

**THE ASSOCIATION  
OF BRITISH MEMBERS  
OF THE SWISS ALPINE CLUB  
JOURNAL 1986**

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### DIARY FOR 1986

- Christmas - New Year    Plas Gwyn, Beddgelert.    John Berry.
- 22 January    The Fondue Party.    Lorraine Wilson on "Leading Treks".    Book with Mary Boulter.
- 7-9 February    Northern Dinner Meet.    Brooke Midgley.
- 19 March    Geoffrey Attridge on "Personal Views".
- 27-31 March    Easter Meet, Patterdale.    John Murray.
- 27-31 March    Easter Meet, Plas Gwyn, Beddgelert.    John Berry.
- 18-19 April    ABMSAC Maintenance Meet, Patterdale.    Don Hodge.
- 2-5 May    Patterdale.    John Murray.
- 23-26 May    Patterdale.    John Murray.
- 4 June    Buffer Party.    Book with Mary Boulter.
- 20-22 June    Classic Scrambles Meet.    John Berry.
- 26 July - 9 August Plus extension    Dauphine.    Joint ABMSAC, AC, CC meet.    Mike Pinney.
- 11-31 August    Arolla.    ABMSAC Alpine Meet.    The President.
- 22-25 August    Patterdale.    John Murray.
- 3-5 October    Patterdale, Buffet Party.    Marion Porteous.
- 7-9 November    Patterdale Reunion Meet.    Miriam Baldwin.
- 19 December - New Year Patterdale.    John Murray.

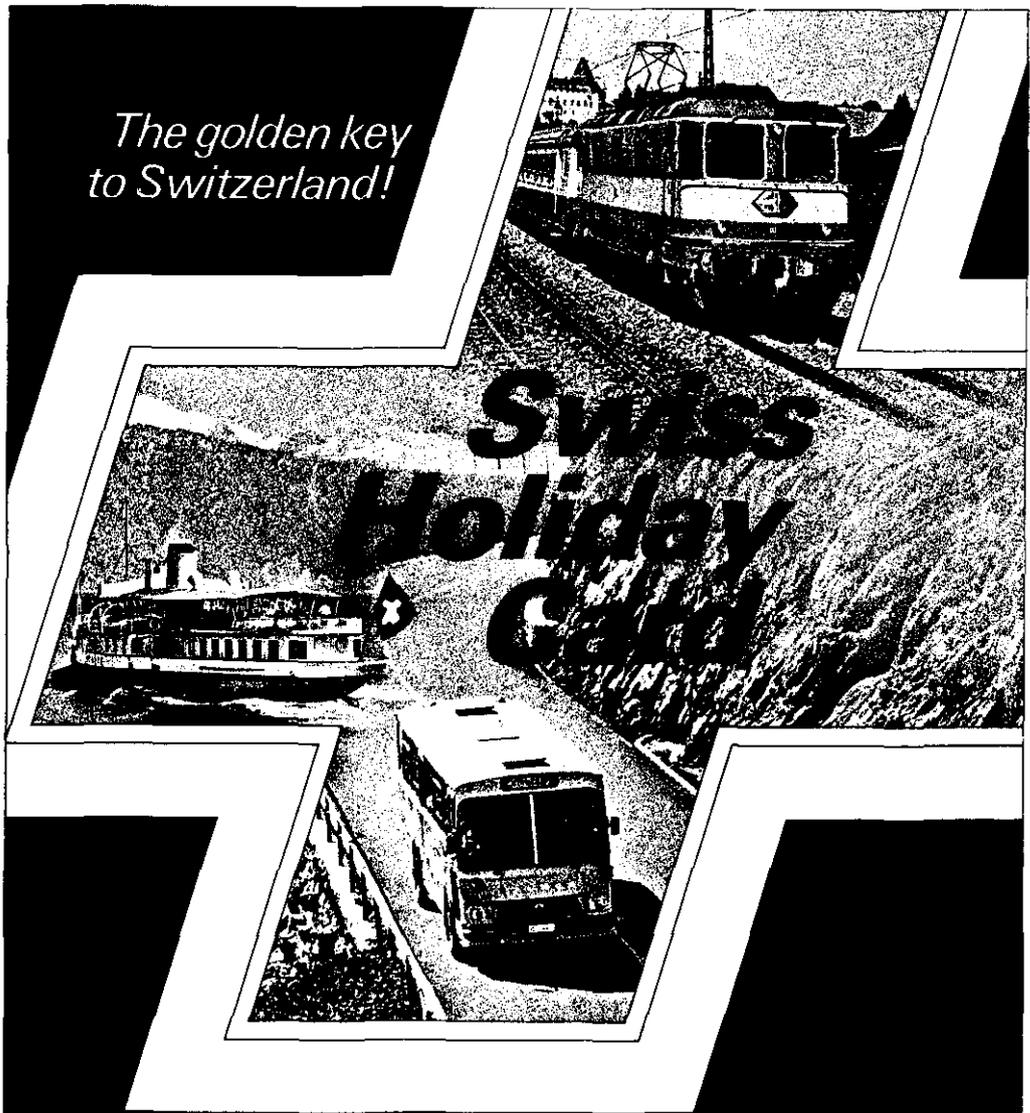
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Lecture meets will be held at the Alpine Club, 74 South Audley Street, London W.1. at 7.15 p.m. Cash bar refreshments will be available from 8.30 p.m. and coffee will be available after the lecture. Please book with the person named for outdoor meets. Further details will appear in circulars.

Book for Patterdale through John Murray, 4 Sunny Point, Crook, Nr. Kendal, LA8 8LP. Telephone 0539 821754.

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## EDITORIAL

By a happy coincidence, this year's Journal includes two reports of feats of classical style Alpine mountaineering. Will McLewin had previously reported the completion of the round of all the 4000m. peaks in the standard list. He has now covered all the supplementary lists that have appeared recently. A technical explanation is given as a main article, and Will also describes his climbs under "Members Activities". There also will be found Les Swindin's brief report on his completion of the standard list. When Will's original performance was reported, we asked whether readers could tell us whether any other British climbers since Eustace Thomas have completed the round. Les Swindin's achievement makes the question more pertinent; please help.

The most importance item of domestic club politics is that we hope we may have found a satisfactory home for the Library. Please see the AGM minutes.

It is with sorrow that we print an obituary notice for Mrs. Cicely Williams.

## THE FOUR THOUSAND METRE PEAKS OF THE ALPS:— A CODA

by Will McLewin

Shortly after my account of climbing all the 4000m. peaks in the classic list of Blödig and Dumler had appeared in the 1982 edition of this Journal and in the July 1982 edition of "Climber and Rambler", Geoff Birtles and John Stevenson, with the help of John Cleare and John Brallsford, were producing a more exhaustive list in a major article in "High" magazine, which appeared in Spring 1983. This list is rather like a miniature version of Blödig and Dumler's book, with a list and a paragraph on each peak. Their list is of 75 summits which they separate into 50 "major summits" and "25 subsidiary tops" and is rather spoilt by the apparent obsession with "round numbers" and a consequently idiosyncratic selection. Most of the increase from B. and D's 59 comes from two sources: separate listing of multiple summit mountains, typically the Grandes Jorasses and the Grand Combin, which provide 5 and 4 respectively in the High list and just one each in B. and D., and named ridge points, typically Pic Luigi Amadeo and the Arete Brouillard of Mont Blanc.

For anyone interested in this business, the detailed comparison is as follows:—

In B. & D., not in High (2)

Ludwigshöhe 4313  
Schwartzorne 4322

These are both minor tops in the Monte Rosa massif.

In High, not in B. and D. (18)

Mont Blanc de Courmayeur 4748  
Grenzgipfel on Monte Rosa 4596  
Pic Luigi Amadeo 4469  
Dome du Gouter 4304  
Aiguille du Croissant on Grand Combin 4243  
Point Whymper on Grandes Jorasses 4184  
Grand Combin de Valsorey 4184  
Grand Combin de Tsesette 4141  
l'Isolée (Aiguilles du Diable) 4114  
Point Croz on Grandes Jorasses 4110  
Point Carmen (Aiguilles du Diable) 4109  
Roccia Nera on Breithorn 4079  
Point Marguerite on Grandes Jorasses 4065  
Point Helene on Grandes Jorasses 4045  
Point Croux on Aiguille Verte 4023  
Dome de Neige des Ecrins 4015  
Punta Baretta 4013  
Aiguille de Rochefort 4001 (or Dome de Rochefort 4015)

The B. and D. list makes reasonable sense from a mountaineer's point of view; only the Punta Baretta, a sweet little summit further south from Mont. Brouillard is a serious omission, and I believe this is a genuine oversight; missed out by Blödig in 1926 because of its obscure remoteness and respectfully left out by Dumler in 1968. The "High" list does not really make sense; for example the Schwarthorn is a more substantial top in its context than the aiguille du Croissant or the Point Croux; and I see no sense at all in selecting only two of the five Aiguilles du Diable for inclusion.

Nevertheless, with encouragement from Geoff Birtles, completing the "High" list seemed a worthwhile objective, especially when it became clear that this had not been done by a British climber, and it provided a nice motivation for revisiting one or two mountains. In fact only five more routes were required: a complete traverse of the Grand Combin for the Aig du Croissant and the G.C. de Tsessette, another route on the Aiguille Verte for the Point Croux, a stroll up the Ecrins for the Dome de Neige, the Punta Baretto and lastly the Aiguilles due Diable, the only route that I was definitely not keen to solo. In fact Anne Brearley, who had previous experience of this obsession, came with me for some of the first four in 1984 leaving a chance meeting with Bob Brevitt to help me with the last this summer.

In some ways the Aiguilles due Diable are an unfortunate inclusion because they require more demanding rock climbing and in a serious situation than any others - on the other hand they are conspicuous and prominent objects.

To get a satisfactory list I would add the Ludwigshöhe and the Schwarthorn.

So "High's" 75 and also the other three Aiguilles due Diable: the Corne du Diable 4046, the Point Chaubert 4074 and the Point Mediane 4097. This makes the total 80, and I am inclined, for bloody minded sentimentality, to include the Point Eccles 4041 even though it is rather insignificant in its context.

And I don't doubt that someone could find a few more with a bit of ingenuity or imagination, but don't tell me, I'm opting for "whatever catches my fancy at the time" from now on.

Piz Verstancla by the North East Ridge (October 1966)

*(after the Ladin of Armon Planta)*  
Translated by Ioan Bowen Rees

Slim ridge	We two	
ladder up	you son and I	
into the blue-black	entangled	
dividing	come what may	
summer and winter	two dwarfs	
above the glaciers	daring the giant's back	
		towards the summit

Fighting the rock	We make it!
eyeing the fall	On top
sweating panting	we shake hands
a bit fear salting	like old friends meeting
our zest	

Down in the valley  
on one another's nerves  
shall we look up  
and remember?

Translator's Note:-

I first saw this Romansch poem by Armon Planta in Terra Grischuna, and attempted a Welsh version with the help of the German translation printed at its side and a Ladin dictionary. The translation was first published in Taliesin, the journal of the Welsh Academy, in 1968 and then collected in my volume of essays and poems Mynyddoedd (Gomer Press, Llandysul, 1973). I thank Armon Planta for giving me permission to translate it: he liked the sound of the Welsh when I read it to him but neither Welsh nor English can evoke the charm and pithiness of the original.

Armon Planta lives in Sent and teaches at the secondary school at Scuol. An outstanding mountaineer, he is a former president of the Engiadina Bassa Section of the S.A.C., whose official language is Romansch. Many of his poems are satirical and radical in tone and he writes in the Walser dialect of German, his mother's language, as well as in his father tongue, the version of Rhaeto-romansch called Ladin.

He is critical of Europe's neglect of the Third World but also disappointed by the way in which a number of Romansch authors desert their native valleys for the fleshpots of Zürich.

The north-east ridge of the imposing Piz Verstancla or Verstanklahorn (3297.6 m) is long, steep, and very exposed. It is approached either from the small hut at Alp Marangun in the Val Lavinuoz or from the Silvretta Hut in 7 to 8 hours. According to the 2nd Edition of Volume 8 of Bündner Alpen it is the finest route on the mountain.

## REPORTS OF MEMBERS' ACTIVITIES

### Alasdair Andrews

The first half of 1985 brought the usual mix of Munros and other hills. Craig Meagaidh in February, Beinn Lui and Ben Vorlich in March, Ben Wyvis in May with Colin Armstrong, Bert Bowes and Ben y Ghlo in June with Geoff Bone and John Evans. Ullapool attracted thirteen members and friends for an unofficial meet for the Spring Bank Holiday. Most of the hills between Assynt and Loch Broom were climbed in most inclement weather.

Mid July saw us in Pinzolo; a delightful spot lying between the Adamello - Presanella group and the Brenta Dolomites. The weather was mostly fine to very hot and we were out on the hills for seven days out of a possible eight. Ernst Sondheimer and I traversed part of the Sentiers Alfredo Benini en route for the Cima Groste and the Sentiero Sosat - a fine exposed route. Later we were joined by Bert Bowes and Livia Gollancz and from the Brentei hut we traversed the famous Sentiero della Bocchetti Centrale. This route winds along the ridge weaving between the magnificent Sfulmini to the Bocca di Brenta. This route is truly superb and is of far greater interest than some of the higher snow trudes of the western alps.

To round off the week Bert Bowes and I climbed the Cima Presanella from the hut of the same name. A fine climb in splendid weather marred only by the deep soft snow of the final one thousand feet. I strongly recommend this area - the hills are interesting, and not too high. Accommodation and restaurants of all standards are available at fairly modest prices.

In the second week we transferred to Canazei in the Western Dolomites. The weather was not so kind, and an attempt on the Marmolada by Bert Bowes and myself was abandoned due to the stormy weather. On the one fine day, Bert, Alf Lock and I climbed a fairly easy hill - Piz Boe - the view over the Dolomites from the summit was superb.

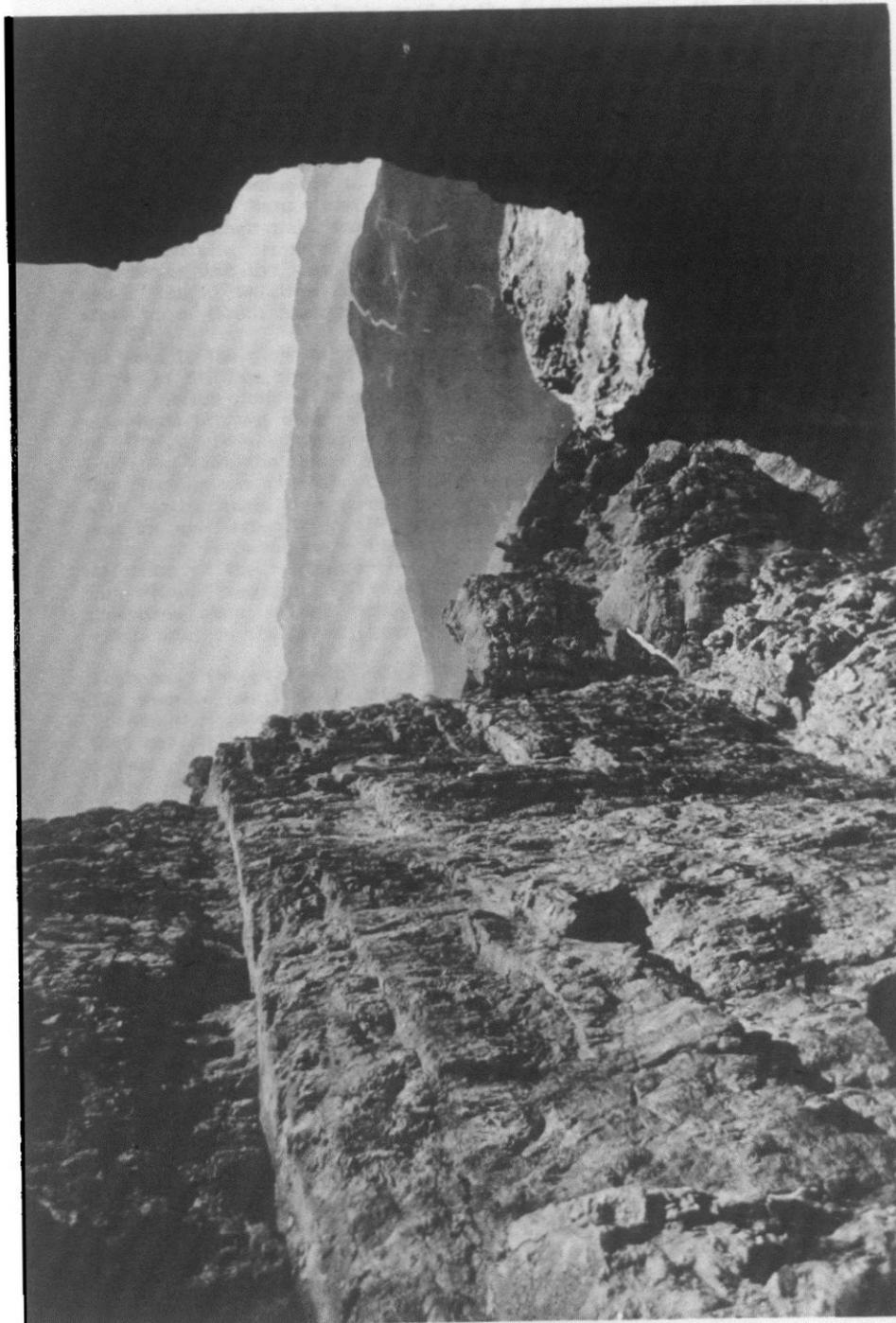
This area is very pleasant - much busier than Pinzolo - with many pleasant walks and climbs in very spectacular scenery.

The remainder of the year was fairly undemanding and was rounded off with an ascent of Mount Teide in Tenerife in November, and a delightful walk over the snow round the Pentland Hills at the end of December.

### Mary and Paddy Boulter

New Year's Day 1985 was windy with snow flurries and low cloud so we abandoned Sharp Edge of Blencathra and walked over Southerfell as a consolation prize. Over the next few weeks, however, we got up High Street, Skiddaw and most of the Northern fells.

We couldn't go to Switzerland this winter but managed to add a few days to a working trip to Scotland. The original idea had been to ski and we did have a couple of days - one on Cairngorm (crowded) and one on the Lecht (slushy), but both brilliantly sunny. The water was pluperfect for hillwalking and we had a day on the Glen Feshie tops - Carn Ban Mhor and Sgoran Dubh - fine views and the great Feshie herd of red deer all around us. Then, the next day was even better. We went up Strath



VIA DELLE BOCCHETTE  
Ernst Sondheimer

Spey and along the old Wade road to the Corrieyairack - the hairpin bends picked out by snow and no tracks except for deer and hares. This was a vintage day with fine views to the Great Glen and the back of Creag Megaidh and to cap it all nobody at all seen in 40 miles of driving and 18 miles on our feet.

In May we were in Australia and spare time was left out of the programme but we had a morning off from Toowoomba when we went up Table Top, a nice walk and scramble to a deserted summit with a fine view along the Great Dividing Range and eastwards to the Pacific coast. A second day gave us another walk from Cunningham's Gap up to Mount Cordeaux in quite dramatic scenery. On the way back home, we came by way of Vancouver and the view from our Air Canada plane on the way across the Coast Range, Selkirks and Rockies was superb - perhaps the gem was a close up of Mount Assiniboine.

We went to the very happy Fischbiel meet. We met up with Joan and John Whyte at St. Luc and did the *Bella Tola* and *Illhorn* as rewarding practice walks before joining the rest of the party. The meet is described elsewhere but we were delighted to return to the Lotschental in the care of the Archer clan and those great girls, Margaret and Rosemary, borrowed from the House of Lords. We had good days in the mountains - the Hockenhorn (twice), the Wildstrubel across the Plaine Morte Glacier with a remarkable view across to the Pennine Alps and along to Mont Blanc and an epic attempt on the Ebnefluh which defeated us by deep crusty snow and inconveniently hidden crevasses. It was not helped by the defection of the Huttenwart of the Hollandia Hut who had abandoned the hut without warning. The winter room cupboard had some gastronomic treasures such as six month old bread and a miraculous pot of honey which went on the bread, over the boiled rice and into the porridge.

Then came October when we had a long-planned trip to Nepal with friends. The weather had been dreadful with the monsoon having a final fling which flooded the plains and clothed the Himalaya with unstable masses of snow that caused disaster on Everest and marooned trekking parties all over Nepal. We had more mist than we wanted as we went up the Tiru Danda ridge. Clear early mornings gave superlative but fleeting views over to the Langtang, the Ganesh Himal, Manaslu and Annapurna. We went down to the Trisuli valley and up to the Langtang. This was glorious, surrounded by sensational peaks - Langtang Lirung, Gangchempo and Naya Kanga (for which we had a permit). We could not do this as the new snow made the route impossible for a large party with porters. We enjoyed our consolation prize of Tsergo Ri which had good going and epic views. We altered our return route to come back by Gosainkund and the Laurabina La and a good snow top above it. Finally, there was a long up and down walk along the Odang Danda back to Kathmandu. The flowers were unexpectedly excellent with *Gentiana* (*Depressa* and *Ornata*), *Daphne*, *Luculia*, *Mahonia* and a final fling of orchids on our final descent. It was a wonderful trip with the best of companions and a great team of Sherpas and porters.

I wonder if the Editor will allow me two final commercials? First: the Patterdale Mountain Rescue team is really a neighbour of the Association at Patterdale. Could we have a collecting box in the George Starkey Hut? Secondly: Mary and I went into the Glenridding Mountain Shop for some bootlaces just before we went to Nepal and left having found there all the things that we couldn't get in well known shops in London and elsewhere. Mr. and Mrs. Wood have an astonishing stock and are nice people too!

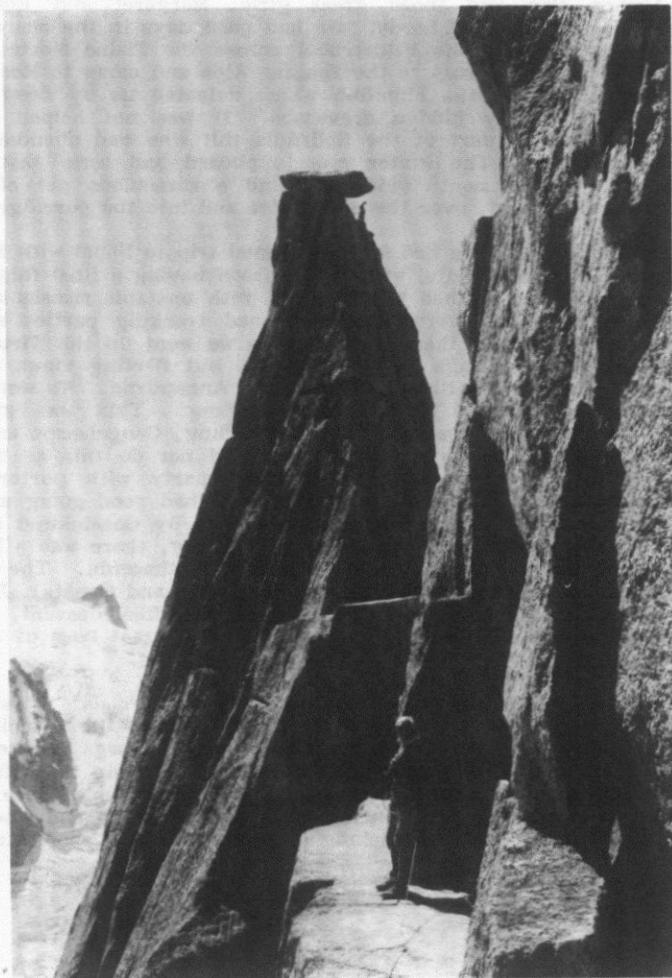
Tony Husbands

One experience in 1985 is perhaps worth recording as being of interest. On March 9th Gill Bull and I arrived on the summit of Snowdon about 4.30 p.m. by which time the sun on the horizon was not very much higher than we were. As we stood beside the trig. point looking East at the clouds drifting over Llyn Llydaw we saw our shadows projected on to the clouds and then a complete rainbow formed with our shadows visible from the base to the centre. Very soon a second complete rainbow formed round the first and then a third one.

No one I have spoken to has ever seen three concentric rainbows before. It was the finest Brocken Spectre I have ever seen. Although I took some photographs the colours of the rainbows are unfortunately not very distinct.

**GRÉPON SUMMIT  
FROM ROUTE DES BICYCLETTES**

*Tony Husbands*



Will McLewin

"Was this the year" I ask myself? For rather too many years now I've been arriving for my summer in Alps having done not enough rock climbing and not enough sack carrying, but then finding, after a route or two, that fitness miraculously returns. And in all this time I've thought "One of these years this transformation is not going to happen, and I'm not going to cruise about at speed but find it all rather hard work". Well, the evidence is not totally conclusive but I've an awful feeling (mostly in the legs) that this was the year.

I had one route I had to do, the Aiguilles du Diable Arete on Mont Blanc du Tacul and despite persistently arranging to get in some harder rock climbing bad weather and other responsibilities persistently prevented it.

Still, as I left at least everything about the van (my VW motor caravan) was perfect; the reconditioned engine was superb, the decaying bodywork had been banished by an orgy of pop-rivets and armour plate and the whole vehicle was resplendent in Dark Peak Fell Runners colours (brown for peat, with a purple, for heather, and a yellow for gorse, stripe: this was also a theft deterrent!). Alas, about thirty miles from Besancon a French maniac smashed into the back as I was driving gently along, knocking me off the road into a ditch. After it was dragged out the van was a sorry sight: a fearful mangled mess at my nearside (U.K.) rear corner, the front off side corner thoroughly crumpled and the driver's door jammed. Incredibly, after some brutal treatment to various bits of the body it would still go, despite the engine having been displaced about 15°. The other vehicle, a Renault Fuego, was a total wreck and an instant write-off. Three thousand miles later the van is still purring around sweetly, albeit under an insurance company death sentence.

The first week, with rain at first, somehow disappeared in Grindelwald and the Lotschental with neither enough running nor enough hard walking so a rather lifeless, but still enjoyable, performance in the Sierre-Zinal race was no surprise.

Brunneghorn, west flank and south ridge; with Brian and Denise, Andrew and Jennifer Wood. This was prompted by our being unable to name it from the Lötchenpass and by our having never previously visited the Turmtantal.

Alphubel, south east ridge; solo. An excellent bivouac by rocks at 3352 m. above the Langfluh and lovely crisp snow as I skirted round the parties on the east flank and sat about on top waiting for the Woods to arrive.

Aiguilles du Diable, Mont Blanc du Tacul with Bob Brevitt. Brian's announcement that he was backing out of our plan to do this route was a considerable disappointment and left me no alternative but to move to Chamouix to try to "pick up a young man in a bar". I was very fortunate to find Bob Brevitt fit and keen and at a loose end after his climbing partner had gone home badly shaken rather than injured after a fall. A particular pleasure was to find that he shared my predilection for bivouacs and we were rewarded with one of the best ever. After walking round from the Midi to the approach couloir in Combe Maudit we found the bergschrund very difficult but impossible to approach closely anyway because of occasional rocks coming over the edge. An awkward rock pitch to the right and about 150 feet of scrambling about led us to a table sized ledge perched a few feet above the couloir, and twenty minutes

construction made it smooth and comfortable. A long, leisurely meal watching the sun go down over Mont Maudit, magnificent views of the Tour Ronde ridge, the Arete Peutercey and the Brenva face; the evening colour bringing the first stars and then the night sky; exquisite. The route itself, once the Breche du Diable was reached, was quite hard, with persistent pitches of vertical and usually cold rock and awkward extremely exposed scrambling. We eventually discovered that the 30 m. direct abseil from St Mediane to the Breche de la Carmen means exactly that and Bob had an unpleasant dangle while I found my emergency length of 6 mm rope, untangled it, invented a knot and eventually rearranged a long enough abseil on ropes of unequal thickness. We discovered that both a stich plate and a descendeur work perfectly well in this situation. The Breche de la Carmen is simply a large flake jammed in an endless vertical fissure - a most impressive situation. The grade V pitch on l'Issolee is the sort of thing that would cause squeals of delight at Stanage: with P.A.'s instead of large plastic boots, without frozen fingers, not after several hours hard climbing at 400m, with a substantial rucksack and without heavy clouds getting ominously close. As it was pleasure and anguish were combined.

The top of l'Issolee is a bit more comfortable than the other pinnacles and knowing that the rest of the route is straightforward scrambling we were able to relax and enjoy the situation, despite apprehension about the weather and uncertainty about the time of the last telepherique from the Midi. For me l'Issolee was the very last of the minor 4000m. summits in the Alps and provided a fitting finale.

Aiguille du Tour; with Bob Brevitt. Another excellent bivouac about 500m. from the Albert Premier hut, but then we found the wrong col in the dark early next morning so the complete traverse of the Dorees that we had planned was abandoned and we settled for an easy day visiting both summits of the Tour. Bob worked off some of his annoyance by finding a taxing route on the south west arete of north peak, which became a safety measure as other parties dislodged vast quantities of rocks down the easy routes.

Dent du Geant west face; with Bob Brevitt. This was supposed to be the first part of the Geant-Rochefort-Grand Jorasses traverse. Unfortunately after 2 day's very bad weather, there were vast quantities of new snow which had not been improved by the first good day because of a very cold north wind. After queueing for the telepherique to the Torino and finding our own route to the Geant it was 6.00 p.m. but we thought we would climb it then anyway and have the route to ourselves. It was quite an epic - vast quantities of ice and snow, the fixed ropes frozen to the face and incredibly cold on the upper half. We reached the madonna just as the sun went down, descended by moonlight and only began to feel comfortable as we moved across the lower half of the west face and got out of the wind. As we prepared our bivouac at 10.00 p.m. we could see a party leaving to begin climbing on the Brenva face. Next morning 100m. of the Rochefort arete up to our waists in soft snow was enough and we went back to the Torino grateful that many parties had made a decent path across the plateau and even more grateful to get down to the plateau before they arrived.

The walk down to La Palud was as unpleasant as I remembered it from the previous time many years ago, but perhaps, like then, disappointment coloured our impressions.

G.B. Pennett

We spent the latter days of 1984 walking in beautiful Wharfedale which is probably the prettiest dale in Yorkshire. In February we spent six days in Eskdale (Lake District), staying at a cottage at Boot. On February 16th we did a short walk to Eel Tarn and returned by Little Pie, Great Barrow and Little Barrow. After drinks at the Burnmoor Inn we drove up Hardknott Pass to the Roman Fort and then walked up Hardknott Fell (1803ft).

The next day, February 17th, was very cold but sunny. We walked from Boot by the railway line to Eskdale Green and then climbed Irton Fell. Continued our journey by Greathall Gill to Whin Rigg (1755ft) and Illgill Head (1983ft). Thrilling views down the screes to Westwater and across to Yewbarrow, Kirk Fell and Gable. We returned to Boot by the Corpse Path and Burnmoor Tarn.

The next day, February 18th, we walked from Boot to Doctor Bridge to the Peat Road and then past Low Birker Tarn to Green Crag (1602ft). Returned by Crook Crag and then did a long detour by Long Crag across frozen bog and streams to the Harter Fell path. This was not a particularly memorable walk. On February 19th we decided to do a short walk due to the poor weather. We climbed Muncaster Fell to the summit of Hooker Crag. On our way we passed Ross's Camp, a miniature man made stonehenge constructed in 1883. Continued to Chapel Hill, High Eskholme, Birks Plantation, Muncaster Head to Eskdale.

The day we climbed Harter Fell (February 20th) was sunny and warm. We left Boot and walked to Doctor Bridge and then by Penny Hill to Harter Fell (2140ft). Stayed at the top for nearly an hour. Returned to the top of Hardknott Pass. Walked by the Roman Fort and then continued to Penny Hill. We returned home the next day (February 21st).

During March I did a few short walks in Wharfedale and then on Good Friday climbed Buckden Pike in the morning and Burnsall Fell in the afternoon.

On May 25th we spent a few days on Arran and during our stay we climbed Binnein Na Uaimh and Ard Bheinn (1678ft). May 29th was extremely hot and sunny. We parked the car at Sannox and then walked up the glen to start the climb to the top of Suidhe Fhearghas (2081ft). Glorious view across Glen Sannox to Cioch na h-Oighe. We then continued to the Witch's Step, Ceum Na Ceillich (2300ft) to Caisteal Abhall (The Castles), (2817ft). After a short stay on the top we walked down to the Dress Circle and then decided to climb Cir Mhor (2618ft), where we had wonderful views down Glen Rosa and Glen Sannox. Returned to Sannox by Whin Dyke and Glen Sannox and finished with a pint at the Corrie Hotel.

During August we spent two weeks on Menorca and visited the highest mountain Monte Toro.

On November 2nd my wife and I enjoyed a walk in Wharfedale taking in Simon's Seat, Lord's Seat and Beamsley Beacon.

Ernst Sondheimer

This report covers the two years 1984 and 1985. 1984 was undoubtedly 'Scotland' year, with no fewer than seven visits, highly varied and all enjoyable. Here is a summary:

(1) Hogmanay with Hamish Brown, Charles Knowles and Belinda Swift, at Cozac Lodge (Glen Cannich), run (at the time) by a friendly Danish couple who had filled the place with the best Copenhagen china and who dined and wined us superbly. There wasn't much else to be done; the weather was as evil as only Scottish New Year weather can be, and after Ben Wyvis, traversed in a gale and bitter cold (Hamish's dog had to seek cover in the rucksack), no further mountains are possible.

(2) February: at the Onich meet, with Alasdair Andrews and the rest of the gang. A superb day in the Mamores; morning fog cleared to let us revel in sun and snow.

(3) In April Hamish was at the Glenbrittle Hut, Warden for the month, so went up to join him for a few days. The Cuillins were under snow, and the sun shone on us for Sgurr nan Eag. A surprising result of that splendid day was that I found myself immortalised (anonymously) on the cover of a recent poetic publication...(see below).

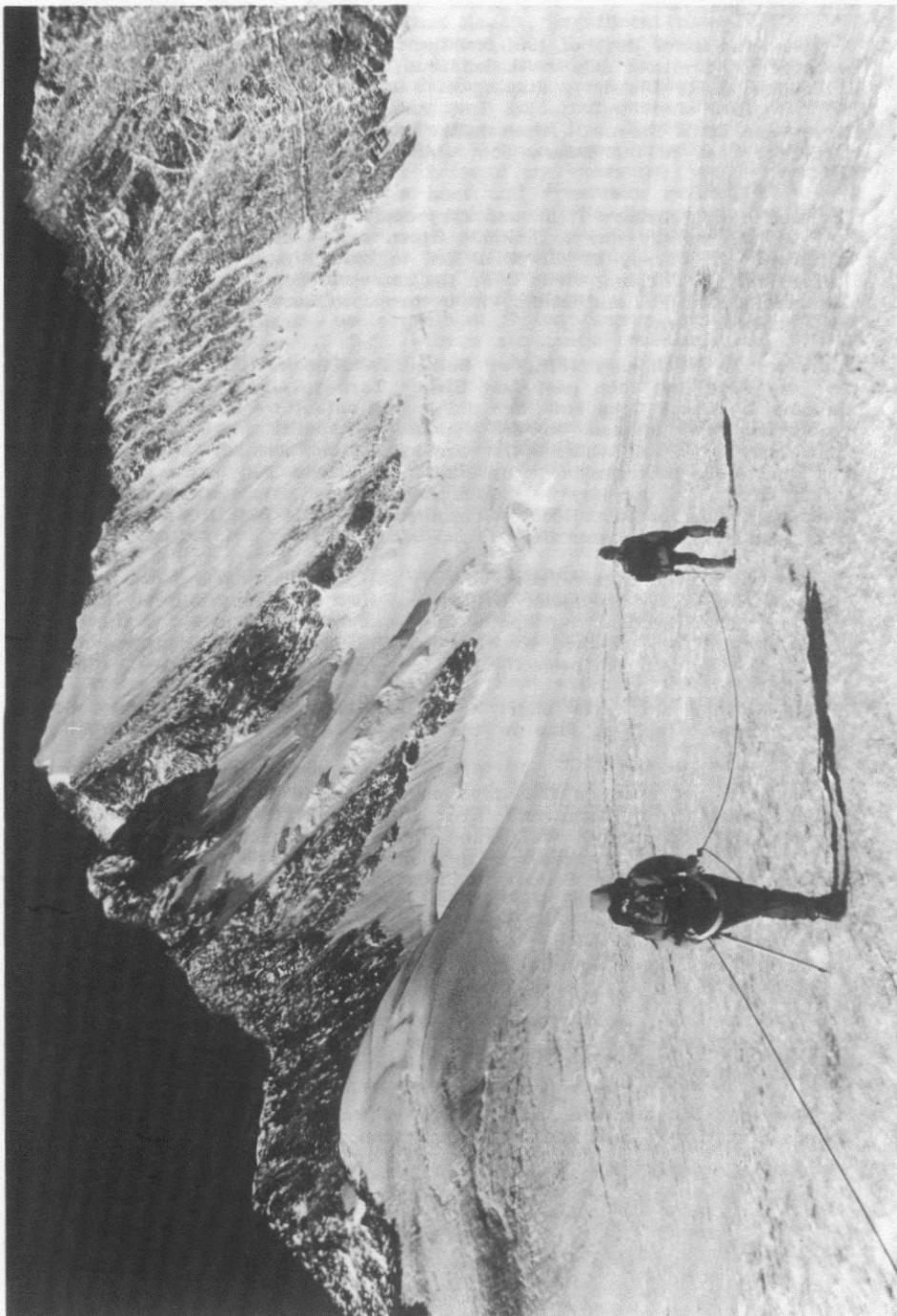
(4) Back to Skye in May, when Swiss friend Richard came on his biennial Scottish visit. The snow had gone, but some good Cuillin rounds were accomplished, including the Banachdich-Dearg horseshoe, up Coire a'Bhasteir and over Bruach na Frithe, and Sgurr nan Gillean. Richard is a keen climber with an over anxious wife: when I saw that he had shinned half-way up the Inn. Pinn, unroped, whilst my back was turned, visions arose of shipping his corpse back to Switzerland, and he was told to come down if he wanted our friendship to continue. I don't think he has forgiven me yet.

(5) A July weekend with Alasdair. Ben Cruachan in fog, and Stuc a'Chroin from Callander - Drumardoch: an excellent ramble in lonely country.

(6) - (7) Two more weekends in October: with an operation looming in December I thought I'd better get fit. The first started with a meeting of the Scottish Wild Land Group; this was the famous occasion when Hamish managed to lose his dormobile, complete with dog, in the middle of Edinburgh New Town. Ben Lomond next day, in wind, sun and cloud, helped to restore sanity. Finally as Alasdair's guest at a Ferranti Mountaineering Club meet at Bridge of Orchy. A fine day for Beinn Dorain and Beinn an Dothaidh, with the first snow of winter on the tops. Next day Alasdair and I earned a reputation for intrepidity (or stupidity?), for battling up Stob a'Choire Odhair in mist, wind and pouring rain, whilst the rest of the party were sensible and stayed in the bar.

I had also one week in the Alps, based on Saas Fee, where our ambitions were frustrated by mishaps and bad weather - a just punishment for playing truant from the ABM celebrations.

Still, belonging to the ABM does have its rewards - as becomes clear when a Vice President of the club, after carrying out your operation with dedication and skill, appears by your bedside almost as soon as you have recovered consciousness, carrying a bottle of whisky and murmuring 'you



LENZPITZE  
Ernst Sondheimer

have to drink a lot, you know!'. Subsequently the Vice President, well knowing my predilection for disappearing into the hills without warning, issued stern orders to take it easy for a while - so the winter's outdoor activities were, reluctantly, confined to tending the alpines in the garden.

By March 1985, rejuvenated, I was back in Scotland. A traverse of an icy and imposing Ben Lui was followed by a sunny springlike day on Ben Vorlich - a jubilee ascent to mark the 30 year anniversary of the Ferranti Mountaineering Club. Never before had I arrived on a Scottish summit to be greeted with a glass of whisky served on a tray! In April Hamish came to London for the launch of the great anthology *Speak to the Hills* (have you bought your copy?), and in early May we were back in Glenbrittle, for three cold and windy, hut dry, days in the Cuillins. Together with cold dog I was hauled up two of the harder Munros, and we finished with an ascent of Blaven, most delectable of mountains - discovering treasure (as one is apt to do with Hamish), by the stream on the way down, in the form of a wild alpine garden, with purple saxifrage, alpine ladies' mantle and other delights.

Late May, and again late September, found me walking in England for a change - on the South Downs Way and then on the Dorset coast. In between, two marvellous weeks in the Alps. First, in July, to Pinzolo, between the Brenta and the Adamello, to join Alasdair and his crowd, together with Livia Gollancz, eager to return to the Alps. The 'Vie Ferrate' of the Brenta Dolomites proved pure delight - so airy, such views, so (relatively) effortless! The ideal pastime for elderly mountaineers - and let the hard men sneer. (I was glad to see that the 'Via delle Bocchette' has been included amongs Wait Unsworth's 'Classic Walks of the World'). By contrast, the Cima Presanella, in hot sun and deep soft snow, was definitely more of an effort - but a fine hill and not without 'interest' - especially when you get to the place where the ridge goes knife-sharp and very airy... Then, in early September, back to Saas Fee to deal with unfinished business. Over the Alphubeljoch, from the *Täsch Hut* to the *Längfluh*, on a day of magnificent views. Then a day of rain, followed by clear weather and high wind. The Allalinhorn, easy enough, proved quite a fight against the gale, but the views were fabulous. Then to the Mischabel Hut, with designs on the Nadelhorn. Black cloud arrived in the evening, and all night the gale howled and the hut shook; at 5.00 a.m. nobody stirred. By 9.00 a.m. we decided it was time to venture out and up - but the wind was relentless. We fought our way to the Windjoch and up the little Ulrichshorn - could it be the Nadelhorn next year? At any rate, a memorable day, and by now I felt really fit: time to go home!

#### Lee Swindin

Well, at last it's done. With the ascent this summer of the Dome de Rochefort I completed the ascent of all the Alpine 4000 metre peaks. It was about five years ago that I realised, at the instigation of Peter Fleming who is trying to achieve the same objective, that such an undertaking was not unreasonable. Since then each summer visit to the Alps and, to a much lesser extent, Easter ski-ing trips as well have been devoted mainly to this endeavour. Now it is over for me and I can get back to thinking about particular routes and lesser (in height) mountains that I'd like to climb, except that first of all, next year, I shall have to accompany Peter on his last four.

The rest of the alpine season was relatively tame. We, Barbara and Peter were my companions, climbed the Trelatete, Piz Bernina by the Biancograt

(a repeat ascent for me and Barbara) and the East Pillar of Piz Palu - a very enjoyable climb - before the snows descended on St. Moritz and drove us home.

Easter ski-touring was ruined by poor weather. After the first peak, the Ofenhorn, and a couple of days hopping (if that is what you do on skis) from hut to hut we abandoned the projected tour and instead skied up the Aletsch glacier in the forlorn hope that the weather would not be quite so bad as was predicted by the meteo. We had three days exercising our navigational skills in absolute 'white-out' conditions and virtually no ski-ing to compensate - still it was good experience and we didn't get lost. Compass and altimeter do work.

The rest of the year was very much the usual sort of mixture. I managed, somehow, to miss the best of the winter climbing conditions but did a few climbs in the Lakes and in North Wales, but what does stick in the mind is a springlike day in February on Cader Idris climbing the Pencoed Pillar in shirtsleeves. Whitsuntide in Scotland started very wet and windy but gradually improved as the week progressed. Our time was devoted mainly to Munros with probably the most satisfying outing being the round of Ben Lawers from Glen Lyon. At the end of the week, in very fine weather indeed, we visited the Cobbler to do the 'classic rock' routes. Somehow though, rock climbing did not really get off the ground for me until quite late in the year, and then, in our Indian Summer, I spent several very good week-ends in both Wales and the Lakes when it was possible to climb on high, dry crags on both days. I do occasionally climb on roadside crags and I suppose my most satisfying day on the rock this year was on that most roadside of all crags, Cheddar. We had only to cross the road to set foot on Coronation Street.

**ASSOCIATION ACTIVITIES**

The A.G.M.

MINUTES of the Annual General Meeting of the Association held at the Alpine Club, 74 South Audley Street, London W.1. at 6.00 p.m. on Saturday, 23rd November 1985.

The President, Wing Cmdr. H.D. Archer, D.F.C., was in the chair.

The Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 24th November 1984, which had been circulated in the Journal, were signed by the President as a correct record.

After being proposed and seconded, the following Officers and Committee Members were elected for the ensuing year:-

<u>President</u>	Wing Cmdr. H.D. Archer, D.F.C.
<u>Vice Presidents</u>	Mr. A.I. Andrews Mr. W.S. Midgley
<u>Hon. Secretary</u>	Mr. A.G. Partridge
<u>Hon. Treasurer</u>	Mr. M. Pinney
<u>Hon. New Members Secretary</u>	Mr. T.G.B. Howe
<u>Hon. Meets Secretary</u>	Mr. J.C. Berry
<u>Hon. Social Secretary</u>	Mrs. P.M. Boulter
<u>Hon. Hut Secretary</u>	Mr. D.R. Hodge
<u>Hon. Editor</u>	Mr. S.M. Freeman
<u>Hon. Librarian</u>	Mr. S.N. Beare
<u>Hon. Solicitor</u>	Mr. M. Bennett
<u>Committee Members</u>	Dr. G. Attridge Mrs. G. Bull Mr. Ross Cameron Dr. N. Cooper Mr. M.R. Loewy Mr. V.V. O'Dell Mr. D.F. Penlington Mr. A. Strawther

Mr. D.M. Bennett was elected Auditor for the ensuing year.

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ASSOCIATION OF BRITISH MEMBERS OF THE SWISS ALPINE CLUB  
INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT  
for the year ended 30th June 1985

		<u>1984</u>
<b>INCOME FROM MEMBERS</b>		
Subscriptions (Note 1)	2367	2008
Life Membership Credit	60	55
Northern Activities		
Donation		<u>250</u>
	2427	2313
<b>LESS: EXPENDITURE</b>		
Journal (Note 2)	1080	1395
Printing, Postage, etc. SNT0	245	289
Printing, Postage, etc. ABM	170	170
Library/Insurance	315	219
London Act. (Note 3)	( 49)	190
Northern Act.	( 40)	( 25)
BMC Subscription	113	84
75 Cel.	39	---
Sundries (travel expenses)	44	51
Depreciation	---	2
	<u>1917</u>	<u>2375</u>
	510	( 62)
<b>ADD: INVESTMENT INCOME</b>		
Association Investment	257	255
Building Society Interest	109	30
Bank Deposit Interest	71	94
	<u>437</u>	<u>379</u>
<b>LESS: Taxation (Note 4)</b>	131	114
	<u>306</u>	<u>265</u>
	816	203
<b>ADD: Surplus/(loss) on S.A.C. fees</b>	( 45)	(110)
<b>EXCESS OF INCOME OVER EXPENDITURE</b>	771	93
	---	---
<b>NOTES</b>		
1. SUBSCRIPTIONS	Subscription income is derived as follows:-	
MEMBERS	Year to 31.12.85	1660
	166 @ 10.0	80
	6 @ 14.0	
	Year to 31.12.84	164 @ 7.5
	3 @ 10.5	1230
		<u>32</u>
<b>AFFILIATE MEMBERS</b>		
	Year to 31.12.85	77 @ 10.0
		770
		10 @ 14.0
		140
	Year to 31.12.84	84 @ 7.5
		5 @ 10.5
		<u>52</u>
		2650
		1884
	Adjustment re subscriptions in advance	( 383)
	In respect of earlier years	<u>100</u>
		233
		<u>2367</u>
		2008
2 JOURNAL	Cost of the journal is made up as follows:-	
Printing		947
Despatch costs and other expenses		<u>133</u>
		1080
		1395
3 London Act.	Fondue Even.	68
(Expend)	May Buffet	170
	Annual Dinner	( 65)
	Other	( 14)
	Hire Rooms	(110)
		<u>49</u>
		(190)

ASSOCIATION OF BRITISH MEMBERS OF THE SWISS ALPINE CLUB

BALANCE SHEET

30th JUNE 1984

		1984		1984
INVESTMENTS AT COST (Note 5)	2216		2216	
CURRENT ASSETS				
Stock of Ties at cost	228	86		
Debtors	304	439		
Cash on Deposit	2648	2311		
Current Account	442	34		
	<u>3622</u>	<u>2870</u>		
DEDUCT CURRENT LIABILITIES				
Creditors	77	489		
Subscriptions in Advance	<u>1325</u>	<u>942</u>		
	1402	1431		
NET CURRENT ASSETS		<u>2220</u>	<u>1439</u>	
		4436	3655	
SOURCES OF FINANCE				
Life Membership Account		677	667	
Accumulated Revenue				
Balance at 30th June	2725	2632		
ADD Excess of income over expenditure	771	3496	93	2725
Donation and Bequests (Note 5)		<u>263</u>	<u>263</u>	
		<u>4436</u>	<u>3655</u>	

H. Archer  
M. Pinney

President  
Hon. Treasurer

REPORT OF THE AUDITOR

I have examined the books and vouchers of the Association and report that the attached accounts, together with the notes, are in accordance therewith.

D.M. Bennett - Hon. Auditor

NOTES

4. The Association is liable to Corporation Tax on its income from investments.
5. INVESTMENTS  
These are as follows:-  
1080 Brunner Investment Trust Limited Ordinary Shares of 25p  
1043 United States Deb. Corporation Ordinary Shares of 25p  
1500 3 Treasury 1986  
Cost of these holdings was 2216 (1984-2216). Aggregate market value at 30th June 1985 was 6800 (1984-5635).
6. 77 has been utilised for repair of projector (1984)

The President presented the accounts for the year ending the 30th June 1985 in the absence of the Hon. Treasurer because of injury. After some discussion the accounts were adopted.

In the absence of the Hon. Treasurer the President proposed that the S.A.C. subscription should remain the same as last year at £21.00, the Association subscription and the subscription for Affiliate Members be £10.00 and the joint "husband and wife" subscription £14.00 was resolved that the subscription be so fixed.

A vote of thanks was given to the Treasurer for all his work with the accounts.

The President made the following proposals concerning the Library, that the offer of the AC Library Council to take the ABMSAC Library under its care, initially for the sum of £50 per annum, and to allow ABMSAC Members free access to both the ABMSAC books and those of the AC Library is gratefully accepted.

Secondly, that a Committee consisting of Stuart Beare, Librarian, Peter Ledebøer, Past President and Member of the AC Library Council, and Paul French, a veteran Member and an authority on Mountaineering literature, is appointed and authorised to deal with all matters relating to the future composition and care of the ABMSAC Library.

Mr. M. Bennett spoke in support of the proposals, after this various Members sought further information on the implications of the proposals, including the availability of the books to Members, and if any were sold in which account the money would be placed. Mr. Freeman spoke on behalf of Mr. Midgley regarding the marking of the books and the method of accounting. The President said that all the points raised would be taken into account by the sub committee who would report back. After a vote these proposals were agreed.

Mr. Murray proposed that there should be an obligation on new members to attend a maintenance meet. After discussion on this and maintenance generally it was decided that Mr. Bennett should be asked to chair a small committee to look into this question and the general overhaul of the rules of the Association as necessary and to make proposals to the Committee.

Mr. Boulter proposed that the question of Full and Affiliate membership and the objectives of the Club to promote climbing in Switzerland should be reviewed. It was agreed that this should also be considered by the sub committee.

Mr. Ledebøer stated that the wooden plaque in memory of Bernard Biner in Zermatt is in a bad state of repair and he felt that the Association should consider, in conjunction with the Alpine Club, the possibility of supplying a stone plaque.

The President mentioned the rumour that there was a possibility that the freehold of the Patterdale Hut was available. He informed the meeting that if any overtures were made by the Landlord they would be investigated and reported to the Members; he felt, however, that the cost of buying the freehold would probably be more than the Club could afford.

The Meeting was then closed.

## THE ANNUAL DINNER

This was held as usual at the Washington Hotel on 23rd November, and around 60 members and guests were present. The atmosphere was convivial.

In proposing the toast of the Swiss Confederation John Whyte displayed remarkable acumen from his historical research and aptly described the first vivid impression that Switzerland made on him. Replying, M. Philippe Welti, First Secretary at the Swiss Embassy, paid tribute to the role of the distinguished membership of the Association.

The President then welcomed the guests and reviewed the Association's activities over the year, underlining the importance of attracting new members and of fostering our links with the main club with the good spirit of the Alpine meets. Michael Baker, responding from the Alpine Club on behalf of the guests, welcomed the initiative of the Association in subscribing to replace the memorial plaque to Bernard Biner in Zermatt and suggested that this might be extended to a plaque in honour of Cicely Williams in the English church there. There was a generous response.

J.P.L.

## THE OUTDOOR MEETS

### Northern Dinner Meet 1985

W.B. Midgley

As for the past ten years or so the meet was held in Patterdale/Glenridding. The weather was indifferent, no decent snow, but it did not rain too much. On Saturday and Sunday various parties walked and climbed, as is their wont.

The Dinner was again at the Glenridding Hotel. 96 members and guests were well looked after by the Hotel staff.

Our Guest Speaker was Walt Unsworth who threatened "to bring a grotty collection of slides which have nothing to do with mountaineering, will last until 1.00 a.m. and will show in excruciating detail the development of the Polynesian eel worm - a subject on which I know nothing". Sufficient to say Walt's word is his bond!!! Nevertheless, the show was very enjoyable and did contain some mountaineering.

### Newtonmore 15 to 17 February

Alasdair Andrews

This meet was based on the rather spartan Jock Spott Cottage which stands in a splendid position overlooking the Spey about three miles south-west of Newtonmore on the road to Fort William. The cottage has recently been acquired by the JMCS, who were undertaking major rebuilding and renovation, and when we arrived most of the usual facilities were missing. In spite of liberal doses of "The Craetur" the night was long and very cold.

The morning brought sunshine and clear blue skies, and we headed for Craig Meagaidh. The walk up to the Coire Ardair was delightful, but the view when we turned the corner and saw the Coire was magnificent. The cliffs, about 1000 feet high and a mile wide, were covered with snow and ice. The scene was more Alpine than Scottish. Several members tackled one of the gulleys whilst the others followed Bonny Prince Charlie's route via the Window to the summit. We traversed east and cramponed down the ridge almost as far as Aberarder farm.

Earlier, without dissent, we had agreed to seek alternative accommodation, so within two hours of coming off the hill we arrived at my brother's guest house in Inverness. He did us proud with a French style meal which lasted all night. Sunday brought gale force winds. We sought the sanctuary of Glen Feshie. One strong party was defeated by the wind on the way up to Carn Ban Mor; the others had an easier day walking up to Landseer's Bothy and back.

A very enjoyable meet. Those attending were Alasdair Andrews, Colin Armstrong, Bert Bowes, Graham Daniels, John Dempster, Alf Lock, Mike Scarr and Jim Strachan.

Easter Meet Beddgelert

S.M. Freeman

This meet was based at John and Jan Berry's guest house at Beddgelert. It was a sociable occasion attended by about 10 members and guests. The social atmosphere was obviously enhanced by the circumstance that we were entertained by Club friends, who made us very welcome. Unfortunately, the weather was less hospitable. The Editor's family group braved poor conditions on Hebog and considerably worse on Snowdon, before being driven to less exposed trips. The mines at Blaenau Ffestiniog and the ancient camp on Yr Eifel are interesting and recommended, but they were not what we had come for. We lack records of whether others did much better.

Spring Bank Holiday, Ullapool

S.M. Freeman

This was one of Alasdair Andrew's semi-official meets, somehow not finding its way into the official list, but taking place in the same part of the world as similar meets for a number of years past have done. For the Editor, they represent a highlight of the year because of the extreme beauty of the region combined with the phenomenally good weather which is usual there at Spring Bank Holiday. In this bad year it was not more than good. We were divided between a guest house where we were particularly well looked after for bed and breakfast and evening comfort, and Alf's caravan, where conditions were probably even more luxurious. We had no difficulty in finding good dining places in Ullapool.

Some of us who stayed only for the weekend managed trips to Ben Mor Assynt and Ben Dearg, and were kindly taken by Alasdair for a scenic ride on a less good day. Some of the Ben Dearg party were deprived of the climb by the need to get rid of a ferocious billy goat which followed behind us eating our rucksacks. It was eventually necessary to return downhill to get rid of this wild animal, so we lost time and became detached. The caravanners stayed longer and some account of their doings is given briefly by Alasdair under "Members Activities".

Welsh 3 Thousands Meet 14 - 16 June

John Berry

Everybody met at The PYG Hotel on Friday night, and plans were made for the weekend. The adventures began as follows:-

Friday 12 midnight. Tony and Suzanne Strawther, Nigel Cooper and Tony Husbands started on the Welsh 3 Thousands, whilst the rest of the party skulked off to their sleeping quarters.

Saturday 10.00 a.m. Harry Archer and a new member and I were just about to set off to climb The Parson's Nose when Tony and companions returned to the Lloyd Hut to take breakfast before carrying on with the next eleven 3 thousand footers. Alas their breakfast lasted until evening, with an afternoon siesta thrown in.

The three of us had a pleasant day on The Parson's Nose and Crib Goch, with a pint of beer in between at the cafe on top of Snowdon. Meanwhile, Mike Pinney and friends were hanging about on a rock climb somewhere in Cwm Glas.

Sunday morning. A few of us spent a few enjoyable hours climbing Amphitheatre Buttress, which ended a good weekend.

JOINT ALPINE MEET, GRINDELWALD, 27 July - 17 August

Mike Pinney

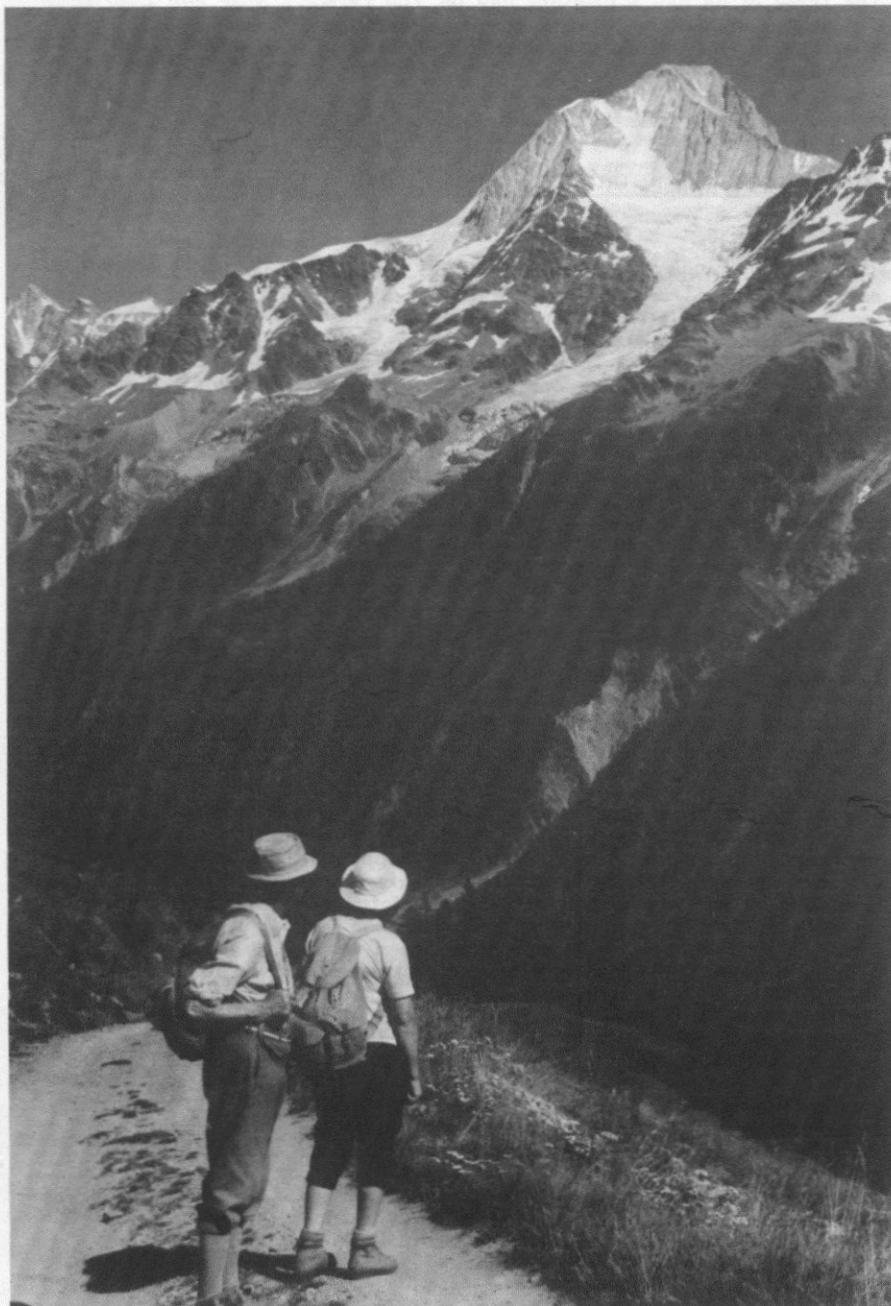
The Meet was held jointly with the C.C. and A.C. at the Eigernordwand camp site, S.W. from Grund Station. About 20 climbers, some with families, were in attendance for some or all of the three weeks. The weather was rather unsettled with snow down to 2000 metres at the beginning of the second week. However, all the 4000m. peaks in the Oberland were climbed by one or more parties, the following giving an incomplete summary.

From the Gleckstein Flat, the Wetterhorn and Rosenhorn. From the Schreckhorn Hut, the Shreckhorn, those traversing the mountain wishing they hadn't and vice versa, and the Lauteraarhorn S.W. ridge with traverse across to finish by the S.E. ridge. From the Jungfrauoch or Ober Mönchjoch Hut, in addition to the Mönch and Jungfrau a tour of the hinterland ascending several peaks on successive days with no real technical difficulty, at variance with the more traditional practice: go up to hut one day, climb peak second day, descending to valley either that day or the next, with occasionally a second route.

One such trip, others having a slightly different programme, involved:

Day 1, up to Jungfrauoch and across to Ober Mönchjoch. Day 2, look outside at about 3.00 a.m; snowing, so abandon idea of Fiescherhorn and start panicking about £25 investment in rail ticket. Have breakfast at 7.00 a.m. and start wondering where the hut occupants are heading, only to realise people have spent an hour sorting their rucksacks. 9.00 a.m., decide clearing sufficiently to go and look at Mönch, rather than sit in expensive hut all day. Reach ridge and happen to look across to Jungfrau to see weather clearing and parties breaking trail, so revise plan. Overtook all but one party by gully to Rottalsattel who were followed to summit, returning to hut by late afternoon. Day 3, ridge of Gross Fiescherhorn, above the Fiescherwand then across to Hinter F. passing party ascending from Finsteraarhorn Hut (a nice trail to follow) then from Hinter down to F. hut for lunch. Day 4, another late start after weather cleared, this time breaking trail for other parties in an ascent of the Finsteraarhorn. Day 5, alpine start to Grünhorniucke then across glacier to S.W. ridge of Grünegghorn meeting party who had started "tour" from South. Go to summit of Cross Grünhorn: very windy and watching weather coming in. Complete descent to glacier with pull up ladder to Konkordia in precipitation and overnight storm. Day 6, head for Jungfrauoch (the Aletschorn had been going prior to the storm, but with parties descending to the South). After about an hour, get out compasses, set for the right of tunnel entrance (better terrain and landmarks). After 3 hours one begins to doubt one's compass, but fortunately no bad crevasses and ski draglift is found and hence the tunnel entrance.

From the Guggihutte the Nollen ridge on Mönch. From the Ober Aletschorn Hut the Aletschorn and others. The walk from First to Schynige Platte (one ticket for chair lift and rail return) gives good views across the valley through a varied terrain.



“THAT MOUNTAIN!”

*Eric Loewig*

## THE 1985 ALPINE SUMMER MEET — FISCHBIEI, LÖTSCHENTAL

*Harry Archer*

The 1985 Alpine Summer Meet was held at Fischbiel in the Lötschental from 10th to 31st August. Some 60 Members and Guests of all ages attended, some for the whole three weeks, others for shorter periods. Accommodation was in Chalets at Fischbiel on the slopes above Wiler, facing the Bietschorn. The domestic arrangements were novel, breakfast, lunch and casual meals were taken in the Chalets, a teatime gathering for all was held each day in Chalet Knylag, and, for the evening meal all members of the Meet gathered in Chalet Knylag or in an adjoining Chalet when numbers rose above the forty mark.

This was our base, comfortable and situated in a splendid position, but it would have been incomplete without Margaret Attree and Rosemary Whitehead, who took a working holiday to run the catering and supervise the accommodation arrangements. Their helpfulness and cheerfulness, and their skill, completed the perfect base for the Meet. Thanks is also due to the many who peeled potatoes, washed up, and ran the overflow dining establishment in Chalet Abel. Hopefully Margaret and Rosemary will come and help next year.

The weather was kind and, for approximately 2½ weeks out of the 3, the sun shone out of a virtually cloudless sky. The snow conditions were uneven. Fresh snow in early August left some peaks heavily covered at certain levels. Three days of bad weather between the second and third weeks left a lot of fresh snow which made the going difficult during the last week of the Meet.

Activities varied according to age and inclination. Everyone found some activity of interest. There being only one cable car in the Lötschental, most walks were fairly energetic and there was plenty of variety. The March-in party, all of advanced age, tolled over the Lötschenpass on an exceptionally hot day, the Fischbiel-Faffleralp-Wiessenried-Fischbiel circuit provided fitness training and the younger and more energetic tackled the long one day circuits of Kandersteg by the Lötschenpass and return (by train and bus!) and the longer Restipass-Leukerbad-Gemmi Pass-Schwarzenbach-Kandersteg and return, the latter with more scope for easing the strain by mechanical uphill transport. For some the purchase of a pass for the minor roads enabled the less fit to reach splendid viewpoints by car, more frightening but less physical effort.

A feature of Fischbiel is the number of lower peaks and short glacier trips that can be done direct from the Chalets, even if an ascent in the region of 5000 feet can be hard work on a hot day of which there were many. Most members of the Meet got up one or other or all of Hockenhorn, Sackhorn and Petersgrat and some went to the small peaks above the West end of the valley. Some turned to advantage the availability of high rising lifts to climb the Wildstrubel in a couple of hours out of Crans Montana, and the Zermatt Breithorn in a couple of hours by the use of the Klein Matterhorn lift. On the other hand there was no mechanical assistance for the party, some of whom had only been out of the UK for a few days, which plodded some 6000 feet up a surprisingly icy Balmhorn from Schwarzenbach.

The planned highlight of the Meet was to have been the meeting with the Diablerets Section of the SAC at the Orny Hut. Unfortunately the weather decided to be unhelpful. The ABMSAC party of 20 was welcomed by

senior members of the Diablerets Section and enjoyed a convivial dinner. That night a gale and a blizzard put paid to any chance of climbing the next day, and the party descended to Champex in heavy rain. This was a great disappointment but it has been proposed and agreed that this meet should be repeated next year. Hopefully the weather will be kinder.

In spite of the general excellence of the weather, the early August snow and the bad weather between the 2nd and 3rd weeks limited activity in the last week, just when fitness was improving. An attempt on the Tschingelhorn was turned back by rockfall and snow on the rocks, and the other high mountains were unseasonably white. During the last week, as soon as the bad weather had cleared, a party set out for the Ebnefluh, in the hope that this easy peak could be reached in spite of the fresh snow. At first progress was good, but the combination of an exceptionally hot day and the deep and crusty snow was hard work for all and exhausting for the trail blazers. Will the crust hold, no, struggle out of knee deep snow to make the next step, and the Langgletscher was not given that name for nothing! On approaching the Hollandia Hut a very cold, strong wind hit the party which arrived at the Hut exhausted and cold to find no Guardian and no food or supplies available. While the most weary rested wrapped in umpteen blankets, the fire was lit, the Hut scoured for firewood, food and water, and consideration was given to whether the situation would justify gaining access to the main kitchen. Luckily bits and pieces had been left in a cupboard and eventually hot drinks and food appeared as if by a miracle from the most unpromising ingredients, mainly old porridge and honey and well-used tea bags. A French couple soon arrived having followed the tracks of our party and they brought food! This they most generously shared with us. Eventually a good British fug was generated and the party settled down to a surprisingly good night's sleep. Next day the lack of food and the snow conditions made it unlikely that the Ebnefluh could be climbed, but it was agreed that we should have a good try. However, after some two hours the leaders were making slow progress and some of the party were very tired, so it was back to the valley. In spite of the problems the trip was worthwhile and we were rewarded with splendid views of the North face of the Aletschorn, and a spectacular Alpenglow.

There were several incidents and some illness, all fortunately with happy endings. There were those who caught cold in the hot baths at Brigbad, the individual who fell into a crevasse and who, with true British sangfroid, took a photograph before climbing out, and the party who missed the path to the Orny Hut in spite of a large painted sign. Watching their feet? A bug laid some low for a few days but all seemed fitter at the end than at the beginning of the Meet.

All-in-all it was a very happy Meet and what greater pleasure can there be for a Meet organiser than that everyone had a thoroughly enjoyable holiday in the mountains.

Members and guests attending the Meet were, in approximate order of arrival:-

Harry, John, Alexander, Margaret, Charlotte and Matthew Archer, Margaret Attree, Rosemary Whitehead, Fred and Dora Dewar, Ann and Simon Dewar, Dr. and Mrs. Attridge, Master Attridge and Guest, Mr. and Mrs. Brook Midgley and daughters and guest, Ross and Sheila Cameron, John Chapman, Dorothy Gravina, Jane Lord, David Lidbetter, Peter Nock, Hugh and Renata Romer, Ray Scott, George Watkins, Dominick Hentrich, Paddy and Mary Boulter, John Coales and two nephews, Sheila Coates, Harold and Lawrie Flook, Peter Griffiths, Ben Howe, John and Joy Hunt, Ann Jago, Rudolf Loewy, Mr. and Mrs. Eric Loewy, Peter Ledebor, Walter MacWilliams, Elizabeth Parry, David Riddell, John and Joan Whyte, Tony Bent, and several guests for a few days or a weekend.

## OBITUARY

### Mrs. Cicely M. Williams

From her girlhood, Cicely had had a great interest in Switzerland and its mountains, particularly the Matterhorn, and from 1927 until her death in 1985, except for the War years, she had spent several weeks there, generally in Zermatt.

Her climbing was done mostly in the Zermatt area and included the Riffelhorn, Rimpfischhorn, Unter Gabelhorn, Wellenkuppe, Obergabelhorn, and Zinal Rothorn, but it was not until 1953 that she achieved her great desire and climbed the Matterhorn.

From 1946 to 1978 her husband, Ronald, was Chaplain of the English Church in Zermatt and this led to a close contact with many of the Zermatt people. Her guide was Bernard Biner, until his death in 1965, and the Biner family became personal friends of Cicely.

Although her climbing was confined to Switzerland, she had travelled widely with her husband and had walked and scrambled among the lower hills of many countries.

She was a member of the Ladies' Alpine Club from 1942 and was a most loyal supporter of the Club's activities. In 1973 she became the Hon. Editor and so produced the last number of the Ladies' Alpine Journal, with its memories and highlights of the Club's activities.

In 1953 she was asked to give a talk on the Swiss Radio and this she did under the title of "April in Zermatt", after some weeks skiing. She had also spoken on B.B.C. programmes on "Alpine Guides" and "Summer on the Alps with the Cheesemakers".

Cicely was also a writer. She had contributed articles to the Times and the Swiss Observer, mostly on some aspect of Swiss life, and she was also a welcome contributor to the Ladies' Alpine Journal. She wrote five books including "Dear Abroad", which described her travels, "Women on the Rope" and "A Church in the Alps", being a history of the Church in Zermatt.

Running through her writing is her love of Zermatt and her great and lively interest in everything connected with Switzerland.

M.S.

### BOOK REVIEW

This year's offering comprises, whether by coincidence or not, works concerning two towering figures in different areas of mountaineering between the Wars: Big Climbing in the Alps and Himalaya and Elsewhere on the one hand, and Rock Climbing in Britain on the other. It turns out to be appropriate to discuss the more recent work first.

"Smythe's Mountains" by Harry Calvert.  
Victor Gollancz Ltd. September 1985.  
223 pages. 18 photographs. 4 sketch maps. £14.95.

\* \* \* \* \*

The author, Harry Calvert, informs us that he was deeply influenced by the accident of receiving "Alpine Ways" as a present. He went on to acquire other works, and describes himself as one of countless thousands whose lives have been enriched by their indirect acquaintance with Smythe. In return for what he has gained, Calvert has written a summary account of Smythe's climbing career, based on his books and some biographical information from other sources, though he disclaims having written either a biography or a climbing guide. In the upshot he has provided enough to set the scene, introduce the dramatis personae and allow the story to unfold, without undue philosophising. Smythe was not in the ordinarily accepted sense a sociable person, and he aroused mixed feelings in his climbing companions, who have given diverse accounts of his personality and achievements. Piquancy and a vicarious sense of participation are added by the circumstance that many of the characters who cross the page were good climbing friends of the readers of this Journal, many of them mercifully still with us; this may add to the interest of a book which is in any case a good read.

The author provides a short account of Smythe's youth, and then proceeds to work chronologically through the writings. Smythe lost his father at a tender age, and was then perhaps unduly cossetted because of a supposedly serious heart condition. He failed to distinguish himself either at school or in his early career. His physique, that of a frail man possessed of great strength and endurance, was as self-contradictory as his personality. Much of his early scrambling was solo, he was largely self-taught, and he avoided guides throughout his career. Nevertheless, he made the acquaintance of distinguished climbers early enough.

A chapter on climbs in Britain includes new routes in Scotland and his part in Longland's climb on Cloggy. Then chapters on the Alps and Corsica lead up to "the great alpine routes". The heart of this chapter is the great climbs on the Brenva face, graphically recounted, and the subsequent unhappy disputes with Graham Brown.

The Himalaya follows. From Kangchenjunga he appears to have gained at least a valuable lesson in how not to run an expedition. That he had learnt this lesson was shown on Kamet, the first and only major expedition which he organised and led, and that successfully.

Everest beckoned. But he was not called in 1924. Neither his background nor his personality was quite right. He did take part in 1933 and 1936 but (perhaps surprisingly to some) not as leader. (In 1936 Odell and Tilman were also omitted, and they responded by climbing Nanda Devi). Neither 1933 nor 1936 was a success, though some remarkable things were done.

The account stays in the Himalaya, particularly the "Valley of Flowers" and the surrounding peaks in the Garswhal area, in which Smythe took such delight. The relatively relaxed joy of travelling in mountains without great obligation to perform, yet with scope for serious climbing, continued in the subsequent Alpine travels.

During the later years of his life Smythe spent much of his time in North America. Wartime duties had taken him to the Rockies, and he returned to make pioneering exploring and climbing trips.

The author concludes with a chapter on Smythe's character and achievements as climber, leader, writer and photographer (all the photographs reproduced are by Smythe). Where this places him in the hall of fame may be a matter for debate, but we are left in no doubt that as writer and photographer he made a great impact on Harry Calvert who, one would guess, will be well pleased if his book drives some of us back to Smythe again.

\* \* \* \* \*

Menlove: the Life of John Menlove Edwards with an appendix of his writings by Jim Perrin.  
Victor Gollancz Ltd., February 1985.  
347 pages. 45 photographs. £14.95

\* \* \* \* \*

In contrast with the preceding work, this is a biography in the accepted sense, and though the geographical scene is narrower, the subject matter brings the reader into a wider world and leads on to high tragedy. To assert that Edwards was one of the greatest climbers of his day would seem to many to be an understatement; he has left his own memorial. He also survived outrageous adventures by river and sea. He was, until misfortune struck, an original and successful practitioner of psychiatric medicine, and he published imaginative literature, both prose and poetry, outside the subject of climbing. Within the subject he was outstanding, and he wrote what is still widely regarded as the classic guide book. There was, however, a profound dark side to his character. Professionally he was a sympathetic and effective clinician, but his heart was largely in research, in which complexity and profundity (and perhaps a little perversity) were so allied to a natural perfectionism as to make it difficult for him to finish the work or get it published. He was a homosexual and made no secret of this, at a time when Society frowned heavily upon such a condition. It was in keeping with his Hamlet-like character that he became a conscientious objector when war came, though he would have welcomed the adventure of warfare. His climbing feats continued sporadically after the war, but his career foundered, his mind failed and the end came with death by his own hand.

Jim Perrin is unusually well placed to write about his subject, being himself a notable rock climber, a writer of guides and a literary man by profession.

The book proceeds chronologically, which necessitates interweaving the strands of climbing, medicine, writing and private life in a complex way. All the climbs are described graphically. The author has also drawn widely on correspondence. Inevitably the book is not short and the argument is not facile, especially where Edwards's more philosophical writings are concerned. This does not make for an easy read, but the

effort is very well worth while for anyone concerned to delve into the human mind and soul.

Perrin begins his account rather before Menlove was born. The father, George Zacchary Edwards, was a person of humane and radical disposition, who studied the miseries of the poor by himself becoming a tramp for a time and living in filthy doss-houses. Menlove was born in 1910. Life was never easy for the family, and circumstances became worse when George Edwards suffered first a disabling accident and then steadily worsening Parkinson's Disease. Nevertheless Menlove had a public school education, as a result of winning a place at Fettes. He did well enough at games and better at his studies, winning the Begg Memorial Prize, whose winners normally go to Oxford or Cambridge. Typically, Edwards chose to go to Liverpool, to study medicine with the intention of becoming a medical missionary.

Climbing began in his student days. He was a leading spirit in the creation of a University Rock Climbing Club. Liverpool became a centre of rock climbers. Perrin devotes a chapter to the years 1928 to 1931 in which Edwards climbed a great deal around Helyg and put up a number of new routes. His most famous feat at the time was, however, elsewhere. He made the first unaided ascent of the Flake Crack on Scafell Central Buttress, an event which rounds off the chapter.

There was little climbing in the early part of the period 1931 to 1934. Edwards completed his finals successfully. There was tragedy at home; his brother was killed in an accident and his father finally succumbed to his disease. His faith faltered, and he abandoned the idea of missionary work, to become a psychiatric practitioner. Adventures by water attracted him; he swam down the Linn of Dee and (with a companion) rowed a rickety boat from Mallaig to Skye and back (his account of the problems involved in obtaining a boat displays the writer in his elegant entertaining style). In the latter part of this period, he was again climbing, particularly around Llanberis Pass, and he was working on the Cwm Idwal guide. In 1934 he became psychiatrist to the Liverpool Child Guidance Clinic, where he remained until its closure in 1941. The chapter on 1934-1936 is largely given to his writing and philosophising, but includes accounts of further adventures by sea, first a journey by canoe from the Isle of Man to Cumberland, then the most impressive trip of all, from Gairloch to Lewis and back in a tiny rowing boat in midwinter. Climbing continued, around Llanberis Pass and elsewhere. From 1936-1939 writing and philosophy occupy more of the text. A love affair assumed central importance. Climbing continued; the guides to Cwm Idwal, Tryfan (with Noyce) and, most importantly, Lliwedd came out. The last introduced a new style, in which each climb was set into the context of the cliff rather than being an item in itself. New climbs were done in the Pass. So much of his life's work in climbing was now done that it is worth pausing to take stock. Perusal of the guides (his own and later ones by other hands) shows his great part in the climbs of Cwm Idwal and Tryfan and his dominance in the development during the 1930's of Lliwedd and of Llanberis, both north and south, so that it is hard to believe that he can have had a rival.

He registered as a conscientious objector when war came. His first application was unsuccessful, mainly it seemed because of his determination to analyse his own opinions closely and present the result in too complex a manner to meet the needs of the occasion. His second attempt was successful. The years 1939-1944 were a struggle with hardship. His

clinic closed down, and he got only intermittent employment. His researches continued, without achieving recognition or publication. There was climbing from time to time, and new routes were made. The Clogwyn Du'r Arddu guide (with Barford) was published.

The final chapter on 1944-1958 is aptly entitled "years of tragic waste". It is a story of increasing sadness, punctuated by occasional climbs and some attempts to take his own life. In 1958 he finally did so.

There are about 30 pages of Edwards's writings at the end of the book, and the 45 photographs cover home life and climbing. In terms of the size of the work, the amount of study that must have been put in by the author and the amount of food for thought for the reader, the book is good value for money.

S.M.F.

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