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SWISS ALPINE CLUB



JOURNAL 1964

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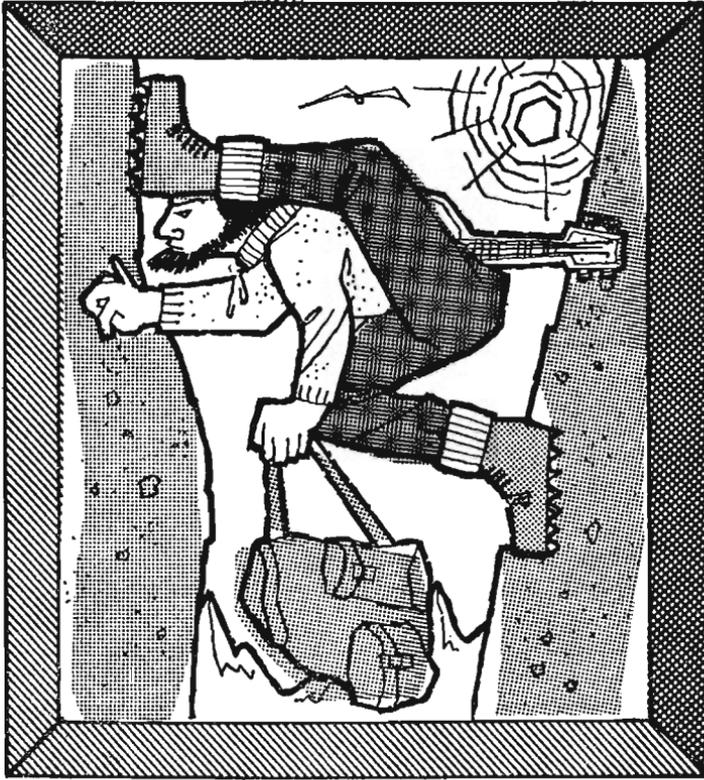
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1964

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*Contents*

	Page
Officers of the Association ... ..	8
Club Notes ... ..	9
The Annual Dinner ... ..	13
The Easter Meet ... ..	15
The Zinal Meet ... ..	15
Mountaineering in Switzerland, 1863-1963 ... ..	18
The High Atlas by R. Wendell Jones ... ..	20
The Picos de Europa by W. R. Jeudwine ... ..	26
The Heart of the Svartisen by G. R. E. Brooke ... ..	30
Climbing in 1963 ... ..	35
Book Reviews ... ..	41
Obituary ... ..	43
Kindred Clubs and S.A.C. Sections ... ..	46
Accounts ... ..	48

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## CLUB NOTES

**T**HE Centenary year of The Swiss Alpine Club has been, not surprisingly, an unusually busy one for the Association. We have concerned ourselves with a number of matters beyond the normal run, and an account of them will be found below. One other project, still in the planning stage, should be mentioned, even at the risk of raising hopes we may not be able to fulfil.

The Committee has been considering the possibility of starting a Youth Organisation on similar lines to that run by the S.A.C. We feel that we should be able to put young people of 16 to 20 in the way of starting their climbing in the Alps under the right auspices, and at the same time to provide a flow of recruits to the Association. There are various problems to be solved, and it must be emphasized that at present nothing is finally settled. But we are hoping that before the summer the scheme will have been worked out in detail.

### Swiss Alpine Club Centenary.

An Exhibition, held at the Alpine Club, was arranged by the Association to commemorate the Centenary of the Swiss Alpine Club. It was opened on 25th November by the Swiss Ambassador, Monsieur Daeniker, in the presence of Monsieur Wyss-Dunant, President of the S.A.C., Sir John Hunt, Monsieur Egmond d'Arcis, Monsieur Briquet, former President of the Geneva Section, and a large gathering of members and friends.

In a short speech the Ambassador recalled the changes in mountaineering which had occurred within his own experience and that of his friend Monsieur Wyss-Dunant. Climbers were looking further afield than the Alps, and he himself had been able to play a part in helping the Swiss Everest expedition when he visited Katmandu in 1952. That expedition had not got to the top, but he was glad to remember that Sir John Hunt had said to him that the ascent in 1953 was in great part due to the Swiss effort in the previous year. He expressed his appreciation of the work done by those who had arranged the Exhibition, Mr. G. Hutcheson, Mr. F. E. Smith, Mr. J. P. Ledebor, and Mr. W. R. Jeurwine, and then formally declared the Exhibition open.

In reply the President warmly thanked His Excellency for having come to us despite the pressure of a heavy list of engagements. We were the more glad to see him since owing to his retirement it would be for the last time. During the nine years he had been in London he and Madame Daeniker had come to nearly all our dinners and in every way had been a staunch friend to the Association. We should

always be grateful for the interest he had taken in our affairs. In conclusion, the President wished Monsieur and Madame Daeniker a very happy retirement.

The Exhibition remained open until 30th November and was visited by about 400 people.

Another exhibition in which the Association had a hand was of Swiss prints from the collection bequeathed by R. W. Lloyd to the British Museum. A selection was made with special emphasis on the mountain views, and these were on show at the British Museum throughout November.

### **Zermatt.**

The implications of the typhoid outbreak in Zermatt in the early part of last year have been of great concern to us, in that many British climbers might be deterred from going to this popular area as a result of it.

The history of the affair is now well known and much has been done to set things right. Nevertheless by virtue of our special interest the Committee felt it necessary to put certain points to the Swiss Ambassador with a request that our views be brought to the notice of the Federal Authorities in Berne. The situation now appears to be as follows:—

1. The chlorination of the water supply is being checked by regular bacteriological tests, approved by the Federal Authorities, in whose opinion the situation is now normal.

2. The waste drainage system is being renovated, but this will take two or three years to complete.

3. The Commune is building an incineration plant for refuse disposal which will probably come into use in the spring of 1964.

4. The Commune has stated that in the event of any further outbreak it will do everything necessary to ensure that visitors are informed.

We consider that the foregoing provides an adequate measure of reassurance for those who might have had doubts about visiting Zermatt.

### **Meetings in 1963.**

Evening meetings were held as usual at the Alpine Club, at which we were entertained by the following lectures illustrated by slides:

Wednesday, January 23rd:

The Scottish Meet, 1962—by Messrs. Bennett, Quine, Lambley, and F. E. Smith.

Wednesday, February 27th:

The Pamirs—by Mr. I. G. McNaught-Davis.

Wednesday, March 27th:

Mount McKinley—by Major P. J. Dietz.

Wednesday, April 24th:

Olympus in September—by Mr. W. R. Jeurwine.

Wednesday, June 26th:

The Engadine—by Mr. W. Kirstein.

Wednesday, September 25th:

The Ortler Group—by Mr. E. C. L. Jarvis and Mr. T. Littledale.  
Zermatt and Saas Fee—by Mr. F. E. Smith.

Wednesday, October 23rd:

The Zinal Meet—by members of the Meet.

A Ladies Night Dinner was held on May 30th at the Connaught Rooms, and this was attended by 103 members and guests. Countess Dorothea Gravina was the guest of the Association and gave a talk illustrated by colour slides on her recent expedition to Western Nepal.

We are much indebted to these members and visitors for making these evenings such a success.

### **Meets in 1964.**

The attention of members is drawn to the list of evening meetings which has already been issued. The Easter Meet will be held at the Alt-Nan-Rhos Hotel at Onich from 25th March to 1st April.

An Alpine Meet will be held from 8th to 22nd August at Sils Maria in the Engadine.

### **Officers and Committee.**

The following were elected to the Committee:— Mr. H. S. Flook and Mr. T. A. H. Peacocke in place of Mr. H. W. Blogg and Mr. E. E. Tavener whose terms of office had expired. Mr. F. W. Schweitzer in place of Mr. F. E. Smith who had resigned, and Mr. O. B. St. John in place of Mr. J. Kemsley. Mr. J. Kemsley was elected Hon. Librarian in place of Mr. C. J. France who had resigned. Mr. A. G. Schofield resigned as Assistant Hon. Treasurer, and it was not proposed to fill this vacancy for the time being.

All other Officers and Members of the Committee, being eligible, were re-elected.

The following alteration to the Rules was proposed and approved by the Annual General Meeting:—

Rule 6 (b). Third sentence to read: 'The Committee may co-opt not more than five additional members, who shall hold office for one year only but shall be eligible for re-appointment.'

### Membership.

The number of members is now 783. This is a net increase of 66 over last year, and by a long way the largest annual increase since the war.

### Library.

The following books have recently been added to the Library:—

Alpine Journal, 1962-3: Alpine Club Guides: *Selected Climbs in the Pennine Alps*, *Selected Climbs in the Dolomites*. Austrian Guides: *Glocknergruppe*; *Oetzal, Pitztal, and Kauntal*; *Schobergruppe*; *Venedigergruppe*. Douglas Busk, *The Delectable Mountains*. Climbers' Club: Journals for 1939, 1944-46, 1948, and 1956. Robin Fedden, *Alpine Ski Tour (La Haute Route)* and *The Enchanted Mountains (Pyrenees)*. Fell and Rock C.C. Journals 1962 and 1963, Mrs. Freshfield, *A Summer Tour in the Grisons*. T. H. Goodspeed, *Plant Hunters in the Andes*. Heinrich Harrer, *The White Spider*. Sir Arnold Lunn, *Zermatt and the Valais* and *The Swiss and their Mountains*. J. & J. Riddell, *Ski Holidays in the Alps*. G. Seligman, *Snow Structure and Ski Fields*. Dr. M. Senger, *Wie die Schweizer Alpen Erobert Wurden*. J. Siegen, *The Lotschental*. Swiss Foundation, *The Mountain World 1960-1 and 1962-3*. J. A. Symonds, *Our Life in the Swiss Highlands*. H. Tichy, *Cho Oyu*. Gaston Rebuffat, *On Snow and Rock*.

The following were generously presented by Monsieur Egmond d'Arcis:—

W. Pause, *100 Walks in the Alps* and *100 Ski Runs in the Alps*. Gaston Rebuffat, *Entre Terre et Ciel*. Lionel Terray, *Conquistadors of the Useless*.

His Excellency the Swiss Ambassador has presented a copy of the amusing account by 'Miss Jemima' of the first Cook's Tour to the Swiss Alps in 1863.

### A.B.M.S.A.C. Year Books.

Clean copies of the Year Books for 1955 to 1961 inclusive are needed for binding. Will any members who have spare copies please inform the Librarian.

## THE ANNUAL DINNER

**T**HE Annual Dinner was held in the Connaught Rooms on Wednesday, 27th November. The President was in the chair, and there were 120 members and guests.

The guests of the Association were: Dr. Ed. Wyss-Dunant (President of the S.A.C.) and Madame Wyss-Dunant; Monsieur Egmond d'Arcis (President, U.I.A.A.) and Madame d'Arcis; Monsieur Ch-M. Briquet (former President, Geneva Section); Mr. T. Howard Somervell, O.B.E., F.R.C.S. (President, Alpine Club); Miss Dora H. de Beer (Vice-President, Ladies' Alpine Club); Mr. M. P. Ward, F.R.C.S. (Vice-President, Climbers' Club); Mr. H. N. Fairfield (Fell and Rock Climbing Club); Mr. J. L. Longland (President, B.M.C.); Dr. E. Bircher (Swiss Embassy); Sir Arnold Lunn (former President, Ski Club of Great Britain); Mr. E. Schaffeler and Mr. A. Eger (Swiss National Tourist Office); Mr. H. Williams (British Museum) and Mrs. Williams.

The toast of the Swiss Confederation was proposed by Sir Arnold Lunn, to whose rapid wit no shadow of justice can be done here. Enlivened by some extremely amusing personal reminiscences, he spoke of how the Swiss had been able to achieve a political federation and still preserve the individuality of its parts. He spoke too of their generosity, never advertised, and not always recognized. In Ruskin's words, they used 'no phrases of friendship', but its reality was felt by those who like himself had come to know them well.

In reply, Dr. Ernest Bircher brought greetings to the Association from the Swiss Ambassador who was unable to be present. He thanked Sir Arnold Lunn for his kind words about Switzerland and recalled the kindness he had received from Sir Arnold's father, Sir Henry Lunn, when he first arrived in England 43 years ago.

After giving his review of the year, the President congratulated Monsieur Egmond d'Arcis on being made an honorary member of the S.A.C. and thanked the officers of the Association, and especially Mr. George Hutcheson and his assistants for their work on the Exhibition at the Alpine Club. Then, speaking in French, he made the presentation to Monsieur Wyss-Dunant of an engraved crystal goblet, a gift from the Association to the S.A.C. on their Centenary.

Mr. Howard Somervell in proposing the toast of the Swiss Alpine Club, the Guests and Kindred Clubs, said that as President of the Alpine Club he represented a body that was older by six years than the S.A.C., but its founder members were men who had climbed as

seconds and thirds behind their Swiss guides. He congratulated Dr. Wyss-Dunant on being made an Honorary Member of the Alpine Club and mentioned that his record included several north faces, the Matterhorn among them, as well as the leadership of the Swiss Everest expedition in 1952.

Dr. Wyss-Dunant, replying, said in the course of an interesting speech that this had been a particularly crucial year for the S.A.C. The task of its first century had been the development of the Alps; the task of the second must be their preservation. The mountains were being invaded and their beauty spoilt by the influx of tourists, the building of cable-cars, the noise of aeroplanes. Huts were being turned into inns. Part of the solution was to build higher huts, making use of new materials like aluminium. A bivouac had already been put up on the Schalligrat, and it was proposed to erect others on the great ridges. There were two aims to be fulfilled: to renovate and improve what already existed, and to safeguard the high mountains from mechanisation. One victory had already been won in that the Commune of Zermatt had agreed to ban all cable-cars from the Matterhorn. Tourist air traffic was another difficulty, since if it was unrestricted the mountains could be turned into a fair-ground. At the same time it was neither possible nor desirable to deprive the local inhabitants of the amenities of air transport. It had been agreed that tourist flights should be limited to certain areas and certain glaciers. The S.A.C. would make recommendations as to which these should be. Dr. Wyss-Dunant concluded by saying that he had been much impressed by a meeting last summer of 300 members of Youth Organisations from all over Switzerland. Their enthusiasm and real love of the mountains were a good omen for the future.

In proposing the toast to the President, Professor N. E. Odell recalled Dr. Barton's distinguished and varied attainments, as a physicist at the Cavendish Laboratory in Cambridge, as a climber and as a football referee. Now he was Headmaster of the City of London School, which counted among its old boys many famous climbers.

This concluded a most successful evening, for which our thanks are due to Mr. J. P. Ledebøer, who was responsible for the arrangements.

## THE EASTER MEET.

**T**WENTY-FIVE members were present at the Glan Aber Hotel, Bettws-y-Coed for the Easter Meet from the 10th to the 17th April, and it was a pity that this considerable gathering should have been faced with the worst weather of any Easter Meet in recent years. The sun hardly appeared at all, except fitfully on Good Friday; it rained every day, and sometimes all day. We felt sorry for the campers at Ogwen and Llanberis who had turned up in strength early on; but a particularly foul Easter Sunday was too much for most of them and on Monday nearly all were gone. However, from the haven of the Glan Aber those who braved the wet, and everybody did, were often rewarded by a better day than they had hoped for.

In the early part of the week there was still quite a lot of snow about, some old, some new, and the Bristly Ridge presented an almost wholly wintry appearance when some of us went up it on the Thursday. There was mist and sleet higher up and we got comprehensively lost for an hour or so on the top of Glyder Fach. It was, however, too wet and warm for any proper snow routes to be climbable. A projected ascent of Trinity Gully on Snowdon got no further than the scree above Glaslyn where small wet snow slides were hissing gently down the runnels. On the same day the top of the P.Y.G. track was deep in snow and a furious blizzard was driving frozen rain painfully into our faces. We were glad to retreat down the railway line, first into rain and mist, with a little timid sunshine near Llanberis.

Some rock climbing was done on Tryfan and thereabouts, and despite the weather it was a thoroughly successful and enjoyable meet.

The following attended: The President and Mrs. A. W. Barton, Mr. and Mrs. M. Bennett with David Bennett, Mr. and Mrs. J. Byam-Grounds with Miss Gaye Byam-Grounds, Mr. and Mrs. N. Peskett, Mr. and Mrs. F. B. Porges, Mr. and Mrs. F. Solari, Mr. and Mrs. Geo. Starkey, The Hon. Douglas Hogg, Dr. D. Riddell, and Messrs. M. N. Clarke, Clements, Fletcher, Flook, Jeurwine, Rockliff and Parker.

## THE ZINAL MEET.

**I**N accordance with our recent practice of holding an Alpine Meet in alternate years, we went last summer to Zinal from the 8th to the 22nd August. With all too familiar perversity the best weather of the season occurred before we arrived, and the classic routes had

then been going reasonably well. But this seems to have been the one brief period of settled weather between a late spring and an early autumn. During the second week in August, a succession of storms plastered the higher mountains with snow, and for the rest of our stay they never quite recovered. A fine day was almost invariably followed by a poor one, with more snow above twelve thousand feet. Thus, neither the Weisshorn nor the Dent Blanche were climbed at all, and the Zinal Rothorn only once at the very beginning.

However, it is one of the advantages of Zinal that there are a number of fine ridges at a lower level which provide quite long days, and views of a magnificence not exceeded anywhere in the Alps. Starting from Zinal, at least four of them involve up to five or six thousand feet of ascent, and all were done, most of them more than once, by different parties on our alternating fine days.

The highest and best of these ridges is the Diablons, the complete traverse of which is a respectable climb. But it is worth doing piecemeal, and from Zinal to the highest point via the Tracuit path and the very easy south-west ridge makes a good day. This is perhaps pleasanter than the northern section which is dull to start with but needs a rope in its upper part.

On the opposite side of the valley the Diablons has a slightly lower but scarcely less rewarding counterpart in the Garde de Bordon. The ridge runs from the Pointe de Sorebois to just short of the Aiguilles de la Lex, where a spur of shale and grass brings one quickly down to the Alpe de la Lex and the Mountet path. The ridge is mostly broad and very easy, but there are one or two scrambly bits, and two of us even managed to lose first the route and then each other on the steep shoulder before the top. Here, too, the views are splendid all the way, and there were long arguments over the identification of the array of peaks from Mont Blanc to the Weisshorn.

Of the other walks or scrambles, the Pas de Forcletta, returning over the Frilhorn, and the Col de Milon were both done more than once.

This hardly sounds like an account of a climbing meet; but that was no fault of ours, and in fact quite a number of climbs were done, especially in the early part of the meet. These included the Zinal Rothorn, Bieshorn, Besso, Pointe de Zinal, Mont Blanc de Moming, and the Tête de Milon from the Arpitetta refuge to Tracuit. One or two parties went over to the Moiry Hut and from there climbed on the Aiguilles de la Lex and the Couronne de Breona. The weather,

however, tended to get worse rather than better. In the later stages, those who had trudged up to the Mountet with energetic intentions found themselves trudging down again the next morning in the rain. Attempts on the Zinal Rothorn, Besso, and Grand Cornier all came similarly to nothing. As a last effort, some of us went up to the Tracuit intent upon the Bieshorn as the only climbable four-thousander. Others had the same idea; and on a lurid morning, with high grey cloud above a yellow sunrise, three immense crocodiles wound up the snow slopes. The Weisshorn was never clear, and by the time we reached the top we also were in cloud. It got gloomier as we descended; at the hut there were a few desultory flurries of snow, and back at Zinal in the afternoon it was raining again.

It was a pity that almost the largest meet we have had in Switzerland should not have been granted more kindly weather. Nevertheless we enjoyed ourselves and were well looked after at the Hotel des Diablons. Nor did we lack for a variety of entertainment. The Syndicat d'Initiative of Zinal held a fete, unfortunately on a wet day, when the village got itself up in local costume and processed to the accompaniment of several bands. We had a play in dialect, amusing if incomprehensible, and acted with spirit; there were several raffles in which we participated, rather hoping not to win one of those gigantic millstone-like cheeses: and there was a truly awe-inspiring local version of the Beatles. Most enjoyable of all were the concerts of chamber music given at the hotel almost every evening for the greater part of our stay. The very high standard of performance made them always something to look forward to and a much-appreciated conclusion to the day.

The following members and guests were present for longer or shorter periods: Dr. A. W. Barton and Mrs. Barton, Mr. M. Bennett and Mrs. Bennett, with David Bennett, The Rev. A. T. I. Boggis, Mr. and Mrs. J. G. Broadbent, Mr. and Mrs. J. Byam-Grounds, Miss Gaye Byam-Grounds, Mr. J. Clements, Mr. and Mrs. J. F. Coales, Mr. Christopher Cornish, The Rev. N. S. Dixon, Mr. H. Flook, Mr. P. French, Mr. J. T. Gardner, Dr. J. W. Healey, Mr. J. Jesson, Mr. W. R. Jeudwine, Mr. and Mrs. W. Kirstein, Mr. J. P. Ledeboer, Dr. H. H. Mills, Mr. R. C. J. Parker, Mr. and Mrs. N. Peskett, Mr. G. van Praagh, Dr. D. Riddell, Lieut.-Colonel and Mrs. W. A. Shaw, Mr. Julian Shaw, Mr. Rodney Shaw, Mr. Robin Shaw, Mr. Stephen Shaw, Mr. Barnaby Shaw, Mr. F. E. Smith, Miss P. Waterworth, Mr. G. G. Watkins.

## MOUNTAINEERING IN SWITZERLAND 1863—1963

THIS was the title of the Exhibition organised and arranged by the Association which was held at the Alpine Club from 25th—30th November last year. Its scope was a good deal wider than the title suggests, for it took a glance at countries other than Switzerland and it could be regarded as a miniature pictorial history of mountaineering.

It was arranged under several headings: Early Mountaineering, with a sub-division on huts and guides; The Swiss Scene; and First British Ascents. This was designed to illustrate the story up to about 1900. On the opposite side of the room a splendid series of photographs showed the later developments, first on the great routes in the Alps and then in the Himalaya, with a final panel devoted to rock gymnastics on the cliffs of Swanage and in North Wales.

The section on early mountaineering began with two of the Christian de Mechel prints published in 1790 which, on the strength of their captions, have often been supposed to represent de Saussure's ascent of Mont Blanc. In fact, as Douglas Freshfield pointed out in his book on de Saussure, they were based on drawings made by Henri L'Eveque on the expedition to the Col du Géant in 1788. The Mont Blanc captions would have been put on by the publisher in the interests of saleability. In the earliest impressions of *The Descent*, de Saussure is shown as a rather fat elderly figure being lowered down a snow slope in a sitting position towards a ladder across a crevasse. This was considered undignified, and in the later impressions he is portrayed as a much younger man in the attitude of a graceful glissade. What appears to be the original drawing for the three central figures in this second version was lent to the Exhibition by the Alpine Club.

Thirty years later than de Saussure, in 1826, a young Englishman, the Reverend John Irvine, set out upon his travels, and he kept a diary, the original manuscript of which was exhibited. It gives a lively picture of Switzerland in those days. He followed the usual grand tourists' itinerary, through France to Geneva, up the Rhone Valley and back to Chamonix, then to Berne, Thun, Interlaken, Lauterbrunnen, Wengen, and Grindelwald. He did no real climbing, but the mountains cast their spell upon him, and his account of the crossing of the Col de Balme and of a visit to the Monteverve and the Mer de Glace makes an often amusing complement to the Swiss prints of the period.

The photographs, some of them dating back to 1865, showed

parties of climbers, huts, and guides, including such famous names as Melchior Anderegg and Christian Almer, a facsimile of whose Führerbuch was also shown. Almer climbed for many years in the '70s and early '80s with W. A. B. Coolidge, and for sheer bulk their joint achievement is probably unsurpassed. Up to this period, the list of mountains of which the first ascents were made by British parties is an impressive one, and the Exhibition had photographs of most of them. But impressive though the record is, it should not be forgotten that these climbs were nearly always led by a Swiss guide.

The real contribution of the British was not that they pioneered the Alps, but that they discovered mountaineering as a sport. The whole section on modern mountaineering illustrated this theme. The Victorian climber, with his cutaway coat and long ice-axe, and the 'north wall' specialist with all his ironmongery (models of them were exhibited at either side of the gallery) are different in more than the details of their equipment. The one was still an explorer, using his mountain craft as a means to an end: the other is the master, some might say the slave, of a highly developed technique. The true successor of the Victorian is more likely to be found to-day exploring the little known ranges of the world than doing acrobatics on overhanging cliffs. Many climbers, of course, and not seldom the best, do both. But the acrobatics, the desire to seek out difficulties and exercise a mastery for its own sake, was something that our grandfathers would not really have understood. Voices have occasionally been raised against artificial climbing. But from the moment, perhaps a hundred years ago, when it came to be realized that there was such a thing as climbing technique, that there was more to it than just getting to the top, then all that has followed became natural and inevitable.

The Exhibition was deliberately arranged to point the contrast between old and modern methods, to show how far we have come. The magnificent photographs were admirably chosen to show the remarkable diversity of present-day climbing. Bonington's group in colour of the north face of the Eiger, and John Cleare's rock climbing series were perhaps two of the highlights. There were also a great many unusually beautiful pictures taken on ordinary routes, from which it would be invidious to choose.

A small group of photographs of the Himalaya and elsewhere, and a number of documents relating to the founding of the Association and the Britannia hut formed a kind of postscript to the main theme of mountaineering in Switzerland.

## THE HIGH ATLAS.

*By R. Wendell Jones.*

**L**ITTLE by little the stars edged across the sky, standing out in sharp contrast with the sombre walls of the gorge. All sound was muted by the roar of the torrent, rushing down towards the lake. Leaning against the angular side of a boulder, I ruminated fitfully on the chain of events that had terminated in this valley of Ouanoumss. Occasionally, I glanced at my watch to review the slow passing of the hours, but never ventured to lie down. Memories of snake and scorpion—admittedly but one of each—seen earlier that day, scuttling on the arid slopes of the Southern ranges, fell thick upon me. At four o'clock came the false dawn as the moon thrust a sickly glow towards the deepest shadows. Vague shapes preyed upon my imagination, induced a brief and bolted breakfast, and a start which preceded daylight. In consequence, I trailed my boots deeper than intended in the river, and began to creep and crampon my way up the gorge. Five hours and three pints of water later, I was shimmering in the heat of the col and looking toward the Neltner hut below.

Peter Ledebøer, Donald Clarke and I had left England one wet evening before Easter, and flown into Marrakesh and a view of the Atlas, for breakfast. Our objective was that part of the Central or High Atlas around Jebel Toubkal, the highest peak in North Africa and therefore we thought a fitting target for a first visit to that continent.

We had booked provisionally our first night's accommodation at Asni, 35 miles from Marrakesh, 3,500 feet up in the foothills and in sight of the major peaks. Bookings had to be confirmed and, having overcome the inherent delays of the local telephone exchange, we made contact with the hotelier; tentative enquiries about public transport produced a happy answer. His car was being serviced in Marrakesh and everyone's convenience would be served if we would bring it along.

Burdening ourselves with vast quantities of food, which brought our baggage within close range of 200 lbs., we traced the machine to its garage. Peter found the gears a little difficult; I found the lack of a back seat rather uncomfortable; we all found the road in places spectacular and Monsieur C's estimate of the time required for the trip suicidal. His speedometer had not worked for some years.

Arrived at Asni, we circumvented the droves of gentlemen intent on selling us souvenirs of Toubkal, and ate a superb meal on the terrace looking toward the mountains.

Next morning we made the acquaintance of Mahomet; "Obviously", we thought, "a good man to take to the mountain". An aquiline and colourful Berber dressed in a tent-like cloak, he proved photogenically superb against a backcloth of snow-clad peaks. Negotiations for his employment started immediately; they proved unusually protracted and had a tendency to recur at rather frequent intervals. Portage charges always exceeded what we had been led to expect, and when, to our mind, finally fixed, turned out to be merely the basis for the next round of negotiations. It seems that a succession of European tourists, knowing little of local conditions and anxious not to cause offence, has pushed up prices substantially. Not unnaturally the Oriental mind takes advantage of this—and we were as children.

Mahomet provided a mule to carry our baggage as far as the snowline and his brother to guide the mule; himself he thoughtfully provided with a sinecure. Donald, Peter and I carried our small packs, partly for training purposes and partly out of pity for the mule.

Our progress to the Neltner hut, covering an ascent of almost 7,000 feet in 17 miles, lasted a leisurely two days. Initially we trudged along an unsurfaced road, passing through broad hills of red earth and backed by villages of similar texture. Later the valley narrowed and took on a gorge-like quality. Walnut trees replaced olives and distant peaks appeared round every bend. The track ended at Imlil, the centric point of a group of villages and, indeed, of our own future wanderings.

Here we found a most luxurious hut, possessed of its own shower, calor gas cookers and other amenities; we were subsiding from civilisation with some grace.

Beyond the village the path narrowed, fewer faces peered at us and the mists came down. Snow gathered in the gullies and across the track until the mule could do no more. Two of its legs were tied together and it was left to graze as best it could. For the last half-mile our packs had to be man-handled, a task for which the two Berbers proved scarcely adequate. Altitude, too, was beginning to have a marked effect, and I for one was glad to step at last inside the hut.

The Neltner hut proved a Spartan contrast with Imlil. No fuel for heating; no water except that produced by melting snow on our stoves; and a vertical metal ladder, very hard on stockinged feet, which led to the Alpine style mattresses above. Externally the hut is better

situated, a thousand or more feet below the twin "tizis" (or cols) of n'Ouagane and n'Ouanoumss. Immediately above the hut rises Toubkal itself, opposite the long Ouanoukrim ridge with its several summits exceeding 4,000 metres.

At the Neltner we parted with Mahomet. His boots lacked laces and were three sizes too big for him, even in the socks he had borrowed from Donald, and it was clear that he would prove more of a liability than an asset on the mountainside. Inside the hut, meals consisted mainly of dehydrated tinned food, which required our personal attention; so there seemed little object in paying another mouth to be fed. Mahomet was rather crestfallen, but, like King Charles's head, showed a tendency to turn up fairly frequently

The quickest way to get into training and see the lie of the country was to climb Toubkal without more ado. And so the following morning, at a rather advanced hour by Alpine standards, we started up a narrow recess valley opposite the hut. A few hours later we reached the summit up steepening snow slopes and a short stretch of ridge. One is tempted to say that the climb was completed without difficulty. Alas, only with considerable exercise of will-power did it seem possible to move forward as much as twenty paces before doubling up over one's axe, panting for breath. It was a ludicrous situation which would have done us credit at 23,000 feet in the Himalaya.

There was a fine view to atone a little for our sufferings. Across the valley rose the snowy crest of Ouanoukrim, Timesguida, Afella and Biiguinnoussene. To the South the mountains faded into hills and the hills sank toward the desert. Northward stood Aksoual and the red foothills of Imlil and Asni. And somewhere in the heat haze Marrakesh lay nestling in the plain.

We celebrated our victory in different ways. Donald ate an Easter egg on the summit; Peter read the Times; and I had a superb sitting glissade back to the Neltner. This feat reduced my trousers to such a sorry state, that the expedition's entire stock of wool was ultimately consumed in preserving what was left.

The next few days were spent in ascending many of the peaks surrounding the hut. The climbing followed a pattern of snow-slog, usually up a gully, occasional rock-scramble, and altitude sickness. Donald suffered the most from this, and other ailments, and spent some days *hors de combat* at the hut. But none of us acclimatised at the rate to be expected at similar heights in the Alps. Possibly to

ascend from 3,500 to 13,500 feet in three days was chancing our arm a little, but the dry atmosphere may have contributed.

Meanwhile Peter and I struggled up the Ouanoukrim, Afella Timesguida and Ras, all a shade over 4,000 metres. Only on the rock pinnacle of Tadat did a rope prove necessary, and each man usually made his own pace.

The day after Tadat we crossed the Tizi of Ouanoumss, leaving a partially recovered Donald to meander along the ridge, and prepared to descend some 4,000 feet on the other side to the Lac D'Ifni, the only lake in that part of the Atlas. Since this route lay on the South side of the range and was credited by the map with a mule track, we hoped that the recent fine weather would have melted the snow. Alas, a tongue of snow growing steadily softer wound its way down the far side into a gorge and to within a mile of the stony lake shore . . .

A couple of hundred feet above the lake Peter and I sat in the sun and photographed the lizards. Four thousand feet of couloir in the heat of the day held few charms, so we allowed the heat to addle our brains and formed an ambitious plan to return along the crest of the ridge immediately above the lake, traversing the shoulder of Toubkal and returning to the hut before dark. But it was already eleven o'clock and by 3.30, under a broiling saharan sun, we had but crossed the old moraine below the lake and reached the first of many tops. With a bare four hours of daylight and 75% of the ridge to straddle, it seemed imprudent to risk benightment inadequately equipped at 13,000 feet. So we went down our separate ways, one to an over-peppered kous-kous feast in a Berber village, the other to the boulder at the head of the gorge. At ten o'clock the following morning I recrossed the col, and Peter, after a disturbing mule ride as far as the gorge, followed equally thirstily two hours later.

Our experiences in soft snow deterred us from crossing over the ridge with full packs to our next base, the Lepiney hut. Consequently we spent 3 hours retracing our steps to Imlil, and, after a decent interval, a further seven hours crossing the col to the West of Imlil, descending en traverse into the valley of the junipers, and up once more through the Lepiney gorges. The Lepiney is a superbly-sited hut; steeply sloped on either hand, and backed by the impressive Northern wall of Tazarhart.

On the morrow, after a tentative brush with the slightly awesome Couloir de Neige, 2,000 feet of permanent snow and frequent stonefall,

we made our way up a neighbouring diagonal gully. Two of the party, misliking the softening snow, tried a variation on the adjoining cliff. In the tradition of the old Duke of York we marched steadily up eight rock pitches and then just as steadily marched down seven more, passing through a hole in the mountain in the process. We finished this tour de force, slightly breathless, five hours later and a full hundred feet higher up the gully. So it was evening when we set foot upon the plateau of Tazarhart, an almost horizontal waste of snow, two miles in length and 1,000 yards across; add that it is 13,000 feet high and almost surrounded by cliffs and one grasps an inkling of the uniqueness of the spot. Night was falling as we reached the hut.

Next day saw us toiling back to Imlil, where our new guide, Lissan, met us with delicious mint tea, and, after a brief reorganisation of commissariat, over yet another Tizi to Tacheddirt. Here the hut was a converted gaol, with cells as dormitories, and still barred against all comers. Being a few hundred yards too close to the nearest village, we were plagued by small boys, who played with our empty fruit tins and crowded round embarrassingly while we ate on the verandah. However the least touching of a camera would send them flying off in fear of the evil-eye. Hovering on the ceiling of our cell were, on successive nights, two of the largest spiders I have ever seen. We doubted whether such repulsively bloated creatures could be harmless, and despatched them with more haste than efficiency. Another interesting local attraction was the hut warden, an old gentleman, whom we christened Methuselah, whose chief pleasure in life was to lie full length in the dust outside the lavatory door.

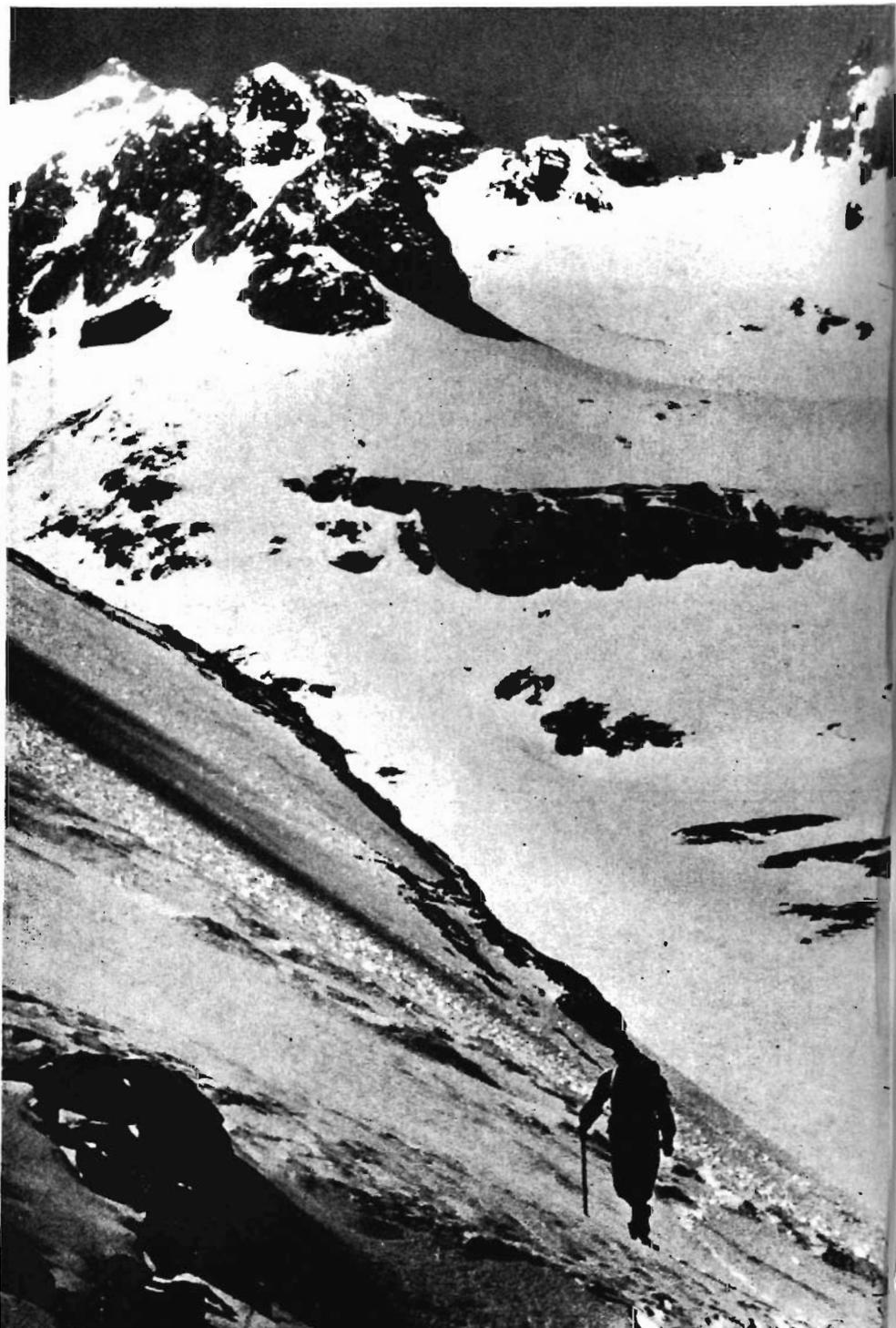
Little climbing was done at Tacheddirt, before the clouds came riding in and obscured the North Wall of Aksoual; we returned to Imlil in a typical Scotch mist.

One of our frequent flits through Imlil had coincided with that of a client of our old friend Mahomet. A slightly vague invitation came from the latter to come and eat kous-kous at his Kasbah the following Saturday. Impressed by this example of Arab (or Berber) hospitality and intrigued at the prospect of a new experience, we accepted.

Kasbah is a vague and generic term; its meaning still obscure. If Mahomet had a Kasbah, the sheikh also had a Kasbah, and it was into the latter that we inadvertently wandered. Having made good our escape, we located Mahomet, admired his garden dutifully and watched his wife or wives—this point was never properly explained

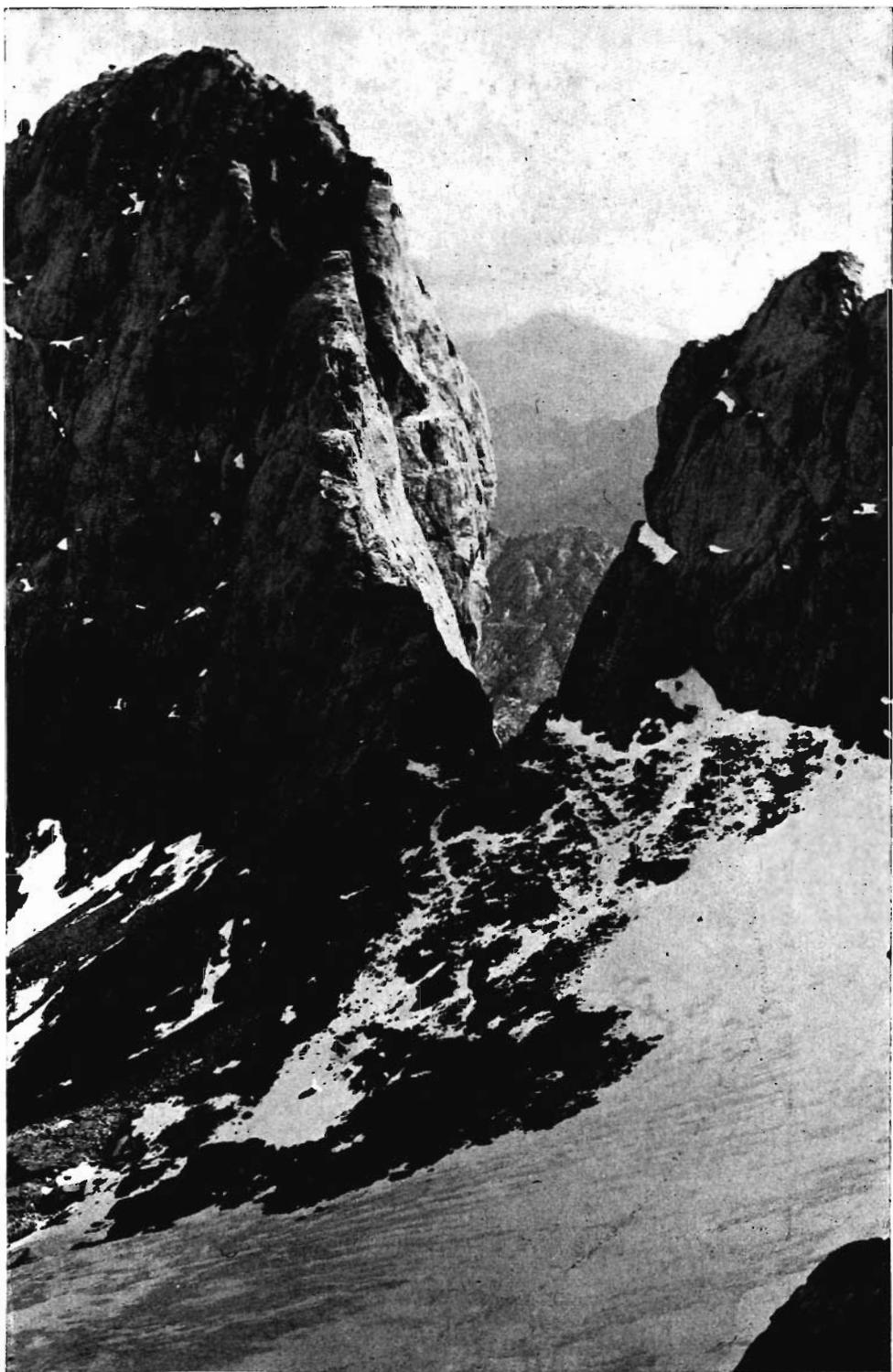


Ober Gabelhorn, Matterhorn, Grand Cornier and Dent Blanche from the Garde de Bordon. Photo: F. E. Smith.



HIGH ATLAS. Above the Neltner Hut.

*Photo: R. Wendell Jones.*



PICOS DE EUROPA. Torre Blanco from Llambrion,

*Photo: W. R. Jewdine.*



MONCH, North Face (see p. 39.)

*Photo: J. O. Talbot.*



Engraved Crystal Goblet, presented by the A.B.M. to the S.A.C.

to us—laboriously shaking sieves for the benefit of our kous-kous. For the remainder of the afternoon we sat cross-legged and wiggling on the floor, while flies buzzed thickly round our ears; periodically Mahomet stirred the swarm with a dirty towel. After innumerable glasses of mint tea and aeons of time, kous-kous ultimately came. Mahomet did the honours by picking out from the stew with his fingers the best bits of chicken for his guests; later he slightly blotted his reputation for hospitality by recommending the amount of the contributions he thought we should make to the feast. He was a lovable rogue.

Then followed a night at the fleshpots of Asni, a day's sightseeing at Marrakesh, and April and a successful holiday drew to a close. Credit for its organisation must go to my companions, especially to those two, who, having done much of the work, were unable to come. Peter interpreted with much efficiency and negotiated with the natives.

Looking back, one is struck by the contrast between the Atlas and the Alps. In both ranges the "viertausender" reigns supreme, and although Mont Blanc is 2,000 feet higher than any peak in North Africa, Toubkal is the equal of the Jungfrau or Rimpfischhorn and Aksoual of the Eiger. There is next to no permanent snow in the Atlas and consequently no glaciers. The peaks are not individually prominent, rarely rising more than a thousand feet over the adjacent passes. Apart from Ifni, we found no lakes.

Yet perhaps the greater contrast lies in the people. They belong to the Orient not the Occident; not prosperous peasant farmers and hoteliers, living in a land of magnificent snow peaks and verdant valleys, but tribesmen dwelling in primitive villages, blending into a parched mountainside; poverty is ever-present and malnutrition not far round the corner. Man rides his mule and Woman does the work in true Eastern style. Muleteers there are, but not Guides in the Alpine sense, since although several huts were built by the French Alpine Club, rock routes made and a guidebook produced, yet no strong mountaineering tradition has been engendered in the Berbers.

Would one go again? We were told of great cedar forests and Dolomite-like peaks in other parts of this great range. Perhaps there is another Rosengarten at the back of the Sahara, but it is to the explorer with a taste for unusual places, not the rock climber, that the Atlas offers most. And if you don't like your fellow men? Well, in a fortnight we never saw another party on the peaks.

## THE PICOS DE EUROPA

*By W. R. Feudwine*

A year ago if someone had asked me where the Picos de Europa were I should have guessed that they might be in an obscure corner of the Andes. It was Freddie Smith who revealed that they were in Spain, and splendid, and that something should be done about them.

The Picos in fact form the highest group in the long range of the Cantabrian mountains that runs parallel with the northern coast of Spain. The highest peak rises to 2,648 metres, and there are many others nearly as high. It was difficult to find out much about them, and few English climbers, it seemed, had ever been there. But from the Spanish Alpine Club we were able to obtain a sketchmap of the central massif, showing an octopus-like tangle of ridges and a number of tracks or routes. Three huts were also marked. It was not clear to us where the area represented lay in relation to anywhere else; but in order to get there it seemed that you had to go along the coast to a point about forty miles beyond Santander and then turn to the left.

With this rather scanty information Don Clarke and I set out from the Spanish frontier at Irun on the 14th September. Our destination was Potes, a large village on the eastern flank of the Picos and about 230 miles from Irun. It was a dull day, inclined to rain, and a slow road, sometimes twisting along the cliffs, sometimes turning inland through green, wooded hills half concealed in mist—an un-Spanish, un-southern countryside, more like Brittany or an overgrown south Devon. We passed through San Sebastian, then Bilbao, an ugly industrial town with the largest potholes in its streets that either of us had ever seen, and after skirting Santander we reached the village of Unquera where we turned off up the valley of the river Deva for the last thirty miles to Potes.

Here the rain came down in earnest, and the floods which we had encountered intermittently on the way became dramatic. The whole floor of the valley was covered by swirling brown water, swamping crops and orchards, uprooting trees, and invading houses. Presently the valley narrowed to a gorge, with immense vertical walls rising five hundred feet or more into the rain and the growing dusk. There were gangs of workmen clearing small landslides; we splashed through countless waterfalls cascading off the rocks, and at one point nearly half the road had been washed away. It was dark and still raining hard when we got to Potes, where we found a very adequate hotel with an hotel-keeper who spoke English.

Next day the sun appeared and we could see where we were. Potes is an attractive small town in the middle of a stretch of open, fertile country, with a range of limestone crags some ten miles away to the west. These, as we discovered later, are not the Picos proper, but an outlying rampart with the top of the Peña Vieja just appearing over the rim. Our next stage was to drive to the village of Espinama where we would leave the car and continue on foot to the Rifugio de Aliva. This, the hotel-keeper told us, was really a hotel, but closed. Of the two other huts, on the western and northern sides of the massif, he knew nothing. However, we were independent of huts; we had a tent and food for a week, and we planned to go through or round the group, climbing the highest peaks on the way. Four, in particular seemed attractive: the Torre de Cerredo (2,648 m.) the highest summit, and the Naranjo de Bulnes (2,519 m.), both on the northern side; and the Peña Vieja (2,613 m.) and Llambrión (2,642 m.) on the side from which we were approaching.

The surprising excellence of the road to Potes did not last long on the way to Espinama, and soon we were rattling from pothole to pothole on a surface that we were to find characteristic of all mountain roads in this part of Spain. It was a beautiful drive, first through open country of vines and orchards, later between steep hillsides richly wooded with ash and chestnut. Espinama was a pretty village of white-washed houses with red tiled roofs, lying at about 2,700 feet in the valley that encircles the central Picos. There we abandoned the car, and shouldering our packs set off for the Rifugio de Aliva.

The sun was warm and we made heavy weather of the mule track that climbed quite steeply through the pastures. Except for the absence of pine trees we might have been in some remote and unspoilt Alpine valley. As we ascended the chestnuts and the ash gave way to oak, becoming gradually more stunted, until after we had passed through the stone pillars that marked the entrance to the National Park, the whole character of the country abruptly changed. Bare slopes of velvety green turf, with herds of goats and cattle, led up to the foot of the grey crags, whose tops were beginning to be swathed in mist. The track led us to the Rifugio, a large and comfortable looking place, but closed as the hotel-keeper had said, and there were workmen nailing up the shutters. A little further on we pitched our tent by a stream below the eastern face of the Peña Vieja.

The Peña Vieja is the most accessible and the most often climbed of the Picos, and the next day we set out for it by the northern of two tracks marked on our sketchmap. Like most of these tracks it proved difficult to find, or to follow when found; but the route was obvious,

first over the grass, then a stony gully and a long slope of scree, emerging on to one of these moraine-like plateaux typical of the Picos, where the rock has been weathered and riven into crevasses and miniature canyons. We threaded our way through, coming out across the northern face of the Peña Vieja, and scrambled to the top up a rocky slope liberally sprinkled with new snow.

By this time we were in cloud and there was only a fragmentary view. The cliffs of the southern and eastern sides dropped away steeply at our feet, and we got tantalizing glimpses of fierce-looking ridges and faces to the north and west. Below the snow on the way down we found a good track (it was evidently the ordinary way) that took us over a col through some splendid rock scenery and back to the tent from the opposite direction to which we had set out.

This circumnavigation of the Peña Vieja made it clear that the local topography was complicated and that to get a real idea of the group our camp would have to be moved further into the middle of it. So after a wasted wet day and another devoted to reconnaissance we carried our loads further up the valley under the impressive southern precipices of the Peña Vieja. After an hour or so, three little tarns invited a halt and a bath. We hopped breathlessly in and out of the icy water and dried ourselves in the sun before continuing towards the still distant pyramid of the Pico Tesorero under which we proposed to camp. We had found a site among the rocks near a convenient snow-patch; it was hard and bumpy, but after a certain amount of gardening it could be made to do. Evening drew on quickly; soon after eight it was dark, and here at over 2,000 metres the nights were frosty. Wearing everything we possessed we snuggled into our sleeping-bags and slept fitfully, wakened every now and again by the cold, or the sound of rain on the tent.

The Torre de Cerredo was our next goal. So far we had not even seen it, but we judged from the sketchmap that we could easily get up and back again in the day. A ghost of a track led us through boulders and over several minor ridges, at whose presence, owing to the map's lack of relief, we had not been able to guess. It all took longer than we had anticipated. By mid-morning the Torre de Cerredo, a bold rock peak, had indeed come into view, but we were separated from it by a deep rift. We should have to descend two thousand feet or more, and then go all the way up again over stones and scree before even getting on to our mountain, let alone to the top. The track had entirely vanished, so rather than spend a laborious and probably frustrating day we turned back and headed for Llambrion.

Soon we were going easily up the snow patches and bands of rock on its northern face. A gully took us on to a ridge and then it was only a scramble with one or two very short pitches to the top. On our other summits we had been plagued by mist, but from here, for the first time, we could see all the major peaks of the group—the Torre de Cerredo and its satellites, the imposing monolith of the Naranjo de Bulnes, and the extravagant pinnacles and curtains of rock on this side of the Peña Vieja.

Llambrión sends out a long east ridge, of which the Tiro Tirso and the Torre Blanca form a part. We had inspected it on the way up and thought that the traverse would make a good climb. From the snow and scree we started up a spur that was easier than it looked and soon reached the summit of the Tiro Tirso. From here the ridge is narrow and serrated, with one or two very steep gaps. We crept cautiously round an enormous block poised on the crest and presently found ourselves at the first of the steep bits. A ledge sloped downwards across a wall to an obvious stance by a detached flake. I stretched a toe gingerly along it, like a bather trying the water, and then retreated. A rickety way round eventually led to the flake, which was on a corner and distinctly airy. There was now a traverse of only a few feet to the bottom of the gap, but it was steep and smooth. Half way across an old and rusty piton appeared to simplify the whole thing, but it was just out of comfortable reach. I made a few timid stretches at it, and then Don came up and went over at once. This was the hardest part of the climb; but the rest of the ridge was never dull, and there is no escape from it on either side: you go on, or you go back. Another wall, a short but very sharp knife-edge, two grooves down and up from the last of the gaps, and we were at the top of the Torre Blanco. It was late, and we hurried down over the scree and boulders on the further side, just reaching the tent before darkness fell.

Time and food were now running short. We spent a day climbing the peaks immediately above our camp site, the Pico Tesorero and Horcados Rojos. Then we had to pack up and return down the track to Espinama.

The Picos would be well worth a longer visit than we could afford and even without a car they are not difficult to reach. Buses run from Santander to Potes and from Potes to Espinama. The track from Espinama to Aliva is passable by jeep, and continues right round the group. Most of the tracks across it seem to have disappeared and without an adequate map getting from one area to another could be laborious and difficult in the frequent cloud and mist. The huts

are open until 15th September, and in addition to the three marked on the map there is a small refuge near our second camp site. But it is probably better to camp. There is plenty of water at the grass level; above it one has to depend on snow patches, but on the northern sides these persist throughout the year.

During the week we spent there we had the mountains to ourselves. On the way home we met two young Spaniards obviously setting out to climb. There is indeed any amount of rock climbing to be done, of all grades of difficulty, not only in the central Picos, but also in neighbouring groups of which we only had a distant view. The rock, so far as our experience went, is good, and the weather, although not the blaze of Spanish sunshine we had been expecting, was at least not destructively bad. The scale may not be great, but there is a compensating sense of exploration in this wild and strangely broken country which tourist development has so far scarcely touched.

### THE HEART OF THE SVARTISEN.

*By G. R. E. Brooke.*

**I**N the region where the Arctic Circle transits Northern Norway, the Svartisen spreads its snowy mantle over two hundred square miles. A vestige of the ice-age, it is the second largest icefield in Europe, situated where an area of lofty plateau and proximity to the ocean with resulting sufficiency of snowfalls, have conspired to conserve a vast glacial sheet which envelops all but the highest summits and sends down long tongues of ice into the surrounding valleys where, in some instances, the ice terminates at altitudes as low as five hundred feet.

The Svartisen is bisected from north-east to south-west by a remarkable rift called the Glomdal, and the two adjacent ice-caps which the rift narrowly divides, have an average height of about 4,000 feet. These desolate plateaux would make scant appeal to the mountain traveller were it not for the nunataks—isolated rock summits—which protrude through the ice and form the culminating points of the district. Snetind, 5,246 feet, a snowy dome with a small crest of rocks, crowns the western ice-cap while the eastern is dominated by Sniptind, 5,220 feet, a shapely peak that rises steeply above the surrounding névé. By virtue of their isolation the Svartisen nunataks rank among the most inaccessible mountains in Norway and even nowadays are seldom visited.

The most convenient approach to the Svartisen is from Mo, a small industrial town standing at the head of Rana Fjord. Some

weeks previous to my arrival I had directed two or three salvoes of correspondence at the long-suffering local tourist office. This expenditure of literary effort had met with gratifying success, securing for me the active co-operation of Karl Westermarck, a local man possessing an unrivalled practical knowledge of the region.

The day after arriving at Mo I travelled by car up the twenty miles of dusty road leading to Lake Svartisvatn where I met Westermarck and spent the night with him at his chalet among the pinewoods. My companion proved to be a man short of stature but strong and agile. Each of us possessed some understanding of the other's language and in the course of the evening, as the arctic gloaming settled upon the deep forests, we worked out our plan for an ascent of Sniptind, the second highest peak in Svartisen, rising at the heart of the icefields. One camp would be necessary and for this purpose I had brought a small, high-altitude tent which, in the event, proved admirably effective.

On August 4th I again joined Westermarck at Svartisvatn which lies close to the southern skirts of the icefield where the majestic Osterdal Glacier has its termination. Early in the present century the glacier descended to the shore of the lake but it has now receded over half a mile, leaving a U-shaped valley of polished rock, as yet utterly bare of vegetation. Svartisvatn lies at a mere 250 feet above sea level and our proposed camp site was situated four miles to the north at a height of 2,830 feet in the Blakkatind corrie. Between lay a stretch of rugged country which would call for considerable expenditure of energy before we could tread the brink of the snowfields.

The afternoon was well advanced by the time we began to climb the steep slabs that rise in terraces above the glacier snout. We made ponderous progress up a series of steep little pitches until we gained the upper limit of the bare rocks and emerged on to a broad shelf covered with sparse vegetation. Immediately below us to the north lay the mile-wide icefall of the Osterdal Glacier with its numberless séracs glinting in the evening sunlight. Slowly we mounted to the base of the corrie and fording the torrent that flowed down from it, arrived after a march of  $3\frac{1}{2}$  hours at our camping place. This none-too-desirable site stood beside a dark tarn where snow-patches fringed the water's edge. It was a singularly exposed and desolate spot but the best that was available, having the strategic advantage of being close to an easy point of access to the icefield which began a quarter of a mile away across the moraines. The Arctic Circle actually ran one mile to the north.

I pitched the little green tent while Westermark achieved a terrifying display of pyrotechnics with a primus stove. We subsequently resorted to solid fuel as being a slower but surer method of obtaining a hot drink. We were much in need of the latter by the time we got into our sleeping bags. The sun had dipped behind the northern wall of the corrie and twilight had crept across the bleak landscape. A frigid wind from off the neighbouring icefield hunted relentlessly through the corrie during the night hours.

My companion slept soundly on his reindeer skin, but to me the night gave little rest and culminated in a sharp attack of colic in the early hours of the morning. We rose about 7 a.m. to find the weather and Westermark both scintillating brilliantly. By comparison I felt like a five-watt bulb in a thick fog. We set out soon after 8 o'clock, Westermark striding energetically across the bouldery moraines and manifesting a cheerfulness that seemed a little out of tune with my resigned contemplation of an imminent demise for which the Svartisen seemed as good a place as any other.

Soon we attained the edge of the ice which extended north and west as far as the eye could see; a vast, white plateau rising in long slopes to distant nunataks. We were immediately confronted with an area of hard, naked ice from which the overlying snow had completely melted, revealing a close pattern of crevasses. Ingrained alpine conservatism behoved me to don crampons but my companion, (who was wearing short gum-boots) promptly resorted to a pair of old skis with loose bindings. Apprehension concerning his strange combination of footgear soon changed to downright wonderment when he proceeded to "shoot" yard-wide crevasses with deadly accuracy, darting to and fro among the gaping rifts with a freedom of manoeuvre that was startling in its deft ease and precision.

For a couple of miles the going remained almost level but crevasses persisted, although a few of them attained sufficient width to bar direct progress. At length the character of the surface changed abruptly into a long, convex snow-slope which inclined for another two miles towards Nunatak 1417, the first distinctive landmark on our route. Over the flat ice skis and crampons had been evenly matched but now the heavy gradient favoured the latter and Westermark's frequent halts gave me welcome opportunity to regain my strength and shake off the indisposition of the early morning. Bit by bit we mounted to the foot of the Nunatak which stood about 250 feet above the surrounding snows and extended to half a mile in length. We traversed the névé along its western side, encountering soft going with a breaking crust in places. By the northernmost rocks we ascended

to a slight col from which we had our first full view of Sniptind. It appeared as a sharp, cone-shaped peak, two miles to the north. Two practicable routes were discernable, the snow-covered east ridge and the southern rock arête. At the outset of the journey it had been mutually agreed that Westermark should pioneer over snow and ice, leaving the initiative to me where any steep rocks might be encountered. Perhaps feeling that hitherto the bargain had proved a bit one-sided, he strongly advocated the arête. Although we were viewing it "end on" it did not look excessively steep, so we advanced towards it, contouring across the névé at the foot of the neighbouring peak, Kamplitind.

The Svartisen is large enough to produce meteorological effects of its own. Moist, oceanic air, carried upward across the plateau and cooled still further by the icy expanse over which it passes, can give rise to rapid, widespread condensation. On this occasion tenuous clouds began to form out of the warm airstream drifting in from the west. Soon Sniptind's crest became obscured and as the other nunataks faded from sight the great snowfields around us seemed to loom even more vast and forlorn.

We arrived at the lowest rocks where skis and crampons were deposited. The arete appeared to be about 700 feet high: at first the angle was very mild but beyond a snowy gap it steepened considerably into a series of slabs littered with pockets of boulders and broken fragments. A boss of crag was easily turned by a short detour on to the S.W. face and soon we were back on the crest tackling the final 200 feet which entailed no more than a steep scramble. With Westermark's versatile gum-boots rising grandly to the occasion we emerged on to a narrow edge and moving a short distance along it, arrived at the summit. Westermark found embedded in the cairn a small tin containing the records of three previous ascents. I consider the full tally to be greater than this, but even so, the number of visits to this remote peak would doubtless be very few.

Light mists drifting around the mountain crest permitted only fragmentary glimpses over the sterile scene around us. To the west ran the deep Glomdal trough and on its further side Snetind's snowy cupola rose to a level just exceeding our own. Sequestered Istind loomed distantly to the north, while south and east lay the long, declining icefields across which we had travelled. Perhaps the most impressive feature of the Svartisen is the deep, pervasive silence that reigns there. Among mountains one is accustomed to the roar of torrents, the rattle of stone-falls and the occasional growl from an

avalanche, but among the mild contours of these wide arctic plateaux the voices of nature are muted in massive immobility.

We descended the arête and began the return march across the snows. Thickening mists limited visibility to a small radius and we followed our outgoing tracks through a white blurr. In the contest between skis and crampons the latter were, thus far, slightly ahead on points but when we came to the long decline below Nunatak 1417 Westermark scored a technical knock-out with a sweeping run that carried him far ahead down the slopes, leaving me to make embarrassingly pedestrian progress in his wake. I found him waiting for me with a broad grin at the edge of the crevassed area where, in the sultry afternoon warmth, the bare ice was streaming with melt-water.

We regained the tent soon after 5 p.m. and slept for an hour before supper. Circumstances necessitated that Westermark should return to the valley later that evening, so I spent the second night at the camp alone. As the sun dipped towards the northern horizon the night wind again began its angry prowling, more powerfully this time, snarling through the shelterless corrie, scurrying in frantic gusts among the boulders and thrashing the tarn into a frenzy of racing wavelets. Inside the tent, however, I rested in warmth and comfort, until the circling sun mounted once more and the wind died away.

I arose and packed up the camp and with this task accomplished, emerged from the corrie's cold precincts. I descended quietly towards the pine-scented valley while the white rim of the icefield sank from sight behind intervening foothills.

Long ages ago a large sector of Europe lay beneath the frigid thrall that now claims the Svartisen as one of its few remaining citadels. Broad and massive though the Svartisen may be, it has no permanence. Even within the short span of living memory an appreciable portion of it has vanished: swiftly the glaciers recede and the ice-caps diminish. Beset by a climate hostile to its survival it yet maintains an immemorial grandeur, with an air of wistfulness that befits an empire in decline. Despite the decay and desolation, a haunting splendour remains, where there is no sound save the rustle of wind around the barren nunataks, no movement apart from the inexorable mutations of ice and snow, no life except when the random traveller sets his feet within this stronghold of solitude and silence.

## CLIMBING IN 1963

THE following are some of the climbs done by members of the Association in the Alps and elsewhere during the past year.

DR. A. W. BARTON:—

From Saas Fee : The Dri-Hörnli Grat, a rock climb in the Almageller valley. Schwarzmys. Both with Siegfried Bumann.

From Zermatt: Ober Rothorn and Mettelhorn.

RALF BONWIT:—

Spring ski-ing from 1st—17th May, following the route Saas Fee—Britannia Hut—Bétemps Hut—Riffelberg. Summits climbed on crampons included the Allalinhorn, Alphubel, and Castor. Also the Fluchthorn, (a wonderful ski mountain from the Britannia Hut) and half way up the Signalkuppe on perfect snow but in threatening weather. The Bétemps-Riffelberg took six hours because of heavy snow blocking the Sommerweg.

Snow conditions were perfect, although there was too much of it, and the Adlerpass was skiable all the way down. Huts were full, but well administered with meals readily available, making it possible for one to carry less. Hut clogs can be a menace on nightly ventures outside the hut. It is up to members to ask their respective Sections to have the clogs fitted with rubber soles.

G. R. E. BROOKE:—

In Sutherland at Easter: Ben More Assynt (under heavy snow). Sulven, Canisp, and Quinag.

In Arctic Norway in summer: Orfjell, Lonstind, and Akjektind in the Saltfjell district. Sniptind (with Karl Westermark) on the Svartisen Icefield.

HAMISH M. BROWN:—

In the Dauphiné (8th—17th July): Col des Bans, and then a retreat due to avalanche danger and extreme cold from wind. Pic Coolidge in good Scottish conditions with thick mist. Les Ecrins, Dome de Neige from La Béarde. The Barre was attempted but avalanched with soggy snow. Traverse of the Pic de Neige Cordier. Traverse of the Col de la Temple to La Béarde.

In the Pennine Alps (22nd—28th July): Breithorn and Klein Matterhorn, up and down from Gandegg in 5 hours. Traverse of the Matterhorn from the Hörnli Hut to Breuil. This took 12 hours owing to being caught in a thunderstorm, and was the first traverse of the season from Switzerland to Italy (23rd July). Traverse of the Alphubel by the Rotgrat in 7 hours from the Täsch Hut. A visit to

the Feekopf and retreat owing to weather. Monte Rosa in 6½ hours up and down from the Monte Rosa Hut. Conditions ruled out the traverse. Dent Blanche in 9 hours up and down from Schönbühl.

CHRISTOPHER CORNISH:—

As a member of the Army Mountaineering Association Meet. Zinal Rothorn by the north ridge. Jägigrat, the wrong way round! Weissmies by the north ridge and down to the Almageller Hotel. Portjengrat from the Portjenpass.

RICHARD GOWING with F. D. SMITH and C. R. ALLEN:—

In the Dauphiné: Aiguille Dibona by the Boell route. Pic Coolidge. An attempt at the south face of the Barre des Ecrins. Soft snow on the upper part of the face caused us to finish by the south-west ridge of the Pic Lory; as it was late we did not go to the summit of the Barre, but down the ordinary north-west ridge and bivouacked on the Glacier Blanc. After riding out a heavy snowfall at the Refuge Ernest Caron, we spent a night at the Refuge Glacier Blanc and returned to La Bérarde via the Col de la Temple. Le Rateau by the south ridge from the Refuge Evariste. Chancel via the Col de la Girose and down the east ridge to La Grave.

In the Bernese Oberland: Finsteraarhorn by the ordinary route. Traverse of the Gross Fiescherhorn from the Finsteraarhorn Hut to the Jungfrauoch. The Jungfrauoch dormitory was found completely booked by a Club. This is deplorable, since it can wreck plans, and the only alternative is single rooms at S. frs. 22 for bed and breakfast.

DOUGAL HASTON:—

In the Dolomites, all with Ian Clough: Catinaccio East Wall, Via Steger in 7 hours. Roda di Vael, Rotwand, Buhlweg, in 9 hours—a first British ascent. Crozzon di Brenta, Aste Dièdre, on June 30th—July 1st in 16 hours in bad conditions. This was a sixth ascent and a first British. Brenta Alta, Oggioni-Aiazzi Dièdre, in 10 hours—a first British ascent.

From Chamonix, with R. Baillie. The north face of the Aiguille du Plan in 10 hours in bad conditions.

In the Bernese Oberland, with R. Baillie. The Eiger, North Face, on 28—31 July under icy conditions.

E. C. L. JARVIS with TOM LITTLEDALE:—

In the Dolomites: Cimone della Pala, Rotwand, Kölnerweg. Santner Pass, Cima di Ball, Pala di San Martino.

F. L. JENKINS with R. M. GAMBLE:—

In the Okstindan Range in Norway. From a camp south of

Lake 748 metres they climbed on 10th June the east ridge of Svarttind (also known as Hekletind) 1868 metres. This was a first ascent. The route was eastwards up the glacier, then southwards to the snow col on the east ridge which gives a climb of 900 feet to the summit—a superb 'alpine' ridge of Very Difficult standard with some hard pitches. Other climbs were Okstind (1808 m.) by the north face, and the traverse of Point 1435 m., Oksskolten (1912 m.), and Okshornet (1907 m.) to the col below Svarttind. On the way south Store Skagastolstind was climbed by Heftye's Rinne.

W. KIRSTEIN with Mrs. KIRSTEIN:—

A traverse of the Piz Palü from east to west, descending by the Fortezza ridge.

D. G. LAMBLEY:—

Trinity Gully (twice) and a traverse of Snowdon under winter conditions. At Easter, scrambling around Buttermere.

In the Pennine Alps: Dent Blanche. Strahlhorn. Mettelhorn. All with Julian Lambley, Eric Thompson, and E. E. P. Taylor.

J. P. LEDEBOER with D. M. CLARKE and R. WENDELL JONES:—

On an expedition to the High Atlas, of which an account will be found elsewhere in this issue, the following peaks were climbed. Toubkal (4165 m) by the ordinary route from the Neltner Hut. By south ridges to Aougdal (4040 m.), Afella (4043 m.), Ras n'Ouanoukrim (4083 m.), Timesguida n'Ouanoukrim (4089 m.), and Tadat (3875 m.)—a thirty-metre pinnacle by the west chimney.

J. H. NOAKE, with Mrs. NOAKE, JOAN NOAKE and MEINRAD BUMANN:

A glacier tour from the Langeflüh to Mattmark via the Britannia Hut. Allalinhorn from the Fee Joch. Monte Moro Pass. Mittaghorn and Egginer (north ridge). Hitawgrat.

NIGEL ROGERS, with JANET ROGERS and JEREMY ROWBOTHAM:—

In the Dolomites: Tre Cime, Preuss route on the Piccolissima, and the Spigolo Giallo on the Piccola.

In the Bregaglia: Piz Badile by the north-east face (Cassin route) and descent by the north ridge.

From Zinal, with Jeremy Rowbotham: Traverse of the Weiss-horn, up by the north ridge and down by the east ridge.

From Chamonix with Janet Rogers and Alan Heppenstall: Aiguille du Peigne by the north ridge.

O. B. ST. JOHN, with a party including some boys doing the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme at Gold Level, with mountaineering as their interest:

A round trip, visiting several districts of the Alps at the beginning of August. The following were climbed: Gross Glockner (Meletzkigrat). Grosse and Kleine Zinne. Piz Bernina. Allalinhorn (east ridge). Egginer and Mittaghorn. Jägigrat. Nadelhorn.

A. E. SMITH, with a party from Reading University:—

In the Bernese Oberland: Mönch. Agassizhorn from the Agassizjoch.

In the Pennine Alps: Strahlhorn and Allalinhorn. Jägihorn and Jägigrat. Fletschhorn and Laquinhorn. Pollux.

E. E. T. TAYLOR:—

Climbing in Wales. Riffelhorn. Dent Blanche from Schönbühl. Rimpfischhorn from Fluhalp. Matterhorn by the Hörnli ridge.

J. O. TALBOT with MARTIN EPP:—

In the Furka: Klein Bielenhorn, Südwand. This was a second ascent.

In the Bregaglia: Piz Badile, North face.

In the Alpstein: Dreifaltigkeit, Südwand. Hundstein Überhänge, Südwand.

In the Engelhörner: Gross Gstellhorn, South-west Pillar. This was the second ascent. Details of the route are as follows:—

From the foot of the pillar climb a crack which leads up to the left to a small sentry-box stance, and then traverse for one rope length to the right. Climb directly up through a series of thin, smooth cracks. Traverse a small wall to the right, and then continue up a crack and over an overhang to the foot of an obvious line of chimneys (VI, A2). Climb the first chimney for one rope-length to a small stance. Continue up the second and third chimneys for three rope lengths. This part is a hard VI, extremely strenuous with poor belays. From the ledge on top of the third chimney traverse up to the left to the foot of a smooth ramp. Climb this ramp, traversing up to the left to the foot of an overhanging bulge (expansion bolt). Directly over the bulge, traverse to the left and then direct up to a good stance. From here a crack leads up to a small ledge, which serves as a cramped and wretched bivouac site. From the bivouac ledge traverse to the left, and direct to the top of the pillar by a series of short cracks and walls. (III-IV).

The pillar is 500 metres high and must be one of the hardest and most strenuous in its class (VI). With the exception of one short pitch it is all free climbing.

*Mr. Talbot has also sent us route details of the following two climbs which he did with Martin Epp.*

## MONCH, NORTH FACE.

This is a magnificent climb, free from objective dangers, with a comfortable start from the Guggi hut and a short, easy descent to the Jungfrauoch. The wall is predominantly ice, and to get through without a bivouac it is essential not to cut steps.

From the Guggi hut go up over scree-covered rock to the Monch plateau (3112 m.), then descend over steep ice for about three rope-lengths to the glacier at the foot of the wall. Cross the glacier to a black, icy wall. Continue up a steep snow tongue and then traverse off to the right on to snow fields. Climb upwards in a direct line over increasingly steep slopes to an obvious black rock wall above. The final ice pitch below the wall is very steep. Traverse icy rocks to the right as far as a well-defined crack. Climb the crack which merges into steep, brittle ice. This is a difficult pitch as the crack must be climbed in crampons owing to *verglas*, and the insecure ice above makes progress tricky. Above this pitch are large flat blocks of rock—a good belaying place, dry and well protected. The route now goes directly up over the overhang which must be climbed by combined tactics. A variation is possible by traversing down to the right and then re-ascending to the left over mixed rock and ice. This is easier but not nearly so entertaining. Go up directly from the top of the overhang over very steep ice for several rope-lengths to an obvious red rock rib, which is climbed throughout its length. The rock is gneiss and of fairly good quality, but made difficult by the presence of ice. The rib merges into the upper ice slopes. Three rope-lengths over extremely steep ice lead to the north-east ridge and thence to the summit.

## WETTERHORN, NORTH-EAST PILLAR (First Ascent).

Take the path from the Schwarzwaldalp to the Grosse Scheidegg and after a short while branch off to the left to an obvious snowfield. Climb this to the top and across the Randkluft to the left of the Hengsternbach. Go up for about 20 metres over smooth rocks, then traverse to the right across the Hangsternbach to a small wall. Climb this to a large terrace (IV). From here climb up towards a large, black, overhanging wall bearing slightly to the left. At the foot of the wall is a wide scree ramp, and on the left there is an unmistakable rock window. Traverse to the right up to the scree ramp to a wide terrace. Climb up slightly to the right for about two rope-lengths until progress is barred by an overhang (V). Traverse the huge slab to the right for one rope length (VI), then climb directly up a small rib to a small hole-like stance (V). Continue upwards to the right to an obvious *verschneidung*, which leads to a large, smooth terrace (V). Traverse to the left for about 5 metres, then back to the right

by an obvious crack in the slab to a large block. Climb this by a crack on its right (V) and continue up to a large, flat slab. Cross this to its edge and *abseil* down to a large snow patch, then a further traverse to the left, going up to the corner of the First Pillar. Climb around the corner, make an exposed pendulum traverse over the Hengstenbach and climb an open crack to a small stance (V+). The route now goes up over an open, tile-formed wall to a good stance (VI+—a free pitch with no running belays). Take a direct easier line until there is a well-defined chimney on the right. Climb the chimney to the top, traverse a little to the left, then continue up directly until it is necessary to go to the right (IV-V). Make a traverse to the right over very steep loose rock with poor protection (V+); then continue up over scree-covered slabs to the foot of the Second Pillar. First bivouac.

Climb an obvious crack, the only possible line to a good stance (VI—). This is a tricky pitch with a run-out of more than 40 metres. Another vertical crack gives a splendid pitch to a good stance (V+). Traverse a little to the left, then up directly over a smooth wall (VI). Continue in an obvious line to the top of this pillar. Cross large, flat slabs to a rounded buttress with a detached thumb of rock in front of it. These safe, flat slabs are a wonderful place for a rest. Go between the thumb and the buttress and climb the latter by a thin crack on the Scheidegg side (VI—, A2). The Third Pillar now bars the way. Climb the crack on the right to a jammed stance (V); then up the vertical wall overlooking the Scheidegg to a tiny stance (VI). Continue directly up the smooth wall; traverse left to a small ledge, then directly up to a fair stance (VI, A3, two expansion bolts—a dolomitic pitch on perfect rock with extreme exposure). From here climb over two small overhangs to a sharp ridge with a good belaying block (V+). Go a little to the left, then up directly to the top of the Third Pillar, where another buttress is encountered. Second bivouac.

A direct crack is the key to the buttress, which after about three rope-lengths leads to the upper ridge (IV—V). Continue up this ridge without difficulty over smooth slab formations to a large *sattel*. Traverse the *sattel*, cross a small *schrund*, and climb steep ice for about two rope-lengths (V); then over mixed rock and ice to the Scheideggwetterhorn.

Height: about 1700 metres. Time: 40 hours with 2 bivouacs. The route is strenuous and many of the pitches are extremely difficult, but there is little or no objective danger. From the scenic point of view it must rank as one of the most beautiful in the Alps.

## BOOK REVIEWS.

LIONEL TERRAY, *Conquistadors of the Useless*, Gollancz 30/-.

The standards of press and publicity have invaded even big mountaineering, and the reticence of a title such as *Scrambles amongst the Alps* would perhaps be impossible today. No reader therefore should be deterred either by the pretentious title of Lionel Terray's book, or by the forthright estimate of his achievements which leads him to speak of his "heroic exploits" and "brilliant success". This is the Spirit of the Age. The important point is that the successes were brilliant, and that his book is good.

Terray is one of the first mountaineers of our day. One speaks of him advisedly as mountaineer rather than as climber, for he is less a rock-acrobat than a man equally at home on rock, ice and snow. He possesses in outstanding measure the judgement and the moral qualities that are vital to great mountaineering expeditions. They have played a major part in his truly "heroic exploits" on the Eiger, Annapurna, Fitzroy, and other notable climbs.

As readers know to their cost, it takes more than a fine mountaineer to produce a good book about mountaineering. Fortunately Terray is also a gifted writer, and apart from a few gallicisms appears to have been well served by his translator. Such things as the account of his childhood and his vivid portrait of Louis Lachenal, perhaps the most attractive of postwar climbers, are memorably done. Further, Terray has a reflective cast of mind and a marked percipience which enable him to make true but unusual observations on many matters of concern to mountaineers, such as artificial climbing, the calling of a professional guide, the pleasures of climbing, and not least the reasons why people climb. *Conquistadors of the Useless* is a valuable contribution to mountaineering literature.

ROBIN FEDDEN.

ARNOLD LUNN, *The Swiss and their Mountains*.

*Allen & Unwin, 25/-.*

Sir Arnold Lunn has written this book as a tribute to the Swiss Alpine Club on their Centenary, and 'as a token of gratitude on behalf of all mountaineers who have enjoyed the hospitality of the huts which they have built throughout the Swiss Alps, and who have read with interest and profit the publications of the Club'.

It is not a history of the Swiss Alpine Club, nor of Swiss mountaineering, but rather a collection of essays, with the influence of mountains on man as their general theme. It begins with the pioneers, Placidus a Spescha, de Saussure, Agassiz, and the later chapters give us impressions of the mountain way of life, of the

influence of growing numbers of tourists, and of the evolution of the Alpine guide. Nobody is better qualified to do this sort of thing than Sir Arnold. He has a profound knowledge of Switzerland, and, what is perhaps even more important for the reader, he possesses the gift of imparting information without a sense of fatigue.

There is an interesting chapter on the artists of the Swiss print, the so-called *Kleinmeister*, and the book is illustrated by some excellent examples of their work, many of them in colour.

The author would perhaps not claim that this is one of his weightier productions, but it is first-class bedside reading.

W.R.J.

DOROTHY E. THOMPSON, *Climbing with Joseph Georges*,

*Wilson & Son, Kendal, 25/-.*

*Climbing with Joseph Georges* is an account of Dorothy Thompson's climbs in the Alps, in the ten years from 1923 to 1933. Most, though not all, of these climbs were made with Joseph Georges, and as the author writes in the Preface, the book is her "tribute to a great guide". Unfortunately she did not live to see the book in print.

Her first 4,000 metre peak was the Zinal Rothorn, on the summit of which two significant events occurred; she met Joseph Georges and she had her first sight of Mt. Blanc, "the mountain which was to become my future lodestone, and round which I was to revolve and revolve like the fascinated moth round the irresistible light".

Meanwhile she climbed many peaks in the Valais: the Meije and other climbs in the Dauphiné; the Grépon and the Drus at Chamonix; and then, the culmination of her achievements and desires, Mt. Blanc by the great ridges. These included the first ascent by a woman of the Brouillard, the Innominata, and finally the Bionnassay—Peuteret traverse. This latter was a tremendous feat of 34 hours continuous climbing, the night being too cold for a bivouac.

It is a pleasant change to find a new book about the older climbing grounds, and though it was written many years after the climbs were done, Dorothy Thompson's enjoyment and enthusiasm stayed with her all her life, and the reader shares them with her. She has a delightful sense of humour, which is never lost, even when things go wrong. Indeed, the whole atmosphere of her climbing is best described in the words of Joseph Georges himself who, in the middle of a wet season, told her that he liked climbing with her "because you are always good-humoured and do not blame the weather on me".

MARY STARKEY.

## OBITUARY.

### GERALD ARTHUR STEEL.

Gerald Steel who died suddenly on 14th December 1963 in his 81st year was educated at Rugby and at University College, Oxford.

He entered the Civil Service in 1907 where he went to the Admiralty. From 1911 to 1915 he was assistant private secretary to the First Lord and private secretary for the next three years. From 1919 to 1921 he was assistant secretary at the Ministry of Transport and then served as secretary of the Geddes Committee on National Expenditure. After this and until his retirement from the Civil Service in 1925 he was assistant secretary at the Scottish Office.

After leaving the Civil Service, Steel joined the British Aluminium Company as General Manager and then as a Director, the connexion lasting until his retirement in 1952.

Throughout his life Steel maintained his interest in his old School and was extremely proud of the fact that in his later years he became one of its Governors.

Gerald, as he became known to a wide circle of friends and acquaintances, first went to the Alps for climbing purposes in 1908 and was therefore on the spot when the formation of our Association was first mooted. He was, in fact, one of the first pair of Honorary Secretaries, holding office with J. A. B. Bruce in the years 1909/11, with the result that he had a large share in bringing the Association into being and laying the foundations of its present success.

After this term of office the pressure of his work prevented him from taking any very active part in the affairs of the Association, but when he was elected Vice-President in 1948 and then President for the years 1949/51 his active participation in our affairs re-commenced with all its old vigour and it was only a few months before his death that failing strength terminated his almost unbroken attendance of our meetings and dinners both formal and informal.

So much, in short outline, for the bare facts of a very full life. As a man Gerald Steel had a vast knowledge of men and affairs and a judgment which was impeccable. He had a gift for handling people and everything he did was accomplished with a wisdom and charm which, in addition to producing respect, engendered affection and esteem in all who had dealings with him. We have all lost a good friend and a wise counsellor in respect of whom our sympathy goes out to his widow and son in their great loss.

G. STARKEY.

## C. G. MARKBREITER.

Charles Gustavus Markbreiter joined the Association in 1921 but for a great many years before this he had been climbing in the Alps with great regularity. The record shows that he visited the Alps in every year from 1904 until the outbreak of the 1914/18 war and then again in the years 1920/2.

During these years he undertook a very large number of expeditions but it is noticeable that, whilst he climbed to some extent in most regions of the Alps, he seemed to have a marked preference for south-eastern Switzerland and the Dolomites.

The record is a little uncertain but it seems clear that before the outbreak of the Second World War Markbreiter had ceased to climb actively in the Alps but had by no means ceased to frequent the homeland hills.

Markbreiter was a great supporter of the Association. Not only did he attend our evening meetings for years with great regularity but in the years 1943 to 1950 he only once failed to be present at the Easter Meet. In 1942 he was elected a member of the Committee and served for the usual term of three years, to be followed by a further year of service in 1949 when he was elected to fill a casual vacancy.

By profession Markbreiter was a senior Civil Servant and the second World War found him with a burden of worry and care which his friends sometimes feared might result in a breakdown. However, he seemed to draw strength from wanderings on the British hills and one remembers occasions when in the foulest weather it was a matter of the greatest difficulty to persuade him to leave the tops at the end of the day.

Advancing years brought what was a tragedy for so active a man. The onset of arthritis crippled him, so that he could no longer visit mountains nor indulge in his favourite sport of swimming.

In spite of all this Markbreiter did not lose his interest in mountaineering and, whilst of late years he was rarely able to attend meetings, he was regularly to be found making his way slowly to his place at Club dinners.

From some points of view Markbreiter was perhaps an eccentric but a most lovable one who will be greatly missed by those who had the privilege of knowing him.

G. STARKEY.

FRANCIS HUGH SLINGSBY, M.C.

1894-1963

The sudden and untimely death of Hugh Slingsby on the 20th February came as a great shock to his many friends in the Association. He belonged to one of the great mountaineering families, and he was the nephew and godson of the celebrated Cecil Slingsby. He was born on the 22nd August, 1894, and was the second son of Frank Edwin Slingsby of Farnhill Hall, Skipton, and of Brigg Flats, Sedbergh.

Hugh Slingsby was a typical Yorkshireman—outspoken and sometimes aggressive, but very kind-hearted, and he would always go to a lot of trouble to help his friends. He had a keen sense of humour.

He was, of course, a prominent member of the Yorkshire Ramblers Club, and he was an enthusiastic pot-holer.

He joined the Association in 1926 and was a regular attendant at all the London Meetings. He served several times on the Committee, and he came to a number of our Meets and most of our pre-war Swiss Dinners. He was also a member of the Alpine Club. In the Alps he was considerably handicapped by his war wounds and went in mainly for the high passes rather than the high mountains. Although he gave one the impression of being rather slow, he would sometimes develop the most amazing turn of speed.

He visited more mountain districts than perhaps most people, his usual climbing companion being either the late F. S. Smythe or A. A. Galloway. Apart from the Alps he had climbed in Norway, the Dauphiné, the Pyrenees, the Gran Sasso and Corsica. On short late autumn holidays with A. A. Galloway, he also visited such unusual places as Sicily, Stromboli, Sardinia and Tenerife.

He was a charming companion and will be sadly missed by his many friends.

In 1932 he married Audrey Rundall, who survives him. We should like to offer her our deepest sympathy in her great loss.

M. N. CLARKE.

The following members have also died during the year:

THE REV. B. W. ISAAC, H. S. JACKSON, H. M. MOORE, THE REV. A. E. MURRAY, G. F. SMITH-BARRY, C. F. SIMOND, A. N. STROH.

## KINDRED CLUBS.

- The Alpine Club, 74, South Audley Street, W.1.  
Alpine Climbing Group, Hon. Sec., D. Gray, 3, Laith Gardens, Cooleridge, Leeds, 16.  
Alpine Ski Club, Hon. Sec., Jeremy Debenham, 22, Old Burlington Street, W.1.  
Ladies' Alpine Club, Hon. Sec., Miss M. Darvall, Heath House, Lyndhurst Terrace, Hampstead, N.W.3.  
American Alpine Club, Hon. Sec., Henry S. Hall, Junior, 154, Coolidge Hill, Cambridge, Mass., U.S.A.  
American Association of Swiss Alpine Club Members, Hon. Sec.-Treasurer, Julien Cornell, Central Valley, New York, U.S.A.  
Army Mountaineering Association, Asst. Sec., Army M.A., c/o A.S.C.B., War Office, Lansdowne House, Berkeley Square, W.1.  
Cambridge University Mountaineering Club, The Hon. Sec., c/o The Wherry Library, St. John's College, Cambridge.  
Camping Club of Great Britain and Ireland (Mountaineering Section), Hon. Sec., G. H. Watkins, 8, Bankhurst Road, S.E.2.  
Climbers' Club, Hon. Sec., M. H. Westmacott, Candleford, 26, Gordon Avenue, Stanmore, Middlesex.  
Fell and Rock Climbing Club (London Section), Miss Ursula Milner-White, 48, Addison Road, Kensington, W.14.  
Fell and Rock Climbing Club, C. S. Tilly, Park House, Greatham, Co. Durham.; W. E. Kendrick, Customs and Excise, Fairfield Road, Lancaster (Hut and Meet Secretary).  
Glasgow University Mountaineering Club, Hon. Sec., c/o University Union, Glasgow, W.2.  
Guys Hospital M.C., M. Reeve, The Mountaineering Club, Guy's Hospital, London, S.E.1.  
Imperial College Mountaineering Club, Hon. Sec., c/o Imperial College Union, Prince Consort Road, S.W.7.  
Irish Mountaineering Club, Hon. Sec., R. Nickels, 25, Rosemont Road, Richmond, Surrey.  
Manchester University Mountaineering Club, Hon. Sec., c/o The University Union, Manchester, 15.  
Midland Association of Mountaineers, D. G. Smith, 160, Maidavale Crescent, Styvechale, Coventry.  
Mountain Club of Kenya, P.O. Box 5741, Nairobi, Kenya, East Africa.  
Oxford University Mountaineering Club, c/o School of Geography, Mansfield Road, Oxford.  
Pinnacle Club, Mrs. Picken, 14, Princess Boulevard, Bebington, Cheshire.  
Rockhoppers (S.W. London M.C.), Miss A. E. Taylor, Flat 2, 11, South Park Road, Wimbledon, S.W.19.

- R.A.F. Mountaineering Association, Flt.-Lt. S. Ward, R.A.F., Waddington, Lincoln.
- Rucksack Club, Hon. Sec., J. E. Byrom, Highfield, Douglas Road, Hazel Grove, Cheshire.
- Ski Club of Great Britain, 118, Eaton Square, S.W.1.
- The Mountain Club, Hon. Sec., D. Gilbert, 264, Sandon Road, Stafford.
- Yorkshire Ramblers' Club, Hon. Sec., E. C. Downham, Brierley House, Oakenshaw, Bradford, Yorks.
- Scottish Mountaineering Club, J. S. Stewart, Temple Cottage, Balmore, Torrance, Nr. Glasgow.
- South Africa, Mountain Club of, P.O. Box 164, Cape Town, South Africa.
- Wayfarers' Club, Hon. Sec., R. Downham, Rocklands, Neston Road, Burton, Wirral, Cheshire.
- Ladies' Scottish Climbing Club, Hon. Sec., Miss E. Leslie, 1, Woodburn Terrace, Edinburgh, 10.
- Ladies' Swiss Alpine Club, Central Committee, Ettlmatweg, Schönbühl, Bern, Switzerland.
- Himalayan Club, P.O. Box 9049, Calcutta.
- British Mountaineering Council, Hon. Sec., T. H. Sinclair, 107, Abingdon Road, W.8.

#### SWISS ALPINE CLUB SECTIONS.

- Altels Section: Edward Ludi, Posthalter Kandersteg. Subscription £2 19s. 0d. Entrance fee 17s.
- Bern Section: Hans Ott, Moosblickweg 7, Belp. Subscription, £3 6s. 0d.
- Bernina Section: M. Schellenberg, Zuoz. Subscription £2 19s. 0d. Entrance fee 13s. 6d.
- Diablerets Section: Tell Mages, Rue due Midi 4, Lausanne. Subscription £2 19s. 0d. Entrance fee 17s.
- Geneva Section: Etienne Marchand, 6, Quai des Arénières, Geneva. Subscription £3 9s. 0d. Entrance fee 8s. 6d.
- Grindelwald Section: P. Schild, Waldhuus, Grindelwald. Subscription £2 19s. 0d. Entrance fee 15s.
- Interlaken Section: Rud. Reinhard, Vorholzstrasse, Unterseen. Subscription £3. Entrance fee 17s.
- Monte Rosa Section: W. Antony, 7b, Rue de la Plantaud, Monthey. Subscription £2 16s. 0d. Entrance fee 8s. 6d.
- Montreux Section: Joseph Huser, Les Saviez, Villeneuve. Subscription £3. Entrance fee 21s.
- Oberhasli Section: Oskar Bättig, Feldli, Meiringen. Subscription £3. Entrance fee 17s.
- Swiss Alpine Club Central Committee: André Reymond, 3, Rue Ami Lullin, Geneva.
- Editor of *Les Alpes*: Professor Pierre Vaney, 68 bis Avenue De Lavaux, Pully/Lausanne.





LIST OF MEMBERS  
of the  
Association of British Members  
of the  
Swiss Alpine Club  
(Corrected up to 1<sup>st</sup> December, 1963.)

*For privacy individual names and addresses have been removed.  
Names and addresses can be obtained, for research purposes only, by reference  
to the Editor or going to the hard copies in AC library in London.*

The number of members is now 783. This is a net increase of 66 over last year, and by a long way the largest annual increase since the war.

*HON. MEMBERS.  
(Included in the List of Members)*

*The President of the Swiss Alpine Club (ex-officio).*

Bircher, Dr. Ernest.

Clarke, M. N., 'A C.' (Monte Rosa), (Hon. Secretary, 1929-1948).

D'Arcis, Egmond (Geneva),

Daeniker, His Excellency Monsieur.

Eggler, Dr. Albert (Bern).

Geiger, Hermann (Monte Rosa).

Hunt, Brigadier Sir John, C.B.E., D.s.o., 'A C.' (Oberhasli).

Marietan, Abbe Dr. Ignace (Monte Rosa).