ferret	10 km. S. of Geneva	Pierre D'Orthaz campsite, better known as Snells boulder. Popular, desperate granite boulder.
Distance from Cham	1 - 2 km.	2 km from Snells	8 km	50 km	70 km	100 km	
Walk In	2 mins	Half-hour	Three-quarters hour, uphill	Half-hour	3 mins	10 mins	Pierre is not the bloke that runs the site. Pierre - Stone or Rock in French.
Guide Book?	?	No.	?	?	Rebuffat	Livesey/Local	
Rock Type	Solid	Smooth Schist	Low-angle schist	Steep Limestone	Flaky Limestone slab	Limestone	
Protection	Large rings	New Bolts	Pegs, nuts	Pegs, bolts, nuts	Pegs, ring belays	Rings	
Height	60 - 70 m.	50 m.	200 m.	400 m.	400 m.	70 - 150 m.	
Grade	All	5b plus	All	4c to Hard	Necky 5a	4b to Impossible	
Sunny?	Yes	Yes	Yes	No - N.facing	Very	Yes, p.m.	
Other Comments	Popular & polished	Newly developed (1980). Good aid practice or delicate free climbing	Good views Mt. Blanc range. Park top of hairpins above Argentiere. Follow path back left	Huge lace-like crag seen from Autoroute. Pity it faces N.	Some v.suspect rock. Route follows water-course - do only in dry weather. Escape ledge 6 pitches up	Like Tremadoc-bar at bottom. Impressive views of Geneva.	

Daytrip down the Gouffre Berger

Gail Searby

The Gouffre Berger (or Goofy Budgie as it was nicknamed) is one of the world's most well known caves, even amongst non-cavers. Hitch-hiking through France, if you mention that you are going caving, then almost without fail the answer will be "Ah oui, La Gouffre Berger!". The cave was explored in the late 1950's and early 1960's by large international parties, and was well covered by the Press. It gained instant fame when it became the world's deepest cave at the time, and later the first cave to be explored to a depth in excess of 1,000 metres. The trips into this cave - even most of the modern ones - usually involve many people, mountains of tackle and underground camping as the trips usually take several days, and in some cases weeks! The Gouffre Berger has acquired a reputation for being the world's finest cave as far as Camp 1 at minus 500 metres, and a very serious trip to go through the wet canals below this. Several accidents and many epics have given it an Eigerwand-type reputation, the main dangers being flooding and fatigue.

"Come what may, I am not going caving again" I announced. I had decided to give up caving the day before when I emerged from another cave totally knackered and with all my gear in tatters. This was definitely it, never ever again would I go caving! Sun-bathing, knitting and other such ladylike hobbies were more for me!

That evening saw me enthusiastically mending gear sewing up the harness that I was about to hang my life on! Carbide lamps were fettled, ropes measured and sorted, karabiners and hanger plates counted and packed. Well, perhaps I would give up caving after to-morrow.

It was decided earlier that day that we would do the trip. Over a glass of Valstar beer and under a mountain of bullshit, we decided that it could be done in one trip, tackling and de-tackling, and without bivouac, even with the handicap of two females in the group! (I think someone got hit for that comment!). So, Operation Gouffre Berger was on.

We set off to a superb alpine start at 1.00 pm. I counted eight tackle bags and five people so I counted again (my maths never was very good) - no, it still didn't fit. After a quick calculation, I realised that I would have to carry two sacks for at least some of the way - then I struck upon a plan. "I'll take these two" I said, picking up the two biggest sacks (marked No. 1 and No. 2). Everyone looked at me in amazement for actually offering to take the bigger sacks! It wasn't until the bottom of the entrance series when I had nothing and they still had their sacks that they realised my plan!

So far, I had been pretty disappointed with the cave, nothing spectacular at all sunbathing would have been much more fun! I hadn't even done any of the rigging yet. I mentioned this to Steve at the top of Aldo's pitch, the last of the Entrance Series. "You go first then, I'll catch up with you" he offered.

I expected this pitch to be more impressive, but I was still disappointed. 'Seen better in England' I thought as I ducked down to crawl through a constriction and popped my head out the other side. 'Eh up, I must have gone wrong somewhere, I'm back outside!' 'that's strange' I thought as I wandered towards the distant sound of a river, 'it should still be daylight'. Very confusing, no roof visible, no walls, my carbide lamp was ineffective against the vastness. I had never seen anything so big!

"Welcome to the starless river," said an eery, echoing voice behind me.

"Who's there?" I nearly jumped out of my skin.

"Only me, you fool." Steve re-lit his light. "Impressive, isn't it - come on, no time for hanging around if we are going to bottom this cave." And off he went. I followed in a daze, feeling strangely insignificant, following this big river in the most enormous passage I had ever seen. Gradually, I began to notice the beauty of the passage, huge stals, crystal-clear pools, sparkling cascades, and endless - it seemed to continue for miles! Eventually, we started to work our way down the huge boulder slope, some of the boulders being the size of a block of flats, while the insignificant ones were merely bungalow-sized! Feeling somewhat like an ant in a sugar bowl, I continued down, stopping every so often to admire the calcite that gave the place a fairy-tale like quality.

Occasionally, by good luck rather than good judgement, I wandered within sight of the left-hand wall. This proved to be spectacular, covered in calcite 'drips'. Eventually, it levelled out and the floor became a maze of gour pools full of the most sparkling crystal-clear water. I stopped for a drink and put my whole head in the water as I totally misjudged where the surface was! I wandered round a corner and found myself facing the biggest stalagmite I had ever seen, looking remarkably like a fairy-tale castle, or a child's drip castle in the sand.

Totally lost in a different world, I was surprised when Steve spoke - "Hall of Thirteen, 500 metres down, beautiful isn't it, look around." I was surrounded by massive stalagmites on a calcite floor. We switched our lights out to wait for the others. This gave a real impression of size as we watched the bobbing lights slowly working their way down.

We paused here for a brief Mars Bar stop. Morale was very high and we decided that the push for the bottom was definitely on. Now, with only one sack per person, we were able to move much faster. We set off in the direction of what sounded like a huge, exciting cascade; we were all amused when we found it a small trickle going into a bucket-shaped stalagmite with fantastic accoustics!

The lower section of the cave has tended to merge in my memory into a blur of sporting caving at its very best big, fast streamway and big cascade pitches with pendulums to bolts to keep us out of the water - S.R.T. at its best. We traversed the walls above the deep canals, one slip and I would have been very cold and wet, but, unusually for me, I didn't make that slip.

At the top of Claudines Cascade we waited for each other and the excitement was tremendous - only six hours to here, we were going well, nothing would stop us now! The last two pitches, Little Monkey and Hurricane, were the most exciting. Superb technical rigging allowed us to abseil down dry next to a tremendous roar of water. Seven-and-a-half hours from the entrance saw us at the sump, 1100 metres (or so) down. We shared a Yorkie bar and waited for Andrea, last seen passing the knot on the last pitch. Nigel arrived, said that she had

shouted something and then started to prusik up the rope. Strange girl, perhaps she didn't want to see the bottom, or was she saving something for next time?

We didn't waste time at the bottom, as speed was now crucial to get back to the other side of the flood-prone canal area, and also because we were short of carbide. I left the others de-tackling while I caught up with Andrea, who it turns out had managed to bend her descendeur doing a knot pass (how the heck?!!). She hadn't realised that it was the last pitch or she would have back-prusiked it - she was understandably disappointed to get so close to the bottom and have to turn back.

Several 'jolly' hours of increasing knackeredness were spent heaving, hauling, cursing and kicking heavy tacklesacks which were now full of wet rope. It was an amazing relief to reach the Hall of Thirteen again, the safe side of the canals. We could now afford to relax, make a brew and at 1.00 am we discovered the revitalising properties of hot blackcurrant 'rise and shine' wonderful. Now came the long plod out. Conversation had almost died apart from the odd choice word directed at a tacklesack!

5.00 am saw me half-way up Aldo's pitch. I stop, rest wake up, wonder where I am. One more step, rest, wonder why I am doing it, one more step, decide I am definitely giving up caving. One more step, decide to die, one more step and I am nearly at the top - perhaps I will make it after all! My sack seemed to double in weight and I wondered how the other three would manage when they had accumulated five sacks. I briefly thought about going back to help them, but soon came to my senses - it would be hard enough for Andrea and myself to get our own sacks out.

7.00 am, and I was out in time to see the mist clearing and the sun breaking through - it was going to be a beautiful day; I wonder which day of the week it is?

By 9.00 am, the sun was hot and reviving as the last person surfaced tired but jubilant - we had done it! In a total of 20 hours, so it can be done.

Now all that remained was the long haul back to the car, the drive down to the village for a breakfast of steak and chips and champagne! (All served with ample helpings of bullshit!).

"I really mean it this time," I announced over breakfast, "I'm giving up caving for good."

"Yeah, yeah, heard it all before - what about the next time?"

"There isn't going to be a next time, that was a good cave to finish on."

"There's better caves in Mexico."

"Really! Oh well, perhaps".



A shot which typifies conditions in the Gouffre Berger. Photo: G.Searby

Dovedale Dash 1981



Pete Holden



Tim Barnett



Dave Wright



Roger Larkam



C.(Rusty) Russell



Chris Fitzhugh

Memories

Pete Scott

" your mother will be proud of you but for all the acclaim you get from others you might as well keep the news a secret "

" you didn't do it to earn memories, but memories you will have and in abundance, for the rest of your life "

A. Wainwright

Both observations turned out to be remarkably accurate. After all, 'there's nowt to see but 'ills an' trees an' watter', but there exists an essential difference between one who has been and embraced with all his senses and one who has not and relies on a series of conjoured sterile images. If the sum total of any single experience in the hills was a series of visual images then mountaineering would not exist. The experience is complex, involving all available senses and emotions interacting with the physical environment, other people and events.

This summer, a casual, last-minute decision to walk the Pennine Way resulted in

..... weariness.

Descending from a day with horizons of sky and heather, footsore and weary, Pennine villages promised temporary succour, a place to lick wounds, food, a farmer's field, rest for our weary bodies and a pub to meet with and chat to our fellow travellers on the Way. Anticipation motivated the continuance of the sometimes grim plod down from the moors, between the grey walls of a stony drovers' road which had become rutted and neglected over the years, each step stimulating the pulsating focus of pain on some part of a foot. Visions of food and drink swam titillatingly through the mind, only to be shattered by another stab of pain induced by a careless collision of foot with stone.

..... recovery.

The simple, functional, physical actions of life became important and good. Resting, cleansing, eating, drinking, relaxing. Pain dissolved and a feeling of mental well-being swiftly followed and one took stock, reflected on the day, anticipated with relish the next, absorbed the setting sun, found contentment in companionship and new-found friends, and wallowed in blessed sleep sometimes.

..... fulfilled promises.

We found the promised Arcadia in Teesdale and rested in sylvan sweetness and dreamed. On the Cheviots we camped on beds of heather and bilberry surrounded by stars and night breezes.

..... a simple welcome.

At Colden, Lothersdale and Dufton, farmers provided for our simple needs and around kitchen tables we chatted, drank tea or ate heartily as if one of the family. What was the magic ingredient which lifted the heart, brought a smile, a spontaneous thanks and left us with those memories?

..... *mindless vernacular.*

Crowden, Malham and Horton villages provided campsites of a more conventional nature, 'civilised' and of easy access by motorcar. Nylon shells and sleep were all too vulnerable to drunken grockle's mindless vernacular. I reasoned at Crowden, ignored at Malham and buried my head in my sleeping-bag at Horton.

..... *childhood memories.*

What happened to my childhood memories of the farm in Wensleydale. Hot summer days, picnics brought out into the fields to the haymakers, fetching the cows from the pasture by the river at milking time, the barns, farmyard hens and geese, rides on the tractor, a raft on the river, a myriad childhood sensations. Were they false?

Now no sign of livestock; consequently no milking, no meadows or haymaking required and where were the poultry? The barns are sterile units converted into a camp launderette, toilets, shower, shop, even a camp restaurant. Who was the stranger who took £1 per person per night. Was he born when I was a child? The long tarmac drive (once a white, dusty track) no longer traced a path through lush meadows but bisected a canvas city whose citizens were seeking ?

..... *'star wars'.*

The lightweight tents in one corner of the field sheltered a slumbering group of Pennine Way colleagues from many parts of Britain and Europe. The silence was shattered by a cacophony of bad language from the four occupants of a nearby canvas castle who had recently returned late from the pub. My remonstrance was unheeded, as was my threat to come over and 'sort them out'. Was I oversensitive? Were they insensitive? Was I over-reacting as a result of previous incidents and my consternation at finding cherished childhood memories blown away? Frustrated at being unable to answer the questions, I determined to pursue the matter further. But who were they? Was it worth the possible consequences? Coward! I padded over to their tent and quietly invited them to step outside one by one. A long-haired head appeared through the zip of the tent. What was on the end? A sixteen-stone greaser? Self-doubt took hold of me but there was only one way to find out. A grab at the long hair, a good yank, a twist of head, a foot behind the legs, a knee in the chest, and hairy-head collapsed in the hedge bottom. Three other hairies tumbled drunkenly out of the tent but a clenched fist poised threateningly over hairy number one's nose persuaded everyone that we had reached the negotiating table. "Bloody 'ell, mate," squealed hairy number one, "it's like bleeding star wars!". The agreed terms were that I should count to ten, everyone would go to bed in silence and hairy number one's nose would remain unbloodied.

(I hated the confrontation. The threat of force acting as a deterrent didn't seem moral but it worked. What would have happened if he'd hit me back? Would it have solved the problem or escalated the conflict? At least one walker was disappointed that I didn't wake him to join me in my lonely battle. I still didn't know whether I was being oversensitive!).

..... *a rat in a trap.*

We squeezed a group of tents onto the grassy bank of the Tyne at the suggested

site of one of the locals in Alston. Our sleep was shattered by a bawling, shouting, incoherent lout driving an alarmingly tilting landrover down a narrow strip of grass between tent and ditch at midnight. "..... *memories you will have for the rest of your life* ". I'll surely never forget my friend silhouetted in the headlights, half out of his sleeping-bag, getting ready to jump (God knows where to) out of the path of the landrover bearing down on the tent.

Why did they behave like that?

..... *physical gratification.*

Teas! Oh! Sweet relief from hot and dusty trail. Was it croaking throat or creaking joints or both which clamoured - "Stop! Not another step until the delights of this latest oasis have been sampled."

Grey-haired ladies bid us enter and take a seat in their homely kitchen, or sometimes we sat on the garden wall by the front door, wondering at the peace and tranquility of a silent village street in the afternoon sun, or a farmyard where scratching hens and playful kittens were companions. The tea flooded fresh brown from giant pots to slake the thirst of all the company and then more and more. Overwhelming! Enough! Thank you!

Did our renewed vigour stem from physical gratification or had the kindness, peace and tranquility radiating from these people sought us out and strengthened our resolve. What contrast where beauty has been commercialised and bored tourists, to while away the time, drink weak, luke-warm tea served in glass or plastic cups in plastic cafes by ungracious, disinterested nubles.

How natural and successful you were at fulfilling our needs at lonely Colden and Woodhead farms. How off-hand and disinterested in the village store at touristic Malham; who was first, you, your attitude or the tourists?

..... *illusions.*

We strolled through verdant parkland in Airedale, flocks of sheep grazed quietly and cattle chewed their cud, meditating on a summer's afternoon. An airborne leviathan rose from behind a low, green hill, massive, banking sharply, an abomination against the sun, seemingly scraping the limestone walls with it's wing tip. Unexpected, shocking, exciting, it sank below the hill from whence it had appeared, a monster returning to it's den.

The morning sunlight sparkled on the surface of the swiftly-flowing Tees, bordered by heather and juniper. Only droning insects and the splashing river broke the silence of a new day. Round a bend in the river, a huge vision of man-made devastation where the very fabric of Teesdale is blasted, crushed and ground, broke the spell.

We meandered on through lovely Teesdale, then climbed the rocky Whin Sill staircase by the side of Cauldron Snout. Water leaped, fumed, thundered freely another illusion courtesy of man and dam.

Pen y Ghent was undergoing plastic surgery. The white scar in the flank of the once beautiful fell, erosion created by the feet of man, has destroyed the beauty that man came to see? Was it that he came to behold and reflect or merely to satisfy his ego by easily attaining a summit which his peers could identify and say "Well done"?

Great swelling Cheviot fells, rough grass and reeds grazed by sheep, silhouetted against a threatening sky. Stretches of heather, bilberry, cotton-grass and sphagnum relieved the bleakness of the windswept landscape. We remained close together in this lonely spot although the land reached out to meet the sky at every horizon; an illusion of space. Danger. Keep Out. Military Zone. Bombs. Shells. Shooting. Which do you prefer?

'Make tea, not war' some passing wag had remarked wryly.

Lowling cattle collected around God's Bridge in the early morning, for centuries a passage for men and their animals, drovers and now walkers of the Pennine Way. Shortly, up through the fields and over a wall by a stile, we came to the A66 trunk road, an artery for the life blood of our nation. We recoiled before the blast, noise and fumes of vehicles streaming either way, faceless, unconcerned. Who was out in the cold, them or us? Who cares? I photographed one such howling monster bearing down, to try and capture something of how I felt. The driver noticed and smiled, there had been communication. They weren't faceless after all. We crossed over and climbed up the far hillside. Five minutes later, they might as well never have existed. I wondered what he thought of us out there.

..... *the sublime.*

We gathered in the late afternoon sunshine on the green turf by a tiny tributary of the Tees and delighted in our situation, companionship and anticipation of the hours ahead. The group had crystallised by the half-way point along the Way. Nine of us prepared our evening meal prior to making our way up Teesdale in the quiet of the evening. Middleton, a pleasant enough market town, had catered for our immediate needs at the end of a morning's walking. Now we had made good our escape and Teesdale was deserted in the remaining hours before dark. We followed paths through pastures and wooded dells, always conscious of the river glimpsed through the trees. At Low Force, we rested on rocky, dolerite ledges. Instinctive forces drove fish vainly to attempt to climb the fall, while we allowed the smoothly plunging water to hypnotise and lull in the setting sun. Anxious quests for permission to camp as darkness gathered drew us closer, but fears were dispelled by friendly endorsements from a farmer nearby and we pitched our tents on the riverside in idyllic surroundings.

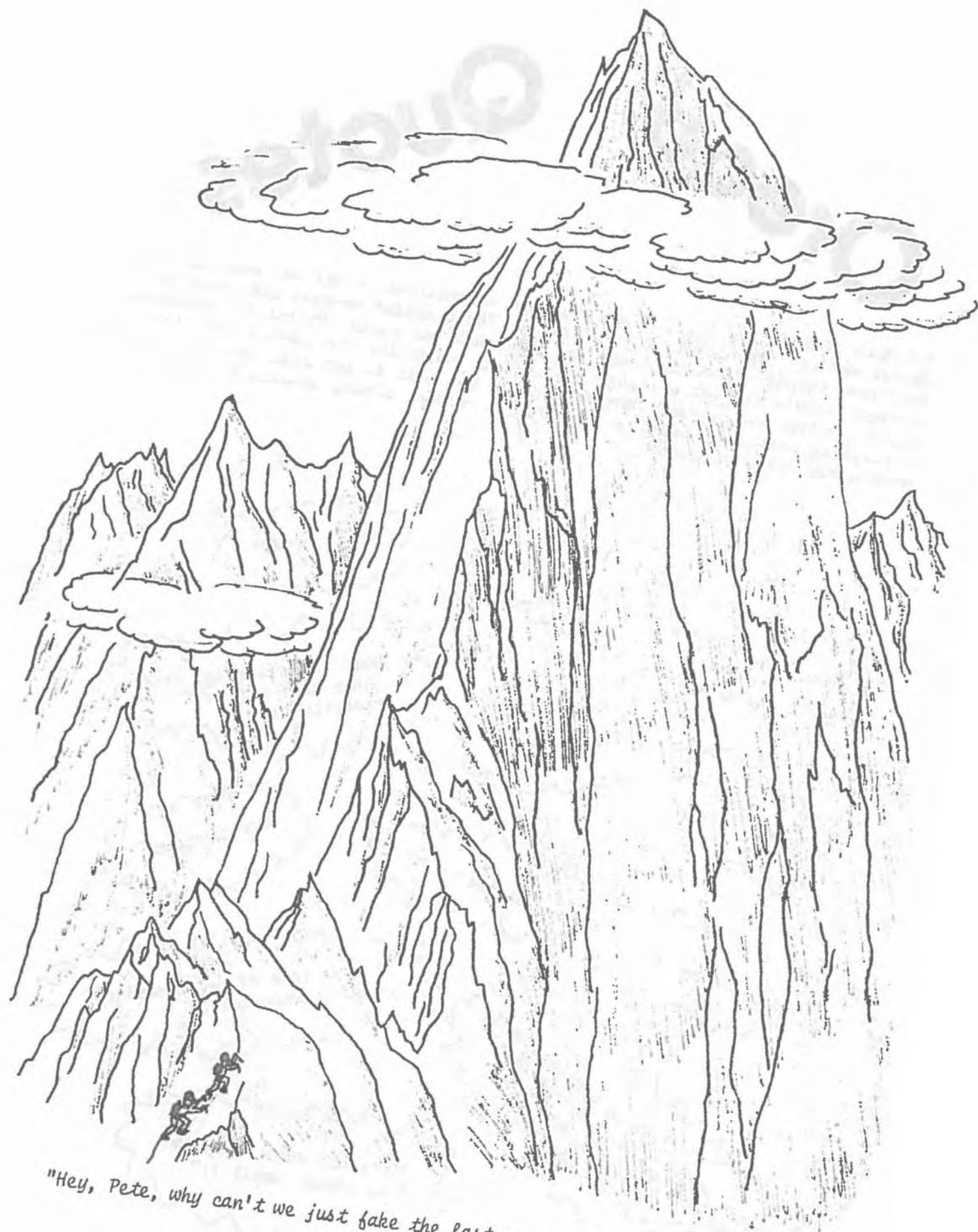
Next day, we tarried long in the presence of beauty, for so much of life is barren. The river ran wide and free, was then constrained through narrow, deep, black channels, next thundering or sliding wildly over Whin Sill cliffs.

We passed by farms, windows and doors open to sun and breeze on a summer's day, and reflected on the free and gentle aspect of the scene. Harsh reality was inconceivable, winter storms and deep snows for months, killing every single living beast at Birkdale, forcing retreat and loss of freedom for a man who was his own master. Life had returned once again to Birkdale, the door stood open.

Later, we crossed a high moorland and, shyly at first, we plunged and laughed in a mountain pool and let the water cascade over our bodies, freed from pressing burdens.

We crossed the watershed at High Cup and abruptly it was over; the land fell away and the plan of a new day to come lay stretched out before us.

Before you part this earth, go and walk up Teesdale as we did and experience the sublime.



"Hey, Pete, why can't we just fake the last couple of chapters?"

Oread Quotes

A simple competition (..... draw your own conclusions) - all you have to do is decide who is responsible for each quote. The brighter members will realise that some people are responsible for more than one quote. Prizes for complete, correct answers include a signed list of the crags the President hasn't been to (clue!), a day out helping Dave Owen carry his rack to the crag, and a collection of slightly used chalk bags in last year's colours kindly donated by Paul Gardner and Robin Sedgwick.

* * * * *

"I'm not as young as I used to be"

Robin Beadle

"What is this crag? Have I been here before?"
(traditional)

Dave Owen

Dave Wright

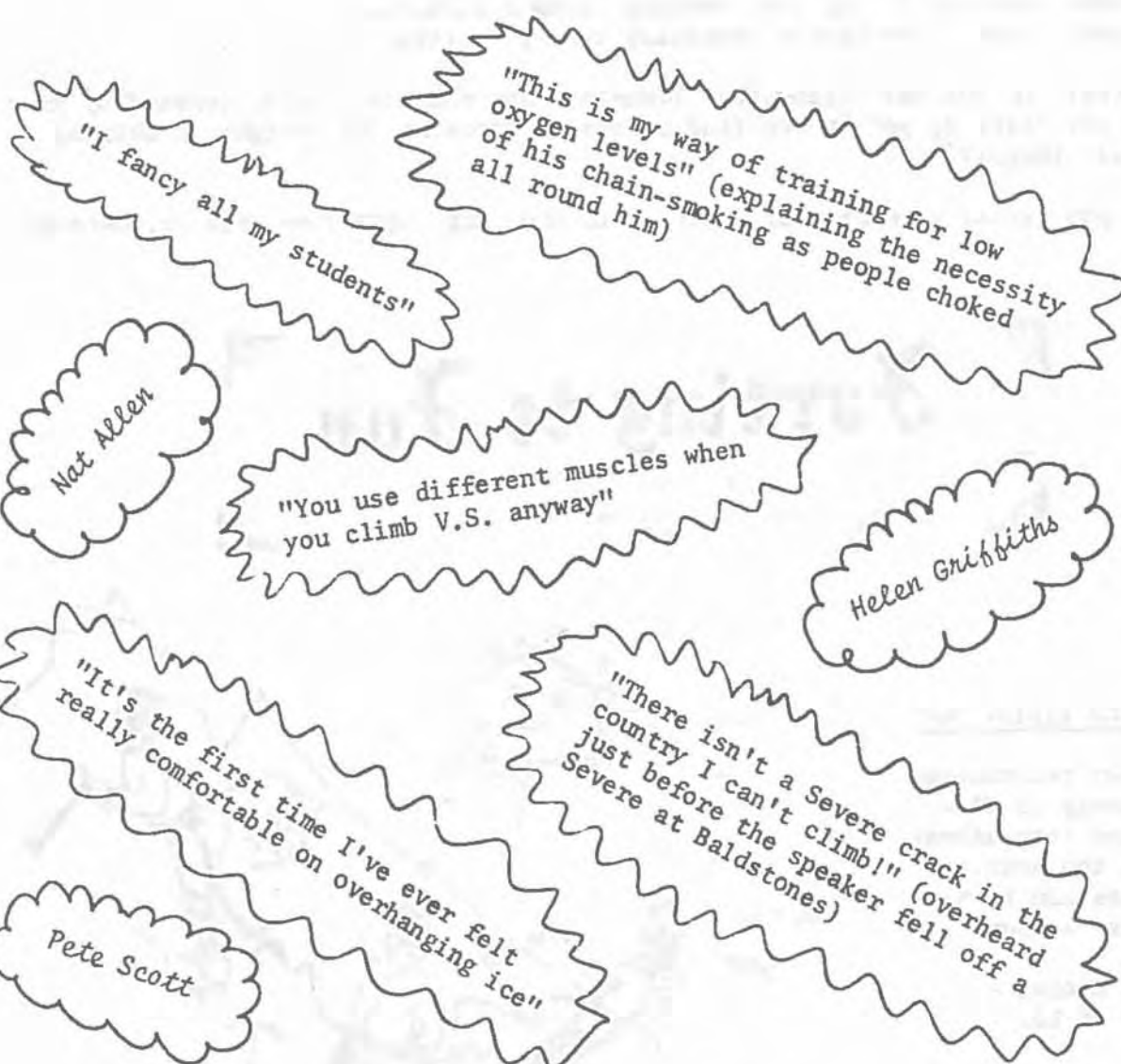
"Some of my very best friends are women"

Pete Lancaster

"I have lots of relationships"
(context uncertain!)

"I've seen stuff in Scotland that looks more impressive than that!"
(comment on first sight of the North Face of the Eiger)

"It's not fair - why am I so bloody small !!"



Extract from Committee Minutes 1982

'After long discussion about charging other Clubs a higher fee to use Heathy Lea (particularly the Pinnacle Club), Pete Scott pointed out that it was "a negative motive to screw people just because they deserve screwing".'

AND NOW! Are you fed up with reading route descriptions?
YOU ARE? GOOD! Now here's something that's a little silly.....

Members! Do you have flatulence trouble? Are you continually berated by your wife for "letting go" in bed (and thereby destroying the 'knight in shining armour' image)?

Have you passed some of your habit on to your dog? Yes? Then read on, because.....

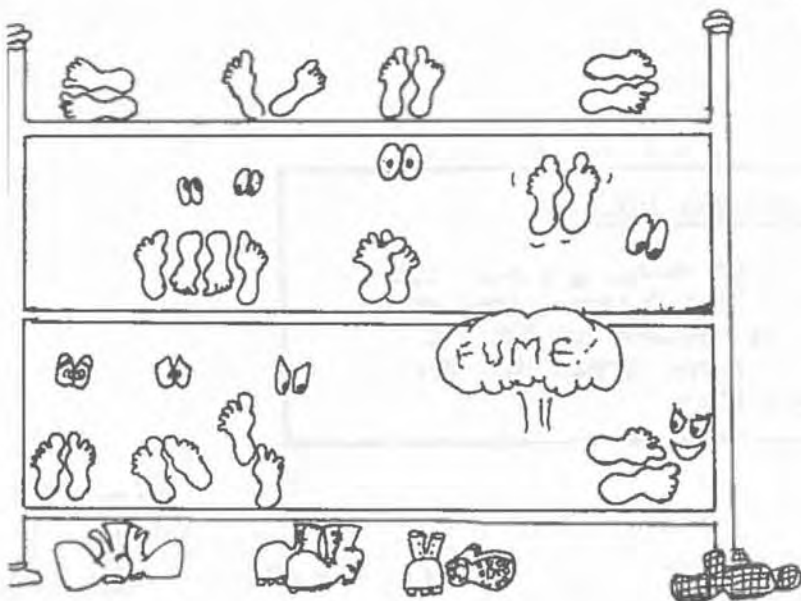
Farting is Fun

Ideas by Mike Jaggs
Cartoons by Beryl Strike

1. The Alpine Poo

Not recommended
as energy is dis-
sipated into atmos-
phere too soon.
Victims can take
evasive action.

Score Rating -
1 out of 10.



2. The Hut Cloud

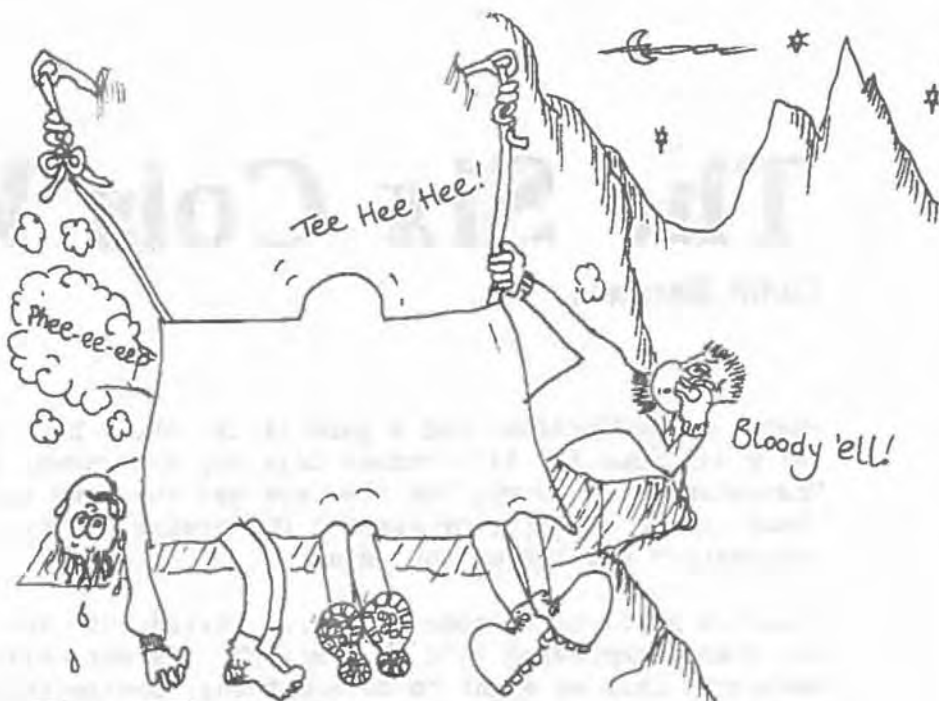
Not recommended.
Energy better used
but victims can still
take evasive action.
Blankets effective
for silencing.

Score Rating -
5 out of 10.

3. The Bivouac Biff

Highly recommended. Victims unable to escape. We recommend a long slow discharge, maintaining a high-pitched note as long as possible. Maximum energy usage.

Score Rating -
10 out of 10.



4. The Camper's Standard

Recommended. Especially in winter as victims do not wish to escape into icy atmosphere from warm pits. Space sufficiently small to use energy well.

Score Rating -
8 out of 10.

Disadvantage - tents can be mistaken for UFO's and used as target practice by RAF - especially in Wales.

5. The Annual Dinner Peeper

A special variety brought out only once a year. Known to wear new suits out quickly.

Score Rating - depends on what you've been eating!

Disadvantage - not recommended if you wish to make friends and influence people.



So you see, you can turn an embarrassing situation into a funny one by picking the correct moment but remember, practice makes perfect!

The Six Cols Walk

Colin Barnard

Maybe, on reflection, not a good title. Ah, I hear you say, we know that, we've all done it, it's rather *deja vu*, and anyway it's five not six. Understandable enough, but they are not the same cols you are thinking of and there really are six, or else my University of Rhyd Ddu degree in Higher Mathematics has let me down again.

I was at a bit of a loose end; D.J. stared into the distance for a long time and then disappeared into the tent for his anti-histamine tablets when I mentioned that we ought to do something. Unexpectedly, Fisher, a *Deus ex Machina* in Army of India kit, came to the rescue. Our plans, when we had finally hatched them, were remarkable for the way they combined complexity with vagueness and inherent improbability, and involved an excessively large number of people being in an excessive variety of places at excessively unlikely times. Fortunately, having formulated them we promptly discarded them for practical purposes.

We left Sulden at the sort of late hour that marked us as incorrigible wastrels and flogged up to the Dusseldorferhutte, a process that involved flushing out the residue of several litres of Forstbrau through every pore of my suffering anatomy. Once at the Hut, we watched a chopper land and pick up a recumbent form, a cheerless repeat of my arrival at the Payerhutte earlier in the week, which had been marked by a helicopter searching for what was left of a youth who had come off the Hintergrat. The present occasion was less final however, a girl having been taken ill at the Hut.

When we rose at 5.25 there was no hint of the sharp frost we had hoped for. The thermometer outside the Hut said 4°C above, so we consoled ourselves by ploughing through an overlarge breakfast and accepting the certainty of a soft-snow wallow. Outside the Hut, Venus overtopping the Angelusscharte pointed our way.

A fair sized avalanche was coming off the North Face of the Vertainspitze as we wound our way up to the first col, the Angelusscharte. Below us, pink-tinged wisps of mist faded as the sun rose but we were still in shade, and the snow was gradually becoming firmer. At the col, we turned left across the Lasserferner and lost contact with the team that had been alongside us. Thereafter followed nine hours of hill-bashing without seeing another soul. A cloudless sky, a crystal-clear view that extended beyond countless mountains and valleys, and the freedom of the hills.

At the far end of the Lasserferner lies the Rosimjoch and from here the guide said to contour under the Schildspitze to the next col. It seemed a shame to miss out this pleasant peak but we were good little boys and for a time did what the book of words said. There was no evident line and a messy traverse over snow, boulders, odd icy patches and the odd small 'schrund soon wore out our little remaining faith in the guide. The ascent of the peak was both aesthetically satisfying and no more demanding than the guidebook route, so we turned upwards and climbed ledges of rubble giving way to easier slopes,

by-passed a tower and arrived on the summit for our second breakfast, and a view of uninterrupted splendour.

The descent to the Schildjoch was unremarkable, as would have been the ascent of the Plattenspitze had not my right leg broken through the snow completely to leave me up to my buttocks and firmly jammed. Oh ignominy! My own efforts to extricate myself, though on an epic scale, were utterly unavailing - John had the double burden of digging me out and keeping a straight face at the same time.

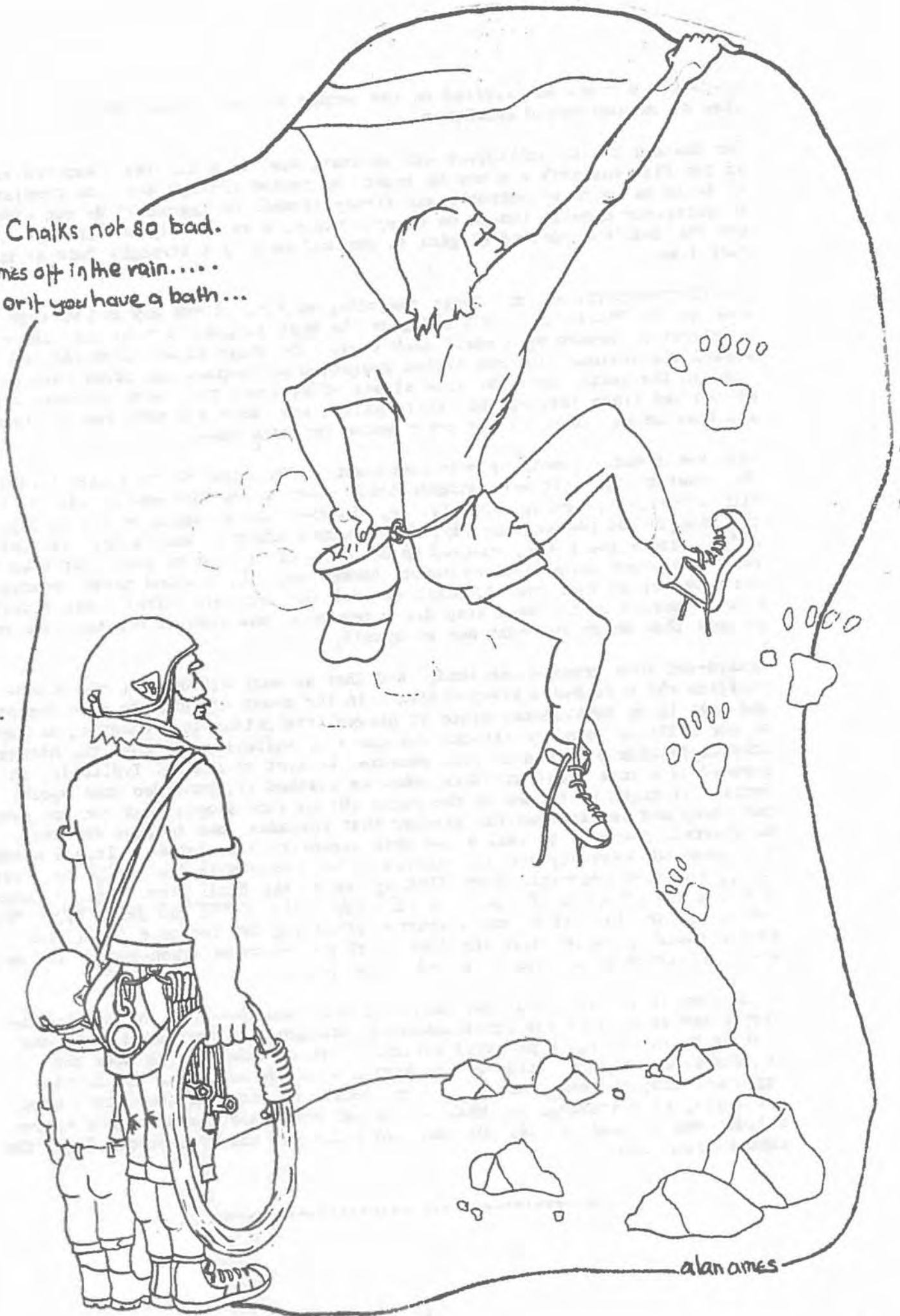
The Plattenspitze was the least rewarding section of the day and we were soon down to the Pederjoch, and looking at the more elegant form of the Innere Pederspitze crowned by a small rock crest. The ridge direct from the col seemed the obvious line but Fisher suggested we by-pass the lower part on a line on the east flank. The snow slopes offered a little more interest than we had had since leaving the Schildspitze, and these and more rubbly ledges and easy rocks led us to the crest below the rock tower.

Here was clearly something more problematic. The snows which passed beneath the tower on the left were uncomfortably steep so we followed a ledge to the right. Here, a gleaming chromolly peg was the only evidence we saw all day that others had passed this way. We contoured under it and Fisher, launching off a sharp-edged block, muscled up onto the crest. For my part, not used to wandering about unroped where others hammer pegs in, I stood there debating the move for so long that I forgot to nick the peg. Only after I had finally psyched myself up the rock step did I remember, and then it was too late to do more than mouth imprecations at myself.

Square-cut tors crowned the summit and then we were off down to the Schontaufjoch which looked a steep descent. In the event appearances were deceptive and even in my debilitated state it proved straightforward. However, no day on the hills is complete without its quota of suffering and this the Hintere Schontaufspitze provided in good measure. It went on and on. Typically, it is crowned by a rock crest and this, when we reached it, provided some sport. Perhaps it might be turned on the right (N) on snow slopes that run out over the steep and massive hanging glacier that cascades down towards Rosimtal. We elected, however, to tackle the nose directly. A scramble up ledges where the handholds were big but also proved to be demountable did little to cheer me up, but some pragmatic route-finding led to the final step. Here, I looked down and the prospect of a more-or-less free fall to the boulders, forty feet below, was the last straw and I started gibbering for the rope. With that safely round my ample waist the final step proved to be a non-event, and we stood on virtually the summit of our final peak.

A run down to the last col, the Madritschjoch, and then down wet muddy ski-slopes and we were at the Schaubachhutte, wringing out saturated socks and looking to the delights of civilisation. These included a trip down the telepherique, an altercation at the bottom where we went into our Little Englander song-and-dance act until, red-faced, we realised the locals were not trying to overcharge us. Back to the car and a beer, and another Alpine holiday was as good as over. How many cols did you count? I expect I got the number wrong anyway.

Nah, Chalks not so bad.
It comes off in the rain.....
..... or if you have a bath...



Meet Reports 1981

THE OGWEN MEET – FEBRUARY – Jack Ashcroft

The avowed intention of walking the Fourteen Peaks in winter never materialised. The Friday night presented such miserable weather at Ogwen that most of us decided a start just wasn't on. Not Brian West and Roy Eyre, however, who left Glan Dena at midnight with the Carneddau peaks in mind. Enough said about that! Have a word with them and they will confirm that their night on the Carneddau steadily wore them down and they abandoned their Fourteen Peaks attempt at first light (having walked all the Carneddau peaks first, of course).

As for the rest, some went climbing, but a team comprising Paul Bingham, Dave Penlington, Roger Chapman, Ron Chambers, Bev Abley, Chris Radcliffe, John Foster (and his son), Stuart Firth, Roy Darnell and myself brought the reserve plan into operation, which was to walk the Welsh 1,000 metre peaks - as read from the O.S. Sheet 115 1:50,000 2nd Series, Crown Copyright 1974!!

We left Glan Dena at 8.00 am, walked up Carnedd Dafydd into Carnedd Llewelyn, off the Penyrhelgi-du ridge to Williams Farm. We then walked over to the Pen-y-Gwryd for a lunch break, before our afternoon effort onto Crib-y-ddysgl and Snowdon, which we attained just before 4 o'clock. We'd arranged transport at Pen-y-pass where we arrived at 5.25 pm. It had been a pleasant day's walk. The weather was rather indifferent but it didn't rain, although the wind was pretty ferocious on Crib-y-ddysgl and the cloud bank was low most of the day. The outstanding feature of the day was lack of snow. It would all have been better with some good, firm snow around, a frosty nip in the air and a clear blue sky. Or, better still, maybe it's meant as a summer day's trip dropping off from Crib-y-ddysgl into the Pass and over the Miner's Track to Idwal. O.K. if you like that kind of thing, I can hear the cragsmen saying! But just bear in mind that some would prefer to run it!

And now, to stretch the imagination a little further - what about playing Gregson's Game of Best Routes $\sqrt{(g^2br)}$. I've often thought of a series of crags through the Snowdonia National Park (not all to be done in one day, of course). It might go something like:-

Craig-y-Dulyn	(Foel-Grach)
Craig-yr-ysfa	(Carnedd Llewelyn)
Craig-Lloer	(Pen-yr-ole-wen)
Idwal Slabs	(Glyder Fawr)
Upper Cliff	(Glyder Fawr)
Main Cliff	(Glyder Fach)
East Face	(Tryfan)
Crib Goch Buttress	
Main Face	(Y Lliwedd)
Clogwyn d'ur Arddu	
Craig-y-Bora	(Y Garn)
Craig Cwm Silyn	

I will leave the reader to jot in his particular choice of route to his own preference (and there are Diffs around Cloggy).

And now to stretch the imagination a little further - what about Fourteen routes down the Edges. Say, starting from the Derwent Dam car park and follow a selection of routes to Heathy Lea. It might go something like this:-

Dovestone Wall	(Derwent Edge)
Prospero's Climb	(Stanage End)
Mantelshelf Climb	(High Neb, Stanage)
Broken Buttress	(Enclosure, Stanage)
Wall End Slab	(Amphitheatre Area, Stanage)
Jitter Face	(Flying Buttress Area, Stanage)
Paddock	(Higgarr Tor)
North Climb	(Froggatt)
Allens Slab	(Froggatt)
Slab Route	(Curbar)
Eagle Stone	(Baslow)
Och Aye Wall	(Gardoms)
NMC Crack	(Gardoms)
Emperor Crack	(Chatsworth)

"Not meant to be serious" said Gregson. Those who want it serious can suggest a series of routes averaging VS - all to be done in a day, in boots and in winter. That was the Ogwen Meet 1981.

The other members who were on the Meet were Keith Gregson, Dave Parnham, Robin Sedgwick, Dorothy Kidd, Pete Lancaster, Pete O'Neill, Matthew Peacock, Paul Baldwin, Gordon Wright, Dave Wright, Graham Pemberton, Helen Griffiths, Ian Tucker, John Draper, Trevor Bridges, Robin Beadle, Roger Penlington, Kath Abley (plus 2 atoms), all of whom climbed (I think) at Tremadoc or on the Milestone.

* * * * *

EDALE HORSESHOE — MARCH — Colin Hobday

Eighteen Oreads and friend assembled at the car park in Hope Village at 9.00 on Saturday morning. Radders appeared wearing green wellies - did he know something that we didn't? I had also made a drop off by bringing two left boots for Stephen, resulting in him having to wear trainers.

No sooner had we gained the higher ground of Win Hill than we were met by gale force winds and horizontal rain, and this set the pattern for most of the day. As we struggled over Crookstone Knoll some descended to Edale and Cooper's Cafe while the experts, who claimed to know Kinder like the back of their hand, finished up at the Downfall.

The rain eased during the afternoon, giving most a good walk over Mam Tor arriving back in Hope car park around 5.15 having had a good, if rather stormy, day out.

* * * * *

THE WELSH WALK – MAY – Dave Penlington

Shortly after our arrival at Tan-y-Wyddfa, Welbourne went up to bed promising to wake everyone at 4.00 am. This was not to be – about 4.30 Ashcroft, Amour and I were wakened by the general hubbub going on downstairs. We dressed quickly and managed a cup of tea before the drive to Aber. Welbourne, having filled the car with pipe smoke, protested that he could not see where we were going.

The morning looked fair and, at Aber, we met Roy Darnell, friend and dog. They had been waiting some time and Roy immediately led off up over the frosted hillside – it was 5.30 am. Dawn brought blue sky with small white clouds, the start of a perfect day!

The party was typical of the original Welsh Walks, young prospective members through to Past President, only the hard rock men were missing. The capability of most members of the party was well known, a number of newcomers were to prove themselves. Only one lady (young) in the party, there to keep her father under control.

We gained the ridge without incident, apart from a few wet feet. A few of the old hands were concerned about a young newcomer wearing soft shoes, not considered to be quite the gear for such an undertaking. He was also rather too casual about the whole thing, with hands in pockets most of the time, but keeping up without any effort.

The sun was now shining brightly, the air crisp and clear as we re-grouped on Foel Fras. Some two hours earlier, Bev Abley and John Muskett had packed their bivvy and set off from near by. On then to Foel Groch, Roy's Eyre and Darnell setting the pace. Various traverse routes took the party to Yr Elan. Two runners were met – they had started from Capel. We crossed Llywelyn and the sky darkened, from Dafydd to Pen-yr-ole-Wen gentle snow fell on us and a storm was seen to pass from Tryfan to Elidir Fawr – it left that side of the valley completely white. The sun returned during the descent to Glan Dena. Hot tea was not offered, just the use of the cold water tap to help wash breakfast down.

On the north ridge of Tryfan, the man in shoes was still with us, hands still in pockets. There was the usual crowd on the summit and we joined them for a few minutes only. The mist returned, thickened up and we could barely see each other as we plodded up Glyder Fach. Snow started to fall and there was some debate as to whether we were on route or not. The summit of the Fach confirmed that we were, and a rapid descent to Llyn-y-cwm was made. The sky began to clear as we crossed Y Garn and made the long walk out to Elidir Fawr. A few members were now in training shoes, Pete Amour's new boots were now getting the upper hand with his feet. A short stop on the summit and the party set off to meet the support party in Nant Peris, food and drink was to the fore in everyone's mind. The descent was delightful down over the streams with waterfalls in spate, spring flowers everywhere, and just outside the village a local farmer opened and closed the gate for us with a cheerful good afternoon. We entered the lane leading to the village to see a familiar car just driving away – we were some two hours later than our estimated time. At the M.R.P. we were informed that our support party had just gone. Again we had to make do with water – pub, shop and everything being closed.

A start was made up the road, Kath Muskett was met and informed us that Bev and John had just started up Cwm Glas. We quickly finished off the remains of their

refreshments, gave our order for an ample supply of beer to be obtained by Kath on her way back to the Hut.

Ron Chambers was not to be pipped to the post by Bev and John, and quickly vanished into the distance. The main party now made their way up the Pass in the late afternoon sunshine to the north ridge of Crib Goch. We reached the top as the last two of the other visitors that day started their descent to Pen-y-Pass. It was a perfect evening, the man in shoes was still as casual as ten hours or so before. Ashcroft suggested to him the best method of traversing the ridge. "I think I'll be alright - I've done a few T.D.'s in the Alps" came the reply. Ashcroft did not reply. On the summit of Snowdon it was clear and cold, with a strong wind rising. We did not stop but dropped quickly to the Hut to end a perfect day of unique weather conditions shared with excellent companions.

What of the support party; Fred Allen had descended from Llyn-y-Cwm to Nant Peris, been refused even a cup of tea at the pub, but then met the support party when making his way up the Pass - will his luck ever break. George Reynolds and Digger arrived in the Pass at about 8.00 pm and decided not to continue in the dark, Pen-y-Pass being too much of a temptation. We received a message of their whereabouts via the police. During the night a storm set in, the next day the tops were seen white through the odd break in the rain which was lashing the valley. We set off to pick up the car from Aber, thinking that nobody would go out in such foul conditions, so we called at Pen-y-Pass to pick up George and Digger. When Ron asked their whereabouts, the Warden informed him that they had set off over an hour earlier. Back at the Hut later that morning, they arrived after an epic crossing - they had however completed the walk.

What of the man in shoes - he finished walking down from Snowdon with Ashcroft, hands still in pockets. His name, Tony Hardwick, or is it Hardman.

* * * * *

AGDEN - AUGUST - Ron Sant

Ron Sant again led the Oread hordes to this interesting venue. Those who attended were Keith Gregson, Harry Lambert, Jill Towle, John and Margaret Theobald, Tony Smedley and family.

This active little group seem to have given Agden quite a hammering as their list of routes suggests - White Rose Flake, Martini Crack, Filth, Derision, Oak Tree Wall, Campsite Crack, Cock o' the North, Briggs and Tittertons, The Whittler, Three Pitch Climb, Double Shuffle, S.O.S..

The whole weekend was blessed with superb weather and the Oreads had the crag to themselves.

* * * * *

SYMONDS YAT - SEPTEMBER - Keith Gregson

As promised, this turned out to be another spectacular Meet - I'm confident that everyone will agree. Not perhaps what we had in mind but, nevertheless, an event not to be forgotten in a hurry.

Some of us snatched the odd climb - there was even the hint of white behind the odd fingernail (I put it down to a difficult confinement in the pub loo).

The main event, though, was the Wrights' prophecy of a front approaching - no sooner had Godamn and Appalling Fright "soothed" their say than it did. We were all sitting in our tents listening to the rain sizzling on the stones, when there came this strange hissing noise - it seemed to move across the campsite and, as it did so, the tidal wave followed - the rain turned to a flood and the frying bacon and tomatoes turned to a casserole.

The 'front' retreated (or became a 'back' or whatever they do) as quickly as it had arrived, we strained the sausages etc, and thought no more about it until bedlam developed in one corner of the campsite. Ambulances, chain-saws, park wardens and all came swinging through the trees. Several caravans had been overturned and modified into play-pens, a couple of large trees had been transplanted and, of course, the ubiquitous frame tents had become ubiquitous. Hopefully, no-one was seriously hurt (or so I believe) and the Oreads in particular had been very lucky to survive with no damage at all.

It was strange that at about the same time as the front had 'fronted', Tim had completed his first ever successful brew, Sedgwick had ceased snoring, Squeaky John had stopped squeaking, and Lol had arrived. Actually Lol hadn't quite arrived on account of a tree parking slightly inconsiderately just in front of his car. He was furious that the "bloody thing had missed", thus robbing him of a well-deserved insurance claim.

Nothing much else happened - except Sedgwick 'et al' going to the pub at 6.00 in the evening. It rained a bit, blew a bit, and Sedgwick went to bed for a bit (I think!). Then we came home.

* * * * *

LADIES MEET — SEPTEMBER — Jill Towle

Team:	Jill Towle	Margaret Theobald
	Yvonne Sant	Barbara Smedley
	Melissa Whyte	Kath Muskett

Saturday: The weather for our first day's climbing was wet and sunny. The climbing was a traverse of a pre-historic route of "The Rivals". In the evening we had a meal in the Prince Llewellyn which consisted of Plover's Eggs in Salad Cream followed by Stuffed Owl and Chips, Passion Fruit and Cream, and Cocoa!!

Sunday: The weather today was very sunny. There was no actual climbing today, just a plod along the old railway track from Beddgelert, through the odd tunnel and field of helpful horses!

* * * * *

BULLSTONES – DECEMBER – John Linney

The faithful and the innocent, with leaders by the million,
left the Nags for the Jubilee Cabin
with much relieving and heavy breathing, soon settled into oblivion.

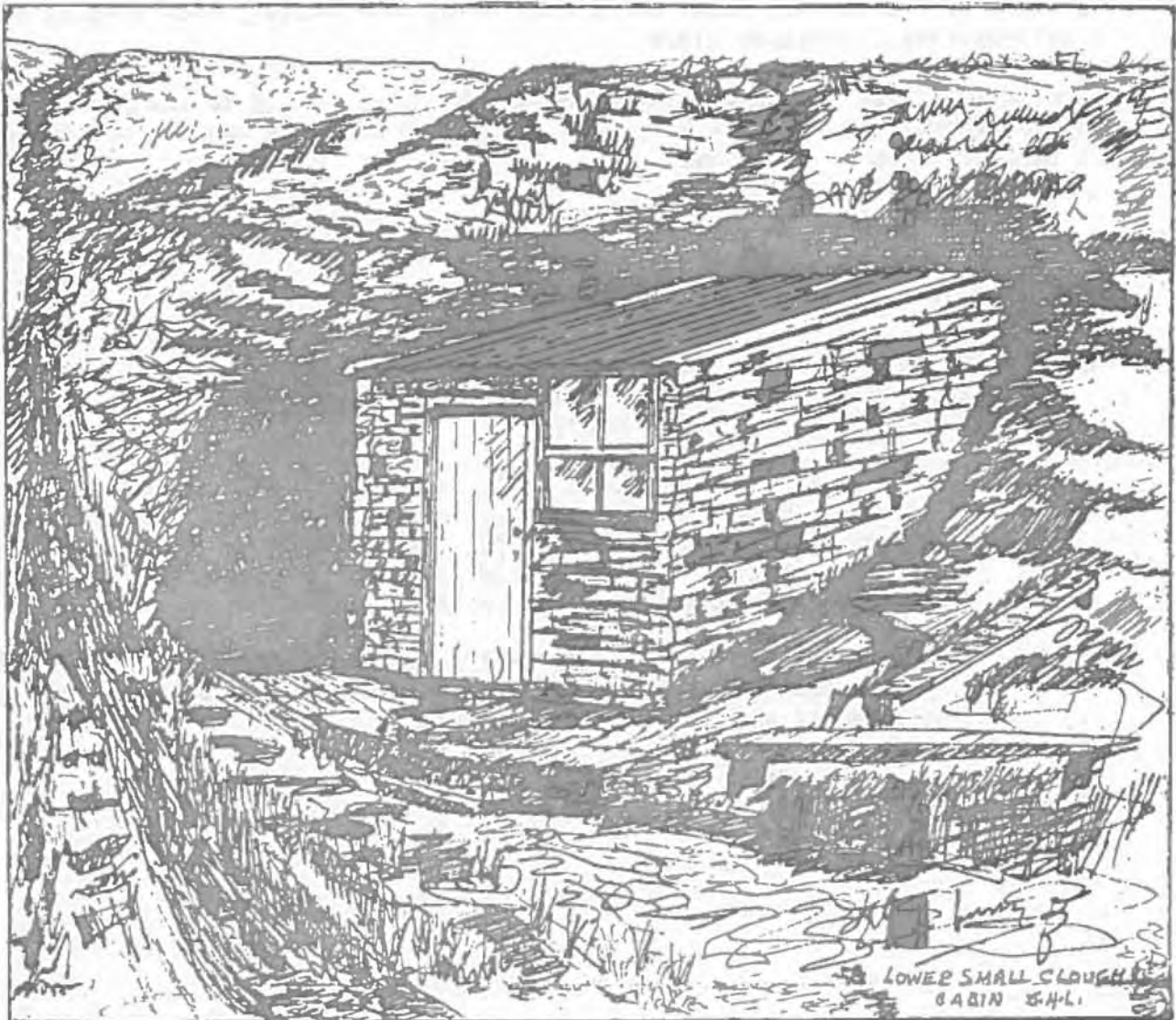
Next day, on our way, over peat and groug;
some are parted from their bearings
heading for Lower Small Clough.

All together yet again, to debate the day's highlights,
'Yes, we waited', 'Didn't you hear us?'
'You must have seen our lights!'.

Then wined and dined, a joke or two,
to the floor we all descend
'til sleep of sorts or dirty thoughts help pass the cold night through.

Early risers reach the pub in time to get a beer,
and over a pint we all agree -
Burgess, bring your compass next year!

*With apologies, and thanks to all who attended.
See you this year? John Linney.*



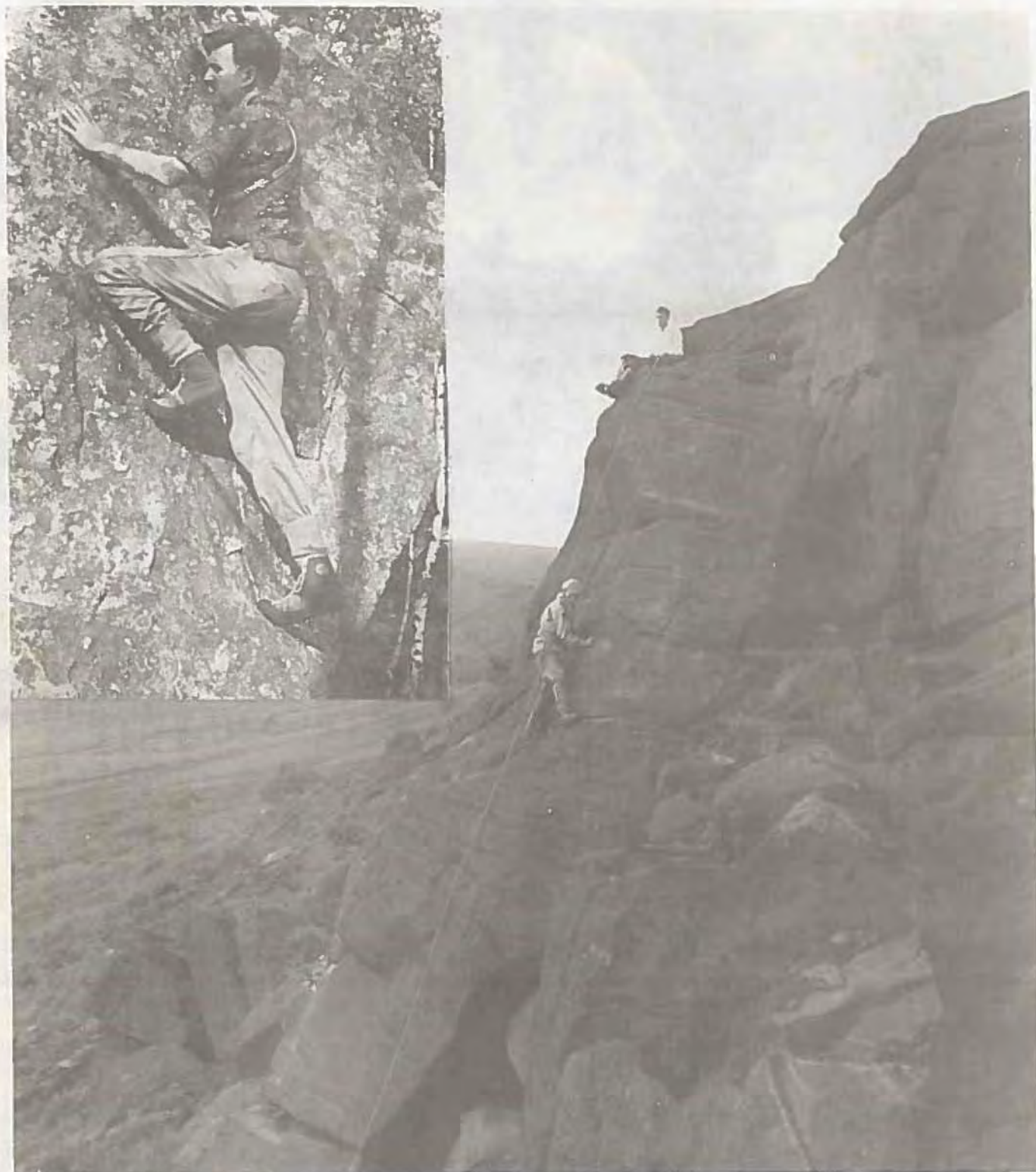


Summit of Glyder Fach in the 1950's. L to R: Phil Faulkner, Bob Pettigrew, Geoff Hayes.



'Oreads' on the summit of Aran Benilyn 1977.

L to R: Colin Barnard, Roland Anthony, Dave Penlington and son, Roger, Paul Beverley



Main Photo: Wall End Slab, Stanage in the 1950's - Brian Cooke climbing,
belayed by Geoff Hayes.
Inset Photo: Brian Cooke climbing at Fontainebleau.
Photos: Jack Ashcroft.

Brian Joseph Cooke

(1923-1981)

Brian Cooke died suddenly on Sunday 4th October 1981 whilst convalescing after a minor operation. Brian was a past President of the Oread M.C. who had climbed regularly for 40 years, mostly in the company of Oread members. Published below are two tributes to Brian, the first by Dave Penlington and the second by Jack Ashcroft. Although there is some overlap, both are published in their entirety.

* * * * *

Brian Cooke's sudden death robbed the Oread of one of its most loyal and long-serving members. Brian, with his wife Marion, first came into contact with the Oread one evening in late 1952 in the Llanberis Pass. Some six months or so later a change of job brought them to Derby - thus began a long, devoted membership of the Oread. Very shortly after election to membership, Brian became a committee member, which was quickly followed by a long term as General Secretary. On the 3rd March 1962 he was elected President.

Brian became interested in the hills at a very early age. Evacuated to Penrith at the outbreak of the war, he was soon rock-climbing in the Lakes. War service took him to India and the Himalayas. His coolies on an expedition into the hills considered him to act in a most dangerous manner when he climbed bare rock rather than, as they did, the vegetation.

After the war, he returned to his native Newcastle and made a major contribution to the production of the Northumbrian Climbing Guides. During this period he came to know the Cheviots in detail and produced a number of fine rock climbs. Many members have experienced Brian's patient encouragement, whether they were a novice receiving advice and instruction or a 'tiger' putting out a new route.

Brian, a Civil Engineer, also left his mark on many fine road works and bridges. The older Nottingham members appreciated the original improvements to the A52. A major bridge over the Mersey cut the time of travelling to the Lakes by hours. One of Brian's later achievements was the Keswick By-pass.

Brian was a man who was dedicated to helping others, of high standards and integrity in all that he did, winning the respect and affection of all those who came to know him.

* * * * *

Brian Cooke's climbing started in 1940 when, as a 15-year old, he was evacuated with his school from Newcastle to Penrith. Michael Roberts, an accomplished mountaineer of the thirties, was his form master who gave him his first taste of the hills. He was so taken with rock climbing that he raced off on his bike at every available opportunity to venture, often alone, onto the Lakeland Crags.

This caused a minor disturbance on one occasion, and an appearance before the Head when he was found unconscious at the foot of a Borrowdale Crag - absent from school without permission. Adventure then followed fast and furious with his enlistment for war service in the Royal Engineers. He served in India with the Royal Bombay Sappers and Miners, which gave him an opportunity to see the Himalayas; then, in Greece, he found time to climb on Mount Olympus. He was demobilised with the rank of Captain and continued his education, graduating in Civil Engineering from the Newcastle Division of Durham University, where he met his wife Marion and where both were active in the newly founded Northumbrian Mountaineering Club. Brian was primarily concerned with the preparation of the first Northumbrian Guide Book, with particular reference to Crag Lough. He had a fund of knowledge on the Craggs of Northumberland which was founded in his days at University.

In the early fifties he came to work in Derby and his long association with the Oread commenced. Marion and Brian indulged themselves fully in Oread activities. Brian became at one time Secretary and then President. He moved back to the north-east in the late sixties but always kept up his connection with the Oread as well as being a member of the Fell and Rock.

Since 1954 I'd been on the hills a lot with Brian, particularly in the late fifties and early sixties when we both worked in Derby and frequently found ourselves on Oread Meets, whether summer evenings at Black Rocks and Brassington, week-ends in Wales and the Lakes, or Alpine Meets. He enjoyed the challenge of the technical move on rock, accomplishing each move steadily and deliberately. No fumbling - led cleanly or not at all.

He'd done walks like the Marsden/Rowsley and inventive circuits in the Lakes, but he preferred to go straight for rock. If his companions in the Alps moved too fast for his preference it was the only time I knew him to lose his cool - "I'm out to enjoy the day and we're going back if you persist with this stupid pace". But this wasn't the true Cooke. He wasn't one to lose his cool and cause unsavoury situations in Committee or on the hill. He was primarily a kindly, balanced type of personality, always with youthful enthusiasm for the hill.

Some of the best days I recall were a week's holiday on Skye camped near Harta Corrie with Dave Penlington, Jim Kershaw and Wally Richardson. We all did the circuit of Clach Glas and Blaven one day, and the complete circuit of the Coolin Ridge another day, including a bivvy on the ridge. Not the classic Greater Traverse but more enjoyable over three days. Then the Cioch another year and, typical of such pleasant days which Brian always enjoyed, on a holiday in Westdale one year we climbed Needle Ridge on Gable, down the Arrowhead Ridge and an ascent of Napes Needle to complete an enjoyable afternoon.

The best Alpine route I recall was in company with Beryl and Roger Turner when we climbed the West Ridge of the Nord Cavales in the Dauphine. A shortish route, but when I think back on the whole holiday it was one of the most pleasant ten days any of us have had in the mountains. And I can never forget Brian's demonstration on a family holiday to one of our seven-year olds on how to fish. All carefully demonstrated - the hook, the bait, the reel, the float and cast the line. Hey presto! The float bobbed up and down and, in seconds, out of a waterfall pool above Glen Brittle House came a presentable trout to the wide-eyed admiration of the tutored youngster. We have all lost a companionable man of the mountains.

Then to his career as a Civil Engineer - he had largely been concerned with

bridge construction. Next time you drive along the A52 between Spondon and Derby, remember all the bridges were supervised by Brian Cooke including the raked piled bridge on the M1 junction. The A66 Keswick By-pass, with the Concrete Society award-winning structures, is also a tribute to his technical expertise and patience, which an engineer has to exercise to cope with the vagaries of weather, and the same in his approach to mountaineering.

The world will be a sadder place without Brian Cooke. He was quietly dedicated to his work and recreation. His family have requested donations to the Coniston Mountain Rescue Team. He was first on the scene after the accident on Dow Crag in 1971 when Geoff Hayes, with whom he had climbed a lot, died. He was forever appreciative of the prompt help the team gave on that sad day.

We never talked much about literature and art, except in the contemporary mountain sense, but the life and work of John Ruskin had something to do with the Brian Cooke I knew. Not the greased pole critique; that was far from his philosophy, but an indefinable attitude seemed ever-present.

Our sympathies go out to Marion and their twin daughters, Jean and Margaret, and they can rest assured that the personality of Brian will long be remembered by his friends in and out of the Oread.



Meet Reports 1982

PATTERDALE — FEBRUARY — John Linney

With good weather promised, parties set out in various directions, most people heading for Helvellyn. We went from Glenridding over Heron Pike and Sheffield Pike to the Sticks Pass. The weather began to break but the view into Keppel Cove looked very dramatic, snow-clad hills under a leaden sky.

From Sticks Pass, the long pull over Raise onto Helvellyn (which always seems to go on and on) brought us into the mist and snow. Soon, we were all together having lunch, as parties came and went it was like a very busy restaurant - our places were taken immediately we got up to move off. We now headed for Nethermost Pike, following the top of the crags instead of the motorway below. Map and Compass were used to get the right direction to Dollywagon Pike, which we missed, but soon we came out of the mist and down to Grizedale Tarn. Fairfield? We headed down Grizedale vowing to do Fairfield and St.Sundays Crag the next day.

It was wet! Some sat it out, some went home, some braved the weather by visiting Boredale. As Roger and I sat down for lunch, overlooking Ullswater near Sandwick, the sun came out. But, as we got up to walk back to the Hut, it started to drizzle and down the lane from Side Farm it came down in buckets, intent on driving us away. It did! Next year I think I shall camp! Many thanks to all who came.

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TAN Y WYDDFA — MARCH — Chris Wilson

In case you've since forgotten, the coldest winter for years was extremely short-lived and gave way to a long period of unmitigated gloom and near continuous rain. Friday 12th heralded blustery storms and exceptionally high winds. Thus the scenario was set for a pretty appalling weekend in Wales.

Friday night's storms and gales gradually faded and, by Saturday morning, only the tops were enshrouded in clouds, with snow down to about 2000 feet, apparently wet and slushy. That, and the sun now shining elsewhere, ensured that widely diverse interests could all be catered for.

Bergfuhrer Scott led his team of disciples (Dave 'leave my cake alone' Owen, 'Airborne' O'Reilly and Tim) to the Pass - Nose Direct and The Cracks on Dinas Mot, Spiral Stairs and Flying Buttress on The Cromlech. The Moelwyns were visited and assorted climbs achieved (Ruth Conway, Dawn and Richard Hopkinson, George and Alistair). Most others went for walks and scrambles around Snowdonia, keeping generally below the cloud. Martin Musson, Helen Griffiths, Roger Larkam and I went around the Snowdon Horseshoe, Crib Goch providing pleasant scrambling over icy snow - on the way, Pete Holden was fleetingly seen as he flashed past.

That evening, the recently discovered Marstons pub was visited (at Tal-y-sarn)

but soon departed in favour of the more pleasant Prince Llewellyn.

Sunday started off fairly dry, but soon deteriorated into torrential rain, sleet and hail, driven on by strong winds and catching most people out. Martin and Ingrid retreated from Flying Buttress, as did Helen and Jan on Pulpit Route (Milestone Buttress) whilst others failed on North Ridge of Tryfan. Others, however, did have some measure of success including the Bergfuhrer's team on Amphitheatre Buttress (Craig y Ysfa) where the supposedly easy exit gully proved to be desperate, Roger Larkam and myself on Pulpit Route ('a fine waterfall') and Richard Hopkinson and half his original team who went up Tryfan's North Ridge, Bristly Ridge and continued round the Glyders.

Gordon and Pauline Wright, once the Hut had warmed up on Sunday, decided to stay on for a few more days.

In conclusion, a well attended Meet (some 24 members and prospective members) which, despite Sunday's weather, appeared to be enjoyed by all.

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STANAGE – MAY – Gordon Gadsby

Warm sunshine and blue skies greeted all corners on this 1982 Stanage Meet on May 8th - 9th.

On Sunday, I walked with a group of over 30 Oreads and friends from Burbage to Stanage End, climbing at Black Hawks area on the way. The hills were alive with the sights and sounds of Oreads in all directions - one of the sights was President Scott, in shorts, doing a marvellous job as liaison officer between the various groups that stretched the length of the Edge. Paul Gardner and Robin Sedgwick were seen and photographed doing fine routes; also climbing and walking were Derek Mountford, Ian, Beryl, John O'Reilly, Frank Shirley and Julia Goldsmith, Pete O'Neill and old friend from the Summit, Phil Brown, Rob Tresidder, Ken and Margaret Bryan, George and Janet Reynolds, Bev and Kath Abley with James and Gareth, Margaret Ricky and Peter Gadsby, Colin Uschi Stephen and Annette Hobday, Margaret Alex and Nick Foster.

We arrived at Stanage End to find a man with a broken ankle - he'd been chasing his dog. This curtailed the climbing for a time while four Oreads gave First Aid and then carried him across the moor to his Landrover and his wife. It was great to climb with Roger and Beryl Turner after a lapse of around ten years.

Saturday was an equally good day but with a smaller turnout. The Meet leader had the pleasure of climbing with Ken and Doreen Hodge, Bud Metcalfe and Graham Foster in the Robin Hood - Black Hawk area. Jack Ashcroft would have been there but was otherwise engaged in the Himalaya. I also heard rumours that Radders was climbing Two Sisters Peak in the Falklands.

Others on the Meet were Jill Towle, Shelagh Carter, John Heald, Dave Owen, Gill Male, Roger Larkam, Tim Barnett, Paul Baldwin, Martin Musson and Ingrid, Lisa Welbourne, Paul Stidever, Gail Searby.

Thank you all for coming and making it a great weekend.

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CWM COWARCH – SEPTEMBER – John Linney

'No, I don't think you can camp at Bryn Hafod' I told John Hammond, 'But you may find a local farmer who will allow you to camp on his land - if not, there's a campsite at Dinas Mawddy.' All this time I was wondering why anyone would want to camp, instead of staying at one of the best Huts in Wales. Besides, the Hut was empty, apart from D.J., Colin and Derek (and two of them are members of the Mountain Club). 'I don't suppose there's any room in the Hut' John eventually said. 'Room! The place is nearly empty,' I said. So, with less than a week to go, the first of the 18 places were taken up, much to my relief. By Friday, 14 places had been booked.

Saturday began misty and damp. What to do was the main topic over breakfast. A Presidential party was formed consisting of Mr. President, Helen, Dave Owen and Penno. They decided to go to Cader Idris, intent on climbing the Pencoed Pillar. The Hammond party of John, Steve and Mike set out to savour some of the delights of Craig Cowarch. The rest were undecided but, eventually, Colin, Derek, John Gresty, 'Rock' and myself left the Hut bound for the Cols and Cwms of the Arans. Gradually, as we ascended Hengwm, it became brighter. When we reached Craiglyn Dyfi, the sun broke through. Lunch was taken under Gist Du, a most impressive looking crag, steep, sheer and wet! A steep ascent followed along a grassy rake, then gully, onto the main ridge. The sun came out again and so did the midges and D.J.. The view now dominated our minds as we sat on the summit of Aran Benllyn. Gradually, thoughts changed from the view to more basic things like getting away from the midges and getting onto the next summit. Soon, the steep pull up to Aran Fawddy loomed up, but after three or four minutes of extra effort we sat down near to the trig point for a rest. The distant peaks of Cader Idris and the Rhinogs now imposed themselves into the view. Time Passed. "Some people down by the lake" someone said, "going for a swim" they continued. No-one spoke or moved, all content in sitting, resting and enjoying a brief spell of sunshine. "Naked!" Heads turned, joints creaked, muscles went taut and, as if all of us were operated by some unknown force, we rose and walked to the edge of the summit plinth. Far below, three people were seen splashing in the clear water of Craiglyn Dyfi. "Must be cold!" "They are naked." "Can't tell from here." "Look at that!" "Have you brought your binoculars?" "No." "No?" "Didn't think they would be of any use today." Silence again, each one of us looking, listening, questioning, straining to get a better view. Eventually, we all realised the distance was too great to reveal any detail of anatomy, so we turned to pick up our sacks and headed back to the Hut. Derek and Colin going via Drws Back and Hengwm, the rest of us over Creigiau Camddwr to end a memorable walk.

The rest of the party had had an equally enjoyable day. The Presidential group, having reached their climb on the Pillar and knocked it off, finished over the summit of Cader. Apart from the very steep ascent to the base of the Pillar, which was wet and greasy, especially the slabs, and lacking in protection, enjoyed what they described as 'a good mountaineering day of considerable character'

The Hammond team doing some half-dozen routes in damp, humid and greasy conditions is worthy of praise, and set the target for the rest of us on Sunday if the weather would allow! Saturday night was spent in the Red Lion, where the days events were recalled and analysed, and plans for the morrow laid down.

Next morning again was misty and damp. To crag or not to crag. Again the Hammond team made the first move, heading for the North Gully area. The Presidential

group decided to walk to Gist Du, which is a long walk and, with cragging gear, a bit of a flog. Hoai Man, V.S., was their objective. Derek, Rock and John Gresty followed the Hammond team, Colin and myself decided to climb Lleche, an easy route! We then walked over Craig y Ffynnon and down the ridge to Y Gribin, returning to the Hut via the old road and the common. Back at the Hut, having cleaned up and packed, I sat outside waiting for the rest of my passengers. Some movement below the Hut caught my eye. Someone was taking down a tent! Had they been there all weekend? Had John Hammond seen him? Eventually, I convinced myself it really wouldn't matter if he did, I'm sure he would agree to make a successful Meet, you require a good area, a good Hut and last, but not least, good company.

Thanks to you all, but special thanks to Mary and Lee Hammond for the tea and help in looking after the Hut in our absence.

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