

# THE ASSOCIATION OF BRITISH MEMBERS OF THE SWISS ALPINE CLUB

## JOURNAL 1972

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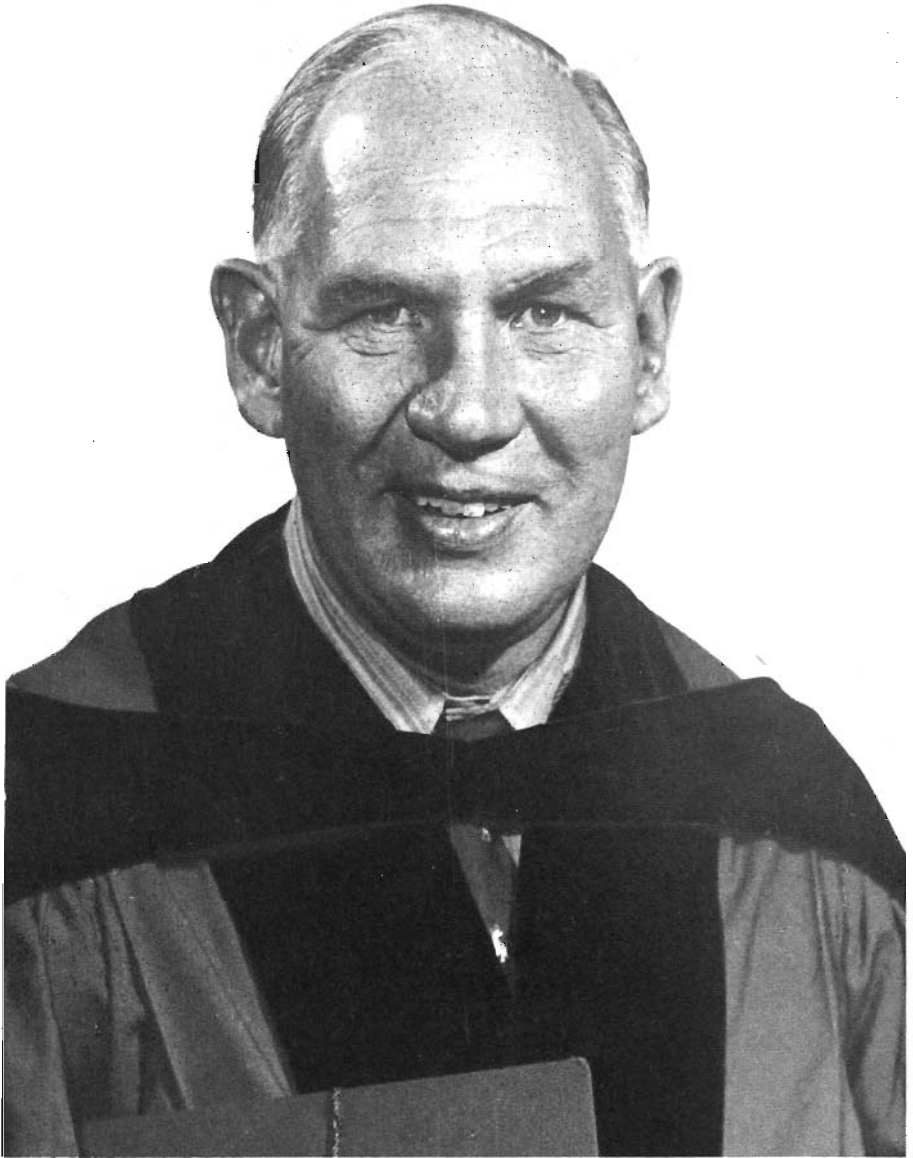
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D. G. Lambley

# DEREK LAMBLEY

## Seventeenth President of the A.B.M.S.A.C.

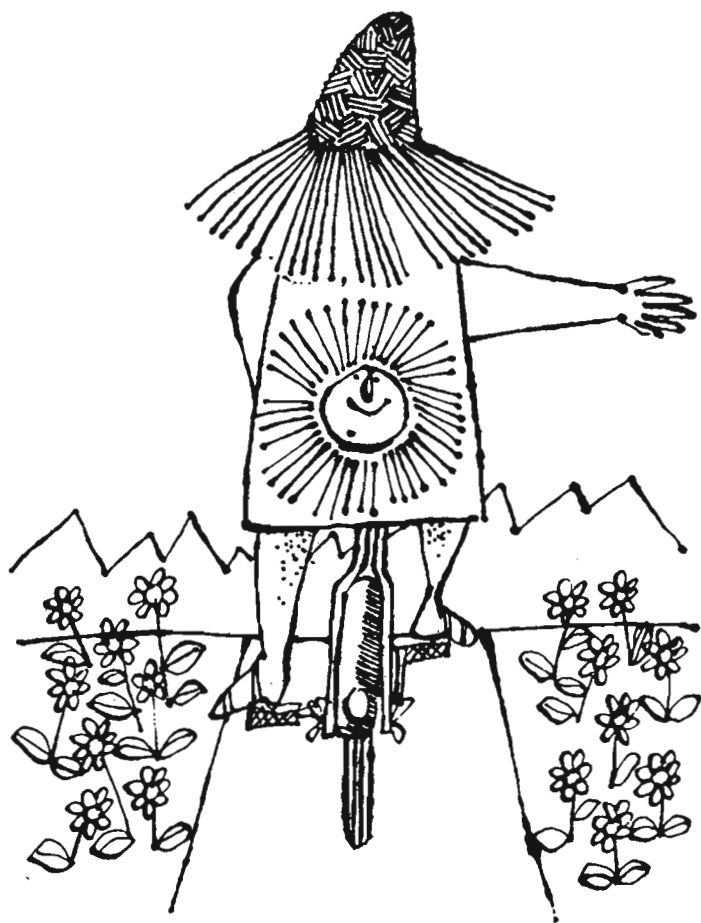
Derek Lambley first went to the Alps immediately prior to the Second World War in 1939. Since the war he has been to the Alps every year since 1948. He joined the A.B.M.S.A.C. in 1949 and the Alpine Club in 1953. By attending club meets at home and abroad he became a well known member and he served as Vice-President between 1960-2.

Derek could never be described as a tiger on the rocks and prefers snow and ice climbs and general mountaineering expeditions, preferably leading to a snow and ice arete. He has done most of the usual courses in the Alps climbing, *inter alia*, the Piz Bernina and Piz Palu, Finsteraarhorn, Jungfrau, Eiger and Allalinhorn.

By profession Derek Lambley is a surgeon of much distinction. As Senior Surgeon at Northampton General Hospital he mends the shattered remains of M1 tragedies. He frequently makes trips abroad notably in North and South America to give lecture tours and was a visiting professor in Guadalajara last year. Earlier, in 1954, he received a rare distinction in being made a Fellow of the American College of Surgeons.

Derek is a married man with four children, three boys and a girl, some of whom share his interest in the hills. In his spare time of late Derek has been a keen fly fisherman for salmon and trout. He is a founder member of the Wellingborough Mountaineering Club.

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# GREENLAND ONE: INGOLSFIELD

*Steve Chadwick*

Our aims included collecting samples of underwater life in the fjords of Greenland for research purposes; collecting botanical specimens for the British Museum; a study of the bird life encountered; the collection of rock samples for geological research and the climbing of Ingolsfield in the South Steenstrup Alps followed by the climbing of the major peaks in the North Steenstrups.

All the painstaking preparation finally came to an end and everything arrived at one focal point, a 57 ft. converted Scottish fishing trawler called the Ice King that was to be our home for eight weeks. The place was Burnham-on-Crouch, Essex, on a fine Friday in July.

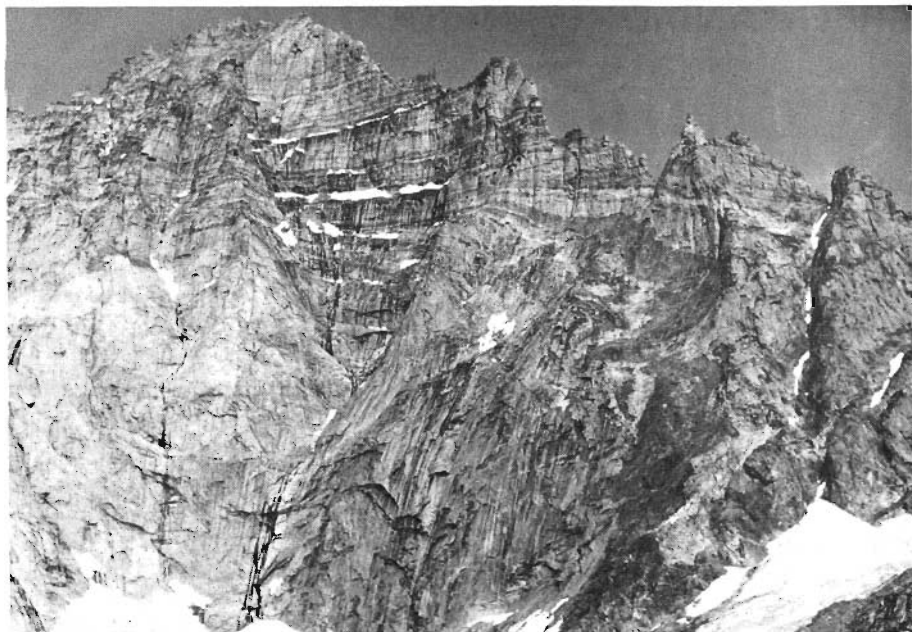
We felt we were really committed to going into the North Atlantic as we turned the corner off the top of the Orkneys. Visions that it was all just a glorified attack on the Old Man of Hoy disappeared in the face of an on-coming force 7 positioned nicely in between us and the Faroes. During the next two days Tony and I were really ill, the others to a lesser extent. The Faroes came like life to a dying man. Staggering granite sea cliffs 600 ft. plus, stretching for mile upon mile. Makes Gogarth look like a playpen.

Three days later we were in Iceland. Engine trouble gave us an enforced but delightful extended stay of three days. A remarkable country with friendly people and incredible scenery. Though that which really comes to mind is the girls. Lovely blonde creatures with fine structured faces. Perhaps it was the two week celibacy, but they all seemed fabulous. Tony Mercer and I called at a night club, 7p to get in. Great stuff, we thought, then we bought a round of drinks. Nearly £1 per two whiskeys. We left hurriedly.

A jagged coastline came into view with one peak standing like a monarch's head above the rest. Proud and noble. It was our first sight of Ingolsfield. Angmassalik at midday—violent vicious mosquitoes, howling huskies, laughing slant eyed children.

Camped at the water's edge of Kangatityslusiak Fjord were our rivals for Ingolsfield, the Danish-Yugoslav team. As it transpired they had indeed climbed Ingolsfield by the time we met them, by the East Ridge. Two days of fixed roping before a two day push to the summit, 6,000 ft. of climbing mostly III-IV with 5 pitches of 5 and one of 6. Our proposed route was by the south ridge. They said that this route looked much longer and a deal harder than theirs.

Eight people, 50 lb loads and a five hour slog saw four of us camped in the shadow of Ingolsfield; an exploratory climb over the glacier and up the right col to the base of the south ridge completed a very tiring day. I collapsed in my bag whilst the others fed me. Then sleep.



South Face of Ingolsfield

Photo: S. Chadwick

Time to appraise the mountain. That it was big or bigger than anticipated is the understatement of the year. This mountain wasn't going to be surmounted by a couple of casual climbers climbing roped up together in one push for the top. It would need careful planning, an infinite amount of hard work and all the fixed rope we had.

The ridge direct was out. Definitely out! It was like the devil's version of the switch back railway. There was so much down on it, the wonder was that it ever reached the top. We decided that however hard the face might be it was infinitely preferable to the tortuous ridge. We would climb the south west face and attempt to gain the ridge after it had ceased its major convulsions.

We set off for the face picking our way across the glacier and opted to try the gully system left of the lowest buttress. This proved the key to the whole lower section of the climb. Tony led up the 300 ft. snow ramp to the foot of the face, across some nasty snow bridges; we later fixed ropes across this section. It was really good to be climbing at last on the mountain that we had talked about and planned so much about; more so as apart from the ledges that had collected debris the whole mountain seemed to consist of the most superb granite. I really enjoyed that pitch; it was a full run out of grade III slab. Just right to start off on.



The angle eased off behind, we had cracked the next 500 ft. at least, with very little effort we scrambled up to the end of our 300 feet of fixed rope, securing it in convenient places. It was very mild scrambling not even 1. Colin came up and passed over a further 600 ft., made a cache of their equipment for use tomorrow and retreated to mountain base. After 200 ft. of further scrambling Steve and I did alternates up a 200 ft. system of black loose gullies to emerge onto the first ridge proper, Grade III to IV. Again the ridge angle eased and the way was clear for a further few hundred feet. By 10.50 900 ft. of the mountain was done. The way ahead looked clear and rope was fixed for the carrying of loads and fast ascent. We retired to the glacier, gave the others our good news, ate and slept.

Next day Colin and Tony covered the easy but loose ground between the first and second ridges in fast time then pressed on across the first big scoop that separated the second and third ridges, leaving belays in place to guide us. Delightfully easy slab climbing II-IV for 500 ft. to a large ledge. 1,400 ft. of rope fixed, another good day. If it stays this easy the top is possible in four more days.

By now we have very little fixed rope left so Steve and I go ahead and remove fixed rope from the easy sections and secure all abseil points. We push on to the third ridge to try it. The whole thing is a shattered pillar of loose rock. In some trepidation I reverse the pillar and we return to the big ledge. By now it's getting late again. Not much progress, but the ridge has been tried and rejected and there is more than a thousand feet of fixed rope ready for use at the high point reached, thus leaving Colin and Tony in a really strong position tomorrow.

True to this promise Colin and Tony do really well the next day. They bypass the lower part of the 3rd ridge to gain it at a small depression some 400 ft. higher and press straight on up a superb natural crack system on the second big scoop till they are at the junction of the wall leading up to the ridge and the slab-scoop beneath. This provides a natural horizontal traverse over easy ground to almost the fourth ridge. 100 ft. short of this they return to the third ridge to bivvi, having decided to make a summit bid the next day.

Two days later Colin and Tony return to base very disillusioned. They had climbed to the fourth ridge and taken a crack system for some 450 ft. to a loose shale band where the climbing became somewhat hairy. It was all 5 to 5 sup stuff. They climbed till about 9 then abseiled down to the fourth ridge and reversed the fixed ropes to their bivvi ledge on the third ridge. In the morning when they saw what little impression they had made on the vastness of the 'Great Tower' they decided to come down. The route they had chosen had become loose and hard. The risk of an accident in Greenland is totally unjustifiable. They had climbed some 500 ft. up the 'Great Tower' heading at last for the fourth ridge proper. They calculated it must be over 2,000 ft. to climb the tower and traverse to the ridge beneath 'The Finger'.

The next day, Friday 6th August, the weather broke, giving way to rain and

heavy low cloud. Ingolsfield disappeared completely out of sight but not out of mind as we had only three days left before we were due to leave for North Steenstrups.

The next morning was fine. Mike and Oly set off early with vast loads, picked their way slowly over the moraine and disappeared over the glacier. The loads were so heavy that when they reached the face they had to make two carries for every pitch. 10, 000 ft. of climbing with 30 lb on their backs. A medal should be struck.

At midday James came up from fjord base with more supplies and went straight on through for a carry up the mountain.

Beaten into action by Colin we set off with light loads and reached the fourth ridge at the end of the fixed ropes just before the sherpas. They had done a fantastic job; we were fully equipped for four days on the mountain. We prepared our bivvi ledge whilst James, Mike and Oly returned to base; which they reached, exhausted, at 2. 30 in the morning

Early morning came with the sun touching the face and warming the snow on the large central scoop to our right as we faced away from the mountain. Stones released from a frozen grip fell, and bounced away down to the glacier 2, 000 ft. below. Our 'morning chorus' had started. Still in my Pied d' Elephant and duvet I turned round to study the problem that reared for more than 1, 500 ft. above us. The Great Tower looked hard and promised a difficult struggle. If the high traverse was hard and loose why not traverse low, and then climb up. The traverse left looked very reasonable. Across the top of the start of the 'Great Scoop' to the bottom 6 ft. of the Great Tower. There was a long curving crack leading up left to a shoulder beneath the Grey Butress, a subsidiary promontary on the Great Tower. Round that we should see if the rest of the route would go. After a quick chat we agreed to take that line.

The traverse proved to be 350 ft. of grade III, we were now one pitch below the crack. Tony and I jockeyed for position: both of us trying to get the other in such a spot that he would have to start the crack. Tony won; he led out 50 ft. of IV to the foot of the crack and belayed.

It was a Bosigran classic. Solid white granite shaping a flared crack. 60 ft. of grade V up, and some time later I belayed in a small cave. Tony led through over the cave overhang into an open chimney, past a difficult rock bulge to belay at 70 ft. A short pitch followed which I led to a good belay on a small shelf. The next took Tony over two hours to crack. It was an open groove with no definite holds and no protection that would have held a fall. The whole pitch was thin and delicate, an accident here would be disastrous.

By now Colin and Steve had decided to return to base to conserve food and water as it became obvious that a ledge to carry loads to would not be reached that day. The sun had gone, and I felt very cold and alone slowly paying out rope to Tony as he moved with great skill and care up that pitch. Then he was up, a fine block belay secured the rope and we abseiled down to

our new bivvi ledge beneath the crack. The last pitch had been 6 and unprotected at that. A fine lead.

During the night Tony and his poly bag slipped off the ledge and dropped 10 ft. before his safety sling checked him. By the sound of his mutterings it gave him quite a scare. A good excuse for a brew though; of melted ice chippings strained through a handkerchief.

The next day Tony jumarrred up to our high point, and I followed. It was an awkward strenuous section, and by the time I arrived Tony had recovered and to save time he led up. When I studied the pitch I was quite relieved. The stance was superb. So far we had climbed in an enclosed crack and chimney system, now suddenly we were out on the main face. The wall dropped 350 ft. below us to the scoop which swept 2,000 ft. down to the glacier. Artificial moves followed for 30 ft. to a 2 ft. overhang, round that to pleasant grade IV climbing to a system of ledges that led 6 ft. to the shoulder. Tony moved round it and ran out the last 20 ft. of rope. Then half an hour of silence. The rope went slack, I took it in and he appeared above me. 'It won't go Chad'.

Round the shoulder the route to the ridge was clearly visible. A wall vertical for over 1,000 ft. to the ridge. It would supply superb climbing of grade V to VI or artificial, but it would also mean at least five more days of time we did not have, for after that we still had 2,000 ft. of unknown ridge climbing to go, and the descent to follow. It needed more climbers, equipment, and time, than we could afford to give it. Tony and I, sad and tired, began to clean up by abseiling down to the ledge. Our finger ends were raw and bleeding from the continuous climbing we had done, and now we had to contemplate the retreat.

For us at least had been the pleasure of breaking new ground, climbing and finding the route, but what we really felt sad about was letting James, Mike and Oly down; after all their hard work; and all the many people who had in various ways helped make the expedition possible. At least we had not been beaten by the weather, or stopped by injuries. A magnificent face of granite had formed a barrier that was too great an obstacle for us to overcome. I remembered Bonatti's words, and realised how true they were. 'The mountains are great teachers, they teach you how to lose'.

## **GREENLAND TWO: DEUCE IS WILD**

*Lindsay Griffin*

I glanced behind to watch him soldiering carefully up the ridge. From below it had looked a walk as far as the shoulder but now I began to dwell on the wisdom of our decision to cut the food and bivouac gear to a bare minimum as we started early for a quick ascent.

Relief at reaching the shoulder was turned to pure joy by the sight of the first step. Four huge cracks—shades of Fairhead! Happiness is being able to quit while still so low on the mountain. Alas! My hopes were unfounded as Sé floated up the leftmost crack in two long pitches. Whimpering sadly I followed on a taut bowstring, alternately marvelling and cursing the attributes of Irish aces. What next? Awkward laybacks and skin erasing hand-jams; the East gives birth to cloud above and the temperature falls. Beneath—the second step—above—the problem of the giant gendarme now had to be solved.

Behold! A veritable 'Via aux bicyclettes' and we wandered with hands in pockets across the east face.

Alone, as ice chips tinkled down the gully on my left I leant my back against four hundred feet of smooth featureless granite. How wonderful of nature in scoring her mountain with flakes and cracks to have left this huge monolith untouched. I questioned my apparent privilege on being allowed to reveal a secret she had kept from man for millions of years. Did I have that right? My thoughts darkened in sympathy with the sky.

At 10 p.m. we had bid goodnight to the technicalities of the third step and reached the col below the summit tower. Contractors were called in and a site excavated. I even made the textbook mistake of expounding on the beauties of a fiery sunset, which were met with disapproving grunts. Much to his annoyance I slept for over three hours.

The penalty for this behaviour was apparent at 3 a.m. when, enveloped by cloud I found myself beating the circulation back into my legs and experiencing the conditions that Met. men nominally call 'storm'. Buffeted around we followed an obvious line towards the summit. Imagine standing behind the jet engine of a 707 at take off with 'il neige' and you have the rough picture.

Breeches and gloves became sodden and the rock more verglassed but fortunately the climbing was relatively easy. I crawled the last roped pitch, our thirty first, along the gently inclined summit ridge. There was no hand shaking, no joy or emotion and even our preconsidered summit celebrations including readings from 'The thoughts from Mrs. Wilson's Diary' had to be abandoned. I may be exaggerating the fury of this storm—Walter Bonatti would most probably still have been in his string vest clenching snowballs in his gloved hands because—'it increases the spleen'.

It's over you think—I can turn the page and read the next article—but in truth it had only just begun.

Our intended descent had been to try and follow a long complex but easily inclined ridge which eventually ran out onto the easterly glacier, unfortunately the opposite side of the mountain to advance base. This, however, seemed meaningless in our situation as the rock dropped steeply into the cloud—on all sides! Beginning to climb down the most feasible looking weakness we soon committed ourselves by a free abseil into a gargantuan chimney. A few more of similar 'coefficients of airyness' convinced us that our

descent was via the west face. Even at the best of times abseiling can be a slow procedure and we had ample time to reflect on our meagre cheese and glucose diet while shivering and squelching between rappels. Initially Sé had joked that it felt as though one was taking part in an extract from the film 'Journey to the Centre of the Earth'. Three hours later the joke had turned sour and when the glacier was finally reached we were almost convinced in our roles.

The wind, now in our favour, flew us to advance base which we discovered scattered over a fairly considerable area and naturally deserted!

Darkness overtook us before base camp and a food orgy the like of which our stomachs will long remember.

\* \* \* \* \*

We have been sadly beaten twice—for our third return match we try flood-lighting, courtesy of aurora borealis. Treading well known ground we aim for the easy couloir that seems to introduce the 'North East Ridge of the Hermelnberg'. The previously mushy ice is now well frozen and at 1.30 a.m. just as the sun begins its day so we begin our mystery tour. The easy couloir produces rather too much difficult climbing once again demonstrating the deceptive nature, of this Greenlandic granite.

The initial gentle warmth from the sun has now matured. I am at grips with an unpleasantly awkward fissure. The whole object of my existence must be to manoeuvre round this dubious protuberance—or so it seems—until I realise that it can be completely eliminated by a few hammer blows. Fist jams lead to a gangway where I sit back contented and haul up the sacs—but it's just another pitch.

Later Sé climbs a thin crack in a steep slab where our proposed chimney turns into a chasm that runs to the centre of the earth. However we are fully repaid and proclaim it the best pitch of the holiday—holiday! Oh how many times has that word been misused! Mixed ground follows; then with those words made truly immortal in recent Himalayan activities, 'Let's drop everything and go for the top', we race off four quick pitches to the final block where a short layback leads me through a rock arch to the small flat summit. After two weeks we have arrived and the emotion that shows on Sé's face makes further speech superfluous. A small cairn, a few photographs and the donation of an empty film cassette—from now on the mountain belongs to us.

A summit for aesthetics—tremendous void on three sides and a magnificent vista that includes the Cape Farewell coastline fifty miles away. But musings are for the timeless and alas our membership is long overdue so we retrace our steps leaving a multi-coloured trail of rappel slings.

My decision to photograph selected abseils results in the immediate jamming of the rope and thereafter the camera is relegated to the bottom of the sac. Seven hours later we are making our last rappel over the bergschrund and even the heavy snowfall that has evolved from the storm, catching us halfway down the couloir, does nothing to dampen our high spirits as we stumble down our jigsaw glacier in the rapidly fading light.

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# NORTHERN MEMBERS

*Walt Unsworth*

Though many members seem unaware of the fact, the A.B.M.S.A.C. has been gradually developing its role as an active club on the British scene in recent years. One effect of this has been to show the need for organisational changes from the time when the Club only held two traditional meets a year: Easter in Scotland and Summer in the Alps. The chief problem is that the Club is a national one, with members throughout the country and to form a Committee representative of all regions is simply not practicable. As a national club it must have its Committee in London and that in turn means that the Committee members are mostly Londoners. And yet, of course, almost all the activities of the Club take place in the north.

Last year the Committee asked a group of Northern members to look into the feasibility of a Northern Sub-committee, and after much deliberation in a Castleton pub, this group sent a report to the Committee which was soundly reasoned, if rather non-committal. Basically, the gist was that the need for a Northern Group (or Sub-committee; call it what you will) was not-proven; that there was no point in formally structuring such a body into the constitution of the Club until it was shown that there was a definite need. Instead, it was suggested that the members present at the meeting should themselves act as an *ad hoc* body for two years to see whether a proper group was justifiable.

Tony Husbands, who lives in Derby, agreed to act in liaison between the Chosen Few and the Committee in London. He carried with him, on his first visit, greetings from the Natives and a few suggestions regarding meets, publicity, and the much sought-after hut, as well as the Report itself. This article is part of the publicity.

Since all the meets are held in the North (just to prove the lie, there's one in the Ardennes this year!) it seems only right that Northern members should choose some of the venues. We have tried to make them as varied as we could, and we hope to do even better in following years, but ideas from Northern members and offers to lead meets particularly would enable us to find out what the Club wants.

A number of members have written to me in the past asking how they go about joining a Meet (usually because it has been my job to organise the Langdale October Meet). Their letters have indicated a certain reluctance to commit themselves in case it was a closed shop. Nothing is further from the reality. For example: Walter Kirstein often comes along. He is over 70 years of age, but he still did the North Ridge of Badile last summer, which isn't too bad for any age group. Then there is Ian Aitchison, who is in his early twenties and a fine rock climber. So the age range is very wide, and so too is the ability: we have members who have done K.G., C.B., and

most other climbs you care to name, and others who have done the Lyke Wake Walk and similar marathon rounds. In between we have the less ambitious types who simply enjoy a walk on the hills or an easy climb on the crags. The common factor, is that we all have some Alpine experience.

Our Meets are usually held at huts belonging to other Clubs, which, considering we cannot yet offer any reciprocal rights, is both generous of them and shows the regard with which we are held. We meet on the Friday night (some members arriving after midnight from the Deep South) and on most meets the Saturday night dinner is booked at a local pub. This enables everyone to get together for a pint and it saves the cooking for those of us who are naturally lazy. All the other meals are left to the individuals concerned.

Sometimes members prefer to camp instead of using hut facilities, or to use a nearby hut belonging to another Club of which they are members and at which they get cheaper rates: this does not prevent them taking part in the meet. Only at Edale do we use a hotel as accommodation for a weekend meet and this is simply because the Edale meet is always held in mid-winter and there is no other suitable accommodation. It is primarily a walking and skiing meet, and was, until this year, combined with our modest Northern Dinner.

One of the great needs is for a hut of our own and the Northern members have been active in seeking a suitable site or building—indeed, we secured an ideal site, only to have it firmly squashed by the planners. Since then, we have looked at two or three more but none have come up to the standards we require—or have been too expensive! When we do eventually get the hut, however, the whole business of organising meets should become more flexible.

I think it should be made plain that a meet organised by the Northern members is not restricted to them—we want no divisive meets of any sort, and bookings are made on a basis of first come, first served. The sort of turnout we get depends on the type of meet and the venue, but on popular meets such as the Edale and the Langdale ones it is usual to have between 30 and 40 members. At places which are more awkward to reach for the majority, such as Wasdale or the CIC Hut, Ben Nevis, the numbers have been about a dozen. I mention this to show that we do not need to beg for attendance: few Clubs have meets which are better attended.

How can we improve the functioning of the Club for Northern members? Are more meets, or different types of meets required? Would it be possible to hold some Northern indoor function? (The North is a big place!) The small group who have to decide this need the help of all Northern members in coming to their decisions, so why not drop one of them a line and let him know your views? The names are given below; the addresses are in the back of this book.

Any of the following will be delighted to hear your views (or your news) of Northern affairs:

Walt Unsworth, Tony Strawther, Tony Husbands, Eric Rayner.



# ALPINE MEET 1971

*Maurice Freeman*

All are agreed that the meet held at Taesch in the Mattertal was a success socially. The degree of satisfaction with what was accomplished, the accommodation and the weather varied. Those who were at Trient last year will recall a meet at which the weather was predominantly poor, but at which a full climbing programme was achieved, partly through lucky phasing and partly through timely and inspired changes of plan. This year the gods did not smile so kindly upon the meet leader. Despite his feats of planning and organisation, and his indefatigable efforts during the meet (at which this writer's mind regularly boggles) he was ill rewarded with thunderstorms and other temporary disturbances, which always occurred whilst the party was at a hut. Furthermore the few storms left behind a good deal of new snow, with lasting effect. In consequence the climber's bag was somewhat meagre, and those who were caught in the web of unlucky phasing retained an impression of poor weather. Non-climbers took a different view. My daily weather notes record a high incidence of sunshine, and my wife thought it was a marvellous meet, with virtually all walks proceeding according to plan.

The hotel and travel arrangements were made by the Swiss National Tourist Office, to whom we are most grateful. Those who took advantage of the whole deal found comfort, convenience and economy very happily blended. We arrived on Saturday 14th August at Geneva where overnight accommodation at an hotel was arranged. Eventually Taesch was reached in very good weather with excellent visibility and such a lack of snow as I have rarely seen. Every peak in sight appeared to be in perfect condition inviting the climbers' attention.

On Monday the weather was perfect and we took a gentle training walk to Taeschalp and the Taesch hut. The weather continued perfect on Tuesday when we went to the Gandegg hut and thence to the Theodul hut. At Gandegg we met an old friend in Otto Stoller who was to guide some of us for much of the succeeding time. At Theodul we had our first experience of the perils of mountaineering as we climbed the mud and loose stones left by the everlasting blasting operations, whose purpose we were never able to understand.

Next day we ascended the Breithorn. We were early enough, and soon high enough, to escape dangers from machines and their aftermath, and the ascent proceeded without incident. The snow was padded down hard enough to require the use of crampons. I recorded the weather as 'nearly perfect'; there was a slight cool breeze. We took the shorter, lower route back across the snowfield when we would probably have done better to return high over the Testa Grigia. We struggled into and out of innumerable little crevasses, trying to avoid skiers whose progress was not impeded by these



Monte Rosa from the Breithorn

Photo: P. Wild

minor obstacles, and at intervals making wild dashes across ski tows. Everything has its compensations however, and as we were sufficiently clear of the national boundary nobody was arrested. We had to make another first ascent up to the hut as the terrain had changed during our absence. Nothing has been noted of the journey down, but the worst danger had yet to be faced. Your writer was unable to find room to stand on the footplate of the train, and was forced to hang on outside. This would no doubt have been entirely refreshing but for the thunderstorm which broke out as soon as we started.

On Thursday a party of about 13 set off for the Rothorn hut. The threatening weather developed into another thunderstorm overnight, and all activity from the hut was ruled out. The effect of the new snow was substantial and lasting, and the deposit was renewed from time to time in the succeeding days, so that all serious ambitions were curbed from that time on.

Saturday was an off day from official climbing, with a walk up to Gornergrat preceded by an attempt to cash cheques in face of the sudden international money crisis. We returned more or less by Findeln but some of us chose a silly route on the wrong side of the stream and found ourselves floundering down a rough way between trees when the thunderstorm broke.

On Monday we walked up to Taesch hut in the afternoon. The weather is recorded as good, and indeed I found it warm and taxing, possibly a fore-warning. We set off in good time next morning for the Alphubel. There

were a few health casualties. Some of us were already suffering from an undignified disability which would surely have been worse but for the timely care provided by David Riddell. I recall the fine conditions up to the col in a hazy way, but there I succumbed to sleep and know little more. I had a companion in like health, and we were submerged in a whiteout until we were eventually awakened by the second guide on his return and suitably rebuked for sleeping in a wrong and inconspicuous place where we could not easily be found. We gathered that our friends had completed the ascent in conditions that fell short of the attractive. For some reason we went on over the Feekopf, a fine walk in clearer conditions, and down towards the Britannia hut. Near the end we met more constructional activity and found ourselves confronted with the severest mud climb of the whole trip, in a place where the path had been destroyed. The sight of the string railway at the Egginerjoch was too much for part of the party, and we descended to Saas Fee and thence by bus and train back to Taesch.

The Britannia hut party ascended the Rimpfischhorn next day, and this was really the last formal official activity to be completed. On Thursday a party set off for the Mischabel hut, once again to provoke thunderstorms which stopped activities. These events have featured in the preceding chronical, but in truth they were generally at night and far away, and did little to disturb walking, though they largely cancelled climbing.

On the very last Saturday a small party of us took railway excursion tickets for a round tour including transport to St. Niklaus, Grächen and Hanningalp with a high walk to Saas Fee followed by transport back. Misty conditions at Hanningalp gradually gave way to the most perfect weather, with a view from the Bietchhorn behind us over the Fletschorn, Lagginhorn and Weissmies to the border hills beyond. We were entertained at the start by a building exercise I had not seen before, a crazy stone roof being laid out and fashioned on the ground before being lifted into position. The walk itself is magnificently situated, with frequent positions of sufficient exposure to satisfy photographic needs without any hazard. The final rush to Saas Fee exposed a deception. Our President had spent the fortnight disguised in a surgical collar, purporting to be suffering from the aftermath of a surgical operation. His vigour during the run down revealed that it must have been all a pretence—or else he had made a striking recovery during the fortnight's increasing activity.

We are often able to finish the account with a reference to a lady who joined in most of the hard excursions. This time we can mention two, Judith Gosland and Virginia French. The latter gets a double mention for she must be thanked along with Paul for all the effective work put in to make the meet a success. Finally I must repeat myself; there may have been disappointment over the climbing but my wife says it was a marvellous meet, and so it was.

# DIARY FOR 1972

- 26 January Members' Evening. Three illustrated talks followed by a wine and cheese party.
- 16 February Lecture 'Yosemite' by Douglas Scott
- 19-20 February Northern Dinner Meet, Borrowdale. Leader, Walt Unsworth
- 19 February Northern Dinner, King's Arms Hotel, Keswick. Principal guest Chris Bonington
- 22 March Lecture 'Climbing in Africa' by Bill Wade and Michael Baker
- 29 March Easter Meet, Corrie, Arran. Leader, David Riddell
- 19 April Lecture 'Mountains—the way of a photographer' by Alfred Gregory
- 29-30 April Meet, Cwm Glas. Leader, John Fairley
- 17 May Ladies' Night Dinner, Connaught Rooms
- 26-30 May Meet, Ardennes. Leader, David Charity
- 10-11 June Meet, Upper Teesdale. Leader, John Kemsley
- 21 June Members' Evening. Showing slides of Easter and Whit meets
- 8-9 July Meet, Blea Tarn. Leader, Ian Aitchison
- 19 August-2 September Alpine Meet, Pontresina. Leader, Eric Radcliffe
- 27 September Lecture 'Climbing and Exploration in the Kishwar area' by Charles Clarke
- 7-8 October Meet, Langdale. Leader, Walt Unsworth
- 18 October Members' showing of slides from the season and the Alpine Meet
- 22 November Annual General Meeting followed by the Annual Dinner, Connaught Rooms

Fuller details of these events are notified in the bulletins. Lectures are held at the Alpine Club, 74 South Audley Street, London W. 1, at 7.0 p.m. and are followed by an informal supper at the 'Waterloo Despatch', Adams Row, W. 1, price £1.25. Places at these suppers must be booked not later than the preceding Saturday with Prof. Ernst Sondheimer, 51 Cholmeley Crescent, London N. 6 (Tel: 01-340-6607).

Information regarding the Meets is available from the Leaders.

# ASSOCIATION ACTIVITIES 1971

It had been hoped that 1971 would see the commencement of work on a hut for the A.B.M.S.A.C. in the Lake District. Regrettably the Lake District Planning Board refused permission for the conversion of the building near Stonethwaite on the grounds that it wishes developments of this sort to be in or associated with existing villages rather than isolated buildings. So founded our first attempt to establish a hut. To date no other suitable site has been discovered although several have been investigated notably some in the lower Langdale area. The search will continue and any members who become aware of sites are urged to contact the club Secretary—requisites are a) near proximity to climbing areas b) ease of access by car for travelling members c) present or potential capacity for 20 persons d) parking space.

The Committee has heard with dismay of confirmation of plans to complete the road from Taesch to the outskirts of Zermatt where a large underground car park will be constructed. It was also discovered that licences had been issued to allow construction of cable cars to the Feekopf and the Kleine Matterhorn. After some investigation by Dr. Jagmetti of the Swiss Embassy it was found that the licences could yet be revoked by the Ministry of Justice and that the S.A.C. had objected along with others. Accordingly our President, Frank Solari, sent a formal letter to the Swiss Ministry objecting to the cable schemes on the grounds of the absence of planning control. Hektor Meier, President of the S.A.C. Central Committee expressed his pleasure at the British support and the Ministry acknowledged our objection. To date no definite information is available about whether the schemes are to proceed.

Once again our remarkable member Walter Kirstein has been active. He has written an article about the Engadine in the magazine Bunderland where he was able to mention the valuable anti-pollution work of our Honorary Member ex Ambassador Rene Keller. A Swiss newspaper carried the following report under the heading 'A Remarkable Alpine Achievement'—just one of his climbs.

'We have recently learned that the well known English alpinist, Dr Walter Kirstein, has succeeded in a remarkable Alpine achievement in his 75th year in the Bregaglia. Accompanied by the Pontresina guide Paul Nigg, he climbed the North Ridge of the Badile on 12th August—this is regarded as the finest Grade 4 granite climb in the Alps.

We congratulate Dr Walter Kirstein on a brilliant achievement. This successful English climber is one of the loyal winter and summer guests of the Engadine and is a member of the British Alpine Club, the British Ski Club and the English Section of the Swiss Alpine Club, in which he is still prominent and works untiringly for Switzerland.'

## Association Climbing Meets

The first meet of the year in February was again led by Tony Strawther from the Church Hotel, Edale. On Saturday the party went over Mam Tor and Lose Hill to Hope for lunch and a reviving drink. Stragglers narrowly avoided being run down while crossing the railway before ascending Win Hill and then doubling back to Edale by the moor and Ringing Roger. The Northern Dinner in the evening was entertained by Johnny Lees who had come direct from a Hill Safety Conference also attended by Frank Solari. On Sunday it was much colder and parties went across Kinder Scout to the Downfall and back by varying routes.

The Easter meet at the Allt-nan-Rhos Hotel in Onich was quite our most successful meet for years, a comradesly affair in every way blessed with near perfect weather with snow rapidly disappearing in warm sunshine each day. Garbh Bheinn of Ardgour was climbed from 3 directions; Beinn a'Bheithir was climbed by two different parties both of whom suffered in the forests, but Ben Nevis was straight forward. Parties were on Bidean nam Bian with a never-to-be-forgotten descent of the South East ridge to the floor of the Lost Valley, a place which for silence, seclusion and utter remoteness that could only be matched in the Atlas.

Present at the meet were President Frank Solari and Mrs. Babs Solari, Vice President Maurice Bennett Mrs. Gladys Bennett and David Bennett, Judith Gosland, Alison and Graham Daniels, Harold Flook, Professor Ernst Sondeimer, Freda and John Kemsley, Secretary Peter Ledeboer, Mary, Harold and John Noake and last but certainly not least, Margaret Darvall, who gave colour and light both on the mountains and the social scene. There was one other, D.R.R., V.P. and 'leader' (small 'l' as the meet ran itself).

Stuart Beare led the Whitsun meet from Brackenclose. Saturday looked unpromising and several parties headed generally in the direction of Napes Needle to await developments. In the event the day developed well, the Needle was duly climbed as were other routes in the vicinity, whilst some members ranged over the fells to the west. Sunday was impossible. The President played chess, the imprudent got a soaking, gluttons walked over Burnmoor for an Eskdale tea. On Monday the weather came up to scratch. For some it had to be a short day on Scafell Pike but others more fortunate took the High Level Route to Pillar and the New West Climb to the summit of High Man. Thence followed a walk on a resplendent clear evening around the head of Mosedale with some friends from the Netherlands to a reluctant descent by way of the Yewbarrow scree to the Wastwater Hotel and a convivial supper at Brackenclose. Our thanks are due to the lady cooks of the Royal Netherlands A.C. and to the F.R.C.C. for their hospitality.

At the end of July Michael Baker led a meet from Helyg. Nothing of note was climbed and, as is meet, this report is short. In driving rain parties on Saturday set out for Tryfan and ascended inter alia Grooved Arete. The real climbing was accomplished over dinner. On Sunday the meet split, one half going to the Carneddau and the other to Tremadoc. Of the former little is known but the latter, after a somewhat reluctant ascent in the damp, sought

solace in the sea whence the meet foundered. Little endeavoured, less done, but pleasurable withal.

The Alpine Meet which is reported in length elsewhere was centred on Taesch and led with his usual elan by Paul French. The weather was not very kind but the summits were duly reached. Those attending were Wing Commander H. D. Archer, Messrs. G. Attridge, M. Bennett, D. Bennett, S. N. Beare, J. H. Brooks, F. R. Catley, Professor J. F. Coales, Messrs. H. S. Flook, S. M. Freeman, F. P. French, J. Gardiner, J. Hammond, W. Kirstein, W. MacWilliams, C. D. Mullineux, R. C. J. Parker, W. E. Radcliffe, Dr. D. R. Riddell, Messrs. G. S. Roger, F. E. Smith, F. Solari, P. Wild, Mrs. Bennett, Mrs. Freeman, Mrs. French, Miss J. Gosland, Mrs. Solari and Mrs. Wild. We also had the pleasure of the company, for a short time, of Mr. and Mrs. Jack Broadbent and Mr. C. Patchett.

In October Walt Unsworth beguiled thirty five members and guests to what proved to be the wettest weekend Langdale has had in years. It was so wet it even made the BBC news. . . . small comfort to those who endured it. A campaign medal should be struck eventually.

However, on the Saturday a number of hardy souls accompanied Bill Comstive to the Three Shires, though I suspect most of them were disconcerted when they found he meant the place not the pub. The error was rectified on the Sunday. The White Lion at Ambleside proved to be a congenial place for the Saturday evening meal and drinks; the one bright spot in what was otherwise a very damp weekend.

### **London Lectures**

Eight meetings held at the Alpine Club covered subjects from Kashmir to East African Wild Life and also provided the opportunity for members to show slides of club meets. The informal dinners afterwards at the Waterloo Despatch are always well supported.

### **Ladies' Night Dinner**

On Wednesday 19 May the Ladies' Night Dinner was again held at the Connaught Rooms in London. The speaker was Captain Henry Day and he showed slides of the Army Expedition which he led to the summit of Annapurna two days before Chris Bonington's team conquered the south face. The lecture was the first occasion on which the club's new projector was used and it was voted a great improvement even if the rearrangement of chairs was a lengthy process.

### **The Annual Dinner**

The Connaught Rooms were again the venue for the 1971 Annual Dinner on 24 November. The guests of the Association were:

Dr. J. A. Iselin Swiss Minister Plenipotentiary  
Mrs. N. Morin (Ladies Alpine Club)  
A. J. J. Moulam (British Mountaineering Council)

W. J. Riddell (Ski Club of Great Britain)  
E. Schaeffeler (Swiss National Tourist Office)  
Dr. C. B. Warren (Scottish Mountaineering Club)  
Lt. -Col. C. G. Wylie (Alpine Club)

The speeches began with John Whyte proposing the toast of the Swiss Confederation. He reminded us that the exclusively male electorate of Switzerland had many of the characteristics of an English club and he hoped that now that women had been given the vote no difficulties would occur. He reminded us of Dr. Johnson's saying that wise men kept their friendships in good repair—and this is the continuing purpose of our Club towards the Swiss.

Dr. Iselin deputised for the Ambassador Albert Weitnauer who had to go to Buckingham Palace. The Ambassador had been honoured to become an Honorary Member of the Club and looked forward to future dinners with us. For himself Dr. Iselin claimed he had no mountaineering skills but he had been to nearly 400 m. on skis above Saas Fee. In 1952 he had been on duty in Khatmandu and had helped the Swiss Expedition to Everest on the administrative side.

Dr. Iselin was aware of the Club's worries about the proliferation of cable cars around Zermatt. He told us that the Swiss people were overwhelmingly in favour of Federal initiative against pollution of all types and felt that this would preserve the natural beauties and advantages of Switzerland.

After a short break the President Frank Solari spoke of his three years of office in proposing the toast of 'The Association'. He felt that the reorganisation of the secretariat giving three sectional secretaries to support the sole Club Secretary would work well and it was fortunate that the scheme had been completed before Peter Ledeboer left for the B.M.C.

The President thanked Maurice Freeman for his projectionist duties at lectures and Michael Baker for organising after-lecture suppers and a full programme of outdoor meets. There were special thanks to Paul French for his years as organiser of the Alpine Meet from which he is to stand down after another successful meet. Wynne Jeurwine's efforts in recataloguing the library were appreciated together with the Rev. Fred Jenkins' bookcase for displaying the growing collection of Club trophies. Graham Daniels was thanked for his efforts on the Journal as was Wendell Jones for coping with floating exchange rates and other problems in his capacity as Club Treasurer.

Among the members, Walter Kirstein's ascent of the North Ridge of the Piz Badile at the age of 78 was remarkable. Sir Jack Longland was congratulated on his appointment as Vice-Chairman of the Sports Council. Finally Frank Solari thanked Peter Ledeboer for his sterling services as Club Secretary for 8 years. In so many ways Peter had made the President's work easier by his early actions. The President felt that although the Club would feel the loss of Peter Ledeboer very greatly, British mountaineering as a whole would benefit from his appointment as Secretary of the British Mountaineering Council. He wished him every success.



Michael Baker welcomed the guests with a few words about each and Lieut.-Col. Wylie (of Everest fame) replied.

Finally Dr. David Riddell proposed the toasts of the new and retiring Presidents. Frank Solari's term of office had been marked by the warmth and enthusiasm of Frank's personality and his wife Babs had been a tower of strength—together they had made everybody welcome at all Club meets. He welcomed Derek Lambley to the Presidential post and assured him of the willing and helpful support of all the Committee.

### **Annual General Meeting**

The meeting was held immediately prior to the Annual Dinner and the main business consisted of the election of officers as follows:

*As President*

D. G. Lambley

*In Place of*

F. Solari

*As Vice-President*

Rev. F. L. Jenkins

D. R. Riddell

*As Hon. Secretary*

F. A. W. Schweitzer

J. P. Ledeboer

*As New Members Secretary*

J. E. Jesson

F. A. W. Schweitzer

*For the Committee*

Wing Cmdr. H. D. Archer

D. E. Charity

J. M. Fairley

F. P. French

J. P. Ledeboer

J. J. Burnet

Rev. F. L. Jenkins

J. E. Jesson

D. J. Lintott

J. S. Whyte

The accounts as presented by the Treasurer, R. W. Jones, were explained and formally accepted. D. G. Hart was re-appointed Auditor.

### **Obituaries**

EGMOND D'ARCIS, an Honorary Member of the Association died in December at the age of 84. He had been a great friend of the Association almost since its inception. He was a noted Anglophile and in both World Wars he did propaganda work for Britain in Switzerland. For 40 years he was the correspondent of The Times in Switzerland.

D'Arcis, short and sturdily built, started mountaineering in his youth, but those who knew him only in later life, quiet, unassuming and undogmatic, would not have suspected that he was one of the first to climb in the Swiss

Alps without guides and thereby incur a great deal of criticism. In his early days he climbed many peaks and was one of the pioneers of the climbing and training schools of the Swiss Alpine Club. He started skiing about 1903, at a time when few people went to the mountains in winter. About this time his all-the-year-round enthusiasm for the mountains spilled over into writing. His climbing, his work in the organization of mountaineering—he also shared in the formation of the first voluntary mountain rescue squad in Geneva—and his personal popularity led to his election in 1932 as President of the International Union of Alpine Associations, then newly formed. From then on, he was regularly reelected every three years, and the organization of the union, with its seat in Geneva, owed much to his enthusiasm and energy.

The alpine museum at Zermatt, the basis of which was the Seiler collection of accident relics, was primarily D'Arcis's idea, and he was always a zealous guardian of alpine amenities. Some years ago he was the originator of the campaign that stopped the building of a cable railway to the summit of the Matterhorn. The petition against the scheme was signed by 1,800,000 people all over the world.

Besides his journalism, D'Arcis wrote two books: *En Montagne* (1935) and *Neiges Eternelles* (1945). He is survived by his wife, his constant companion, who shared his enthusiasms and delighted his friends with her vivacity.

ABBE DR. IGNACE MARIETAN was made an Honorary Member of the Association in recognition of his befriending a large number of British climbers in the Alps. He conducted the religious services at the opening of the enlarged Britannia Hut in August 1929. For many years he was a Professor of Divinity at the University of Sion and he used to spend the long vacation each year at the Hotel des Diablons at Zinal. The last time I saw him was in August 1958 and he was then about 82 so he must have been 95 when he died. He was also an outstanding botanist. M.N.C.

DR. ROBERT BENEDICT BOURDILLON was one of the few surviving original members of the A.B.M.S.A.C., a fact that he remembered two years ago when he sent a message from his home in Canada on the occasion of the Sixtieth Anniversary Dinner.

The son of a mountaineer, F. W. Bourdillon, and father of another, the late Tom Bourdillon, R.B.B. was educated at Balliol (B.A. Natural Sciences 1912) and went on to take his medical degree at St. Mary's Hospital, London. He was appointed lecturer in Chemistry at Balliol and when the First World War intervened he saw service from 1914-19 in the Intelligence Corps, the R.F.C. and the R.A.F. being awarded the M.C. and the A.F.C. He resumed his academic career at University College Oxford as well as doing work at St. Mary's Hospital. From 1925-46 he was with the National Institute for Medical Research, Hampstead. Later, from 1946-54, he became Director of the Electro-medical Research Unit at Stoke Mandeville under the Ministry of Health. He was awarded the C.B.E. in 1946.

Bourdillon was elected to the Alpine Club in 1920. He took a lively interest in the development of the closed-circuit oxygen apparatus used on Everest

in 1953, collaborating with his son who used the system devised on his and Charles Evans' great attempt on Everest when they reached 28,700 ft. They were the first people ever to set eyes on the final ridge to the summit that was later climbed by Hillary and Tenzing.

T. J. B.

We regret to record also the deaths of the following members during the year:

C. M. Sleeman, E. E. T. Taylor



## A.B.M.S.A.C. TIES

Association ties (red and silver badge on blue background) may be purchased at any time from

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# ASSOCIATION ACCOUNTS

## NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

### 1. Subscriptions

Income from this source is made up as follows:—	1971	1970
Subscriptions—Town Members	348	334
Subscriptions—Country Members	363	345
Excess of flat rates of subscription levied over the sterling equivalent of subscriptions due to the Swiss Sections of the S.A.C.	118	121
Difference on Exchange	(4)	15
Subscription relating to past years	22	17
	<u>£847</u>	<u>£832</u>

### 2. Journal

Cost of the journal is made up as follows:—

Printing	308	295
Despatch costs and other expenses	42	38
	<u>350</u>	<u>333</u>
<i>Less: Advertising Revenue</i>	23	46
	<u>£327</u>	<u>£287</u>

### 3. Taxation

The Association is liable to Corporation Tax on its income from outside sources. The charge in the Accounts is made up as follows:—

Estimated Taxation on Current year's Invest- ment Income	58	54
Over provision (1970 underprovision) for previous year	12	(9)
	<u>£ 46</u>	<u>£ 63</u>

### 4. Fixed Assets

	<i>Cost</i>	<i>Depreciation to date</i>	
Projector (W. J. Foster Bequest)	70	69	1
New Projector (N.S. Finzi Bequest)	166	—	166
Equipment at Swiss National Tourist Office	80	79	1
	<u>£316</u>	<u>£148</u>	<u>£168</u>

## 5. Investments

These are as follows:—

	<i>Nominal Value £.</i>
4½% Agricultural Mortgage Corporation Deb. Stock 1977/82	1,000
Brunner Investment Trust Limited 5/- Ordinary Shares	270
London Scottish American Trust Limited 5/- Ordinary Shares	178
5½% National Development Bonds	<u>300</u>

Cost of these holdings was £2,172. Aggregate market value at 30th September, 1971 was £2,635 (1970 £2,260).

## INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT

for the year ended 30th September, 1971

	1971	1970
<i>Income from Members:</i>		
Subscriptions (Note 1)	847	832
Entrance Fees	76	79
Profit on Sale of Ties	8	66
	<u>931</u>	<u>977</u>
<i>Less Expenditure:</i>		
Hire of Rooms	100	100
Journal (Note 2)	327	287
Library	3	3
Printing, Postage etc. SNT0	140	127
Printing, Postage etc. Association	43	56
Insurance	15	15
Entertainment	70	87
Grants	—	30
BMC Subscription	48	31
Lecture Expenses	—	18
Sundries	4	44
	<u>750</u>	<u>798</u>
	181	179
<i>Add Investment Income:</i>		
Association Investments (Gross)	118	114
Bank Deposit Interest	28	16
	<u>146</u>	<u>130</u>
Less: Taxation (Note 3)	46	63
	<u>100</u>	<u>67</u>
<i>Excess of Income over Expenditure</i>	<u>£ 281</u>	<u>£ 246</u>

# BALANCE SHEET

as at 30th September, 1971

	<u>1971</u>	<u>1970</u>
<i>FIXED ASSETS</i> (Note 4)		
Projectors (W. J. Foster & N. S. Finzi Bequests)	167	1
Equipment at Swiss Tourist Office	1	1
<i>INVESTMENTS</i> at cost (Note 5)	2,172	2,172
<i>CURRENT ASSETS</i>		
Stock of Ties at cost	22	17
Debtors	19	259
Cash on Deposit	589	411
Cash at Bank	206	93
	<u>836</u>	<u>780</u>
<i>Deduct: CURRENT LIABILITIES</i>		
Creditors	79	148
Subscriptions in Advance	178	200
	<u>257</u>	<u>348</u>
<i>NET CURRENT ASSETS</i>	579	432
	<u>£ 2,919</u>	<u>£ 2,606</u>
<i>SOURCES OF FINANCE:</i>		
LIFE MEMBERSHIP ACCOUNT	1,326	1,294
ACCUMULATED REVENUE ACCOUNT		
Balance at 30th September, 1970	1,212	1,212
<i>Add: Excess of Income over Expenditure</i>	<u>281</u>	<u>100</u>
	1,493	1,212
N.S. FINZI BEQUEST	100	100
	<u>£ 2,919</u>	<u>£ 2,606</u>

I have examined the Books and vouchers of the Association and report that the above accounts are in accordance therewith.

21st November, 1971      Signed A. H. HART, F.C.A. Hon. Auditor

# BOOK REVIEWS

ONE MAN'S MOUNTAINS (Essays and Verses) by Tom Patey  
Published by Gollancz £3.00

Dr. Tom Patey, one of Scotland's best known climbers and a pioneer in the field of Scottish winter mountaineering, was killed abseiling from a sea stack off the northern Scottish coast last year. He had at the time almost finished editing this book which consists of pieces already published in various climbing journals, now published as they were originally written.

The book is split into four parts. The first and longest part deals with many of his famous winter climbs in Scotland (e.g. Zero Gully, the first winter traverse of the Cuillin Ridge) plus the real inside story of the epic TV climbs like the Old Man of Hoy. The second part is concerned with his major climbs abroad, ranging from Norway to the Mustagh Tower in the Himalayas. All today's well known climbers are featured and Patey's dry humour and keen insight into his companions and their personalities reveals them perhaps more truly than in other published works.

The third and fourth parts are headed Satire and Verse respectively. The last section of verse contains many of his lyrics (those that can be published) which will help swell our repertoires for future climbing meets. The third section on Satire pokes fun at many climbing traditions and activities though in some ways it is based on some shrewd observations of mankind. Why do most of us climb? The usual answer is the beauty of the mountains, the solitude etc. Patey suggests that as we are descended from the apes there might be a much more basic drive within us. This section provides many laughs and again more material for future after dinner speeches.

As climbing books go, this is an unusual one. The fact that it is a collection of published essays means that each one stands in its own right. All are well written and presented and in all it is a welcome addition to our libraries.

J. P.

CLIMBING by James Lovelock. Published by Batsford £1.70

This is a handbook for aspirants. Many have been written in recent years and most of them have had their merits. The present offering is no exception. It starts with a skimpy chapter on the history of mountaineering, and continues with an excellent one on equipment: subsequent chapters on rock climbing technique, free and artificial, and on snow and ice, contain a lot of rather dry technical information, but do not succeed in bridging the admittedly unbridgeable gap between precept and practice. The use of examples from actual climbs, both pictorially and in the text, would have been a help. 'Where to climb' should have been called 'Where to climb in Britain', since

nowhere else is mentioned. Then comes a first-rate chapter on safety and survival, and Mr. Lovelock winds up with some useful appendices on guides, guide-books, and clubs. And the whole thing is embellished with a number of suitably awe-inspiring photographs. Thus, the book follows a familiar pattern. But if there is nothing particularly new, the presentation is clear, and though one might quarrel with a few details (e.g. ten yards between each member of a party of three on a glacier seems too much) it can be read with profit by anybody who has already some idea of what climbing is about.

The trouble with this book, as with others of its kind, is that it is either too specialized or not specialized enough; it is neither a guide to general mountaineering, nor a comprehensive textbook on rock climbing. The author gives the impression that by 'climbing' he means chiefly rock climbing, and that the aspirant for whom he is writing will make an uninterrupted and almost automatic progress from grade one to grade six. But such a one is almost certainly climbing in good company already and will not get here more than a few useful hints. On the other hand, the beginner who has never been on a rope may well find the prospect before him altogether too intimidating. What he will be expected to do in the novice class of a climbing school is not explained, and the misconception, universal among the general public, that climbing involves nothing else than dangling from overhangs is not dispelled.

W. R. J.

# TREKKING TOURS 1972

Cooks regret that the recent War caused the postponement of their DARJEELING Trek until 1973. One or two places are still available on the KARAKORAM and EVEREST Treks for details of which please write to:

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# MEMBERS' CLIMBS

*Dr. and Mrs. A. W. Barton*

Easter: Walking in the mountains around Capel Curig including ascents of Moel Siabod, Pen yr helgi-du, Carnedd Llewellyn and Moelwyn Mawr.

Summer: Saas-Fee with our godson, Ian Thomson. Walking in the mountains including ascents of the Mellig and down by the east face to the Hohenweg, Monte Moro Pass. Ian Thomson with Emil Imseng climbed the Portjengrat by the Portjen Pass and the Rimpfischorn by the South ridge. Dr. and Mrs Barton with Meinrad Burmann climbed the Mittelrücke and the Adler Pass.

From Pontresina walks in the mountains including ascents of Piz Lagalb, where we saw a beautiful display of flowers on steep slopes a little below the summit, Piz Languarg and Piz de Staz.

*P. S. Boulter*

1971 started for us in the Lake District. The Hogmanay fogs were dispelled by a crisp walk on Place Fell and the next five days were spent on the fells.

Spring skiing at Obergurgl. Not much sun until the last day but beautiful snow—new powdered snow delivered every morning.

Back to the Lake District in May with a good week on the fells culminating in a Whit Sunday of epic wetness which saw a large part of the Fell and Rock Club squelching round the Newlands tops.

August and September. Virtually every day a winner. With my wife to Chamonix, a training walk over Mont Joly and next day to the Petite Verte. Later days spent on the Brevent and Aiguillette, the Croix de Fer and L'Arollette. After this a move eastwards to St. Luc for the Bella Tola and Rothorn in splendid conditions—this must be the easiest 3,000 m. peak of the Alps. Then followed a series of days at Zermatt in pluperfect conditions and a series of delightful trundles—Gornergrat, Stockhorn, Cime de Jazzi, Gandegg, Theodulhorn, Furgghorn, Oberrothorn.

Phase 2 of the holiday was spent camping in Corsica with one of our daughters, her husband, and the Schweitzers. Tops visited there were pedestrian but enjoyable—Punta di a Vacca Morta (How did that dead cow get there?) and L'Incidine. Incidentally, further to G. Gadsby's note of last year, the Fabrikant Guide to the rest of Corsica (i.e. excluding M. Cinto) came out this summer.

Wales and the Lake District for weekends in October.

A final folly for the year—a package deal to Majorca with friends for three days in November. £23 and good value too for 1,750 miles of flying and three days in a first class hotel. On the Sunday the expedition marched up the Puig de Teix, a garden-like mountain of 3,500 ft. on the northern coast. The highest hill, Puig Mayor, has a military camp on the top and is banned unless a special permit is obtained from some unspecified source, unknown

even to the Tourist Office in Palma. May I recommend this island for a winter weekend? The hills are lovely and deserted—not many package dealers carry their boots.

*G. R. E. Brooke*

April. Ben Macdhui, Cairngorm, Cairn Lochan.

August. Iceland: From the hostel at Fljotsdal in its beautifully pastoral setting in Southern Iceland ascents of three peaks in the volcanic Tindfjalla Jokull massif rising immediately to the north. Blafell and Vordufell provided pleasant rambling on their simple cone-shaped peaks. Saxi, 4, 264 ft., entailed an ascent taking 4 hours and culminated with an enjoyable scramble along a narrowing rock ridge.

August. Greenland: Minor excursions in the course of a brief visit to the Narssarssuaq district of S. W. Greenland, including ascents of two small peaks and a visit to one of the great glaciers of the region.

*Hamish Brown*

As a solitary S.A.C. Scot in a largely English ÖAV party in the Stubai Alps; twelve days of perfect April weather for ski-touring usually giving long first light hauls on skins, fine narrow summit ridges to climb and downhill ski perfection. Based on the Franz Senn, Amberger and Dresdner Huts and skiing many 3, 000 m. passes between them. Peaks: Wildes Hinterbergl, Ruderhof Spitz, Innere Sommerwand Spitz, Schrankogel Kuhscheibe, Hint. Daunkopf, Zuckerhütl 3, 505 m. the highest, Wilder Pfaff, Stubaier Wildspitz, Ost. Daunkogel, Schussgrubenkogel, Schaufel Spitz.

In June, Ketchil, the dog so often with Braehead School on the hills, climbed his 500th. 3, 000 ft. peak—and his last. As far as is known no other dog has managed this before. Nice to be a one stone weakling. It was done too on the last expedition with the school which has now closed down. Scotland had a dismal winter of no snow but there were 2 good visits to the CIC Hut and good days in the Torridons, Cairngorms, Glen Tilt, Glen Coe, Grey Corries, Aonachs, the Great Glen, Affric, Glen Shiel, Glen Pean, Knoydart, Culra Bothy, An Teallach and the country in there, Gaick and Corryarick Passes, and so on: enough to see the third round of the Munros completed. The very last school trip was to the Isle of Rhum. Hamish is now loose on a sabbatical before taking up the post of County Adviser on Outdoor Education with Fife County. A N.T.S. cruise to Norway and Northern Isles literally ran into trouble and while the bows were being patched, came the chance for exploring the hills and fiords round Bergen. Mild and then wild autumn days saw a tour round Ireland, Wales and the Lakes to complete the third round of the 3, 000ers outside Scotland. (Have to keep ahead of the dog!) This ended at the deluge Langdale gathering, an enjoyable social occasion; and a last fling above L. Treig on a weekend of eatings and slide viewings with David Riddell up from Baldock and Colin Macdonald and Bob Aitken also there. Winter months will be spent in Africa south of the equator—which no doubt more anon.

With Bob Aitken and Colin MacDonald(SAC) and several B.F.M.C. friends paid a short and happy visit to the Ortler Group in mid-July. Motoring out took the poor Dormobile over the Julier Pass, the Bernina Pass and up a dirt road to the Buzzi Inn at 2, 178 m. above St. Caterina. Jeeps run up to some of the huts in the area, the English Guidebook gives most information needed. We went up by Pizzini Hut to the Casati with unseasonal snow masking the way. It was crowded with summer skiers: enough said. Quite friendly and efficient though and from it we traversed to the Branca over M. Cevedale, 3, 778 and M. Pasquale, 3, 558, an enjoyable day. We then drove up the adventurous dirt-track hairpins of the Gavia Pass, 2, 541, to the Berni Inn from where we toiled up to the old bothy of the Bernasconi Hut, glad to have it instead of a bivvy in a storm; Segnale above buzzed noticeably. Here were the incredible remains of World War 1 defences. Bones too! From there we traversed the Tresero (a proper bivouac has been built on it across the glacier from the Bernasconi) and the Pedranzini. Heights vary according to Germanic or Italian maps—about 3, 600 anyway and rimming as fine a glacier cirque as anywhere in the Alps. The same day the poor vehicle took the seven of us over the unique 90 hairpins of the 2, 755 m. Stelvio Pass (Higher than the Disgrazia!) to Sulden where the Austrian attitudes prevail. A charming spot which deserves to be far better known. Leaving it the mild Reschen and Arlberg passes were just too easy. After one day of rain in all our heatwaving we sweated up to the Col dell' Orso and the Payer Hut for the ascent of the Cima Ortles, 3, 899, the highest in the range—and a fine mountain by any standards. A four intending the Gd. Zebbru from the Milano Hut turned back at the Col Cedric in poor conditions while Hamish and the 'babes' unexpectedly had the hardest day of the tour from the Serristori Hut: the long ridges of the Angelo, 3, 520 and Cima Vertana, 3, 544, were often iced and the latter was gained simultaneously with a thunderstorm which marvellously hastened the descent by the Rosim glen. In the distance we watched the figures of Herr Poolman(ABM) and friend—the only other British we met all through. The huts were quiet, the food excellent, bedding better than usual, and prices reasonable. There are a few changes since the English Guidebook came out—the permanent snow has certainly shrunk—maps also mislead on this score.

Peruvian Andes. People claim the Cordillera Blanca as the finest mountain range in the world. After a couple of weeks trekking through them we are not going to argue! Its big peaks look familiar, if unpronounceable: Quitaraju, Artesonraju, Chacararaju, Chopicalqui, Huandoy, Alpamayo, Taulliraju, Huascaran. The last three especially are in turn Beauty, Beast and the Giant Killer. For them gear would have to go by sea, but a five week charter was perfect for our modest trip: two weeks up the Santa Cruz valley, with burros to do the donkey work, along the Huaripampa and back by the Yanganyuco. A few things just over the 5, 000 m. mark to put Europe in its place, then running out of time just short of the top of Pucaraju (and a descent into storm and waking to find camp a unique combination of snow and midges) and with two camps a rump managed Pisco, just under 6, 000 m. Travel through this scenery was undiluted pleasure. We had our measures of ailments and nothing hurries in Peru. As a gaelic singer once quoted discussing things Spanish: *manaña* has too much sense of urgency about it!

We had acclimatized by going to Cusco first, itself 10,000 ft., and from there revelling in the strange, impressive Inca atmosphere: Saqsayhuaman, Pisac, Urumamba, Ollantaytambo and Machu Picchu, so much better than the photos. Later we were to contrast it with Spanish things in Arequipa (the sunny delight of Sant Catalina) and the floating island inhabitants on Lake Titicaca. The lake is 12,000 ft. up and on our travels we crossed passes very slightly less in height than Mt. Blanc—with our 13 burros. There were several charter flights this year and in the Blanca there were a score of expeditions from eight countries—yet the thousands of miles and peaks just absorbed them unnoticed. One feels though that this is the time to go—before too many discover the secret that it is not just the land of the hardest ice climbing but also offers unlimited scope for every modest ambition. We spent more money than expected but even so, the travel out, and everything there, was less than a normal air fare.

### *Steve Chadwick*

September: First ascent Cheesewring quarry, Liskeard. Warrior 150 ft. Severe A2. Black Sabbath 160 ft. V. Severe A3. October: Magical Mystery Tour and other routes in Torquay area. Various routes in Cheddar Gorge. December, January: First ascent—Alternate start to the Curse. 100 ft. Hard A3. Routes on Baggy Point including Kinky Boots. Very enjoyable. Spring: Various routes at Ansteys Cove and Stony Middleton. Pink Void, Baggy Point; a classic route. Extreme for only just 15 ft.

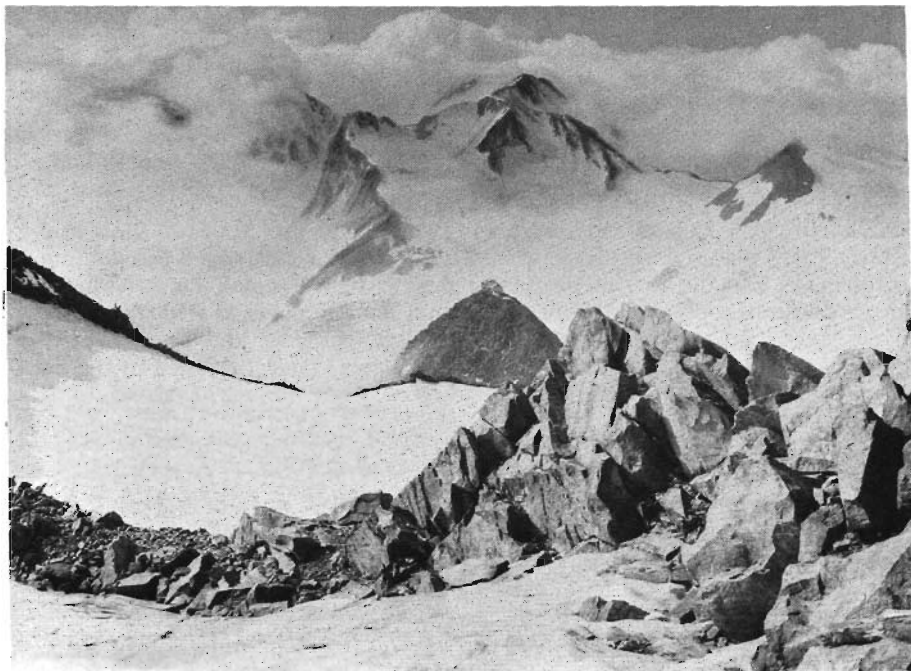
July/August. Expedition to Greenland. Failed on Ingolsfield after 5,700 ft. of climbing, three bivouacs. Grade 3-4 with 500 ft. Grade 5-6. An estimated 4,000 ft. still to climb. Several first ascents in North Steenstrups. Sailed there in our own converted fishing trawler.

October: More fine climbing at Baggy Point. Ascents of Midnight Cowboy and Sexy Legs; classic Extremes. First ascents of Dinas Aries 180 ft. V.S., Moonlight Laser 190 ft. H.V.S. with two rurs for aid. Wet weekend at Chair Ladder. Dioces climbed.

### *W. A. Comstive*

There was a distinct absence of snow in the Lake District last winter, particularly at week-ends, as most falls occurred mid-week and disappeared by week-end. The New Year week-end was probably the finest and a repetition of the previous year. Heavy frost, a sprinkling of snow on the higher summits and fine walks in bright clear sunshine with magnificent views. A highlight of the early part of the season was on a F & R.C.C. meet in the eastern fells when 'a rope of eighteen' ascended Pinnacle Ridge on St. Sunday Crag and continued the round to Fairfield descending down Dovedale. The rocks were covered in verglas and climbing was quite tricky, particularly going over the pinnacle.

At Easter Enid, the family and I went to Mull for a week when the weather was gloriously warm, more reminiscent of early June. On a cloudless day we ascended Ben More by way of Beinn Fhada and A' Chioch with fellow



South from the Wilder Freiger

Photo: W. A. Comstive

member John Brooks who was also staying on the island with his family. The route to the summit by A'Chioch is a very fine sharp ridge, not unlike Striding Edge but sharper, steeper and if anything longer.

We paid a further visit to the Rhinns of Kells in Kirkcubrightshire at Whit and walked over Cairnsmore of Fleet and Meikle Mulltaggart in clear conditions with a cool breeze keeping the temperature down. Again we did not meet anyone on the fells and there was little evidence of previous visitors.

Our main alpine holiday was spent in the Stubai Alps in mid-July based on Neustift. We were attracted to this area by J. Hubert Walker's description of the Oberbergthal in his book—'Walking in the Alps'—as being the most beautiful alpine valley he had visited. His claim is quite justified in my opinion and to our satisfaction we found the area only moderately populated by visitors. The weather was very hot indeed and training walks direct from the village involving some 5,000 feet in a day certainly taxed our resources and for most of the first week we consumed large quantities of lemon tea, skiwasser and the local brew. An attempt on the Habicht from the Innsbrucker Hut was thwarted by the only bad morning but we managed to scramble along the ridge to the Kalkwandspitze and back to the hut before a thunderstorm broke. The return journey down the Pinnistal in clearing

skies and warm sunshine was delightful. We scrambled up the Rinnenspitze via the Rinnen See on an afternoon's excursion from the Franz Senn Hut.

The Wilder Frieger was climbed from the Nurnberger Hut on a morning with a fine start but the deterioration in the weather was confirmed by a short sharp thunderstorm which broke as we returned to the hut. This cleared after lunch and the walk back down the Langental to Ranalt was magnificent in the late afternoon.

Our excursions abroad were intermingled by frequent visits to the Lake District walking and climbing on F & R.C.C. meets. Attended the autumn meet in Gt. Langdale based on Rawhead with John Brooks. On Saturday a dozen or so brave souls left the hut bound for Bliscoe and Red Tarn. Almost horizontal rain and a high wind greeted us above Red Tarn. Wet through we continued on over into Little Langdale and returned to the hut by Blea Tarn with the thought that we had earned our dinner at the White Lion that evening.

*N. M. Davison*

Spent the winter working and skiing in the Mjølfjell area of Norway. Hitched down to Switzerland to join up with M. Chapman for climbing in the Grindelwald area in the last three weeks of June. Spent our first day in Grindelwald hiding from the rain and collecting my S.A.C. membership card from the Post Office.

Gleckstein Hütte via Halsegg and the Ober Grindelwaldgletscher in wonderful weather for an attempt on the Wetterhorn. The attempt was abandoned after 3 hours of slogging through knee deep rotten snow. Returned to Grindelwald in a snow storm via Euge and headed for the Engelhörner where we hoped things would be in better condition. After two days in the Engelhorn hut it became fine at last. Climbed Klein Simelistock, N.W. Ridge (Normal route) coated in thin film of snow and ice. Rosenlauistock and Tennenspitze normal.

Weather rotten so down to Meiringen for a change of view. After a brief visit to the Dossen hut we retreated back to the Engelhorn hut in mist, snow and wind. 19th saw the wind at gale force. Just hoped the hut would last out. Rosenlauistock, Engelberg West Ridge and Traverse to Sattelspitzen. Abseiled off via S.E. Wall. Tennlücke then traverse towards the Simelisattel. Stopped by very poor rock and time! Vorderspitze Normal then traversed ridge to Hohjagiburg. Egg Kante Gr. Simelistock—Kingspitze West Ridge returning via West Wall Couloir. Up to Jungfrauoch for the Mönch via Ob. Mönchjoch in mist. Jungfrau via Rottalsattel in cold wind conditions. Wind slab avalanched off the slope leading to the Jungfrauoch Plateau. Attempted West Flank of Eiger but had to give up about half way due to poor conditions and bad weather.

August, Sustli Hut with the Randen Section S.A.C.. No climbing due to rain. With Herr Mosser, Klausenpass, Chammljoch and Hüfirn to the Planura Hut. 3 a.m. start for the Tödi. Went up via Sandpass and West ridge to Piz Russein 3,614 m. and then down the Biferten Firn, Grünhorn Hut, Fridolins Hut to Linthal. A fine 10 hour trip.

Bergsee Hut with Randen Section. Berdseeschizen West Ridge (IV) and Schijenstock South Ridge (IV). Fine climbing on granite. Engelhorner Hut with Randen Section. Traversed the S. Gross Simelistock (II/IV). Mittelgruppe traverse (IV). Fine Route.

October. Es-cha hut. Kesch nadel and Piz Kesch in 10 cm. new snow. Albert Heim Hut: Gletschhorn South (III) and South East Ridges (IV) with Franz and Pater of the Randen Section. Fine routes on good granite. Kreuzberge. KIII and KIV via South rib and west couloir. Ended the season with a meal of chamois liver and good Swiss wine.

### *Henry Day*

Climbing began this year in Hong Kong where we found that granite cliffs beginning to decay gave good free climbing up to Hard VS on Kowloon Peak and Lion Rock in particular. Both faces overlook Kowloon and the island of Hong Kong; planes landing beneath compete with the hubbub of 2 million Chinese voices to destroy the solitude. A good guide book rates the best route as graded HVS A3. However as subsequent climbers all agree it is nearer severe and AI if the prominent tree routes are used.

A quick visit to Chamonix saw us caught out on the Rebuffat route on the Aiguille du Midi in a storm. The gendarmes called out to rescue us had scarcely dangled a rope out of the telepherique before we had jumarred up it and dived inside to thaw out. Four inches of snow had fallen over-night and apart from totally obscuring holds on the rock, reduced the friction of our PAs somewhat. . . .

First ascent of the North Front of Gibraltar. Any climber landing by aeroplane on the runway beneath the Rock of Gibraltar would be impressed by the fine sheer face of limestone looming over him. He would rack his memory for what he knows about its ascent and have to admit failure. Should he ask a Gibraltarian he would be amazed to learn that the North Front had not even been attempted.

It had happened to me—on the day of my twenty-first birthday when I found the local expert, A. D. Marsden with the explanation. The North Front was Crown property and restrictions were imposed to maintain security and protect the public from falling stones.

Years later Mick Burke found he had Tony Marsden as a neighbour who fired him with the wish to try the face. Mick enlisted the support of John Cotter, Head of ITN's outside broadcasts, and together they persuaded the authorities in Gibraltar that an experienced team of climbers could try to ascent the unclimbed face safely enough.

Mick asked another Annapurna South Face climber, Martin Boysen, to join the attempt. Martin's considerable reputation as a rock climber stems from such difficult first ascents in the Alps as the West Face of the Pic Sans Nom. Mick himself intended to film the climb so he asked me to join the team. Perhaps he wanted military advice on assaulting the impregnable rock. Or perhaps he was remembering the Army expedition reached the summit of Annapurna a week before the South Face team. . . .

A prominent feature in the centre of the face was the Notch, six hundred feet above the runway. It was our aim to reach it on the first day, August Bank Holiday Monday. Martin set off but to our embarrassment had to return to ground level. Once he had managed to find a place to start we quickly reached the foot of the buttress we wished to follow. Since early years man has quarried away at the foot of Gibraltar and this buttress in particular, the foot of which now overhangs. Martin bypassed this using a piton for aid gaining a nasty gully full of loose rock and dessicated plants which he showered down on us. Mick filmed us and then followed. After another pitch Martin was able to break left onto the buttress and gain the Notch. We climbed into a gallery window and spent the night back at the Rock Hotel!

Next day I continued out of the window and found that although the rock was vertical it was well endowed with holds. After three hundred feet Martin came to grips with the hardest part of the climb. The summit above curled over like the crest of a wave and it seemed certain that a lot of pitons would have to be used for aid. He set out to the left towards a gangway intending to belay at the foot. Having led out 120 feet of rope he found there was no possible place to belay as he could not place any pitons. At the foot of a final wall he made a balance move across to gain an earthy crack and here he managed to place several pegs and eventually swung onto a tiny stance silhouetted on the face above the overhang.

**A periodical not for the Swiss alone . . .**

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Mick jumarrred up with the cameras and I resigned myself to the possibility of doing the same as it looked technically far too difficult for me. As it turned out the climbing was magnificent and I was able to knock out all the pitons except one. In fact, those in the final crack were so loosely lodged in the earth I was able to lift some out without using the hammer at all.

Two more pitches, still steep and sustained, saw us to the end of the climbing where we were met by Ginger Warburton who had been in charge of the camera crews. His main task had been to ensure that they didn't fall off the Rock in their enthusiasm for filming us. We coiled the ropes while our finale was staged. This turned out to be up a ladder to the top of Rock Gun where we were met by the Chief Minister, the Govenor and a kiss from Miss Gibraltar.

Summary: The Rock of Gibraltar. First ascent by the North Front August 1971. Mick Burke, Martin Boysen, Captain H. Day. 14½ hours climbing. Hard VS. 4 pitons (2 in place).

### *John D. Evans*

Found good snow for climbing in January on the Carneddau in Snowdonia. Feb./June Regular walks and climbs with friends and school parties in Snowdonia.

July: Opening of Offa's Dyke Path along the Clwydian Range with lightweight camping and 14 boys in tow.

Walking with my family in Switzerland around Les Avants including Dent de Jaman. Delightful tour from Champex with Roger Bayard up the Glacier d'Orny, around the Plateau du Trient and over Pte. d'Orny.

August: With David Martin in Yugoslavia. A long traverse taking in Triglav and 3 other peaks. Ascent of Stol in the Karavanke and ridge walk along the Austrian frontier.

Glorious Autumn weather in Snowdonia with numerous walks and climbs on Tryfan, Craig yr Ysfa, Moel Siabod, Snowdon and the Glyders. One very fine weekend walking with the family on Derwent Fells near Keswick.

### *John Fairley*

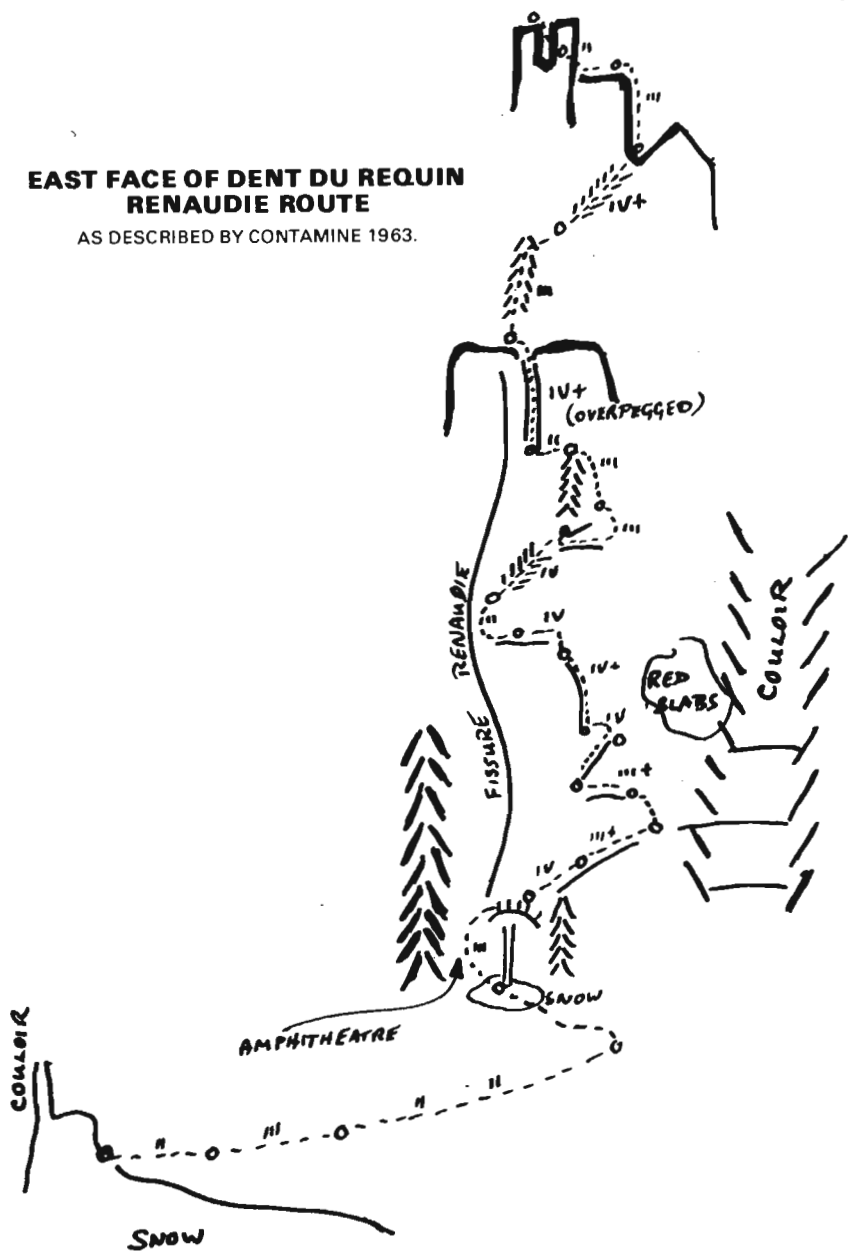
As last year I have been quite active both at home and in the Alps climbing mostly with Lizbet but occasionally with other members of the A.B.M. and with the J.M.C.S.

Despite the poor winter we were able to climb on Scottish snow at Easter employing Alpine starts to beat the sun in the gullies on Ben Nevis. A further week was spent on Arran and many weekends on Welsh rock culminating in a training climb (boots and sacs!) on Cloggy before leaving for Chamonix.

Based at Montenvers we were well placed to explore, spending a couple of days acclimatising and in the process climbing the Aiguille des Petits

# EAST FACE OF DENT DU REQUIN RENAUDIE ROUTE

AS DESCRIBED BY CONTAMINE 1963.



Charmoz. Continuing the process at a higher altitude we enjoyed l'Eveque and la Nonne from the Couvercle hut before being disgusted by the Moine complete with 'Collective'—a polite term. . . .!

Escaping, so we thought, to the Albert Premier we determined to climb the Forbes Arete of the Aiguille du Chardonnet (which we did) and to traverse the Aiguilles Dorees (which we did not). The first was preceded by a cloudless and sleepless night in the company of half of France; but the snow was crisp which made a change. Bad weather found us fretting in the Trient hut and an epic walk back showed just how much snow can fall in a single night. Nevertheless the Trient hut is a happy place; good views, good food and four times as much bed space as in the Premier.

We set off in the drizzle for the Requin hut and that evening it cleared. The guide book says of the Renaudie Route up the East Face of the Dent du Requin ' . . climb a vague chimney in vertical rocks. . . . After some 400 ft. of more or less similar climbing. . . .' Well, 400 ft. is a long way when all the pitons you pass have abseil slings through them! Retreat and rest.

A couple of days later in perfect conditions and despite lending a hand in a rescue we climbed the face again. This time we had a copy of Contamine's sketch of the route in our pockets which showed quite clearly that we had to keep to the buttress to the right of the 'Fissure Renaudie'. It was 5 p.m. by the time we arrived at the summit but it was a fine evening and we bivouaced on the descent with an incomparable view of the Vallee Blanche and the Aiguille du Midi black against the sunset.

The next day as we returned to Montenvers the bad weather and the 'Collective' arrived at the Refuge du Requin. There is a moral somewhere!

*Peter Farrington*

'Apart from a brief encounter with Welsh rock in September climbing has been confined to the cliffs and crags of Islay. The September interlude consisted of Grooved Arete—Tryfan, Central Gully—Lliwedd and Flying Buttress—Dinas Cromlech.

Exploring, photographing and climbing the Islay crags was both exciting and frustrating, the result of having to operate solo. Routes can be found up to 500 ft. at the Oa and Sanaig but due to my limitations the ascents done so far are restricted to 200 ft. and severe standard.

Compared with the atmosphere and length of routes in the Highlands and Skye, the climbs on Islay are insignificant. However for those who like a change and enjoy the attractions of unclimbed rock, beautiful beaches and quiet hills, all easily accessible, I can recommend a visit. If anyone would like more information or photographs, please don't hesitate to contact me.

*Stephen Flook*

The region bounded by the Susten, Furka and Grimsel passes contains magnificent mountains and glacier scenery and is served by 10 S.A.C. huts. In early September I visited the western half of this area with two friends. On

looking at five of the hut books I found that there had been almost no English visitors for a number of years, only the Albert Hein hut having had a British visit this season. The West Col guide book to Central Switzerland was our main source of information but we found that useful though it was a number of details need to be brought up to date.

From the tiny Windegg Hut above the Gadmental we went up the Mährenhorn for a training climb as it appeared to be a good view point. Unfortunately we arrived on top at the same time as the cloud. The route from the Windegg Hut to the Trift Hut has been greatly improved with ladders down the buttress to the glacier and fixed chains across the Tätiplatten slabs. An attempt on the Hinter Tierberg by the S.E. face was abandoned in a maze of crevasses. However the splendid scenery of the upper Trift compensated for this.

Walking up to the Tierbergli Hut on a Friday afternoon we found the hut deserted. Soon others arrived and the warden made a dramatic arrival by helicopter. On our return from the Sustenhorn next day we found numerous parties crowded round the hut. People kept arriving in a steady stream until after dark and we woke the next morning to find every inch of floor-space being slept on. As we began our traverse of the Gewächtenhorn by the west ridge the hordes could be seen making for the Sustenhorn.

The Albert Hein hut was our base for the Galenstock which we climbed by the north ridge. On the way down we met the Swiss army coming up. Finally we visited the remarkable all electric Gelmer hut with constant hot water and its own hydroelectric generator. Our attempt on the Diechterhorn went as far as the limmi where we turned back in the face of bad weather. We left with the feeling that our departure from the well known climbing centres had been very worth while.

### *Gordon Gadsby*

A busy year at home visiting the Lakes, Derbyshire and Wales on several occasions.

Easter: Fabulous weather while camping Glen Etive for 4 days. Traversed the main ridge of Bidean Nam Bien in good snow conditions. Descent via the Lost Valley after a difficult climb down an icy couloir. Traversed Ben Starav 3, 545 ft.—one of the best Scottish days ever—descending by north ridge. Skiing on Meall-a-Bhuiridh 3, 656 ft., walked down in the late evening to a wonderful sunset over the Ardgour hills.

Isle of Arran at Whitsun started with an evening ascent of Goatfell in good weather. Traverse of Cioch-na-H-Oighe, Mullach Buidhe and the Pinnacle Ridge to Am Binnein from Glen Sannox in the worst possible weather conditions. As we cycled back to Glen Rosa at dusk we saw a huge snowy owl with its prey in the trees by the coast road. Cycled round southern half of the island for rock climbs on Drumaddoon Pinnacle in super weather.

July/August. Traverse of the Alphubel 4, 206 m. by the Rotgrat in difficult conditions with Geoff Hayes, Jack Ashcroft, Brian Cooke and Peter Badcock.



Snow Arete on the Rotgrat-Alphubel 4, 206m.

Photo: Gordon Gadsby

Traversed Pointe de Zinal 3,791 m. and Schonbuhlhorn 3,209 m. with my wife on a fabulous hot day. On a two day trip to the Oberland from Taesch with my wife we walked to the Belalp Inn from Blatten—this Inn mentioned as cheap and hospitable in the Oberland guide book is now expensive and inhospitable. We contemplated a bivvy on the Sparrhorn Ridge but a tremendous storm swept the Oberland and Pennine Peaks. We ran for cover as forked lightning flashed across the ridge and the Belalp traverse path eventually finding shelter and a mattrazenlager in a cheap ski restaurant. The next day thick fog over the area reduced visibility to 10 yards. Waited for it to clear at the John Tyndall monument on Sparrhorn Ridge. Gave up at 2.30 pm. and returned to Taesch in glorious sunshine! Walked to Flualp with my Aunt and Uncle both over 70 years old.

Then onto Silvretta Alps, Austria, camping at Galtur—climbing from Wiesbadner Hut. Climbed the Drielanderspitze 3,197 m. on a cold misty day. Whilst on the icy traverse of the East Face to reach the summit ridge one of the party of four in front of us (climbing without axes) slipped on the ice and fell over 150 ft. He was very lucky to stop in a patch of soft snow. I had to cut bucket steps to get him and his party (Germans) to the col and

safety. The route from there on was very enjoyable rock climbing to a fine narrow summit.

We climbed the Silvrettahorn 3, 244 m. on a glorious day. Next traversed Piz Buin 3, 312 m. via Wiesbadner Grat and the Signaahorn 3, 210 m. in fabulous weather. Magnificent views of the Ortler and the Bernina Alps from the summit of Piz Buin. Climbed the Ochsenkopf 3, 057 m. whilst on glacier crossing to the Jamtal Hut. This area abounds with fine mountains and breathtaking lakes and is well named 'The Blue Silvretta'. The huts are excellent especially after spending a fortnight in the rather spartan huts of the Pennine Alps. The peaks offer first rate mountaineering but of a less serious nature.

Back home on August Bank Holiday camping at White Sand Bay, Pembrokeshire. Red Wall route with S. Bramwell and Frank Goldsmith, also some possible first ascents on pinnacles in Marlow Sands area. Walking to and around Gateholm Island (uninhabited)—very interesting.

September was marred by the tragic death of my best friend, Geoff Hayes, who died saving his companion's life on the North Wall of Dow Crag, Coniston.

October saw us camping and walking in the Martindale Fells area of Ullswater.

#### *Keith Hindell*

Camping and hill walking en famille in the Jotunheimen which in summer seems much like a rather grand Scotland. I recommend Galdhogpiggen (8, 000 ft. highest in Norway) as a pleasant easy expedition very suitable for daughters under 10.

#### *A. N. Husbands*

Some trouble with my nose which four operations have so far failed to cure has restricted my activities this year but I spent a few days in Borrowdale in beautiful weather on the A.C. meet in May and did a number of climbs with Ivan Waller, very fit having just returned from doing the Haute Route on skis.

Reaching the amphitheatre on Gable one day we were requested to go and pose on top of the Napes Needle for a picture for a calendar by a photographer who had carried up a plate camera and tripod. This is one of the few occasions when my ability to rock climb has been of use to someone else.

Whilst on business in Scotland I traversed An Teallach with one of my clients and then went to Skye in the hopes of getting a few photographs as I had nothing but rain the year before. However the cloud persisted at 2, 600' and a traverse of Sgurr nan Gilleann yielded nothing. When I reached Glen Brittle in the evening three people were regretting that they had not had any glacier cream with them as they had got badly sun burned climbing on the Cioch. I might have needed it myself the next day—June 14th—if the sun

had appeared at all because as I reached the top of Sgurr Thearlaich it started snowing and after proceeding over Mhic Coinnich I went down the An Stac stone shoot.

After completing my business at Talisker distillery I made for Islay from where the Arran hills looked very inviting. So on my way South I stopped at Ardrossan and went over to Brodick on the Saturday morning and completed half the ridge. There was heavy rain that night but it turned into a beautiful day and I did the rest of the ridge getting a really fantastic view from the summit of Goat Fell—probably the best view I have ever had in the British Isles and extending from Nevis in the N.E. to Ulster in the S.W. In the evening who should I find in the hotel but Ernst Sondheimer and his son Julian.

Leaving London On November 2nd with a temperature of 64° I proceeded to Elgin where the weather got colder and distinctly wetter but my friend and I made an early start on the Saturday and drove to Glen Affric. The weather was better there and the heavy rain had fallen as snow—the first of the winter—and Mam Soul looked more like the Ober Gabelhorn. We traversed it and also Carn Eige—a most enjoyable day with marvellous colourings and nothing in sight except for two huge eagles and many stags and deer.

*E. C. L. Jarvis*

April: A day on Aran Fawddwy and another on Rhinog Fawr.

May/June: Scotland with John Clements and Tom Littledale. Assorted Scottish weather. Stob Coire and Bidean by the Dinner-time Buttress; from Alligin traverse of Liathach (one of Tom's ghosts laid), Ben Damph (Little John) and a very wet walk up Coire Mhic Nobuil; from Tongue Ben Loyal (one of mine); from Lochinver Sulven and Stac Polly (on heavenly days); from Ratagan the Five Sisters (no. 2 of mine); from Fort William the Ben by Carn Mor Dearg ridge (no. 3 of mine) on the first perfectly fine clear day I have ever had on the Ben, the Buchaille by the Curved Ridge and Garbh Bheinn. A pleasing tally of spectres.

August: Three days of lovely weather with our blind friend Fred. A limber-up on Bristly—which Fred now virtually solos—and then Cneifion Arete. This was Fred's first classified rock climb and I know he felt he had 'arrived'. I never fail to marvel. Finished with the Carnedds walk.

September: With Ramblers' Association party to W. Pakistan. The fantastic journey by plane and jeep via Gilgit to Hunza and Nagir in their superb settings (Nanga Parbat, Rakaposhi etc. etc.) and a trek up the Barpu glacier.

My ghosts have been taking a caning this year—which is just as well or too many will remain unaccounted for.

*F. L. Jenkins*

Christmas and New Year skiing at Niederau. January climbing on Tryfan and Glyders with a school party. Easter on Braich-y-Ddeugwm and Tryfan, Y Garn, Foel Goch and Elidir Fawr with a school party.

With G.J.S. Hamilton; Fiacail Ridge of Cairngorm to Ben Macdui, Aladdin's Couloir in Coire An T-Sneachda and skiing in Coire Cas and Coire Na Ciste. A July day on Tryfan with P. C. Clifford, up North Buttress, down Ivy Chimney. A.B.M.S.A.C. meet—Amphitheatre Buttress with S. N. Beare and R. W. Jones

With G. W. F. Finch and G. J. S. Hamilton at Arolla and Saas Fee. Walked up La Luette in threatening weather. Traversed L'Eveque by S. W. and N. E. Ridges. Traverse of Weissmies to Zwischbergen Pass and descent to Saas-Grund. The Rimpfischhorn from Britannia Hut and the Allalinhorn by the Hohlaubgrat.

### *John and Freda Kemsley*

The New Year holiday gave us the traverse of Hedgehope and Cheviot with John on ski reliving 30 year old memories of a last long run down with the lighthouse beam on the Farne Islands shining in the dusky distance.

In February we enjoyed the Edale meet. Had a terrible day on the ridge north of Loch Cluanie and a day of perfection in the Cairngorms with the finest Brocken Spectres all along the Cairn Lochan ridge. Four perfect days on the Easter meet spurred us to some unashamed peak bagging which netted fifteen Munros on the Lochaber ridges.

In May we joined the 400 strong field of entrants for the Fellsman Hike, wondering whether we could complete the 52 miles and 11,000 feet of climbing from Ingleton to Threshfield thinking that an undertaking of that sort was quite foreign to our style of hill expedition. Twenty seven hours later we reached the finish and looked back with pleasure at the good company we had enjoyed on the way, with admiration at the excellent organisation and with gratitude to the many volunteers who had made the event possible.

Our concentration then turned towards botanical expeditions and with family affairs preventing the usual Alpine holiday the year ran down in a slow decline brightened by occasional weekends in the northern fells.

### *W. Kirstein*

Skiing Bernardino mountains, California. Skitouring: Galtür-Klosters with Augstenberg, Dreiländerspitze, Rauher Kopf. Gotthard area: Pazzolastock, Rotondo hut, Leckihorn, Piz Lucendro.

Summer: Sassal Massone, Piz Muragl, Piz Languard, North Ridge Badile—Gianetti Hut—Bondasca Glacier, Rimpfischhorn (turned back 200 m. below summit).

### *Derek Lambley*

Two weekends were spent in Snowdonia both in glorious weather. I went round the Horseshoe again on the first and up the Carnedds on the second. I also had a couple of days in Derbyshire and walked round the edge of Kinderscout. On another occasion on a fishing weekend I traversed the Black Mountains from Crickhowell to Hay-on-Wye. As far as the summer



was concerned I went out to Kandersteg as is my wont and after some local walks there did both the Diablerets and the Oldenhorn with discreet use of the cable car. We were caught in a most ghastly thunderstorm on the descent from the latter with lightening fizzing about 10 yards away from me. Then with Oskar Ogi did a traverse of the Wildhorn, descending to the Rawil Pass and to Lenk. This was a very long day indeed but the weather was very fine. Subsequently I went over to Sils Maria and ascended on my own two feet the Piz Corvatsch. This again gave magnificent views and the weather was glorious. Further walks in this area were rewarding but the weather broke before I could do any major climbs.

*Peter Ledeboer*

This summer I went for the first time with a small party to the Brenta to explore a relatively unfrequented part and was amply rewarded. From La Madonna di Campiglio one has a superb panorama of the Presanella, which is approached in the words of Douglas Freshfield up 'the most beautiful valley in the Alps'. Facing, on the opposite side, are the towering western outposts of the Dolomites proper.

For those who have yet to experience this unique form of traversing mountains I can recommend the via ferrata in the Dolomites.

The traverse of the Brenta is best achieved by the Boccheti Weg, a via ferrata which can just about be done in one day starting from the top of the lift. The track starts gently enough, but soon becomes an engineered path about two feet wide cut across the face of the cliff. The sense of exposure is startling. The difference in levels at the gorges is bridged by vertical iron ladders, some of which are up to 20 metres long, and I can assure you that the ascent (or descent) is quite tiring. But the route is magnificent in its sheer drama and skirting such huge pinnacles as the Campanile Basso.

There are many via ferrata in the Dolomites, and probably the most magnificent of all is on the Civetta, where the route goes right up the ridge to the summit. This we missed on account of bad weather, but one could see that the route had exhilarating possibilities. One disadvantage is that in August the via ferrata are considerably enlivened by large numbers of Italian families, the gorges echoing to terrified cries of 'mama mia'. This I would not recommend, nor for that matter being on the iron ladders in a thunderstorm!

*Roger and Lisa Lewis*

Lisa Grochowska has now become Lisa Lewis. We honeymooned on a wet cloudy Eiger East Face and Matterhorn North Face. Switzerland has never been so wet. Apart from this it has been 'wet' walking weekends in N. Wales, the Beacons and the Peak District.

*Alan Lyall*

Grosstrubel, Grand Cornier, Lenzspitze, Nadelhorn, Stecknadelhorn, Hohberghorn.

*W. McLewin with R. McLewin*

Bellavista, Piz Palu, Piz Bernina by N. Ridge, Gran Paradiso, Ciaforon. Matterhorn by Italian Ridge—we were expecting a lot of snow on the route but not enough to bury one of the fixed ropes. By this time, with just a couple of days left, my brother whose previous climbing experience consisted of walking up Tryfan once and two wet weekends on gritstone, felt he'd done enough but I thought the weather was too good to waste and that there was just time to do the Dom by the N. W. Ridge. I bivouaced on the Festijoch and reached the summit by 6. 30. The weather was the most perfect I have ever known and I sat there for a while feeling very emotional and knowing this was another time I would always recall with a sense of gratitude.

*John Murray*

Various week-end meets in North Wales and the Lake District, where we failed to find good winter conditions but were more than compensated by a glorious Easter in Wasdale.

At Whitsuntide with the Tuesday Climbing Club to Scotland where we camped in Glen Nevis for three days before moving to Glencoe. On arrival we trained by walking over some of the Mamores and the next day what should have been climbing on Ben Nevis was turned by pouring rain into a trudge up the pony track to the summit, where we had what I understand to be the traditional view of thick mist. On moving to Glencoe we saw a dramatic change in the weather and had four very fine days there, during which we climbed on Bidean Nam Bian, did the Aonach-Eagach Ridge, Buachaille Etive Mhor by Crowberry Ridge and the Clachaig Gulley

Zermatt in August with Don Hodge and other friends from Tuesday Climbing Club. Trifhorn and Zinal Rothorn from Rothorn hut. Bad weather and low food supplies forced our return to Zermatt but we climbed the Mettelhorn on the way down. Alphubel by the Rotgrat from the Taesch hut and the Dom by the Festigrat from the Dom hut.

Rock-climbing in Derbyshire at August Bank holiday.

These meets were interspersed with regular week-end meets in North Wales and the Lake District. One of the most enjoyable of them all being in November when we walked from Three Shires Stone over Cold Pike, Crinkle Crag, Bowfell, Esk Pike, Esk Hause to Scafell Pike and Scafell via Mickle-dore and Broad Stand returning via Mosedale to Cockley Beck. The day was mainly fair although occasionally we found ourselves in cloud. The Lake District was at its best and we enjoyed magnificent views of the surrounding fells and lakes and out to sea. The next day we climbed on Raven Crag in full sunshine all day.

*Bill Neate*

First year of living in the Lake District. Many long walks over most of the fells throughout the year and some pleasant rock climbing. Joined local mountain rescue team; also help with rescue dog training every week.

Attended Remembrance Day gathering on Great Gable; a record turnout perhaps over 140 people. First snowclimb of 1971-1972 season up a Helvellyn gully but gale-force wind prevented us from reaching the summit.

### *John Percival*

A week over Christmas and the New Year was spent in the Lake District. One or two superb 'alpine days' exploring the Derwent Fells and one day attempting (and wisely failing) to walk round Striding Edge and Swirral Edge in a blizzard.

At the end of May I reconnoitred the Lyke Wake Walk—a 42 mile stretch running the whole width of the North Yorkshire Moors from the A. 1 to the sea. Successful completion of this walk within 24 hours entitles one (if male) to become a dirger of the L.W.W. club. As this was a reconnoitre (with the aim of throwing down a 24 hour challenge to my walking friends next year) I spent two days on it. The first day involved a leisurely trek over 30 miles to a Youth Hostel at Weardale which proved on arrival to be closed giving rise to a cold night in an adjoining coal cellar. But it did lead to an early start (4.15 am.) and the completion of the walk in 27 hours.

At Whitsun I joined fellow S.A.C. members Graham Daniels and John Dempster for some 'Munro bagging' in Wester Ross between Loch Maree and Ullapool. After an exceedingly long day in the hills (15 hours) traversing A'Mhaighdean, Tarsuinn and Mullach Coire Fhearchair Graham and I arrived at Sheneval at 12.30 pm.—crossing the final river in the dark (very wet).

Late in August I teamed up with the same pair for a fortnight in the French Alps around Chamonix. After four wet days the weather settled down for nearly 10 clear days. After fitmaking walks on both sides of the valley and near misses at small peaks like the Aig. de l'M and Aig. du Moine success came at reaching the top of Mont Blanc by the tourist route and the Aig. du Tour.

### *L. Poolman*

A long week-end early in May yielded Stuchd an Lochain, Meall Buidhe and Beinn an Aighean. Weather could have been better—almost blown into Loch Rannoch when traversing high on Meall Buidhe.

A week at the end of the month permitted ascents of Beinn Bheoil, Alligin, Liathach, Sgriol and Carn Dearg (Alder Group). Weather again poor—a special disappointment was the loss of the complete traverse of the Liathach tops. I suppose, though, I was lucky to reach the summit of Spidean!

July found me in the Otztal and Ortler mountains with D. Grace. After an ascent of the Furgler 3,007 m., came the Wildspitze (3,770)—thick cloud with light snow, south top only—Fluchtkogel and Mittlere Hintereisspitze. Then across to the Ortler group, and a pleasant encounter at the Serristori Hut with Hamish Brown. Weather, like that in the Otztal, varied from bad to good and, apart from hut to hut traverses, the following were ascended:- Hohe

Angelus, Hinter Schontaufspitze, Madritschspitze, Monte Vioz (3, 644), Cima Lagolungo, Cima Careser, Hinter Schranspitz, Hinter Rotspitze and Hinter Gramsenspitze.

Finally, an excellent autumn visit to Switzerland, in mainly good conditions, during which the following summits were reached, solo:- Becs de Bossons, Diablon, Bella Tola (thick cloud and heavy snow), Latelhorn, Jazzihorn, Stellhorn (3, 436), Simelihorn, Zibelenfluh Rothorn, Hohe Gwachte and Ewigschneehorn. In addition, the Steghorn was climbed with Swiss and—with other Swiss—approx. 3,760 m. was attained on the Mountet-Zinal Rothorn route. I can heartily recommend the comforts of the new Lammern Hut above the Gemmi, at which I appeared to be the first visitor from the ABMSAC. As usual at this time of the year on many days I met no-one, and in four huts—the Gspaltenhorn, Laggin Biwak, Lauteraar and Gruben—I had to make do with my own company.

A memorable year, even if not quite as good as 1969.

*R. H. L. Richards.*

A party of four of us—Robert West, Dick Sykes, Angela Faller and I—were lucky enough to complete the whole of the Haute Route from Chamonix to Saas Fee in April.

We first spent a week of down-hill running at Chamonix in the course of which we made the magnificent ski descent from the summit of the Aiguille



Before the descent from the Aiguilles d'Arpette Photo: R. H. L. Richards

du Midi by way of the Mer de Glace on two separate occasions. Then starting from the lift station at the top of Grandes Montets we made our way via the Cabin d'Argentière, Col du Chardonnet, Fenêtre de Saleina, Cabin du Trient, Fenêtre de Chamois, Champex, Borg St. Pierre, Cabin de Valsorey, Plateau du Couloir, Col du Sonadon, Chanrion Hut, Val d'Otemma, Vignette Hut, and the Cols de L'Evêque, du Mont Brulé and de Valpelline to Zermatt.

Conditions on this section were as near perfect as they are ever likely to be. There was always the slight fear of avalanches, particularly in the Val d'Arpette which is menaced by the steep north flank of the Aiguilles d'Arpette, but nothing came down while we were there. The Valsorey exhibited a particularly forbidding appearance as a rescue party was still searching for the last of the victims of a huge airborne powder avalanche in which the Guardian of the Velan Hut and three tourists had been killed. The traverse across the steep nevés leading to the Plateau du Couloir presented no difficulties in the crisp early morning and the remainder of the route to Zermatt was accomplished without incident.

After a great welcome from Fraulein Biner and a day's rest at the Bahnoff Hotel in Zermatt, we went up to the Monte Rosa Hut. The following morning we climbed Castor. We had in fact originally intended to go up Lyskamm, but the party was in an idle mood and opted for an hour's sunbathe on the Felixjoch instead!

On our last day, we skied over to Saas Fee by way of the Adler Pass and a short detour to the summit of the Strahlhorn.

In retrospect our only serious regret was that we did not take time off to climb the Grand Combin before leaving the Plateau du Couloir. The day was a particularly good one and we would have had plenty of time for what would have been quite an easy ascent. This route up the South Western Flank of the Grand Combin tends to be dismissed in the guide books, presumably because it is rather characterless and no doubt loose in summer, but in spring it should be well frozen up and much less exposed to serac fall than the Corridor Route which nowadays is regarded as the 'via normale'. We were well pleased that we had decided to do our own route finding as this undoubtedly added to the interest of the expedition, and in the perfect conditions prevailing, there would have been no advantage in taking a Guide.

#### *David Riddell*

The Easter and August Meets, both dealt with elsewhere, and one wild dash up to Scotland to climb Stob a'Choire Mheadhoin on the West of Loch Treig, in celebration of Hamish Brown's third circuit of the Munros, and the completion of Alastair Lawson's first circuit. There were thirty in the Dalwhinnie Hotel that night, and as many the next night at Kinghorn to see the slides of Hamish's trip to the Andes

#### *Oliver St John and Family*

To start the year we had two brief ski-ing trips, to Formigal in the Pyrenees in January, and Kitzbuhel in March. Had there been more snow at For-

migal I could recommend it unreservedly, and the Hotel Formigal is really excellent. The weather early in March in Kitzbuhel was superb and we made the most of the large number of fine runs available.

At home, a short trip to North Wales at Easter, visiting the Ogwen valley and Tremadoc, started off the climbing season, followed by a visit to Stangeg and Dovedale at Whitsun.

July saw us at Arolla, where we were fortunate in finding excellent climbing weather, in that any storms were confined to the late afternoons and nights. Camping at Satarme, we climbed the Petites Dents de Veisivi and the S. W. ridge of the Aiguilles Rouges. A wet day found us walking up to the Dix hut but it cleared enough to climb Mont Blanc de Cheillon in fine weather though there was deep snow on the final ridge. For two days low cloud prevented major expeditions, but we made a family ascent of the Pigne d'Arolla one day and l'Eveque the next. Back to the valley for a day off, bathing in the little pool above Satarme and climbing the Dent de Satarme nearby. We climbed also the North ridge of the Aiguilles Rouge from the valley. It seemed a long long way on to the ridge, but the fine weather made the effort worthwhile.

For our last expedition, we walked up to the Bertol Hut, which has such a magnificent situation. Fortunately we arrived early and were given a good spot to sleep. Vast hoards arrived later and most spent the night on the tables and benches. The guardian was very helpful, and ensured that those who were climbing next day got as good a night as possible. We scrambled down the chains in the pitch dark soon after 4 a.m. and were on the top of the Za, a rope of five, by 6 a.m. The weather looked doubtful and the days work was still ahead. We trudged across the glaciers to the Rossier Hut, where we had a warm welcome from the guardian. There was plenty of room in the hut, and conditions on the Dent Blanche seemed good. So next day we scrambled up the rocks at the back of the hut, took the Grand Gendarme direct, and were on the top, with a glorious view of all the peaks of the Valais around us, by 7.30 a.m. Going down seemed slower, and the descent to Les Hauderes was interminable.

For some years I have wanted to do the ridge of the Cuillin, so in early October, my son Hugh, a young friend Ann, and I, decided to have a go. We could only spare a long week-end, but the extended M1 motorway gives a good start, and by spending the Thursday night in Coventry and starting very early, we arrived at the Kyle of Lochalsh about 2 p.m. It was drizzling but nothing serious when we pitched camp at Glen Brittle. The days are short at this time of year, so we started at 4.30 a.m. It seemed to be pitch dark almost all the way to Gars Bheinn, but the weather was perfect, and cold, with frost and a little ice on the shaded side of the ridge. Leaving Gars Bheinn at 8 a.m, we finally arrived at Sgurr nan Gillean a few minutes after 7 p.m. and it was already beginning to get dark. As a noble gesture, Hugh, who was still perfectly fresh, offered to run back to Glenbrittle and fetch the car along the few miles of road, to save the legs of the weaker members. Alas, it got darker, to the point where we could no longer see the way down at all, and whilst scrambling down a steepish face of rock, we

decided to sit it out. Of course Hugh had taken all the spare food and clothing, and an involuntary bivouac, clad in a thin shirt and cagoule is a cold affair. However, we survived, and arrived back in Glen Brittle in time to stop Hugh setting forth with a rescue party. A good breakfast and an hour's sleep, and we were off on the way home.

After this incident, my wife and I went off for a week in the sun in Majorca, our first holiday away from the mountains in 26 years of marriage. We saw some fine rock faces up in the mountains, but resisted the temptation to climb them.

*Ernst Sondheimer*

A.B.M.S.A.C. Easter meet: Garbh Bheinn of Ardgour, Bidean nam Bian, Aonach Eagach ridge. A June weekend on Arran ridges snatched on the way to examiners' meeting in St. Andrews.

With Swiss friends a four day walk in Oberland in July. Obersteinberg—Mutthorn hut—Petersgrat—Fafleralp (Lötschental)—Ferden—Kummenalp—Lötschenpass—Selden (Gasterntal). Superb weather and flowers. I reached Obersteinberg via Mürren—Gimmenwald—Sefinental—Busenalp (an excellent walk).

September in the Bregaglia with Roger and Celia Starr. We started from the delightful Hotel Heinz at Cresta in the Avers valley and walked to Soglio (or rather Promontogno because the Hotel Willy was full) over the Prassignola pass. Not a recommended first day's walk for people out of condition with packs but the view from the pass (already praised by Freshfield) almost makes up for the grind. We recovered at the Sciora hut from where we went up to the Bondo pass. After the hot summer the Bondasca glacier was in particularly evil shape. We continued to the Forno hut (swimming in the Cavloc lake on the way) which was officially closed for rebuilding but in fact run by two charming Australian girls who produced superb meals under trying conditions. We (almost) climbed Monte Sissone and admired the Disgrazia then continued via the Sella del Forno to Chiareggio in Val Malenco climbing Monte del Forno on the way. A splendid walk and the Albergo Chiareggio (which belongs to the warden of the Porro hut) is excellent—provided you can communicate in Italian! We had intended to reach the Marinelli hut via the Forcella d'Entova but after 8 hours' walking we realised that we had come over the wrong pass. We could find no way down the precipices between us and the hut visible on the hillside opposite and so a forced march took us back to Chiareggio by nightfall somewhat the worse for wear.

*Tony Sperry*

Two weeks in the Alps were split between Fiesch Bergsteigerschule—Sepp Volken and Pontresina Bergsteigerschule—Paul Nigg. Climbing achievements included Kleine Furkahorn and Galenstock in the first week followed by the Wellenkuppe (and most of the way to the Obergabelhorn), Zinal Rot-horn, and the Dom via the Festigrat

Climbing in the Alps this year turned out to be something of a disappointment. From the Blumlisalp hut I climbed, with my wife, the Weisse Frau and the Morgenhorn. The idea was to acclimatise before traversing the ridge from Morgenhorn to the Blumlisalp. Deteriorating weather caused us to cancel our plans and leave Kandersteg for the Engadine. Hopes of climbing the Biancograt were thwarted and we had to be satisfied with Piz Gluschaint and Piz Roseg. From there we journeyed to Champex and by way of the Sessellift to the Trient Hut, which is surely one of the finest huts in Switzerland. Next morning we crossed the glacier to the Col du Tour. From there an easy traverse leads to the foot of the Aiguille du Chardonnet. The route to this point from the Albert Premier hut is shorter, which meant we were behind a considerable number of parties from there. However, the only hold-up in our progress to the Forbes Arete came at the ice bosse, where a Frenchman insisted on cutting 'buckets'. The ridge itself proved easy with wonderful situations and we were able to reach the summit in under guidebook time. Descent was straightforward with the 'enormous' bergschrund easily crossed.

Earlier in the year I had traversed the Cuillin ridge from Glenbrittle with John Oaks, Geoff Causey and two others. Whitsuntide weather was at its best for a mountaineering expedition which for me proved the highlight of the year.

Many weekends were spent in North Wales and the Lakes, activities ranging from snow and ice climbing to festering. Fortunately one trip to the Lakes coincided with good weather and I was able to climb Kipling's Groove with Oaks and Causey.

*J. O. and Beryl Talbot*

A short but pleasant season with somewhat variable weather. A hard pull up to the Col de Tsarmine on the first day, but returned from the Grand Dent owing to wet snow and thunder.

From the Vignettes hut an enjoyable day on the Pigne d'Arolla; a fair amount of ice in the couloir and badly crevassed in the upper firn. Unable to climb L'Evêque because of bad weather and returned to valley in time to rescue the tent from collapse.

Fresh snow at the Aiguilles Rouges hut put paid to any ideas of rock climbing, and we had to be content with a snow climb on M'Etoile; an excellent view point.

A superb climb on Mt Blanc de Cheilon from the Dix hut but low heavy mist the following day forced us to abandon Le Pleureur; La Luette being a consolation. Found La Ruinette from the Col de Mont Rouge a singularly unpleasant climb; bitterly cold, a high wind and nothing but steep icy scree and loose rock. The approach from the Col de Cheilon over the Giéto glacier required care for a rope of two being quite badly crevassed with a covering of fresh powder snow and spindrift.



*R. Vipond*

At the end of Easter week some cold climbing in Langdale introduced my fiancée to the Lake District and mountains. Our honeymoon at the hospitable Onich Hotel at the end of July was punctuated by my wife's enjoyable initiation to Scottish climbing on Buchaille Etive and Aonach Eagach.

I had an article published in 'Quest' the journal of the City University. The article summarised some of my climbs of 1969 and 1970 in Switzerland, noting particularly a guided spell with Dougal Haston. Unguided ascents with Dr. Mart Idnurm included the Matterhorn, Dom, Monte Rosa, Weissmies, Zinal Rothorn, Rimpfischhorn and Allalinhorn.

*N. E. D. Walker*

One of my best seasons in the Alps for a long time. First week in the Stubai Alps with P. P. L. Punnett and his mother. From Dresden Hut climbed Gross and Klein Trögler, descending to the Sulzenau Hut for lunch, returning via the Peil Joch. Climbed a small unknown peak near the hut. Climbed Hinter Daunkopf and finally Zückerhüt; all in fine weather with Johann Gstrein.

Second week, in the Allgäu Alps, Germany—nothing very exciting but a very enjoyable visit. Climbed to the Nebelhorn (Ridge route) from the Edmund-Probst Haus, and from there on the high route to Kemptner Hut; finding it too far, descended to the Oytal from Himmeleck Sattel and spent two nights in Oytal Haus. With his section of the German Alpine Club, made a week-end visit to the Rosengarten Group of the Italian Dolomites. From the Rosengarten Hut, climbed Rotwand Spitze in fine weather.

October: Back in Mittenwald—with Wilhelm Winneberger, climbed Gam-sanger in the Wetterstein Range. Climbed Herzogstand and Heimgarten, including the impressive ridge route, in the Walchensee Group. Traversed the Eppzirler Scharte from the Solstein Haus in the Karwendels. All in fine weather.

*J. J. Whitehead*

April with S.C.G.B. Gotthard tour. Pazole Stock, Piz Lucendro, Leckihorn, Piz Centrale, Lochberg, Sustenhorn.

August in the Chamonix area. La Nonne, Aig. du Moine with J. Roche. Arete de la Chapelle, Aig. de l'M by N.N.E., Grepon traverse, Pt. Aig. Verte N.W. face, Tour Ronde by W. face, Aig. du Geant.

Aig. d'Argentiere by a possibly new variant. We followed the southerly branch of the glacier du Chardonnet and then took a steep snow-ice slope to join the Charlet-Straton ridge just N.E. of pt. 3774. This route was then followed to the W. summit. This is probably a bit more interesting technically than the original Whymper-Reilly route which takes the same branch of the glacier and then the N.W. ridge. There is no record of our way in the Vallot guide but then the same point on the ridge could be reached more quickly from the glacier du Milieu. These routes with J. Roche and P. Lize-roux (aspirant guide).

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