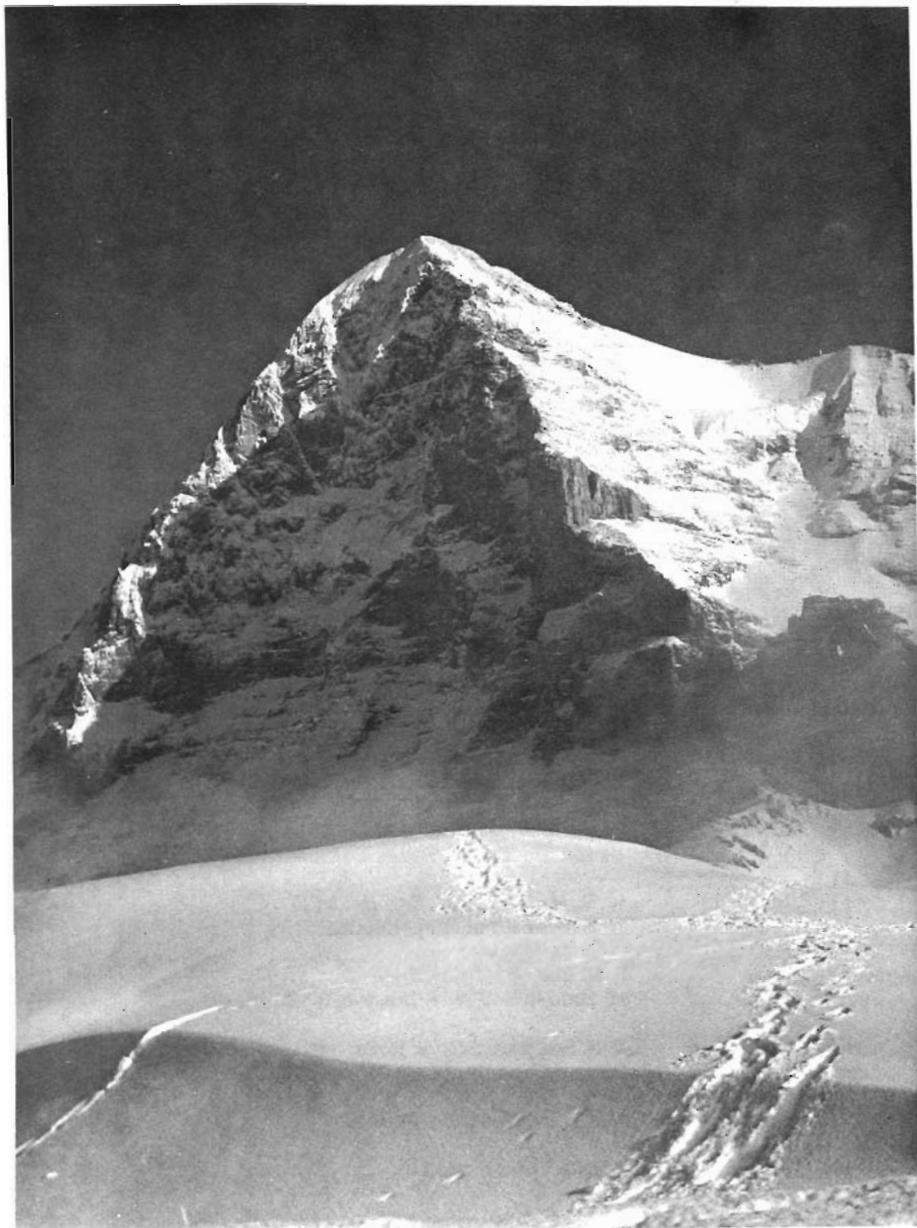


THE ASSOCIATION OF BRITISH MEMBERS OF THE SWISS ALPINE CLUB

JOURNAL 1971

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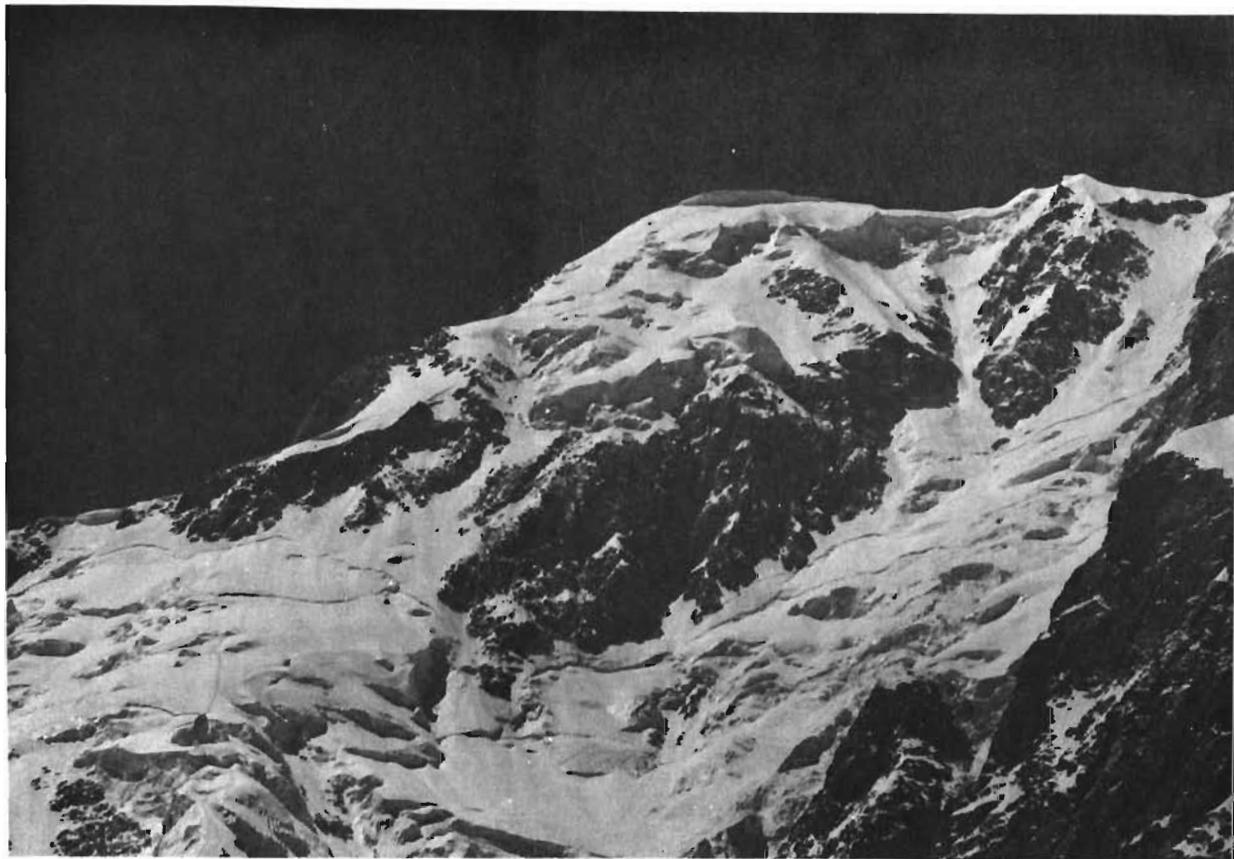


The Eiger from the Lauberhorn Run

Photo by: W. A. Comstive

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Tirich Mir—telephoto from Advance Base

Photo by: Henry Day

TIRICH MIR AND ANNAPURNA

Henry Day

Henry Day and Gerry Owens, both serving officers in the Army, have made two expeditions to the Himalayas in the last two years. In 1969 with the Army Mountaineering Association expedition to Tirich Mir in the Hindu Kush Henry Day made with others the first ascent of Little Tirich 20,869 ft. and followed this in company with Gerry Owens with the fourth ascent of Tirich Mir 25,263 ft. On Tirich Mir they bivouaced at 23,500 ft. on the S.W. ridge on the way to the summit and again coming down.

In 1970 Henry Day led the British Nepalese Army Annapurna Expedition at the same time that most of us were avidly reading reports from the expedition to the south face of Annapurna. The following is an extract from Henry's account:

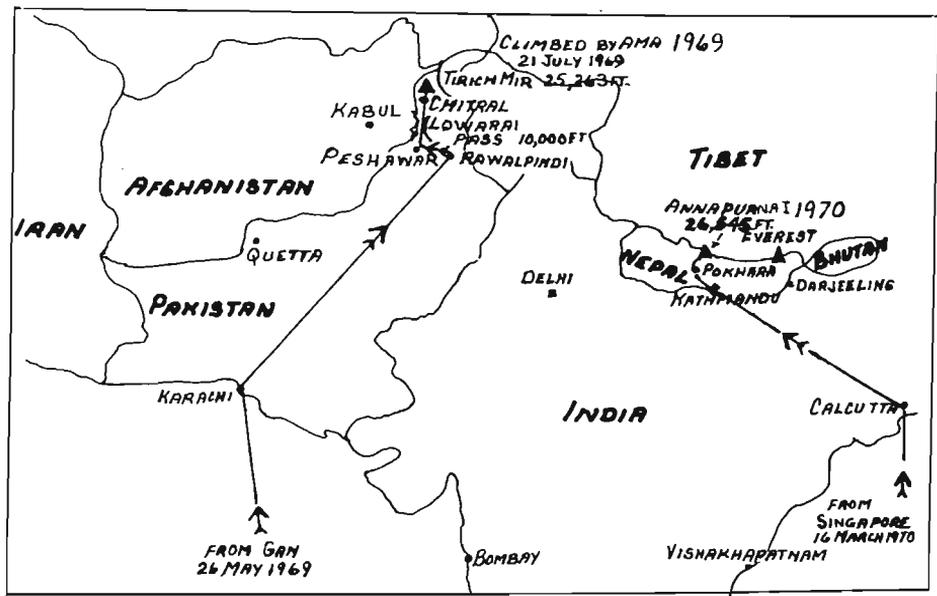
Two final blows with my ice axe and the final step in the wind hardened snow was fashioned. A deep gulp into my mask for oxygen, a gentle heave on the axe and I was there, precariously perched on the top of ANNAPURNA, 26,545 ft. Captain Gerry Owens and myself were the second party ever to have reached the summit. The first were French and made the climb twenty years ago. Lachenal died later in his native Alps but Hertzog survived the loss of all his fingers and toes and had advised us to be more careful.

'How are your toes, Gerry?' I shouted into my oxygen mask. His mumble I took to mean all right; the circulation in mine had started again in the final couloir two hours after setting out. I had cut the toes off my socks to reduce constriction the night before. I had trouble using the oxygen set too which was new to me. The mask seemed enormous and reduced visibility; my goggles were always steamed up so I could not see very much. There was nowhere to rest to take the set off after leaving Camp 5 at 24,300 ft. so we pushed on fast taking only three hours to reach the summit. Initially Gerry stormed away and I tugged on the rope to tell him to slow down. I then saw my set was giving only one litre a minute of oxygen, our sleeping rate, so I turned it up to four litres and enjoyed moving freely at a speed I had not equalled for many thousands of feet.

I looked down the other side of Annapurna, only visible for a few feet. We knew the South Face Team under Chris Bonington was down there and wished them luck. The weather was perfect and I had sent a message saying we would leave our top camps standing in case they decided to descend our side. However they declined. Our route is marked with yellow flags that more usually mark alpine ski runs. There is one on the top. We brought the Union Jack and Nepalese flag down again together with a few rocks collected from the side of the final gully.

Our progress as far as Advanced Base or Camp 2 at 19,600 ft. although a

repeat of the French route had not been without its difficulties. Because of an early harvest enough porters could not be recruited to carry the food and equipment over the Hum Khola from the main valley trade route of the Kali Gandaki to Base Camp beside the North Annapurna Glacier. It was the end of April before Bruce paid off the last of them—and our porter train left Pokhara on 23 March! Meanwhile the lead climbers were probing a way up the lower icefall to Camp 1. The route finally settled on lay up rock by-passing the worst of the ice but before that Gerry and Doug had threaded a few hundred feet through the unstable ice towers and we had fixed ropes to them by metal ice screws. One night a large tower collapsed dragging some of the rope with it. Andy decided to enter the shattered maze next day to recover the precious rope and came out very shaken. An ice peg had come out unexpectedly while his weight was supported by it and he swung into space feet scrabbling on the ice.



The top six thousand feet of Annapurna on the North Face look like a huge sickle. The curved blade is a great rock cliff overhung all along its edge by an ice crust that constantly threatens to crumble over the edge and sweep all before it. Doug and I saw one of these monster avalanches while at Camp 1 on 15 April. With a deafening roar several tons of ice collapsed over the rim into the bowl of the Sickle. The bowl we were later to traverse on the way to the top. As they hit the bowl and broke up the lumps of ice began to slide. Past the handle of the Sickle the face narrows into three parallel gullies starting at 23,000 ft. One of these would have to be followed by us so we watched with interest. The ice gathered speed and became

more pulverised as it roared down all the gullies. A cloud of ice particles billowed up, growing to fill the Sickle, then the upper basin of the glacier, finally falling on us as snow three miles away.

The next big avalanche broke off the Sickle nine days later and wiped out Advance Base. Gerry recorded in his dairy at the time:-

'At 0600 hrs hit by avalanche—blast of high wind and numerous small fragmental ice lumps. Henry's tent with personal gear and my crampons blown away to oblivion. My rucsac containing and £75 disappeared forever. Meanwhile our tent in state of chaos—collapsed, ripped in several places, stoves and water turned over —Richard's down jacket burnt as a result.

Meanwhile we laid low, wind shrieking, bombarded by ice particles. Richard suffered a bruised back. Discovered we had survived—to our relief! Went outside but immediately numbed by icy wind and spindrift. Pushed back to rewarm our frozen limbs. Very strong windy gusts began to hit us regularly. Pulled out as planned.'

After seeing Richard's shocked state and realising that no-one on the face when the Sickle avalanched could possibly survive we agreed to look for an alternative route avoiding the Sickle. The North East Buttress looked a possibility from Camp 1 and Doug and I went back up to have a look at it on 26 April. First we moved what was left of Advance Base to the shelter of a wall of a crevasse a hundred feet below the old site. The tents we dug in close beneath the wall, some twenty feet high, where they would certainly escape the blast of an avalanche if not ice particles. I was in the mess tent having supper three weeks later when a large avalanche came down nearby and apart from blowing out the candle and lining the tent with hoar it did us no harm.

We found the North East Buttress solid blue ice set at a moderate angle—about 50°. Working alternate days in pairs we cut steps and attached rope for more than one thousand feet up an ice chute. These were wonderful days for an ice technician, using minimum blows of the axe to fashion a foothold, screwing the metal tube firmly into the resilient ice. It became apparent however that the route was not free of objective danger as we had first hoped. An ice cliff frequently crumbled into the ice chute and new snow showered constantly on us as we worked. On 2 May we saw a large fall of ice blocks down the line of ropes. When we reached them the top half had been carried away, the rope severed and several of the pitons sheared in two.

Our doubts were confirmed a few days later. From an intermediate camp (numbered 2A) at 21,000 ft. Gerry and I tackled a prominent ice tower that blocked the way. If we could surmount this obstacle the way to avoid the Sickle and its dangers seemed clear. Gerry and Andy had earlier reached the foot of the tower, distinguished by a vertical cleft fifty feet high, by a difficult ice wall sixty feet high. They had left a rope hanging down so we were soon up and ready to try the tower. The cleft itself looked impenetrable and the ground on the right too broken to make a way. So the sheer left wall it had to be. Unfortunately it was not ice which we were used to

contending with, but hard snow variably consolidated. It began steeply and after thirty feet became vertical. Gerry was climbing with two axes driving both up to the hilt before gingerly moving up. I was relieved to see him up for I doubted if I could have held a fall. We found we were trapped on a pinnacle of ice. The Route had to be abandoned.

Our eyes once again fell on the Sickie glacier up which the French had climbed twenty years before. They had had a narrow escape when an avalanche carried a party away. Hertzog had stuck in a crevasse and fortuitously saved the party. No large falls had occurred since the one that carried our camp away so we hoped that was the end of the Spring thaw. By crossing the right hand gully low down then gaining height clear of the fall line it looked possible to outflank the worst of the icefall and traverse back into the bowl above the cliff. This would still leave the width of the bowl to cross but the going looked easy and we hoped to minimise the danger by moving fast.

This plan was put into effect at once. The lower part as far as the gully had already been reconnoitred by Richard before the big avalanches. He and Doug pushed across the gully, hearts in their mouths, for there would be no surviving an avalanche, and moved fast up to 22,000 ft. where they reported a possible site for Camp 3. From this site some days later Gerry and Doug searched for a way into the bowl of the Sickie. A steep ice gully by a rock buttress seemed to be the key and I came up and climbed it with Doug two days later. We also crossed the Bowl, a nerve wracking experience under constant threat of annihilation, to the handle of the Sickie. If the handle could be climbed the technical difficulties should be over.

I thought it could so five of us carried loads to the handle next day. Pertemba replaced Doug who had a bad back. I led out one rope of 125 feet straight up the handle. My crampons bit firmly in the sixty degree snow ice and I smashed a two foot dural stake in up to the hilt and tied the rope to it. Gerry came up with another rope and soon he was just a pair of crampon heels above me showering me with ice. His section grew steeper and the ice more rotten before he could break left onto the apex of the ridge. With difficulty he secured the rope, only just long enough.

We had cracked the route. 250 feet of red nylon made sure we could pass the crux in safety. Two Sherpas came up hand over hand eyes popping out of their heads. Later Pemba Norbu was to say he had never had such steep climbing on all his expeditions which included several to Everest, to Makalu, to Kanchenjunga. When assembled I pressed on up the ridge, easier now. Five hundred feet higher, about where the handle joined the curved blade of the Sickie, we sited Camp 4 under a convenient ice cliff. It was only at 23,300 ft. but the way to the top lay clear.

THE U.I.A.A.—JUGENDLEITERTREFFEN 1970 (AND OTHER CLIMBS)

John Fairley

Together with John Noake I represented the B.M.C. at an International Youth Meet at Rosenlauri this summer. Rosenlauri is situated in the north eastern corner of the Bernese Oberland where the High Alps meet the Vor-Alps in a violent vertical twist of limestone—the Engelhörner. Here the climbing is entirely on rock and at an altitude sufficient to provide acclimatisation for higher peaks. There are climbs of all grades although the ability to lead at least 'severe' is essential if an unguided party is to take full advantage of the area.

Since John and I were climbing in different parties most of the time he will have a different tale to tell. For my part I was determined to learn all I could from the Guides in the time available. Accordingly (though not without some trepidation!) I joined 'les extremes'—those who felt they could climb grade V. Trepidation? Well what did V represent? To me it sounded like v. s. but a sudden activity in packing pitons and etriers made me feel less confident. It was with the feelings of a lamb led to the slaughter that I set off.

Ours was truly a 'cordée internationale'—Greek, French, Italian, Swiss and British. The walk up from the hotel in the valley was roasting hot and lasted about two hours but it was soon over and we were roped up at the foot of our first climb—the North West Wall of the Rosenlauistock. The first pitches were easy enough though smoother to the touch than I had expected with big holds. Confidence returned; this was only v. diff. Fritz our guide spent half an hour over the next pitch, the rope moved slowly, the pauses got longer. He was out of our sight and all we could see above was the blue of the etrier he had left where the rock bulged out.

Then at last the rope moved quickly—Fritz was taking in. 'Vien-tu Catherine!' and off shot our kleine Griechin who was to show herself to be the best climber of us all. My turn was next and I was by now curious to see what this pitch was all about. It was INTERESTING. In places like Harrison's rounded friction holes, then balance moves, the occasional Thank-God-Jug and always a fantastic exposure. There were a large number of pitons in place so at one time this must have been a far more difficult proposition. I was rather glad I had not been leading! The climb finished with a short chimney to the summit followed by a fast dash down the back and round to our food stashed away at the foot.

The following days were much like the first. Long days of brilliant sunshine. Hard climbs and parched summits; grateful swigs at cold tea. Effort and sweat followed by well-earned snoozes. We traversed both the Klein Semilistock and the Gross Semilistock spending something like an hour on the latter top identifying the surrounding peaks. Ahead of us and beside us towered great walls, ridges and buttresses of limestone inviting our return

some other time. This we silently vowed to do the following day as approaching bad weather cut short our traverse of the entire Südgruppe sending us scurrying down into the shelter of the valley from the top of the Tannenspitze.

That night, the last of our official meet, was party night, and what a party! The usual slow start punctuated with bursts of song gradually merged into one long boisterous party—we can-canned, belly danced, jodelled and sang with much hilarity and drink. Champers, schnaps, Scotch, beer; what didn't we drink? Songs, songs and yet more songs till late in the small hours the party drew to a convivial close. Multiple hangovers characterised breakfast. This was the last meal we would have together and it was all rather sad.

Most of us had another two or three days left and whilst some set off to climb the Matterhorn John Noake and the remainder and I made tracks for the Dossenhutte. The thoughts of a Scot in Alpine summer snow after the solid winter stuff at home are definitely not recordable! Suffice to say that we floundered up the glacier to the Wetterhorn descending over easy broken rock to the Glecksteinhutte. It made a pleasant day with the vastness of the Bernese Oberland spreading out before us making a fitting end to a fine meet.

A month later I was back in the Alps with Lizbet for the Austrian Alpine Club meet in Zermatt. In a way this was another mini A.B.M. club meet for Peter Ledeboer in somewhat grander style was staying at the Derby!

The first morning we set off to climb the Unter Gabelhorn as a training climb by a 'Fairley Special' variation—usually a highly recommended procedure provided you like that sort of thing. A 'Fairley Special' is any route starting and finishing in the same places as the guidebook but twice as difficult and interesting in between.

We went up to the Rothornhutte the next day in the wake of most of the others to renew an old friendship with the Guardian there. We decided to have a crack at the Rothorngrat whilst the weather held. Daybreak found us already on the hill and as we crossed the glacier below the sun crept down the rock to meet us. It was a glorious day. Earlier steps in the couloir had been swept away but we made short work of it and were soon standing on the ridge at the Oberrothornjoch. What a superb sight! The entire ridge seemed to lean over to the right as it swept up in pitch after pitch of clean, firm rock, tier after tier of hard yellow granite to meet the sky. The sun and the altitude had a soporific effect as we climbed higher until suddenly we realised we were badly behind time. The Sneegrat by which we had to descend was hourly becoming more dangerous. It was time to retreat and this we did cutting short our climb at the Gabel. The summit, only $\frac{3}{4}$ of an hour away, could wait. Honour had to be satisfied though and two days later we returned to the Rothorn ascending this time by the ordinary route in fine style.

Ours and three other ropes planned to traverse the Wellenkuppe, Obergabelhorn, Arbengrat route. The Wellenkuppe was an old friend and it was not until the Grand Gendarme where we had to queue that we lost time. By now the sun had started to soften the steep snow of the Obergabelhorn

North Face until by the top it was becoming quite treacherous. The previous parties had had to cut steps and we profited by these but all the same we were glad to take to the rock for the final climb to the summit.

The guides had gone on and we could see them about a third of the way down on the Arbengrat as they approached the gendarme. The place we were most interested in though was further on at the point where one leaves the ridge to descend to the Arbengletscher. The guide book was rather vague and we hoped to have a more positive indication.

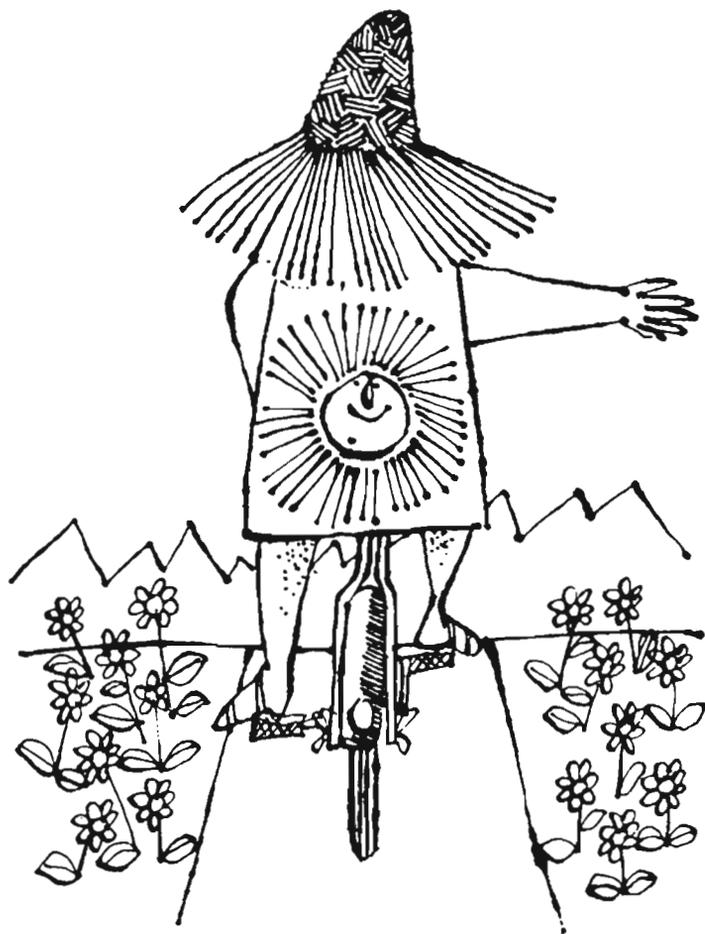
Half way down the weather finally broke. The rain and the snow came sheeting down and visibility was down to a few yards making the descent from the ridge thoroughly unpleasant and difficult. We still weren't out of the wood and by the time we found our bearings and came in sight of the glacier it was fast getting dark. We decided to bivouac whilst we still had enough light to dig a snow hole. Now snow-holing is a thoroughly enjoyable occupation provided you are the one inside digging the thing out! It also helps for everyone to have a duvet—we only had one!

Later in the week we stirred ourselves to walk up to the Schönbiel hut with Peter—Hon. Sec. and Roger—A.A.C. to climb the Pointe de Zinal. This we climbed with Peter (Roger going sick) by the South Ridge to the South Summit. However on arrival it appeared that there had been a large rock fall which had quite altered the character of the summit ridge so, not wishing to inflict another 'Fairley Special' on the party, we returned the way we had come.

We decided to climb the Cresta Rey next. The approach itself is not without interest as one winds through the crevasses below Lyskamm and climbs the small hanging glacier into the corrie below the Dufourspitze. The Cresta Rey itself starts about a hundred and fifty metres of steep ice above the bergschrund and rises straight as an arrow to the summit of the Dufourspitze, the highest point in Switzerland. One is most likely to have the climb to oneself—indeed we were only the second party this year to climb it from the Betempshutte.

One more climb and we set off the next morning to do the complete traverse of Pollux and Castor from the Betempshutte. Don't be fooled by the few lines given to this route by the guide book. On our return the Guardian told us he would rather climb the length of Monte Rosa twice than do this route! Nor should you follow its advice about the best approach for the couloir is now dangerous and rarely climbed. Indeed a huge snow fall roared down it just as we passed above. One should now go the long way round to point 2632 metres below the Schwärze. Climbing the Schalbetterfluh mainly over snow one reaches Pollux. We avoided the bergschrunds and found a perfectly good route, a little icy, round the side on the narrow West Face rising from the Schwarztor and this we climbed. A quick dash to the top then on again to Castor. The clouds were gathering again in Italy and the temperature had dropped noticeably; the weather would not last a second day. The summit of Castor was a welcome relief from the dicey snow we had just climbed. It was also a complete surprise for it was one of those highly dangerous fairy cornices, sugar-icing, paper-thin, one reads about but never sees—its traverse was an experience in itself!

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AUTUMN ALLEINGANGER

L. G. Poolman

I think it was my friend David Grace of Bristol who told me that McMillan's guide to Switzerland indicated good weather in the autumn. Certainly, on our first visit in late September 1949, we were able to listen in sunshine to the afternoon rumbles from the Jungfrau massif—albeit from the safe distance of Murren.

Be that as it may, in October 1963, I visited on my own five S.A.C. huts in the Klosters—Bergun area, attained a few moderate passes and ascended the Weissfluh (2844m.). I had, however, enjoyed the trip, and since then have visited the Alps alone in the autumn several times.

In 1969 the sky was already looking good as I sped along in the train from Vallorbe. A good breakfast at Aigle and I was ready for the train to Champéry, and a pleasant, sunny walk to the Susanfe Hut.

The ordinary route to the Haut Cime of the Dents du Midi is quite easy, but I strayed too far to the right above the col, and only after some time regained the proper track. On top, however, one was rewarded with fine views across to the Mont Blanc massif. It is, though, a long way down to Martigny but I felt well pleased with my first full day as train and post-coach took me up to La Fouly.

It is a grand walk up to the Cabane Dufour and on to the Col des Essettes—and how imposing appear the Tour Noir and the Mont Dolent! Surprisingly enough, despite the superb conditions, the hillside was deserted as I wandered back in the afternoon to La Fouly, thence travelling by coach to Champex, with its lake.

No obstacles of note bar the way to the Orny and Trient Huts, although the glacier below the latter is not devoid of the odd crevasse, and care is necessary. Next morning, a spectacular cloud sea surrounded the lower slopes below as I made my way towards the Aiguille du Tour but the bergschrund stopped me; any attempt to cross alone was clearly too dangerous, so I retreated to the hut, from which I had earlier been on the nearby Point d'Orny.

It was in good spirits that I set off for the Saleina Hut by way of the Col des Plines (N), the guardian having done his best to explain how to cross the col. My French, whilst it could be worse, could equally well be better, and it was only when I got up above that I could appreciate fully what he meant. There is a deep, wide trench where the snow has been expelled next to the rock, and one must descend into this and follow it around for some distance before the descent over easy snow commences. The Saleina glacier has to be crossed above the ice-fall, and after a way has been found through a few crevasses, one picks up a good track leading to the hut itself. Once again, I

was alone and—probably unlike Garbo—spent the rest of the day melting snow, and enjoying the mountain prospect.

My next target was the high Valsorey Hut above Bourg St. Pierre, so I set off early for Praz de Fort, finding a thick pullover in good condition not far below. This I handed to the Police at Orsieres, who told me that if it was not claimed in five years, I could have it. The route is quite varied, and includes the crossing of some steep rock where steps have been cut and the passage is safeguarded by chains. The admirable post-coach took me to Orsieres and Bourg, where I had a good lunch before going up to the Valsorey, a pleasant walk of four hours or so.

As many will know, this hut is the base for the W ridge of the Grand Combin, but as I could not emulate the late lamented Hermann Buhl, this was not for me. I went up to about 3,400 metres on the Sunday, before returning to the hut, and crossing more or less directly to the Velan Hut. No-one was staying there, and as I could find neither water nor snow, I went down to Bourg for the night. Not before I had looked through the hut book, however, and noticed that a much more illustrious member of the Association (H.M. Brown), together with R. Aitken (whom I had met on Stuc a' Chroin in Perthshire back in 1965) had been there for an attempt on the Velan.

It is to be assumed that a stronger party would reach the Panossiere Hut from Bourg by way of the Col des Maisons Blanches, but I had to be satisfied with the more circuitous Col de Lana (3,037m.) and the Col des Avouillons. Indeed, it appeared that I crossed too high up on the WNW ridge of the Petit Combin, and I was not sorry to get off the steep and rather uncertain snow above a small bergschrund, and reach the less inclined glacier below. It is still some way to the Col des Avouillons but eventually this was reached and a descent made to the Glacier de Corbassiere. This can be crossed fairly easily, and a short walk southward brings one to the Panossiere huts—first the new and then the old. A few workmen were sleeping there with the guardian, but I seemed to be the only Bergwanderer.

The weather had been deteriorating as I approached the Col des Avouillons, and next morning it was sleeting with snow above. This was the only slight blemish during the three weeks, and even then it ceased at about nine, allowing an ascent of the Grand Tave before I walked down in the afternoon to the Val de Bagnes. A lift part way brought me to Le Chable in quick time, and I went up by coach to Verbier.

It is not a long walk up to the Mont Fort Hut, which is now quite large. I was, however, left to wrestle alone with the vagaries of the stove in the evening, and was almost smoked out; it is not my favourite stove—in fact, I found it worse than its cousin at the Linard, which gave my friend D. Grace some trouble in 1966. Apart from the smoke, life was quite serene, and I went up the easy Mt. Gele, and also wandered up to the Col des Gentianes in the afternoon.

The Rosa Blanche (3,336m.) had for some time held my imagination, and its traverse to Le Chargeur and Pralong was no disappointment. How wonderful and enjoyable it all seemed, these succeeding days of warm, clear sunshine,

as I crossed the Cols de la Chaux and de Louvie, and in due course reached the summit by way of the upper part of the Grand Desert. This glacier is pretty sound, but there is the occasional crevasse, and one must be careful, especially when alone. One then descends the pleasant Glacier de Prafleuri to the north-east, but lower down there is a section where the terrain is rather disagreeable. I did, however, see at close quarters a herd of steinbock—I had not realised they were in this area.

As it turned out, it was fortunate that I left Pralong before daybreak to reach the Cabane Aiguilles Rouges by the Col de la Meina, the Laitcondoi and the Pointe de Vouasson. Funnily enough, I picked up one of those Swiss papers they harness to a pole, and learnt that a youth party had been up to the Pointe over the week-end and erected a cross, so I expected to find a track indicating the way down.

I reached the Col in the scheduled three hours, and after a short rest set off for the Laitcondoi. The weather gave no cause for concern and the guide book made little of the ridge. The snow varied from quite soft in places to jolly hard in a couloir which I crossed. Neither could I be sure that I was always on the precise route, although the general line was readily apparent. Of course, the ascent was always interesting to a Salvationist such as I, but I was quite happy to emerge on the main top of the Laitcondoi—memory suggests it was then about 4 pm. A couple of photos, a hurried bite, a slight descent on the left of the ridge, and a final trudge over the softened slopes of the western arm of the Glacier de Vouasson took me to the Pointe (3490m.) at 5-30 pm. The journey from Cluanie Inn to Loch Ossian Hostel had once delayed the attainment of a couple of easy Munros until about 8 pm, but this is (so far!) the latest arrival at an alpine summit.

I need scarcely say that I did not linger, in spite of the serenity of the evening sunshine. The track over the glacier was clear, and I quickly lost height until forced to the side of the tongue. Progress here was slower, with the result that the light was already failing when I got on the moraine, and the tribulations of my first night ever in the open air became more apparent. Then I went to the left rather than the right before realising that there was no future that way; I longed for a Wegweiser that left no doubt about its intention but, like a lift when you desperately want one, it declined to appear.

With the onset of darkness I had more or less abandoned hope of shelter when I came upon the semblance of a track, and concluded that I may as well try to follow this (with the advantage of at least keeping warm) to see if it went downward. After some distance I suddenly noticed what seemed to be a building a little to the left of the track, and went across to investigate. To my surprise—and relief—it was the Cabane Aiguilles Rouges, occupied by some delightful people who found absolutely no resistance when they offered me generous portions of their tea, my first drink for many hours. I did not then know that I had postponed for five nights only an involuntary bivouac beneath the stars.

A half-hearted attempt on La Cassort next morning ended when I realised I was too far up the slopes of the Aiguilles Rouges to attain the Col des

Ignes at a reasonable hour, so I returned to the hut and went down to Arolla. As the weather was so good, the Cabane Vignettes appealed as a good place to spend the Saturday night, and it was with some surprise that on arrival it was found to be unoccupied. As I gathered in the snow toward the evening meal, I kept looking down the Glacier de Piece—but in vain. Daylight faded and I ate. Where, I wondered, was everyone on such a grand week-end? It seemed almost suspicious. But wait!—surely that was a human voice? Yes, it was; and soon after two young fellows from Montreux clattered into the hut. Not long afterwards I was signed up for the Pigne d'Arolla.

This, together with La Serpentine, provided a delightful ascent next morning, with splendid views of the surrounding mountains. The Pigne is quite easy, although we found the slope just above the cabane distinctly icy. We sped down together to Arolla and they kindly took me down to Sion by car.

After a night in Leytron, the post-coach took me to Ovrannaz, which gives ready access to the Cabane Rambert. There were about ten of us when we sat down to a communal supper, superintended by a very agreeable Swiss lady who had gone out to Kenya as a nurse, and married a fellow-countryman who was farming there. I do not know which I appreciated most—her cooking or her English. I dislike over-crowded huts, and am not entirely partial to being alone; it seems to me that ten or a dozen is just right.

Next morning was as clear as ever and I left at daybreak for an uneventful ascent of the highest point in the vicinity—the Grand Muveran. By a happy coincidence, a Swiss couple who had traversed the Muveran the previous day had to go to Montana—my next objective—and they waited for me.

The Violettes Hut is unusual for this part of Switzerland, insofar as one must get the key. This was not easy, as I wished to go down afterwards to Lenk, but I finally got permission to take it (without deposit) and post it back. It was, however, somewhat worn, and when I thankfully put it in the lock as night was falling, it bent over and I was quite unable to open the door. Much displeased with my efforts, but not wishing to spend the night al fresco, I re-descended to Montana to sleep. As it was easy to find the way in the dark, an early Aufstehen before 4 am did something to restore the position.

The Wildstrubel, Grosses Schneeshorn and Rothorn presented no great difficulty, though I was taken to task for crossing alone the Glacier de la Plaine Morte. I have often merited this criticism but the Plaine Morte appeared to be as unbroken as any glacier I have met. Retribution, none the less, was at hand. At about five, I rejoined my sack and had a meal, prior to the Weissshornlucke and the Wildstrubel Hut. Unfortunately, I did not bother to consult the map, and by the time I had descended some distance from my 'false joch' and failed to find the hut, it was too late to return and try to correct my stupid error. I was in the wrong valley, on steep broken ground at about 2,600m., and I could only resign myself to making the best of it until dawn. No bivouac sack being available, all spare clothes were donned, but the night was very cold. It was also very long, but the stars shone throughout and there was relatively little wind.

At long last my watch seemed to be going again, and it was time to undress

a bit, ready to regain the glacier and discover the true Lucke, as soon as it was light enough. This was no great problem, and soon after nine I was eating and drinking at the Wildstrubel, none the worse. Then the long descent to Lenk and a good sleep, followed by a traverse to Lauenen and the newly constructed Geltenalp Hut. Next day via Gsteig and the Col du Pillon to the Diablerets Hut.

It was yet another cloudless morning as I set out for the Col de Tsanfleuron and the Diablerets, reached without difficulty. Then a straightforward glacier crossing to the Oldensattel and up the west ridge of the Oldenhorn for a final inspection of so many old friends in the Valais. Finally, down the glacier to a point on the road below the Sanetschjoch, coupled with an unsolicited lift to Sion after a short while, and a magnificent holiday had come to an end.

When the Editor first approached me, I felt honoured beyond my humble status, but I soon realised that honour has its pitfalls. If these notes sound egotistical, I can only plead that I write as an Alleingänger—not entirely from choice, by the way. The object has been to show that early autumn is a great time for easier alpine excursions, even when alone. Though not invariably good, the weather is generally more settled than in the summer, and the atmosphere is often wonderfully clear for photography; the sun is warm and caressing, rather than hot and overwhelming. The huts are quieter (I have been alone at least a dozen times), and one can cook in relative peace. Oh yes, and the blankets—you can normally have half a dozen for the asking, if it is cold. Then there is the smell of the grass and, of course, the beautiful and varied colourings. At the same time, constant vigilance is necessary—the snow slopes tend to get icier, and the crevasses more open. Neither can one, particularly when alone, afford to be caught high up in bad weather. As Fritz Lang, our Grindelwald Sektion Treasurer wrote, in relation to the Gleckstein and Strahlegg Huts; 'For both huts it would be very important to come back in the valley if the weather begins to be bad. Even in early October snow could come overnight and then you are in a trap.' Very sound advice, which I try to heed.

In conclusion, I must confess a little ambition, a derivative of Munroism, which is to stay overnight in all the huts and bivouacs of the Club, together with the eight huts of the four University Clubs. I do not suppose I shall achieve this completely, but if any of our members have done so, I should be interested to know.

HIMALAYAN TREKS

Continuing our series of successful treks, the following have been or are being organised.

1971

EVEREST under the Leadership of W. H. (Bill) Murray.

Leaving London on 28 October and arriving back on 4 December with a 3-day stay in Kathmandu and incorporating a 30-day trek to and from Base Camp.

Inclusive fare stands at the moment at £510 but it is hoped it can eventually be reduced by about £30. A few vacancies are still available.

1972

There will probably be two trekking groups, one to EVEREST and the other to ANNAPURNA, both travelling to and from Kathmandu together. Departure will be, as usual, at the end of October or the beginning of November, with a total duration of 30-35 days. Details are not yet settled but provisional registrations for membership can now be accepted.

It is hoped to obtain Permits for a trek into SIKKIM, beginning and ending in Darjeeling during April/May. Tensing (Norgay) will, subject to his duties with the Himalayan Institute permitting, accompany the trek which will keep to the crest of the ridge from Sandakphu through Phyt, Nayaprar, Mangothang, into Sikkim, mostly at altitudes between 13,000' and 15,000'. Failing the necessary Permits (on which a decision is hoped-for early in 1971) an alternative trek from Darjeeling will be offered in the direction of Kanchenjunga. Inclusive cost from London back to London is expected to be in the region of £450. As many Members of our last two treks have already made known their wish to participate, *provisional registrations for this tour should be made immediately as the absolute maximum number in the group can only be 25-Members.*

N.B.

Other possibilities for 1971/72 are under review; Afghanistan (Hindu Kush) and the Karakorum (Hispar Glacier) and it would be helpful if persons interested would notify their interest.

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ALPINE MEET

David Riddell

The Alpine Meet for 1970 was held at Trient, just west of the summit of the Forclaz on the road between Martigny and Chamonix. We stayed at the Hotel du Glacier. This is an old hotel in the 'mountain inn' category, reminding one of the 'du Glacier' at Saas Fee.

The Swiss National Tourist Office who had fixed us up did us well. Half of the 'Group' appreciated getting out of Cointrin Airport straight into the bus which took us to the very door of our hotel. Paul French had supplied us with an itinerary. In the event more of this was carried out than ever before and the variations added to the enjoyment of the Meet. Even our preliminary walk to the Croix des Prelayes from the Forclaz provided the unimaginable and unforgettable in that we were hailed by a young Swiss who insisted on our drinking all we wanted of beer or wine—FREE. We never did find out why.

A walk over the Bovine Alp to Champex was our first expedition. Modest, but most satisfying. Next day some returned to Champex and Trient, the rest waited for the rain to abate enough to enable us to start, first through the debris of a recent avalanche—trees embedded in snow when well below the snow line. Later it cleared to give us a splendid walk to the Fenetre d'Arpette and down the other side of the ridge to Vesevey.

One of the features of the Meet was the use we made of the motor cars. We were mobile in a way impossible with public transport. Thanks to the Bennett, Whyte, Andrews, Kirstein and Bogle cars we were able to get to Champex on Tuesday 18th to the foot of the Brea chair lift complete with Maurice Verro, guide. Advantages of a guide. Without M. Verro we would not have had seats in the hut never mind beds, the hut being so full.

Mist next day but the Aiguille du Tour was duly climbed in slightly less of a dawdle than getting to the Trient hut. The most striking feature was the Forbes ridge of the Chardonnet on our left. It was plastered in recent snow.

Philip Andrews set about the weather situation next day by getting a good forecast for the Graians from Aosta as the whole of Switzerland showed RAIN on the television screen at the Cafe Morat, our 'local' at Trient. We set off in a drizzle via Chamonix with a low cloud base even when we had got through the Mont Blanc tunnel but as the day went on the weather improved. Up the Val Savaranche to Pont by a lovely unspoiled valley. Cars dumped, up to the three-decker Nissen hut called the Victor Emmanuele Refugio.

There was fine weather on the summit of the Gran Paradiso the next day. My principal recollection was of the impossibility of going up the couloir above the bergschrund when people would insist on coming down simultaneously. That and seeing Virginia French skipping about on the summit

slabs whilst we lesser mortals were belayed with snap rings, karabiners and ropes . . . Magnificent view.

Our most disappointing day was when we moved to Chamonix with the Couvercle hut as our objective. The transport of bodies to the Montenvers Rack Railway station was carried out in dull weather. At noon a message came through from our guide to say that the expedition was off on account of soft snow. The best feature of the day was the reception we had on our unexpected return to the Du Glacier in the evening. Madame provided us with a supper at short notice which was under the circumstances quite outstanding.

Our major summit was the Aiguille d'Argentiere. To most the two outstanding features were the overcrowding of the hut—250 in a hut for 80, and the magnificent 'cirque' at the head of the Argentiere glacier dominated by Mt. Dolent, the Verte, Courtes and Droites. At the hut we had to step over or on bodies to get to our abode for the night. Next morning as soon as we got out of our beds, the floor, corridor and steps non-sleepers took over.

It was eerie putting on crampons in the dark prior to clawing our way on to the Milieu glacier. The angle looked 60° and was probably 30°. Once on the glacier it was a steady plod to the summit with only an interlude at a crevasse some way below the top where 'A.B.' considered that the second guide should have been at the rear of the caravan. The second guide was in front. However, A.B. made it. Splendid view all round from the top. The



The Argentiere Hut

Photo by: F. E. Smith

Forbes ridge seen 'en face' looked even more impossible than from the Trient Glacier.

Back at the hut some stalwarts decided to stop another night and go over the beautifully named Col Superior du Tour Noir to make their way down the Val Ferret, la Fouly and home. The rest of us just ambled across the Glacier of Argentiere with glances backwards to that magnificent amphitheatre that really does merit the French word 'formidable'.

A party finished up with the Dent du Midi. Another walked up to the Susanfe hut by the Bonavau chalet from the head of the Val d'Illiez. Delightful, uncrowded and with constantly changing views. Weather against us next day but Dr. Charles Warren guided us up unerringly having been there before. Cloud, nothing to see from the Haute Cime but in the imperishable words of Ed. Hillary, we had 'knocked off the B. . . . d'.

As in all previous Meets we started as individuals, with a small gang of old timers as a nucleus, but as time went on our North Country friends, Prentices, Walmsleys, Summers and the one and only 'A.B.' all joined in in making a most enjoyable Meet.

The aftermath of Philip Andrews passing over to the Elysian Heights was a great shock to all who knew him. All of us at the Meet who greatly enjoyed his stimulating company know that he would not have had it happen otherwise, though so prematurely.

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DIARY FOR 1971

- 27 January Lecture 'The U.I.A.A. Meet at Rosenlauri' by Mr. John Fairley followed by a wine and cheese party.
- 13 February Northern Dinner, Church Hotel, Edale.
- 24 February Lecture 'High Alpine Tours' by Mr. Walter Kirstein.
- 24 March Lecture 'Wild Life in East Africa and the Indian Ocean' by Mr. Robert Tyssen-Gee.
- 7-14 April Easter Meet, Onich, Inverness-shire. Leader, David Riddell.
- 28 April Lecture 'Exposure in Mountains' by Dr. Griffith Pugh.
- 19 May Ladies' Night Dinner, Connaught Rooms.
- 29-31 May Meet, Wasdale. Leader, Stuart Beare.
- 23 June Members' showing of slides from the Easter and weekend meets.
- 30-31 July Meet, North Wales. Leader, Michael Baker.
- 14-29 August Alpine Meet, Hotel Taescherhof, Taesch. Leader, Stuart Beare.
- 22 September Lecture 'A Short Walk in Kashmir' by Mr. Frank Solari.
- 15-17 October Meet, Langdale. Leader, Walt Unsworth
- 20 October Members' showing of slides from the Alpine Meet.
- 24 November Annual General Meeting followed by the Annual Dinner. Connaught Rooms.

Fuller details of these events are notified in the bulletins. Lectures are held at the Alpine Club at 7.0 p.m. and are followed by an informal supper at the 'Waterloo Despatch', Adams Row, W.1., price £1.12½. Places at these suppers must be booked not later than the preceding Saturday with Michael Baker, 64 Kensington Gardens Square, London, W.2. (Tel: 01-229 7155).

Information regarding the Meets is available from the Leaders.

ASSOCIATION ACTIVITIES 1970

The active support given to the Association's home climbing meets over the last few years gave the Committee sufficient faith to launch the idea of a hut in the Lake District during the past year.

The Lake District was chosen as a site for two reasons. It was felt that North Wales was better catered for in terms of accomodation; but more important the Lake District was within reach of more members of the Association. A Hut Sub-Committee was formed to investigate and report on the idea. Almost immediately through the good offices of Walter Unsworth the Sub-Committee were advised of a suitable site. (The exact whereabouts can not yet be disclosed, the competitive demand being so great). On the site at present is a small stone building but this could easily be extended and there is plenty of room so to do.

On a rough basis the total cost of the projected hut is £6000 (land £1000, repairs to existing building £1000, extension £3000, electricity and equipment £1000). The method of funding this amount is not finalised but some sort of Governmental loan is essential. The Department of the Environment has been approached to establish conditions on which grant aid would be available, and if this were forthcoming it is hoped that it would amount to approximately half the total cost.

In June Peter Ledebor circulated all members with a questionnaire to determine the extent of members' interest and financial assistance. Well over 200 members replied and over 90% of those replying were in favour of establishing the hut. The majority of replies also indicated that donations would be forthcoming at the appropriate time and a figure of £2000 should be reached without difficulty.

At the time of writing the position is that an option to purchase the site has been established, with the present occupier having been given notice to quit in March 1971. An architect has been engaged to draw up plans for the extension and he has applied for outline planning permission. The Association's rules were amended at the 1970 A.G.M. to allow for the subsequent appointment of a Hut Secretary. Until the hut really becomes established as a definite venture the existing Hut Sub-Committee will continue to guide the Association Committee.

Association Climbing Meets

Tony Strawther led the first meet of the year at Edale on 14/15 February which was held in conjunction with the Northern Dinner. The occasion was well attended and quite a number of bookings had to be refused.

The weather was perfect, two wonderfully sunny days with a fair cover of snow which suited the needs of all. The snow 'swimmers' were out once again in the well drifted Kinder Grufs and parties did routes on the faces of

Mam Tor and Back Tor. The skiers made one or two small tours including a nice run from Bleaklow Head to Derwent.

We were very fortunate in having Jack Longland as our after dinner speaker. He entertained us with a very interesting talk ranging from his early climbing days to his involvement in the European Conservation Year. I should at this point like to congratulate him on behalf of all his fellow club members on his recent Knighthood.

With the inauguration of the Northern Dinner it is to be hoped that still more Northern members will take an active interest in *their* club.

In 1970 we tried a new centre for the Easter Meet—Killin at the western end of Loch Tay. Whilst this-area is primarily walking country rather than a climbing area, the weather conditions encountered made even walking a formidable task at times.

Throughout the week there were periods of snow accompanied by very high winds—one night we felt that even the very solidly built hotel might take off. In the result the aggregate bag of 'Monros' was quite modest, several parties having to give up on the summit slopes as they were quite unable to keep their feet in the teeth of the gale. However, several tops were reached and pride of place must to to John and Freda Kemsley who achieved six Monros in four days—no mean achievement in the prevailing conditions.

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

Association ties may be purchased at any time from:

J. S. Whyte
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Cheques for £1.10 to be drawn payable to A.B.M.S.A.C.

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Coire Odhar—Lawers Group

Photo by: F. E. Smith

Mr. and Mrs. Symons and their staff looked after us very well at the Bridge of Lochay Hotel. Those attending the Meet were Mr. and Mrs. F. Solari, Mr. and Mrs. M. Bennett and Mr. David Bennett, Mr. and Mrs. S. M. Freeman, Mr. and Mrs. J. Kemsley, Mr. and Mrs. D. G. Lambley, Mr. Julian Lambley and Mr. William Lambley, and Messrs. H. Allison, M. N. Clarke, D. McArthur, J. Noake and F. E. Smith.

Shortly after this Stuart Beare led a meet in North Wales based at the M.A.M. hut at Glandena and the Climbers' Club hut at Helyg. Ice axes were out in force and there were even rumours of avalanche dangers on Carnedd Llewellyn, but despite an unseasonable amount of late snow, its condition was poor. Parties, which included a Vice President, Walter Kirstein, making his first ascent, climbed Amphitheatre Buttress and walked over the Carnedd on the Saturday and climbed and walked on Tryfan and the Glyders in rather better weather on the Sunday. An informal dinner was held at Cobdens on the Saturday evening. Members were made very welcome and provided for extremely well.

An innovation was a meet at the C.I.C. Hut beneath Ben Nevis. David Lintott led a small group of members at the Spring Bank Holiday. Several of us arrived early enough on Friday to undertake an evening climb of the Douglas Boulder in cold, misty and slimy conditions. The next day, overcast but dry, was enjoyably spent climbing Observatory Ridge and making plans for

further routes on the subsequent two days. However these were not to be fulfilled. After a day and a half of almost continuous rain and with a dwindling supply of fortifying drams we retired. Our thanks are due to the S.M.C. for the use of their hut and it is hoped that it will be possible to arrange further meets there.

For the Alpine Meet in 1970 we tried an experiment by organising a group hotel booking and group travel arrangements. These arrangements were made through the Swiss National Tourist Office and we are greatly indebted to them for their assistance. The Meet was based on the Hotel du Glacier at Trient and proved very popular, a total of 36 members and guests attending. An account of our climbs appears elsewhere in this Journal: the weather unfortunately caused the abandonment of some of the more exciting items on the programme. Those attending were—Dr. D. R. Riddell and Mr. Kirstein, Dr. H. Summers and Mr. R. Summers, Dr. C. B. M. Warren and Mrs. Warren, the Rev. J. M. Bogle and Mrs. Bogle, Mr. and Mrs. P. Andrews, Mr. and Mrs. M. Bennett, Mr. D. M. Bennett and Miss J. Godsland, Mr. and Mrs. S. M. Freeman, Mr. and Mrs. F. P. French, Mr. and Mrs. N. Peskett, Mr. and Mrs. G. S. Prentice and Miss A. Prentice, Mr. and Mrs. J. Walmsley, Mr. and Mrs. J. S. Whyte, Mr. P. Whyte and Miss A. Whyte, and Messrs. J. H. Brooks, J. T. Gardiner, A. B. Hargreaves, C. Mullineux, J. Noake, W. E. Radcliffe and F. E. Smith.

The last organised meet of the year was on 10/11 October when Walt Unsworth led a meet in Langdale with members mainly accommodated at the Fell and Rock C.C. hut at Raw Head and the Robertson Lamb hut of the Wayfarers Club.

Saturday was mild and misty, Sunday mild and damp. Thus encouraged, some forty members spread themselves over the fells between Coniston and Scafell. Some good walks were accomplished but the dominant feature of the meet was the rise in rock-climbing standards. Climbs were done on Bowfell, Dow, Gimmer and White Ghyll, including such classics as Eliminate A, Asterisk, and Slip Knot. An attempt on Kipling Groove failed at the traverse due to rain making it hard! (Incidentally, two members involved in this had been content on the previous day with a simple walk over Bowfell: there's a moral somewhere.)

Rumours that places on this meet will form the first prize of any future National Lottery are quite without foundation, and were probably put about by those unfortunate enough to miss a place at dinner on the Saturday. However, it does emphasise the need for early booking. The next Langdale Meet is planned for 16th/17th Oct 1971. As I am away from home during August, it would be a great help if intending participants could let me have their bookings *before* the end of July. A reserve list will be formed to take care of last minute cancellations. Walter Unsworth.

Social Events

The usual programme of London lectures at the Alpine Club was enjoyed by members living close enough to attend. One splendid innovation was a

Cheese and Wine party following a lecture and film show. The evening was admirably organised by Franz Muheim of the Swiss Embassy and must surely set a pattern for future years.

Ladies' Night Dinner

On Wednesday 20 May the Ladies' Night Dinner was again held at the Connaught Rooms in London. The main guest of the Association was Mrs. Sally Westmacott and she sang for her supper most sweetly and shewed slides taken by herself and others on several trips to the Alps. Although Mrs. Westmacott professed to be a climber of limited ability this was shewn to be clearly untrue as major routes followed one after another. Throughout these climbs Mrs. Westmacott's eyes turned longingly towards the Younggrat on the north face of the Breithorn. In the final few slides we were able to share her pleasure in the ascent of this route in far from perfect conditions.

The Annual Dinner

After the excitement of the previous year's 60th Anniversary Dinner the 1970 Annual Dinner at the Connaught Rooms reverted to the normal pattern. The guests of the Association were:

His Excellency the Swiss Ambassador, M. Rene Keller
H. D. Greenwood (Secretary, British Mountaineering Council)
A. K. Rawlinson (Alpine Club)
Miss D. H. de Beer (President, Ladies Alpine Club)
R. Downham (Wayfarers Club)
H. Rowntree (Rucksack Club)
S. Hutchinson (Midland Association of Mountaineers)
J. Schmid (Swiss National Tourist Office)
R. Signore (Swiss National Tourist Office)

The toast of 'The Swiss Confederation' was proposed by our Vice President, Walter Kirstein. He took the speech as an opportunity to thank the Swiss and Switzerland for all the pleasures they had given himself, his family and his friends over the years. His Excellency the Swiss Ambassador, M. Rene Keller, replied to the toast. He wished he could share the Association members' idyllic views of Switzerland, where things all too often tended to be guided by material aims. He was pleased that Britons can still face up to hardships on the hills and in other fields without always counting the material cost. Unfortunately, said the Swiss Ambassador, he was being recalled to Switzerland after two short years, but he would long remember the happy evenings and pleasant company of the Annual Dinners of the A.B.M.S.A.C.

Our President Frank Solari proposed the toast of 'The Association'. He said how much we would all miss M. and Mme. Keller and M. and Mme. Muheim after all too brief a stay. He reported that the members had been as active as ever on the Association climbing meets. Notably he mentioned

Henry Day and Gerry Owen's successful ascent of Annapurna; Norman Odell being on a recent TV programme about Everest; John Fairley and John Noake attending a U.I.A.A. junior leaders course at Rosenlaur; and happily Roy Crepin's forthcoming marriage to Mrs. P. K. Benner.

Mr. Solari referred briefly to the Committee reorganisation and the hut plans which are covered elsewhere in this Journal. He thanked the Committee in general for its good service during the past year. Maurice Bennett he thanked on behalf of us all for his 10 years sterling service as Secretary and his sustained efforts in organising the Easter and Alpine Meets. His election as Vice President of the Association was fully earned. Also mentioned were Walter Kirstein who retires as Vice President; Wendell Jones and Graham Daniels for their efforts as Treasurer and Editor respectively; the Swiss National Tourist Office for their help with collection of finances; and finally Peter Ledebor for all his work as joint Secretary and in particular for organising the Annual Dinner.

Paddy Boulter welcomed the guests quoting the maxim of polar explorers—Choose your comrades wisely, you may have to eat them! A. K. Rawlinson replied for the guests and said that he was in fact a member of the A.B.M.S.A.C. although tonight he spoke as a member of the Alpine Club. On behalf of the non-active members of the A.B.M.S.A.C. he thanked the Committee for providing a bridge with the S.A.C.

Finally Dr. David Riddell proposed the toast of 'The President'. He reminded us that behind the scenes the work of the President continues all the time. A particular sign of this was the marked improvement of relations between the Central Committee of the Swiss Alpine Club and the A.B.M.S.A.C. This was very largely due to the efforts of Frank Solari on committees of the U.I.A.A. and his friendship with Hektor Meier.

Annual General Meeting

The meeting was held immediately prior to the Annual Dinner. The Committee had unanimously recommended that the organisational structure of the Committee be changed in the light of the expanding activities of the Association. These changes were based on two premises:

- (a) Detailed planning of the main activities can be more effectively undertaken by specifically designated officers, supported by Sub-Committees rather than the Hon. Secretaries.
- (b) It is highly desirable that members in the north and other areas should be in a position to organise local activities and have facilities for representation on the Committee.

Resolutions were passed to the following effect:

1. The number of Hon. Secretaries be reduced from two to one.
2. Provision be made for the appointment of:
An Hon. Meets Secretary
An Hon. Social Secretary
An Hon. Hut Secretary

3. The number of elected members of the Committee be reduced from 12 to 9.
4. The Committee be empowered to appoint area committees.

The Hut Sub-Committee is going ahead with preliminary planning and it is not intended at present to appoint an Hon. Hut Secretary or an Area Committee but it was felt that power so to do should be available when needed.

The following appointments were made:

<i>As Vice-President</i>	<i>In Place of</i>
M. Bennett	W. Kirstein
<i>As Hon. Secretary</i>	
J. P. Ledebøer	J. P. Ledebøer and M. Bennett
<i>As Hon. Librarian</i>	
W. R. H. Jeudwine	S. N. Beare
<i>As Hon. Meets Secretary</i>	
S. N. Beare	
<i>As Hon. Social Secretary</i>	
P. S. Boulter	
<i>For the Committee</i>	
Dr. D. J. Lintott	Wing Cmdr. H. D. Archer
Prof. E. H. Sondheimer	S. M. Freeman
O. B. St. John	F. P. French
	W. Unsworth

Obituary

PHILIP ANDREWS was my oldest climbing friend as we first met in 1929 when we joined a climbing party in Switzerland organised by a mutual acquaintance. After this we climbed regularly together in the Alps with other friends until marriage and the calls of work broke up the party. During these years there were also many rock climbing weekends in Wales and the Lakes.

Philip was a man of many parts. He was a rugby player as a young man playing for the Wasps and later on he took up golf. His first love was however mountains and mountain activities. A rock climber and summer mountaineer at first his interests gradually changed to skiing and ski-mountaineering. In this connexion he played a great part in the organising and leading of ski-mountaineering parties for the Ski Club of Great Britain and was a past President of the Alpine Ski Club.

By profession Philip was a surveyor and he found time to serve on the local Council in addition to working at his profession. He was a member of the Alpine Club as well as of the A.B.M.S.A.C. and S.A.C. Although he served a term on the Committee he did not take a great part in our activities until this year when he attended the Alpine Meet held in Trient. Here he was in great form and enjoyed himself so much that, but for his untimely death, we should have undoubtedly seen much more of him at meets with his wife Kathleen.

Now he has passed on we mourn the loss of a man of wide interests and great personality and extend to his wife and family our sincere sympathy in their bereavement.
G. S.

We regret to record that the deaths of the following member have been recorded during the year.

P. Dean A. H. H. Ross F. M. Welsford

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BOOK REVIEW

ROPE BOY by Dennis Gray. Published by Gollancz. £2. 50.

The one redeeming feature of his home town, Leeds, so Dennis Gray tells us, was the ease with which open country could be reached from it. The contrast between industrial squalor and the not too distant hills impressed itself upon him early; and the very violence of the contrast was perhaps not least among the factors which drew him and others to discover an enthusiasm and a talent for climbing, and thus to spark off and to nourish a revolution in the standards and technique of rock-climbing.

Dennis Gray belongs to the second generation of this revolution, led predominantly from the north. He tells of his apprenticeship under Arthur Dolphin and the Bradford Lads, then with Joe Brown, Don Whillans and others, and of his progress from the outcrops of the West Riding to the Alps, the Himalaya, the Andes, and Yosemite. His accounts of climbs are admirably written, always lively, often vivid, and he avoids the pitfalls of either the guidebook-documentary style or the technicolour-epic. Of the bigger ventures, Kulu (1961), Gauri Sankar (1964), Alpamayo (1966), and Mukar Beh (1968), the account of the splendid near-success on Gauri Sankar is perhaps the best.

But what makes this an unusually worth-while book is that it is more than a collection of climbers' tales. Within the framework of his own experience Mr. Gray gives us an insight into some of the most original and dynamic aspects of British climbing since the war: how rebelliousness and talent bred achievement; and how the one might be tamed by success, and the other exploited by commercialism and the mass media. All of which pose questions for the future of mountaineering as a sport. Both the questions and Mr. Gray's answers are worth pondering.

W. R. J.

ABMSAC JOURNAL 1971

EXPEDITION MINDED?

Hamish Brown and Alastair Lawson are organising a series of informal expeditions on the lines of previous Atlas visits. Nothing highly organised but with everyone's aims, pleasures and abilities satisfied. The main expeditions are:

Summer 1971: Peruvian Andes, Cordillera Blanca

Winter 1972: Kenya, Kilimanjaro, Kenya, Ruwenzori

Easter 1972: High Atlas of Morocco

May, end 1972: Corsica

Summer 1972: Greenland

Contact Hamish M. Brown, 21 Carlin Craig, Kinghorn, Fife.

ASSOCIATION ACCOUNTS

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

The Form and Layout of the Accounts has been subjected to substantial revision. All figures are now shown to the nearest £.

1. Subscriptions

Income from this source is made up as follows:-

1970		
Subscriptions—Town Members		334
Subscriptions—Country Members		345
Excess of flat rates of subscription levied over the sterling equivalent of subscriptions due to the Swiss Sections of the S.A.C.		121
Profit on Exchange		15
Subscription relating to past years		17
		<u>£ 832</u>

Subscriptions relate to the year to 31st December. An adjustment has been made on the face of the Balance Sheet to create a provision for subscriptions in advance for the 3 months to 31st December, 1970. This has been charged direct to Accumulated Revenue.

2. Journal

Cost of the journal is made up as follows:-

Printing		295
Despatch costs and other expenses		38
		<u>333</u>
Less: Advertising Revenue		46
		<u>£ 287</u>

3. Taxation

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

Estimated Taxation on Current year's Investment Income		54
Underprovision for previous years		9
		<u>£ 63</u>

4. Fixed Assets

	Cost	Depreciation to Date	
Projector (W. J. Foster Bequest)	70	69	1
Equipment at Swiss National Tourist Office	80	79	1
	<u>£ 150</u>	<u>£ 148</u>	<u>£ 2</u>

Investments

These are as follows:-

	Nominal Value £
4½% Agricultural Mortgage Corporation Deb. Stock 1977/82	1,000
Brunner Investment Trust Limited 5/- Ordinary Shares	135
London Scottish American Trust Limited 5/- Ordinary Shares	178
5½% National Development Bonds	300

Cost of these holdings was £2,172. Aggregate market value at 30th September, 1970 was £1,923 (1969 £2,300).

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT

for the year ended 30th September, 1970

	<u>1970</u>	<u>1969</u>
INCOME from Members:		
Subscriptions (Note 1)	832	426
Entrance Fees	79	60
Profit on sale of Ties	66	—
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	977	486
 <i>Less: Expenditure</i>		
Hire of Rooms	100	100
Journal (Note 2)	287	336
Library	3	21
Printing, Postage etc. SNTO	127	219
Printing, Postage etc. Association	56	
Insurance	15	
Entertainment	87	76
Grants	30	—
BMC Subscription	31	32
Lecture Expenses	18	21
Donations	—	10
Sundries	44	18
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	798	848
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	179	(362)
 <i>Add: Investment Income</i>		
Association Investments (Gross)	114	121
Bank Deposit Interest	16	—
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	130	121
 <i>Less: Taxation (Note 3)</i>	63	51
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	67	70
 <i>Excess of Income over Expenditure</i>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	£ 246	£ (292) (Loss)

BALANCE SHEET

30th September, 1970

	<u>1970</u>	<u>1969</u>
<i>FIXED ASSETS</i> (Note 4)		
Projector (W. J. Foster Bequest)	1	1
Equipment at Swiss Tourist Office	1	1
<i>INVESTMENTS</i> at cost (Note 5)	2, 172	2, 172
<i>CURRENT ASSETS</i>		
Stock of Ties at cost	17	—
Debtors	259	28
Cash on Deposit	411	—
Cash at Bank	93	341
	<u>780</u>	<u>369</u>
<i>Deduct: CURRENT LIABILITIES</i>		
Creditors	148	—
Subscriptions in advance	200	—
	<u>348</u>	<u>—</u>
NET CURRENT ASSETS	432	369
	<u>£2, 606</u>	<u>£2, 543</u>
<i>SOURCES OF FINANCE:</i>		
LIFE MEMBERSHIP ACCOUNT	1, 294	1, 277
ACCUMULATED REVENUE ACCOUNT		
Balance at 30th September, 1969	1, 166	1, 458
Add: Excess of Income over expenditure (1969 Deficiency)	246	(292)
	<u>1, 412</u>	<u>1, 166</u>
Less: Provision for Subscriptions in Advance (Note 1)	200	
	<u>1, 212</u>	
N.S. FINZI BEQUEST	100	100
	<u>£2, 606</u>	<u>£2, 543</u>

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

18th November, 1970

Signed A. H. Hart, Hon. Auditor.

MEMBERS' CLIMBS

Hamish M. Brown and Robert Aitken

Visited the Alps in July/August with other B.F.M.C. lads; based either on the dormobile or camping.

The Isère gave a contrast of summer ski development and utter solitude in the National Park—where 11 fine new huts have been installed, equipped and left even unguarded. We climbed the Aig Pers after a terrifying night in the van in a thunderstorm, the Gd. Motte, and in and out of the wilderness over the Pt. de la Meän Martin and the Sana. The same sort of thing is happening in Italy where a road is being put through from quiet, beautiful Pont at the head of the Val Savaranche, through the Nivolet Glen to Ceresole. Botanised up the Cima de la Rolle, on the Grand Paradiso had a freezing day, and on the Tresenta, sun.

From Martigny to the Mt. Fort Hut for a romp over the Rosa Blanche and down to Fionnay. The bitter, wild weather followed the gang to Saas and livened-up the Weissmeis and Laquinhorn, while the Jägihorn gave an off day scramble. From the Täsch Hut Saas was reached again by traversing the Allalinhorn. Alex did the Hörnli while Jim joined Hamish and Ludwig Imboden for a thirteen hour traverse from the M. Rosa hut to the Trockener over Lyskamm, Castor and Pollux, a great day of snow ridges, the icy wind keeping it cool for the long skirting of the Breithorn. Having already met ABM members at the Zermatt English Church Centenary the party again briefly met at Trient—by when it had become a family holiday.

Another party, mostly S.M.C., A.C. and J.M.C.S. were in the High Atlas for several weeks. Despite tummy troubles a happy visit: a few new routes and many classic peaks, passes and climbs done. Also ski-ing and exploratory work with the hope of Hamish getting on with a guidebook in the autumn of 1971. He would welcome any information. Going back in spring of 1972 as well, if any members interested. Fuller details of this visit appear in the S.M.C. Journal.

Braehead School is closing in August 1971 under local education plans, but the pupils hope their mascot dog will complete its first ascent of all the Munros and Hamish his third ascents before the end.

G. R. E. Brooke

April. Arrochar—The Cobbler, Ben Narnain, Ben Ime—opportunist excursions in doubtful weather conditions. An attempt on Ben Cruachan from Loch Awe frustrated by storms.



The Aiguille de Bionnassay from the balcony of the Gôûter Hut from which the ascent of Mont Blanc is usually made.

August. Zermatt with Th. Perren. Cima di Jazzi from Stockhorn. From Gandegg traverse of Theodulhorn, Furgghorn, Furggrat descending via Breuiljoch to Schwarzee.

W. A. Comstive

Plenty of snow on the Lake District fells last winter ensured good sport in the gullies. Crags mainly on the eastern side were visited, Ruthwaite and Nethermost Coves, but Dovedale and Birkness Combe also provided some good days.

Attended the N. Wales meet to Glan Dena with my wife.

Traversed Y-Garn, the Glyders and Tryfan with J. P. Ledeboer and guests on the Saturday. Sunday found Bob Hards, myself and wife on the Carneddys; some snow still lingered on the ridges and in the gullies and the weather was perfect.

Throughout the spring and summer I spent many week-ends in the Lake District walking and climbing. An attempt to join the Alpine Meet was frustrated by a suspected illness in one of our children which proved to be a bogus attempt to make us stay at home, or so we suspected. However Enid and I did manage to get away for a few days to Scotland. Starting with a traverse of the Rhinns of Kells in Kirkcudbrightshire, a wild and remote range of hills which are little frequented. I can recommend this area to any members who still enjoy a day on the hills without seeing anyone. A good deal of new planting by the Forestry Commission will ultimately result in access from the south being difficult in the future. As we moved north the weather worsened and in the next five days we only managed a traverse of the Ben Lawers range (spoiled by too many people) and a walk in Glen Lyon.

Attended the autumn meet in Langdale with guest. A traverse of Pike O' Bliscoe, The Crinkles and Bowfell on the Saturday. Cloud was down to about one thousand feet so that once we entered we saw little until we emerged half-way down Rossett Ghyll at the end of the day. Ghostly figures of other members loomed out of the murk at frequent intervals bound for afternoon tea at O.D.G. Sunday found us on Tarn Crag but we were rained-off in the early afternoon and a proposed visit to Pavey Ark was frustrated.

George Cubby

There was reasonable weather in late July/early August and we seemed to do a great deal of walking about the Oberland glaciers, entry being made from the Grimsel Pass by way of the Oberaarjoch and the Gemslücke. The Oberaarhorn and Finsteraar Rothorn were climbed from the Oberaarjoch Hut, the Agassizhorn and Finsteraarhorn from the Finsteraarhorn Hut, and

the Mönch from the Bergli Hut which was reached in one of the many evening thunderstorms. A change of area gave us the Allalinhorn from the Britannia Hut and the Fletschhorn from the Weissmies Hut with the Jägihorn for a so-called rest day.

Peter Dean and Keith Hindell

We returned to Chamonix for our fourth Alpine year together. We began on the Grands Charmoz and must endorse the warning given in last year's Journal by T. H. P. Brown. The crossing point on to the ice at the bottom of the rognon in the centre of the Nantillons glacier is very dangerous. In September this year the seracs overhung about fifteen feet and had no visible support. They groaned continually in a most alarming fashion as if their last hour had come, and ours. The wisest course in descent would be not to change into crampons until one is well out onto the middle of the glacier and out of danger.

We progressed to the Forbes ridge of the Chardonnet and then did the North West face of the Aiguille de Bionnassay. On the summit we were brushed by lightning and twice knocked over. The violence of this attack twisted my knee. Despite this mishap we continued through snow and cloud and arrived at the Götter Hut by midday. There we met an Austrian whose companion had been struck dead by lightning on the top of Mont Blanc a few minutes after our episode. Only then did we realise how lucky we had been.

The next day my knee was badly swollen so, rather than wait three or four days, Peter decided to descend to the valley on his own. Somewhere between the Götter and the Tête Rousse Hut he had an accident from which he died. No one saw the accident but the most likely cause seems to have been a stone fall which is a common hazard on this route. Peter Dean was an experienced mountaineer and exceptionally cautious in descent. On this easy route, most of which is a path, it seems impossible than anything other than a stonefall could have had fatal consequences.

Peter was a splendid companion and his climbing friends as well as his family will miss him dearly. A full length article about him has already appeared in 'Mountaineering'.

J. D. Evans

17 day trips to Snowdonia with walking and climbing in all conditions.

Peter Farrington

Winter. A pleasant ascent of Crib Goch via Dinas Mot on a warm misty December day with the mountain to myself. S.A.C. meet at Edale: walks

on snow covered Kinder, Rushup Edge and Mam Tor. On Snowdon with Eddie Tuck in near Alpine conditions; easy gully to the left of Trinity Gully and descent over Lliwedd. On Craig yr Ysfa, 'B' Gully (exit from Amphitheatre Gully) short but interesting route after a strenuous descent into Cwm Eigiau in thigh deep snow.

Easter. Rock climbing on Castle Naze, Castle Rock of Triermain and walking in the Langdale valley and on Side Pike.

Summer. Solo walking on Bleaklow, Isle of Islay and Paps of Jura. Rock climbing on Stanage, Dovestones, Lawrencefield, Agden Rocher and Froggatt Edges.

Autumn. S.A.C. meet at RLH. Langdale. Rock climbing on Dow Crag and walking on Pavey Ark and the Pikes.

George Gadsby

In addition to regular visits to all parts of Derbyshire for walking and climbing the following expeditions were made:

Winter. Several weekends camping and walking in North Wales (West Face of Tryfan in difficult snow conditions). Walking in the Chilterns. Ski crossing of Chatsworth Park on a rare sunny day.

Easter. Camping in Patterdale and Borrowdale in atrocious weather. The gods relented on Tuesday and it all seemed worthwhile.

May. Corsica. Three weeks holiday (one spent on the car and boat journey) during which my wife and I climbed 8 peaks in different parts of the island. These included Mount Cardo 8000', Mount Rotondo 8750' and Mount Foggial 7950' in the hottest weather we have ever known. We also made an attempt on Mount Paglia Orba—the Matterhorn of Corsica—but had to turn back near the shoulder due to a combination of excessive heat and deep snow. The mountains in this area are dealt with in the A.B.M.S.A.C. Library volume 'The Making of a Mountaineer' by G. I. Finch. I would like to thank the Club Librarian for despatching this promptly at short notice.

The following may be of use to any club members intending to visit Corsica. Nice to Corsica (Ajaccio) 7 hours—Fare £38 return for a medium-sized car with four occupants (4th Class). List of fare, boats etc. is available from: The French Line, Cockspur Street, London. There are plenty of camp sites on the coast and in the mountains. The roads are reasonable apart from the 50 odd miles from Calvi to Porto. The people are proud, handsome and very friendly especially to the Anglaise. The scale of the high mountains is hard to grasp as they look so near in the good light conditions. But to climb them, even by the easiest routes will entail a strenuous day unless a bivouac is planned. The French guide book 'Monte Cinto



Punte la Porte from the Col Stazzanelli (Corsica) Photo by: Gordon Gadsby

Massif' by M. Fabrikant, available from Gastons in London for £2 10s 0d., contains a good map and a hundred or so rock climbs from Facile to Extreme. (This is only a fraction of what the Island offers) mostly long mountain routes. In April or May crampons and ice axe are essential.

June-July. Traverse of the Rhinogs. Patterdale—Steamer to Pooley Bridge then traverse of High Street during a sunny weekend.

August-September. During a long weekend in Pembrokeshire walked many miles of the magnificent coastline. Very sunny but too windy for climbing. Moved the tent on Tuesday Sept. 1st just before the Concorde's supersonic flight (not a sound).

October. Camping by Llyn Gwynant—a fabulous weekend with the lake like a millpond. October 30th in Borrowdale. Struggled to the top of Glaramara in gale force wind and horizontal rain. Drying out in the tent later we heard the forecast of Force 10 gales causing structural damage in Northern England and Southern Scotland. The tent held fast although the fly sheet was torn. Sunday dawned bright and sunny with views of Lakeland at its best. Tarn Hows magnificent!

We began our walk to the Argentiere hut very soon after our arrival in Chamonix. On reaching same in rather dubious weather we were surprised to find the next morning of incomparable clarity and were able to make a first route of the season—the Couloir en Y on the Argentiere—in a relaxed mental attitude. This route, not in the English guide book, is supposedly similar to the Whymper Couloir on the Verte and deserves recommendation to other English climbers to whom it seems relatively unknown.

We then journeyed to the Aiguille du Glacier at the opposite extreme of the range. I will say no more than to warn other people never to set foot on the mountain—it surprises me it still exists. I have never seen anything disintegrate more rapidly during a day.

Some form of fitness was now becoming apparent and we next climbed the Contamine route on the east face of the Moine (TD). This was after a very heavy snowfall and the pitches of six were climbed in a very non ethical way providing sporting ice climbing. These three routes had provided the background and built up the fitness quite substantially and we were able to call on them for our next route, The South East Pillar of the Bec D'Oiseau. This is a 2500' ED rock climb on the Aiguille only 30 minutes from the Envers Hut. It turned out that this was the second British ascent. The climb is thoroughly recommended providing technique and situations not usually experienced in Chamonix rock routes and being quite delicate in places and magnificently exposed in the upper section. We experienced route finding difficulties in the middle section. The standard is sustained at V and Vsup with three or four pitches of 6 and on the whole of the route there are only two pitons and one wooden wedge. A magnificent route which I hope will become popular with British parties in the future!

A trip to the Col de la Fourche hut for a try on the Major was made. However when on our departure from the hut half the Brenva face fell down the Grand couloir and the stars looked ominously bright we decided not to risk it. By ten o'clock that morning a violent thunderstorm had settled on top of Mont Blanc and was echoing around the valley. Before this however I had been compensated for such a long and expensive journey by a solo ascent of the Cromiquer Arete on the Aiguille du Midi (AD). (A rather pleasant sensation to make a solo ascent of a route in the Alps however small and non-serious!)

Disappointment was not for long though and four or five days later we were descending to Chamonix from the Charpoua hut having bivouaced on the Dru Rognon—climbed that magnificent mountain—bivouaced again on the descent to arrive at the Charpoua hut the following afternoon. The North face of the Dru had always been one of my greatest ambitions and it proved to be a taxing climb, having very strenuous mixed climbing with little enjoyment. The French descent was followed—a multitude of abseils from the Petit Dru to the Flammes des Pierres alongside the Bonatti Pillar and from there onwards as for the normal route.

The North face of the Chardonnet provided a magnificent ice route. Not too

long but very varied and technical in its last five hundred feet. A superb summit with magnificent views—even the descent is not without interest—mainly provided by an enormous bergschrund!

The weather had deteriorated throughout the season and it now became a question of snatching routes on the good days. One such was the South East Pillar of the Petit Clocher (TD sup), a magnificent mixed free and artificial route on a fairly low and non-serious peak in the Champex region of the Mont Blanc Massif. The difficulties last for about 800'—long A2 pitches and small stances—combined with a brilliantly sunny day gave the climb a Dolomitic atmosphere.

The last climb done in Chamonix I value to be the best climb I have ever done. The Frendo Spur provides every form of difficulty on both rock and ice and being over 3500' long there is plenty of it. Conditions very rarely seem to be good on this North face and the final rock buttress provided very hard ice and verglassed rock to climb. One pitch stands out which was magnificently led by my partner; a diagonal traverse right for 40' on 80° ice followed by an overhanging slanting chimney choked with ice—my language in the latter left much to be desired!

Then followed a trip to the Salbitschizen where we never even saw the mountain for cloud and rain. Then a trip to Zermatt in unpromising weather with hopes of tackling one of the great routes on the Matterhorn. This was not to be as it seemed as though the snow had only just receded from the valley. Thus to end our season an epic fight up the Hornli Ridge where crampons were essential and where we hardly saw the rock the whole way. An even bigger fight to get down to the hut before dark—everyone else had had enough sense to turn back earlier—but then I've always wanted to 'do the Matt' as the pundits say.

A. N. Husbands

Four pleasant weekends were spent with other members at meets in the British Isles. While climbing Observatory Ridge with David Charity and David Lintott I risked a step up on a greasy hold from which my boot slipped causing me to partially dislocate my shoulder. However we completed the climb and had fairly good views from the summit. The curious thing was that when my shoulder was eventually X-Rayed I was told that I had a fractured shoulder blade and that this had happened before the Nevis meet. I was recommended not to climb again for some time but told that it might be alright again in eighteen months or two years.

By the end of August I was no longer in much pain and a long climb on Lliwedd with alternate leads gave no trouble so I telephoned Camille Bour-nissen who said that he would be free on September 7th. When I met him at Sion the weather was very good so we went to Zermatt and, finding the Matterhorn in good condition, went up to the Belvedere as the barometer was high although the red light was on.

Next morning as we went up to the Furggenjoch Camille remarked that the snow was rather soft and when we reached the joch we found the wind was from the south. Climbing the chimney in the dark made my shoulder complain a little but the conditions were good. However when the dawn came about 6.00 it was obvious that the weather was bad but we pushed on and it soon started to snow. The rock was fairly sound but I have never seen so much loose stone lying around before. Fortunately not one piece came down on us.

By the time we reached the shoulder it was snowing in earnest. Camille had never been on the Matterhorn before and I still had vivid memories of being caught in a particularly vicious storm two years before after my second traverse of the Zmutt so we decided it would be prudent to traverse across to the Hörnli ridge and descend. Although we had only done the easy part I enjoyed what we did. Naturally I was disappointed not to have finished the route especially as the Zermatt guides told us that the Furggen had not been done for four years.

Who should be at the same hotel that night but Douglas Pilling with whom I had traversed the Alphubel in 1965. He was on holiday from Guatemala and desirous of climbing the Matterhorn. Also in Switzerland I met still another member, Alan Lyall, who told me he had been up the Dom the day we reached Zermatt.

A few days later Camille took me up the Rebuffat route on the South Face of the Aiguille du Midi. This is a nice rock climb about 800 ft. long of IV, V and Al. Etriers, of which three are required, are needed at the start of the second pitch. All the pitons are in place but the last two pitches are climbed free and the route is not therefore so obvious. It tends upwards towards the left. I found the flake at the top of the penultimate pitch rather exhausting at that altitude (12,500 ft.) and on the final pitch, which starts off with a near vertical crack about 8" wide and 20' high and very exposed I was glad of some assistance from the rope. The rock is very sound and on a day such as we had, with the sun shining all the time, one can leave Chamonix on an early teleferique and be back in the town again in the late afternoon. In unsettled weather the climb could become very formidable.

E. C. L. Jarvis

April. Walking based on Tal-y-Llyn. June. Walking and scrambling based on Capel Garmon, Parson's Nose, Slabs and Cneifion. July. Ditto based on Courmayeur, Val d'Isere and Pralognan—Aiguille Pets, Aiguille de la Vanoise. August. We took our blind companion Fred Reid up Bristly, Snowdon and over Crib Goch to his delight—and ours.

November. With Cook's trekking party in Nepal up the Kali Gandaki. A very welcome return to that lovely and thrilling land.

Christmas. Snow climbing on Snowdon. New Year. Ski-ing at Lermoos and on the Zugspitze. Easter. Exploration on Baggy Point, North Devon. Ski-ing at Saas Fee and ski-touring in the Valais. Bella Tola, the traverse of Pigne D'Arolla, the crossing of Col De L'Eveque from Cabane Des Vignettes to Arolla, attempt on La Luette in foul weather, 48 hours avalanche dodging above Zinal; the Gornergrat and Stockhorn runs, and the Breithorn from Zermatt.

August. With Royal Masonic School party. Retreated from high on the Allalinhorn in a white-out on the first day in time to attend church in Zermatt. The Zinal Rothorn by the North Ridge, Mont Blanc De Cheilon, the traverse of Pigne D'Arolla. Several days of bad weather were spent at the Dix, Vignettes and Bertol Huts, and in camp at Arolla.

September. With a school party. The Skye weather was so bad that we fled to the Lake District to skid on slimy rocks on Great Gable and Scafell.

Richard Johnson

Al Edmonds and myself arrived in Courmayeur on Sunday 28th June with the weather very overcast. We retreated from two attempts on the south ridge of the Aig. Noire. The weather decayed on both attempts forcing us on to easier routes that enabled us to acquire the qualifying level of fitness for bigger routes. The training climbs were the easier Boccalatte route on the Aig. de la Brenva and the Tete de la Brenva—Tour Ronde traverse. The second expedition was from the Brenva Bivouac on a perfect day that gave terrific views from the summit of the Tour Ronde.

After this we traversed the Aigs du Diable on Mont Blanc du Tacul. Due to snowy conditions we omitted the Cone du Diable and regrettably the Isolee. The route is magnificent but we would advise the Col du Diable to be gained by the second alternative in the English guide as the link from the top of the initial Couloir to the top is too long and, if snow covered, very tiring. Additionally too the return to the Torino hut should be avoided as the walk across the Vallee Blanche up to the hut is very wearing though the Torino start avoids the horrors of the Geant icefall at night.

This route built up our morale and we returned to the Noire hut where to our satisfaction Rene Desmanson and client arrived shortly afterwards. His presence on the South ridge should avoid route finding errors. It should be noted that the English guide is dangerously wrong in its description of the start of the route. The weather was perfect, the first sun making the pinnacles of the mile long ridge glow red is a dramatic memory. R. D. and tiny French client raced over the easy ground but were very slow on difficulties so we kept to the pace. The famed Diedre is not hard but the Res-sant Demi-Lune demands concentration. R. D.'s route finding on the descent

was brilliant and coupled with the four of us working an efficient abseil routine a bivouac was avoided.

The weather decayed so dreams of Gervasutti's Mont Blanc pillar were scrapped in favour of the bad weather comforts of Cham. A good day enabled a rapid descent of the deservedly popular North Ridge of the Peigne. Ignore the guides' suggestion of using the normal route to gain the final diedre as it is longer and less pleasant than the proper.

After this, being fit and having enlisted the services of gritstone's latest protege John Yates, we climbed the west face of the Blaitiere. John's crack expertise was productive in the Fissure Brown as it had only two wedges. The standard was good hard very severe. The severity must be extreme with no aid; we speculated whether anybody other than Joe Brown has led it free. The rest of the route though sustained is easier, 'regular V'. The last difficult pitch rates as my 'Finest in the Alps'. It starts with an apparently difficult but straight forward layback followed by 100 ft. of perfect jamming. The previous evening's sunset had been ominous and at three o'clock evil lens shaped clouds appeared. The resulting storm at six o'clock resulted in a frightening and rapid run for the Plan d'Aiguille and also the death of at least nine people.

The weather was now much worse so we went to realise a long standing ambition and climbed the North East Face of the Piz Badile. The route is not hard and a fit party will easily reduce the guide book time; the danger is being held up by slow parties. Unfortunately we were the victim of an international plot to make us the last out of the hut but we were able to overtake the slower parties. We would advise a descent down the North ridge, the alternatives being longer and more tiring. On this descent an evil narrow gully makes the abseiling interesting. The sporadic stone fall motivates a very rapid descent. Regrettably the bad weather had not changed, morale was slipping in the National so after five productive weeks we beat the annual retreat to North Wales.

John and Freda Kemsley

In the winter we climbed various scattered Munros near Dalwhinnie, in Glen Moriston and in the Cairngorms. Then we enjoyed the alpine conditions of the Edale and Killin Meets. We returned to Scotland in the summer and added eight summits to our list of Munros and many species to our list of alpine flora.

In the last two weeks of August we went to Switzerland and walked from St. Luc over the Bella Tola to Gruben and then moved up to the Turtmann Hut. From there we crossed to the Tracuit Hut and after climbing the Diablons and Bishorn in snatched periods of passable weather we dropped to Zinal in a storm that wrecked our plans for a continued journey southward through the Pennine Alps. In alternating bad and good weather we moved in turn to the Glarner Alps where we beat a trail from the Mutsee Hut over

the Kisten Pass in deep new snow, to Piz Palu which we traversed on a magnificent day, and finally to the Albula Alps where we climbed Piz d'Ag-nelli in thick mist before ending our tour with a walk in the rain down to the Julier Pass.

W. Kirstein

January. Lake Tahoe, California, piste skiing.

Spring. On skis—Engadine; Piz Muragl, Sassal Massone: Stubai; Wilder Pfaff (col only), East Daunkogl, Hinterer Daunkopf, Zuckerhutl, Rotondo Hut, Leckihorn.



Grand Paradiso—descent to the bergschrund

Photo by: W. Kirstein

Summer. Piz Arlas, Piz Cambrena, Monte Rosso, Aiguille du Tour, Paradiso.

D. G. Lambley

March. Climbs and ridge walks around Stange and Kinder Scout edges. April with A.B.M.S.A.C. Beinn Ghlas, Sgiath, Meall Glas, Beinn Heasgarnich, Meall Corronaich. August. Meall a' Bhuiridh, Clach Leathad, The Saddle. Mont Velon, Les Diablerets with Oskar Ogi.

D. Roger Lewis

With Lisa Grochowska climbed Mount Fujiama by the Kawaguchiko trail. The trail is divided into ten stages of unequal distance numbered in order of their location from the bottom of the mountain to the summit. We followed the cinder trail in rainy weather and stopped overnight in a stone shelter at the top of Stage 7. We shared the shelter with 50 Japanese and after a breakfast of Japanese whiskey and rice cakes we left at 2.00 a.m. to reach the summit at dawn. We were inside the characteristic holy temple gate as the sun hit our backs, so our shadows at least were on holy ground. About 200 yards away dozens of people were standing, praying to the risen sun. We walked towards them passing a dishevelled heap of souvenir stalls and a complete tractor. On our right was the great crater of Nai-In, the sanctuary, some 1600 feet wide and over 700 feet deep.

Our descent was by the Gotemba trail until we lost it after which we plunged straight downwards through the volcanic debris. After 5 hours we found ourselves at Stage 1 and were the first to reach the foot of the mountain that day.

W. McLewin

With Mr. Brian Wood. Eiger by South Ridge (bivouac on Eigerjoch). Mönch by North East Face (bivouac on Eigerjoch, descent via Berglihütte, Kalli, Bäregg). Lenzspitze by North North East Face (after 5 years waiting). Bivouaced on Hohbaln glacier beforehand.

Solo. Nadelgrat—Nadelhorn, Stecknadelhorn, Hohberghorn, Durrenhorn, Hohberghorn by North East Face (bivouaced on Ried gletscher), Laquinhorn, traverse South to North. Alphubel. Taschhorn by South East ridge (ascent and descent in 4¹/₂ hours from and to Mischabel refuge—just beat a storm). Bishorn. Weisshorn by Bishorn and North ridge. Magnificent route but conditions bad, lot of new snow. Very much a breakthrough season.

L. Poolman

April. Beinn Heasgarnich—Creag Mhor from Glen Lochay (They say it can be winter any day of the year in Scotland; confirmed!) and Stob Coire an Albannaich—Glas Bheinn Mhor from Inveroran.

June. Sgurr Dubh Mor, Sgurr Mhic Coinnich, Inaccessible Pinnacle (thanks to two members of Altus Climbing Club) and Sgurr nan Gillean; also seven other tops and Munros, previously ascended. Weather good.

July. With D. Grace (Bristol). Wandering in Rheinwald Gebiet, in moderate weather. Summits ascended—Hohberghorn (3,005 m.), Piz Stabbio (3,136), Piz Medels (3,211), Piz Ravetsch (3,007), and Piz Campo Tencia (3,072).

Sept. Apart from one slight blemish, weather was good in latter part of month and following solo ascents were made: Balmhorn (3,699 m.), Gross Rinderhorn (3,459), Gross Hockenhorn (3,294), Lauterbrunnen Wetterhorn (3,241), Gross Bigerhorn (3,625), Balfrinhorn (3,796) and Grubhorn (3,192). Slopes at times icy, and axe and crampons in frequent use. On last day of month, weather broke, with snow eventually down to about 1,100 m. Mountains out of condition, and after a topless seven days, I came home.

David Riddell

Hogmany, Achnashellach with Hamish Brown, Robert Aitken and others. Moruing, deep snow, very cold. Subsequently climbed Sgurr a' Chaorachain and Sgurr Chainnich, with much stepcutting in the ice-hard snow. Fionn Beinn, probably the easiest 'Munro' in the County, made better with plenty of snow.

Hamish Brown led a party, sometimes called an 'expedition' to Morocco in March with a view to writing a guide book on the High Atlas. There was some tough climbing, and ski-ing done by some members. They slept out for three nights at over 10,000'. I had to be content with going up to the Imlil Hut, from there went to Tachdirt, a C.A.F. hut which had been visited by soldiers from Gibraltar a week or so before, and who reported FLEAS. Also the water supply was below the village. Crossed the Tizi n' Tachdirt to Timichi (10,500'), to sleep out beyond the village. A long day to Setti Fatma, partly on mule back through country that looked exactly like the Himalayan foothills. Back in Marrakesh after this outing, when the Virus of Tachdirt struck, I could only stagger up to the Lepiney hut and wait while the other members of the party climbed Toubkal (13,600') and other local heights. Mountaineering-wise, the trip was not a success, but I saw a lot of Morocco, and not all Marrakesh as I went over to Ouerzazate on the 'rim' of the Sahara... by bus. Much more could be told but it is not under the heading of 'Members' Climbs'.

D. W. Robbins

Last summer in the Bregaglia I climbed the following routes:

1. Via Inglese, Punta Allievi (Dsup) with P. A. Wright (O.A.V.)
2. S. E. Ridge, Cima di Castello (Dsup) with P. A. Wright, K. Meldrum and J. Coles. (1st British ascent). A rather scrappy unsatisfactory route.
3. N. Ridge, Piz Badile with P. A. Wright.
4. Most of Via Gervasutti, Punta Allievi. Retreated from top in thunderstorm.

Oliver St John

Lack of any contribution to the 1970 Journal was largely due to concentration on skiing, to which our family have become addicted in the past few years. We have found Northern Italy ideal in supplying an informal atmosphere, outstanding mountain scenery and excellent runs at all-inclusive rates far below more popular areas. Sauze D'Oulx, Courmayeur (twice) and Macugnaga all provide a distinctive charm, and unforgettable memories, for example, of skiing from the Col du Geant down the Mer de Glace right into the main street in Chamonix.

However, climbing was not altogether neglected and a few sporadic forays have been made in the U.K. to North Wales, the Lake District and Skye. The last was unkind as to weather, but with my two eldest children just leaving University and both very keen, I have enjoyed the pleasures of being led up such, to me, epics as Bovine and Cenotaph Corner in North Wales and Kern Knotts and Innominate Cracks in the Lakes.

July 1970, saw us in the Dolomites, with one week of perfect weather. Arriving by road at the Sella Pass about noon, we slipped in a most enjoyable, unplanned, short route, the Jahn Weg on the Third Sella Tower. Peter, my 11-year old, thoroughly enjoyed the somewhat exposed traverse, and we got down in plenty of time to get to the Gardecchia Hut in the Catinaccio, where we used our VW caravan as a base. Next morning three of us climbed the exhilarating Delago Kante on the Vajolet Towers, and, traversing over to Stabeler, met my wife and Peter, who joined us for the rest of the traverse to Winkler. Here again there is an interesting, if short, exposed traverse as you gain the Winkler Tower, where one has to hang out with one finger through a peg, and Peter ingeniously described it as the 'worst ten minutes of my life'.

Next morning, three of us made a route, probably a variation of the Kiene Fuhre, on the NE wall of the Catinaccio, about grade IV+, emerging at the cross on the top in glorious sunshine for an extended bask and a scamper down to the hut for refreshment.

The following morning we drove on to San Martino, bent on the Gran Pilaster of the Pala di San Martino. This was climbed by catching the 8 a.m.

cable car to the Rosetta, arriving at the foot of the climb about 9.30. It was a somewhat disappointing climb, with little technical interest, but there was thick cloud on the top and we were glad of the shelter of the bivouac hut before groping our uncertain way down and back to the Pradidali Hut, to meet my wife and Peter. The whole party climbed the Cima Canali next morning and then 3 of us made the exhilarating scramble over the 'golos' of the Via Ferrata to the new bivouac hut near the foot of the Cima della Madonna. As the weather had been so cloudy, the friendly guardian and his family regarded this rather mixed English party with kindly suspicion when we told him we hoped to give them a hail from the top of the Cima della Madonna next morning.

The Spigolo del Velo, though graded V, is a delightful climb and, leaving the bivouac at 6.30 we had no difficulty in reaching the top by 10 a.m. where we received a wave and answering cheer from the Pradidali Hut. In fact, there are only two really steep pitches, both well protected and we scrambled up the first half of the ridge unroped, steep but with huge holds and excellent rock.

After a couple of days relaxation by Lakes Molveno and Garda, the weather turned bad on us and frustrated an expedition to the Campanile Basso in the Brenta, which Hugh, my middle son, climbed solo as a gesture. We had further plans, too, for the Mont Blanc area, but on arrival at Courmayeur there was new snow almost down to Entreves and we drove through the tunnel and back home.

Early September found us in Morocco, with an even larger assorted family party aged from 8 to 55. Driving south through Marrakech to Asni, we found to our disgust that the Toubkal area in general and the Neltner Hut in particular had been 'out of bounds' for some months, due to an aircraft carrying guns to Biafra having crashed on Toubkal. We spent the night in the C.A.F. Hut at Imelil and aimed instead next day for Lepiney Hut, unmarked on our map, and very much an unknown quantity. We left our sleeping bags at Imelil and after an interminable and hot climb, reached the Lepiney Hut to find a warm reception from the guardian but an intensely cold night exacerbated by absence of any blankets. After the comfort of the bivouac huts of Italy I found this night particularly trying, which may in some way explain subsequent events. At 4.30 next morning, I stumbled out, literally, from the front door and slipped over the unguarded terrace on to the rocky slope below, breaking four ribs in the process. Fortunately there were two mules at the hut, but the subsequent evacuation, facing backwards down the very steep rocky track was a memorable experience that I have no wish to repeat. My wife and brother came down with me but my three children led the remaining young folk to the top of Biuguinousse, arriving back at Imelil shortly after us, having had an excellent day. Next morning we drove back to Tangier and medical attention and the rest of the holiday was spent enjoying the beaches of North Africa. Fortunately, the ribs, though badly smashed, healed rapidly, and we look forward to two spells of skiing shortly, in Formigal, Spain in January and Kitzbuhel in March 1971.

F. E. Smith

Easter. Killin meet:- Meall Corranaich. May. Bridge of Orchy:- Stob o'Choire Odhair and Stob Ghabhar; Beinn Dorain and Beinn an Dothaidh; Ben More and Stobinian; Meall a'Bhuiridh.

August. Trient meet:- Croix des Prelayes; Aig du Tour from Trient Hut; L'Arolette and traverse of Croix de Fer, Pointe du Van and Corraye; Mont Arfillie; Haute Cime, Dents du Midi from Susanfe Hut.

October. Langdale meet; Bowfell.

J. O. Talbot and Beryl Talbot

This year we were dogged by bad weather from the start. A few climbs in the Engelhörner on the Simelistock, Rosenlauistock and Engelberg but constantly chased by thunderstorms. Moved to the Jungfraujoch but confined for two days by snow and low cloud. Ambitious plans to do some of the great Oberland face routes with Paul Etter sadly abandoned. One final attempt to do a climb but turned back before the Ober Mönchjoch by new snow and a whiteout.

Climbing at home this year has been more productive with a good number of new routes on Gower Limestone.

David Todd

Instructing climbing with the Colorado Outward Bound School.

N. E. D. Walker

September. In the Stubai Alps with Graham Rose. Despite the absence of our guide we managed to do a few things. From Ranalt climbed to Nurnberger Hut in pouring rain. Following day climbed Mairspitze in fine weather, followed by the Wilde Freiger in poor weather coming off the snow ridge in a blizzard. Next day we ascended the Simming Joch in glorious weather. The final day we crossed over to the Sulzenau Hut via the Niedl Joch in glorious weather.

A four-day hut tour in the Wettenstein range with Walter Stefan and his wife. From Unter Leutasch climbed to Meiller Hut, then descended to Sachen Haus next day, and went on to the Reintalinger Hut for the night. From there we climbed to Knorr Hut and the day ended with climbing the

Zugspitze from the south-west ridge. After spending the night in Münchener Haus, the descent was made to the Schneeferner Haus and Gatterl to Ehrwald—all in glorious weather.

October. Back again in the Karwendels. Due to freak wintry weather conditions, climbing was at first confined to small minor peaks off the major ridges. Climbed Wornerkopf from Hochlander Hut in severe wintry conditions; and Pleisen Spitze from Pleisen Hut in heavy snow, both with Wilhelm Winneberger. Ascended to the BrunNSTein Joch from BrunNSTein Hut with a party of Germans.

Eric Wallis

Easter. An attempt on the North Face of the Matterhorn with P. F. Gentil. Peter and I spent two days at the Hornli Hut after excavating several feet of snow and ice from the main door. From outside we had noticed the shutters of a first floor window were off and the window out. After locating the keys we entered this bedroom from inside. Inside all the bunks and blankets were under several inches of snow. The window was lying neatly on the floor between the two rows of bunks—not a pane was broken. Closer inspection showed that the window had been forced probably with an ice axe. Earlier in the year the snow must have been up to the window level and it would have been easy to enter. We found no names in the hut book after November but we entered ours and paid our fees. The afternoon was spent cleaning up the bedroom and replacing the window. I mention this in an effort to clear our names and that of the A.B.M.S.A.C. from any responsibility for any damage caused. The weather was far from ideal and even inside the hut the temperature was a constant -8°C .

Next day we only reached the top of the steep snow/ice slope leading onto the Matterhorn Glacier before deciding it was unwise to continue. There was a considerable amount of snow all in danger of avalanching. The following day the barometer had dropped considerably and snow was falling heavily, about 9" settling by the morning. We decided that if we didn't retreat immediately we would be isolated for several days so reluctantly we retraced our precarious steps back down.

Summer. Guiding in the Bernese Oberland and Otztal. On arrival in the Alps after the usual two day marathon drive the weather was good so on the Sunday evening we went up to the Blumlisalphutte arriving there in darkness. The following morning was magnificent and we climbed the ridge of the Weisse Frau (3654 m.) which proved to be a pleasant snow climb. From the summit there were superb views, one being the undulating snow/ice arete linking up with the Blumlisalphorn. As it was my client's first Alpine season I decided against trying this and instead traversed the almost level snow ridge to the Morgenhorn (3612 m.) and descended the N.W. ridge.



Below the Hörnli Hut—Easter 1970

Photo by: Eric Wallis

The following day also was good and we set off for the Blumlisalhorn—Weisse Frau traverse. What a beautiful route this turned out to be! It was quite serious in the prevailing conditions. Having reached the summit of the Blumlisalhorn via a steep narrow snow arete we breakfasted and then set off along the N.E. ridge. This was slow as we moved separately almost the whole length of the ridge. On our right there was a continuous cornice and break line with overhangs of about 30'. After this conditions improved steadily and although my client was going slowly we reached the summit of the Weisse Frau from where we retraced the steps of our previous day.

The weather then clamped down for several days so we retreated to the Taschachhaus in the Otztal where after much hard work making tracks over glaciers we did the Ordinary route up Hinter Oldgrubenspitze. The highlight of our stay in Austria was our meeting with 18 Czech Instructors who despite the language barrier became good friends. We exchanged information on different equipment and techniques and after an offer of help to carry my wife's large sac down to the valley we all had an unforgettable evening drinking Weisse Wein at the Mittelberg Hotel.

Jeremy Whitehead

April. Leading S.C.G.B. Valais ski tour. Peaks ascended were Bella Tola, Mt. Blanc de Cheilon (winter summit); Pigne d'Arolla; Breithorn. Guided by Michel Zufferey, except for Breithorn which was guideless. The party also included Rev. F. L. Jenkins.

August. Portjengrat traverse; Fletschhorn; Jagiwand and traverse of Jagigrat; Rimpfischhorn by ordinary route from Britannia; traverse of Aigs. Rouges d'Arolla; N. Summit of Les Bouquetins. All these climbed guideless with J. J. B. Hackney. There followed an idle week nursing a badly sprained ankle, sustained on the Bouquetins when my companion decided on a rapid descent of an ice slope.

Later, attempts were made on Le Besso, and Rothorn, N. ridge, both frustrated by excessive snow, in company of R. F. Hunter.

I. F. G. Whittington

Went skiing while in Norway over New Year, on the West Coast. A spell of near two months in Iceland in the summer, with the British Schools Exploring Society's Expedition to the Eriksjökull area in the central desert region. Found the mountains of this area to be majestic mounds of loose stone and scree, much as G. R. E. Brooke recounted in last year's journal. Little of note was achieved (mainly as I was engaged to survey, rather than climb) save that I walked through the soles of my boots on the volcanic rocks. An area to be visited by Land-Rover, to view natural phenomena rather than to mountaineer.

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PRINTED BY Unwin Brothers Limited
THE GRESHAM PRESS OLD WOKING SURREY ENGLAND

Produced by 'Uneoprint'

A member of the Staples Printing Group

(UO453)