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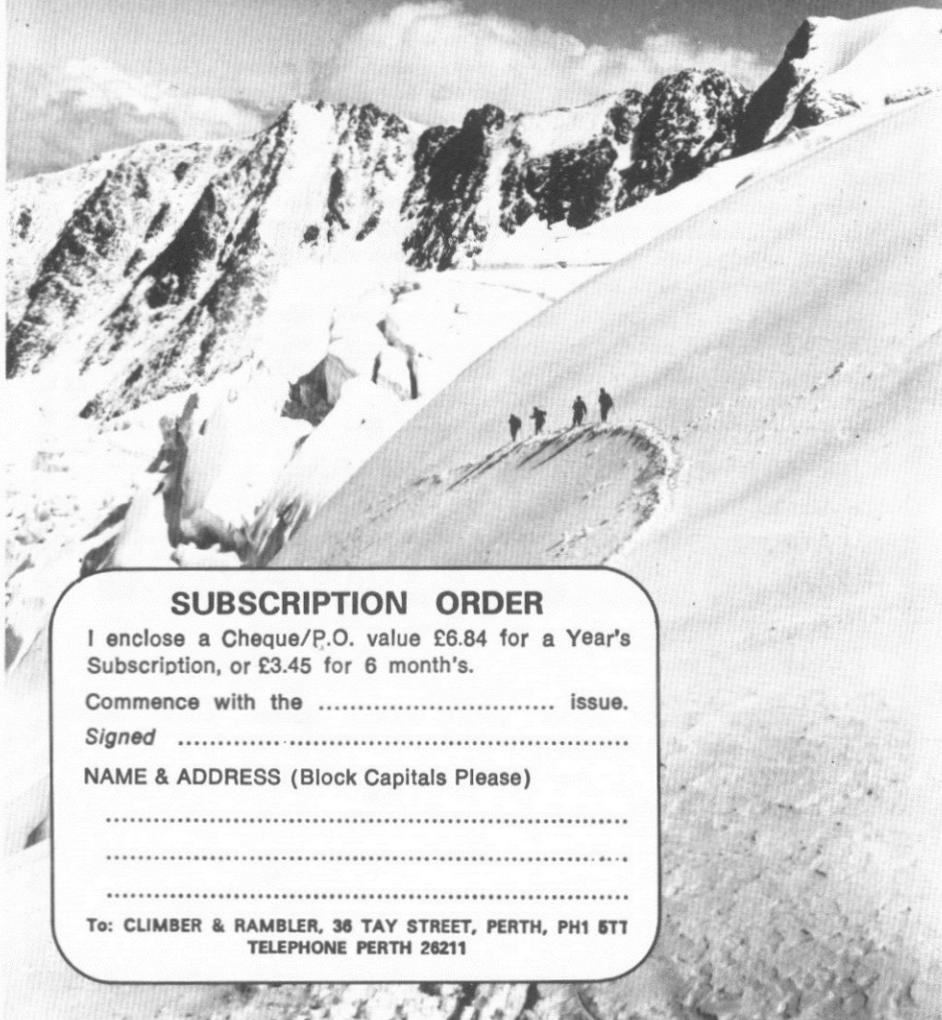
JOURNAL 1977

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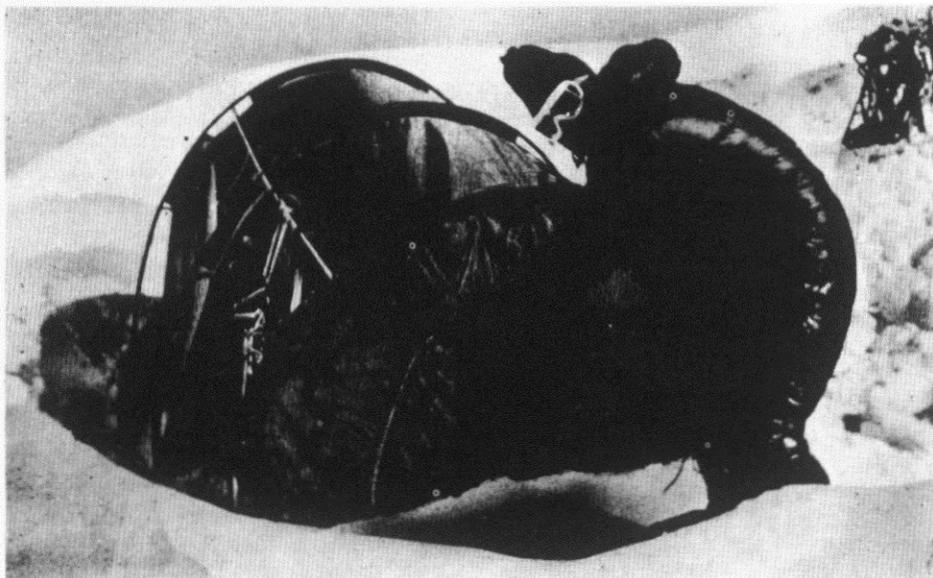
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DIARY FOR 1977

- | | |
|----------------------|--|
| January 19th | Lecture, Michael Ward, 'Man and high altitude'. |
| February 4th-6th | Northern dinner meet at Patterdale. Leader W. Brooke Midgley. Dinner at Glenridding on February 5th. |
| February 16th | Joint indoor meeting of A.B.M.S.A.C. and T.C.C. |
| March 4th-6th | Working party, George Starkey hut. Leader E. Tuck. |
| March 16th | Lecture, Capt. Sir Crispin Agnew of Locknaw, 'Everest 1976'. |
| April 6th-13th | Easter meet at Betws-y-Coed. Leader M. Bennett. |
| April 7th-11th | Informal Easter meet with T.C.C. at George Starkey hut. |
| April 20th | Lecture, Ken Baldry, 'Travels among the Alps'. |
| May 6th-8th | Meet at George Starkey hut. Leader George Rough. |
| May 11th | Buffet party at the Alpine Club. |
| June 3rd-12th | Joint meet with T.C.C. at George Starkey hut. |
| June 3rd-11th | Spring Holiday Scottish meet at Loch Torridon. Leader A. Andrews. |
| June 15th | Lecture, Fred Jenkins and Ernst Sondheimer, 'Climbing in Norway'. |
| June 24th-26th | Roman Wall. Leader B. G. Bowes. |
| July 1st-3rd | Informal family meet at George Starkey hut. Leader David Lintott. |
| July 8th-10th | Welsh meet at Glan Dena. Leader S. M. Freeman. |
| July 29th-August 5th | Family meet at George Starkey hut. |
| July-August | Alpine Meet. |
| August 26th-29th | Informal meet at George Starkey hut with T.C.C. |
| September 9th-11th | Meet at Carne Eigiau. Leader Tony Strawther. |
| September 21st | Lecture, Gordon Gadsby, 'Magic of the Mountains'. |
| October 7th-9th | Meet at George Starkey hut. Leader Walt Unsworth. |
| October 14th-18th | Joint meet with Alpine Club at George Starkey hut. Leader P. Ledeboer. |
| October 19th | Indoor meet, the Alpine season and Meet. |
| November 4th-6th | Informal meet at George Starkey hut. |
| November 23rd | A.G.M. and Annual Dinner. |

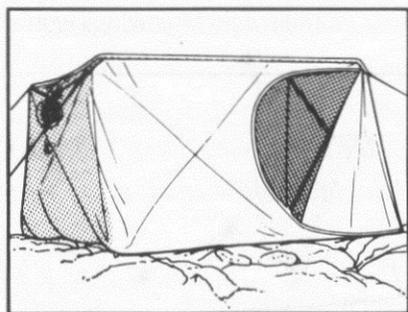


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December 23rd-
January 1st 1978

Informal meet with T.C.C. at George Starkey hut.

All meetings, except the Annual Dinner, are held at the Alpine Club, 74, South Audley Street, W.1 at 7 p.m. They are followed by an informal dinner in the Park Coffee House, The Britannia Hotel, Grosvenor Square. The expected cost of the dinner is £3.60 and bookings must be sent to Mr. P. S. Boulter, Social Secretary, by the Saturday preceding the meeting.

P. S. Boulter, F.R.C.S., Social Secretary, ABMSAC, c/o Medical Centre, St. Luke's Hospital, Guildford, Surrey.

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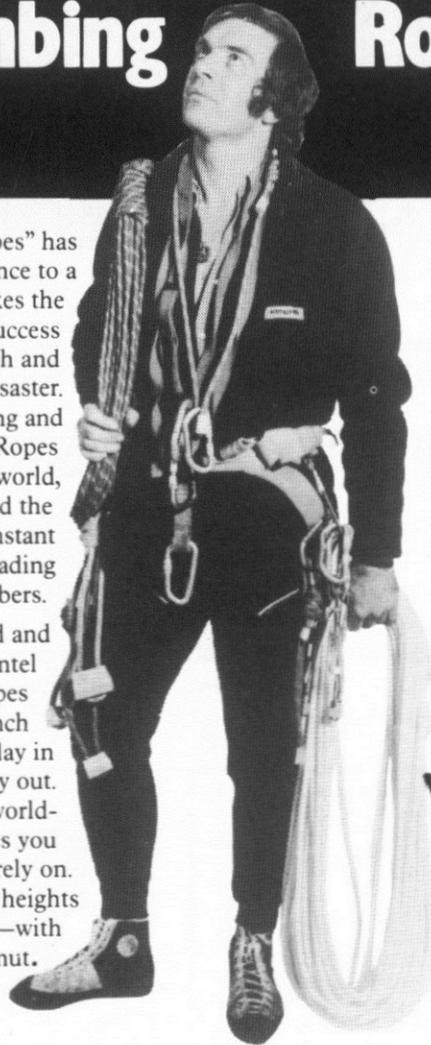
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EDITORIAL

The readers' indulgence is craved as the matter of an editor's problems is resumed. When last year's editorial was written, there was still uncertainty about the outcome of appeals for contributions. In the upshot there was a generous response, and it was necessary to produce a longer Journal than usual to do justice to the material. This year there has been a sufficient response without individual appeal; it is hoped that the contributions to the section renamed 'Members' Climbs and Excursions' will be found suitably entertaining. A few rather longer articles would have been welcome, and the editor looks forward to seeing this corrected next year. It cannot be doubted that members have taken part in expeditions which would make good reading; it can hardly be that they are lacking in skill and application with the pen, and it must be concluded that an excess of modesty has been the cause of their silence. Please believe that your feats are of interest.

Grateful thanks are due to all who have found it possible to send beautifully typewritten articles, thus saving time and money. Let not the others be deterred, however, as we should not wish to lose interesting articles just to avoid a little trouble.

This year's special articles concern skiing. Walter Kirstein has given eloquent expression to two passions: that sport, and love of the Engadine. Peter Cliff has provided something far from usual in his account of a ski expedition to the Himalaya.

Reverting to an editor's problems; it transpired that the previous incumbent had some kind of extra-sensory perception which allowed him to see at first glance of a hand-written paper that it would occupy exactly $43\frac{1}{2}$ lines at the printer's spacing. He was then able to present the work neatly typed and laid out in exactly numbered pages, leaving the minimum of work to the printer. Technical skill is a mystery; some are good at flint-knapping or old fashioned lead plumbing, others can be bound, gagged, blindfolded, nailed in a coffin and sunk in the sea and still escape, but for most of us it is too late to learn. This editor still has to rely on cutting up galley proofs with one hand whilst raising his hat in tribute with the other.

Several aspects of the Club's affairs have given pleasure and satisfaction. Peter Ledebor reports on a later page a success story concerning the George Starkey hut. Another excellent chalet-based Alpine Meet was a tribute to the skill and selfless effort of Harry Archer and family. In the nature of things, this could not be repeated for ever, and it will be necessary for members to find some other way to circumvent inflation. The way is not yet clear, but active study is proceeding.

The well-established hut meets were more popular than ever, but the rest were sparsely attended. Readers will have received a questionnaire long before they see this Journal, and one hopes that all will have answered, so that the Committee may know what is your pleasure and how to meet it. Vigorous home activity now appears to be a prerequisite for sustaining vigorous alpinism, particularly in view of what follows.

Inflation has attacked more vitally by whittling away membership of the Association. Earnest study of ways to resist this attack has been going on for a long time, and the solution finally adopted has been to form a class of Affiliate Members who aspire to join an appropriate S.A.C. section in happier times. This proposal was accepted at an Extraordinary General Meeting which is reported in this issue.

It is with deep regret that we refer to the death of Dr. A. W. Barton. An obituary notice, written by the President, will be found on another page.

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1976 KULU SKI MOUNTAINEERING EXPEDITION

Peter Cliff

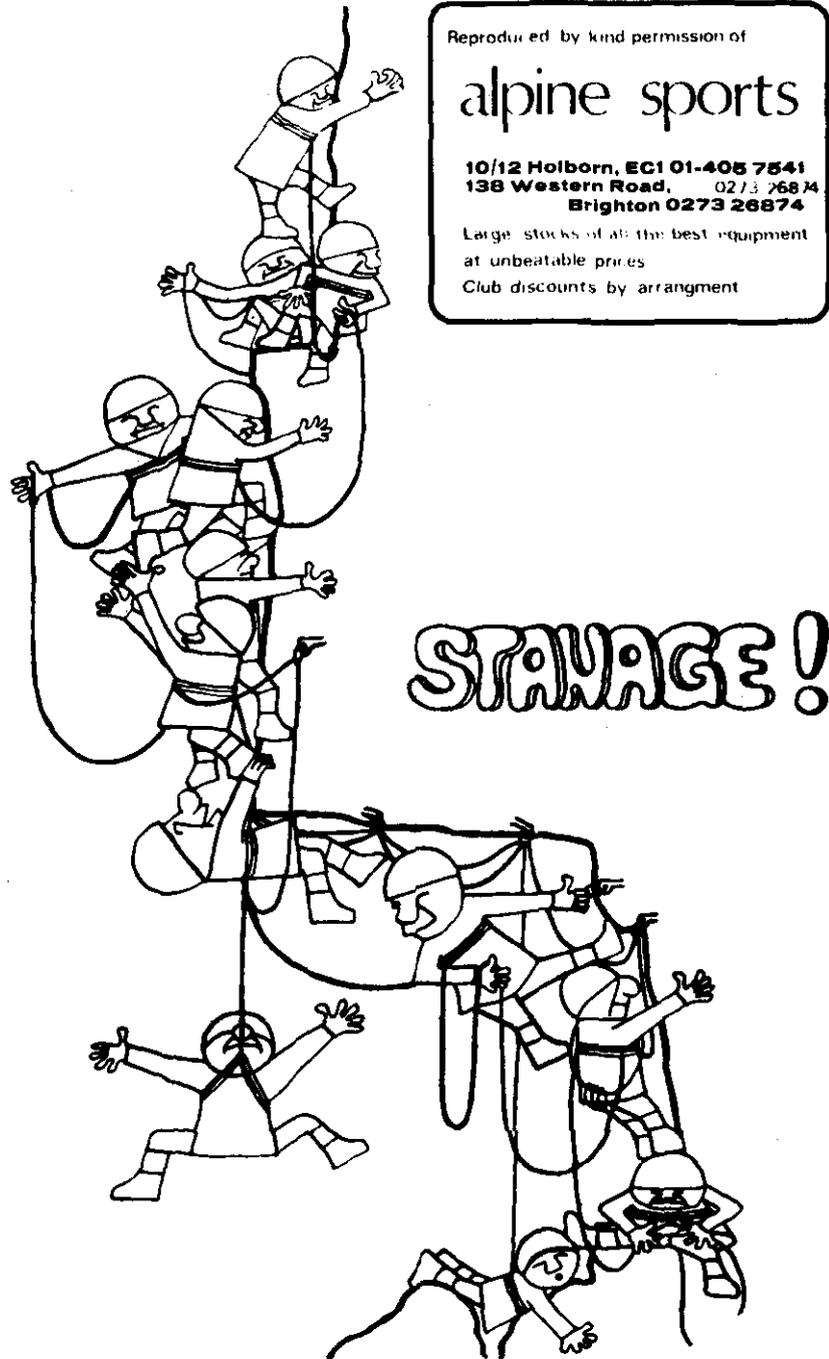
PLANNING

I first started thinking about a ski mountaineering expedition to the Himalayas at the beginning of 1975. Keeping the idea quiet, in case it didn't come off, I started on some research. I soon found out that there had been very few ski mountaineering trips to this area. The most notable ones were a ski descent of Noshag (1970) by the Austrians and the much publicised ski/parachute descent of part of Everest by the Japanese. Skis had been used on a number of ordinary mountaineering expeditions, a notable British example being Henry Day's use of them on Deo Tibba (20,000 ft.) while on the Army expedition to Indrasan (20,410 ft.) in 1973. Gerry Finch (Alpine Ski Club and S.C.G.B.) had also used skis in Kulu Himalaya in 1941. Both Henry Day and Gerry Finch were able to give me some useful advice.

So the field was wide open for not only a ski descent of a mountain but particularly for a ski traverse of an area. But what area? The Himalayas are so huge—1,500 miles from West to East. I read articles about mountaineering expeditions in Kashmir, Nepal, Karakoram, Hindu Kush, Chitral, Kulu, Lahul, Garhwal, etc. I looked carefully at photographs to see if mountains or passes were ski-able. I wrote to various people who had extensive Himalayan knowledge to ask for suggestions: without much success as usually they were mountaineers and not skiers and could not advise on what was primarily a ski-ing matter. Finally I visited Fred Harper, Principal of Glenmore Lodge in the Cairngorms. He had done the first ascent of a mountain in the Kulu range in 1969. He not only had photographs of the area but more important he is a fine skier and knew what I was looking for. The Kulu was a definite possibility. We could do a ski descent of Deo Tibba (20,000 ft.) on which Henry Day had skied and on which the Japanese had trained before their Everest para-ski descent. And it offered the possibility of a ski traverse of the range from West to East.

EXPEDITION MEMBERS

The time had come to see if anyone else was interested. Fred Harper had shown interest in joining a possible trip, so there was one 'possible' I had already discussed the plans with Dan Drew, with whom I had been to Lapland and on the British Alpine Ski Traverse (1972). He was a definite starter, but very unfortunately dropped out through illness. He would have been an ideal person: a fine mountaineer, a very good skier in all condi-



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tions, lots of expedition experience, and a very easy-going temperament. John Noble, an Instructor at Plas Y Brenin National Mountaineering Centre in North Wales, and Dave Penlington, Outdoor Education Adviser to Shropshire, showed immediate interest. Both are very experienced mountaineers and good skiers, and the three of us had done a trip before. Fred Harper said 'Definitely yes', so there were finally four of us.

PREPARATION

Hundreds of things had to be sorted out. For example: when would be the best time for skis? If we went too late it would be bad for ski-ing, but if we went too early there would be snow from low down, and this would mean that porters would not be able to get to Base Camp. To fly or to go overland? If we were to fly, how could we transport our expedition equipment? How long would we need to acclimatise?—because this would dictate to some extent the length of the trip. Could we ski with loads at high altitude? And then we did a detailed planning of food, skis, bindings, gaiters, stoves, etc. etc.

The expedition had now got to a stage when it was no longer an idea. It was definitely going to take place. To offset the big costs of such a trip we applied to various sources for financial help, and received grants as follows:

Mount Everest Foundation	£300
British Mountaineering Council	£250
Scottish National Ski Council	£ 50
Alpine Ski Club	£ 40

I also received £65 from an Award Scheme run by my employers, Lothian Regional Council. We are most grateful for these grants: without them we would not have been able to go, as the costs of travel and equipment are so great.

SNOW HOLES AND BIVOUAC BAGS

A classic Himalayan expedition is run on the principle of 'camp-establishment'. The Base Camp is set up, and then tents, food and equipment are moved up to Camp I, the climbers returning each night to Base. After say three days Camp I is fully established and then occupied for the first time. The same process happens for Camp II. By this method you always return to sleep at the height to which you are already acclimatised, but at the same time you gradually acclimatise to a new height. Recently there have been one or two highly successful mountaineering expeditions in the Himalayas using the Alpine techniques of light loads and moving up through camps. This idea appealed to us. Instead of the normal long expedition with a lot of tents, Sherpas and food we would go lightweight. On our skis we would be able to move fast anyway; away from camp we would use a bivvy tent or snow hole. And being lightweight we could fly out and back, so saving the time of an overland journey. It sounded great: departing on

the 19th of April we would have five weeks away from Britain, a ski descent of Deo Tibba and a traverse of the Kulu area as far as Dibbibakri. We even started looking to the areas further East and South in case we had time for more. In retrospect we could perhaps call these objectives 'unrealistic'—at least 'over-ambitious'.

DELHI

The impact of India was almost overpowering. Having travelled through a lot of Africa, I was prepared to some extent for India, but the impact of the country far exceeded anything I had expected. The contrasts are amazing. Every day you see something incredibly good or beautiful and something so appallingly bad and terrible. The heat in Delhi was also pretty devastating, and it was only due to the great kindness of Erryl Dickinson and Paul and Elizabeth Fabin at the British High Commission that we survived these first days in India.

WALK-IN TO BASE CAMP

We arrived after many adventures at the Himalayan foothills village of Jari (5,000 ft.) feeling pretty jaded. We sat in the cool evening air enjoying our first view of the mountains. On the way up I had seen the most disturbing thing that I have ever seen, which was the terrible plight of the Tibetan refugees, who have been in this area now for fifteen years.

Thanks to John Banon, the local Secretary of the Himalayan Club, our high-altitude Sherpa, Wangyal, was waiting for us. Fred and I had a mind-blowing bus ride to Manikaren in order to get a look at the mountains from there. After two days we left with ten porters for the walk up to Base Camp. The first night was spent at the very remote mountain village of Milana. The people here believe they are untouchable. This is not the untouchability of the Caste System but something totally different and unique. We were not allowed off the path through the main village, and we were not allowed to touch the houses—or anything of theirs for that matter. There is one family who originally came from another village, and we were allowed to stay with them. Fred had stayed there on his previous expedition, and was most unhappy about a revisit, since the house is a haven for every type of rodent imaginable. The rest of us were amused when Fred started to pitch a tent inside the room. He pointedly ignored us, crawled in, and after carefully zipping all the fasteners tight shut, wished us a good night. After ten minutes they came: mice everywhere. I arranged an anorak round my head and then pulled the drawcord of my sleeping bag tight so they couldn't get in. When one mouse got caught up in my anorak near my right ear I really panicked because my arms were stuck inside the sleeping bag and I couldn't find the drawcord.

The rest of the walk-in to Base was uneventful, although quite tiring. All our food was with the porters, and since we didn't see them all day long

we didn't see any food either. It was a small mistake, but it made the walk-in harder than necessary. On the second night we bivouacked out, and arrived at Base the next day.

BASE CAMP

The Base Camp consisted of 2 Vango Mk.V tents and 1 Mk.IV for Wangyal. It was at 11,000 ft., just below the foot of the Ali Ratni Glacier, and on one side of it there was a huge 2,000 ft. wall. We were slightly above the tree-line but found some small trees to pitch under for shade. A stream of melted snow ran about 20 yards away, which was very useful for cooking. Wangyal did all the cooking, and for Base Camp we had a few luxuries like fresh onions, dahl, and chippattis which Wangyal made over the primus. Dave had done a really excellent job of choosing and packing the high-altitude food, and at Base Camp Wangyal's chippattis were a delicious bonus.

THE PASS OF THE ANIMALS

The first key section to a traverse of the Kulu was the Pass of the Animals (15,000 ft.). Wangyal had crossed it before, but later in the year, and he thought there might be too much snow for the descent to the Tos Glacier, so the first thing we did was to establish a food and fuel dump on the Pass. In fact on the first day we realised for the first time what we were really up against. Our loads were about 35 lbs, and we didn't get them further than 14,000 ft. The heat was overpowering and we were not acclimatised. I went on up to the Pass with Wangyal to have a look at the descent on the other side. It took two hours to climb these last 1,000 feet to the Pass: ten steps and then bent over the ice axe for half a minute. Another ten steps and a collapse in the snow for a couple of minutes. It was completely exhausting and totally unpleasant. I knew then that we would not achieve our objectives. From the Pass the view was most impressive. Big remote mountains. From my diary: 'Wangyal and I glissaded back to the others. The ski descent to Base was in fact excellent, but we were all too shattered to appreciate it. Collapsed into the tent and gave ourselves up to the ministrations of Wangyal, who just keeps on and on.'

We were obviously going to have to review a bit, since load-carrying at this altitude and in this heat was worse than we had expected. After a rest day we went up again and established the dump on the Pass of the Animals. This time the ski descent was really good: perfect snow, and a breath-taking mountain scenery. At midday the sun was scorching. I had to wear full head and face protection, gloves, and sleeves down, and even then I got water blisters on my forearms, as did John.

DEO TIBBA

A lot of our time had already slipped by: it was now Tuesday 4th of May. Having got everything ready for the descent to the Tos Glacier the next objective was to establish camp on Deo Tibba. So on Wednesday the 5th we took five days' food and fuel, the bivvy sac, shovels and snow saws up to the site for Camp I—about 14,000 ft. on the Milana Glacier—and returned to Base. Thursday was a rest day: it snowed heavily on Friday, tying us down at Base; and on Saturday we had to allow the snow to consolidate. Finally on Sunday we moved up to the dump on the Milana Glacier, we erected the bivvy sac, and Wangyal dug a snow hole for cooking in. In the evening we sat outside the bivvy sac in the middle of the glacier watching a most beautiful sunset. It was one of those rare and unforgettable moments with which the mountains from time to time reward you. It was cold that night and despite down trousers and jackets and down sleeping bags there was not a lot of sleep.

On Monday we moved on up the glacier to the so-called Second Shelf, and made Camp II at 16,300 ft. This meant carrying 40 lb loads, not counting skis, and although we went quite well there is no doubt at all in my mind that load-carrying at altitude is the worst form of masochistic hell imaginable. Here we met a group from Indrasan (20,410 ft.). The top of Deo Tibba was another 3,300 feet above Camp II. We could see the first 2,000 feet, up to the Deo Tibba/Indrasan Plateau: it was a steep couloir, the last 300 ft. being at 50°. This top section was too steep to ski unless roped: but having thought for the last year of little other than ski-ing down this mountain, I was certainly taking my skis as far as possible. When we set off in the morning Dave was unfortunately feeling very bad, and soon turned back to the camp. John on the other hand was in great form, and soon had a rope fixed on the 300 ft. top section. When we reached the plateau my heart sank. There was the top of Deo Tibba another 1,300 feet to go and obviously unski-able. The snow was very deep and the angle appeared to be about 45°. This was something I had been planning for a long time, and suddenly it wasn't going to happen. I must admit I felt very dejected, and didn't even appreciate the view. With the weather worsening we set off to do the rest of it leaving the skis behind: but the snow was terribly deep, and I soon gave up. Fred, John and Wangyal battled on a bit further and then came back. The good weather had definitely broken, and with conditions deteriorating we descended to the Camp and a welcome brew from Dave.

The position wasn't too promising. With the weather having broken we would probably have to spend four or five days at this camp before getting another chance at Deo Tibba, and we only had food for one more day. Dave was still feeling bad, and the rest of us were very tired. The unanimous decision was to descend to Base, to enjoy the ski descent while we had the chance. So in the morning we started this really magnificent ski descent. The glacier was mostly easy-angled with a few steeper bits, giving excellent and varied ski-ing. All around were massive icefalls and rock cliffs, and magnificent views. As far as I know, we were the first to make this descent on skis, and we savoured every minute of it.

BACK AT BASE CAMP

When we got back down to Base Camp we found that the tents were left on little pedestals. They had created their own shade, but the snow all round them had melted considerably. As we repitched them it started to rain, and then to snow. By now it was Wednesday 12th of May, and we had a week before we would have to be back down in the valley. We had to make a difficult decision. On the one hand the move over to the Tos Glacier was all set up with the food and fuel dump on the Pass of the Animals. On the other hand, the weather looked very nasty: we were all very tired: and I didn't think any of us wanted at this stage to take on any more unknown challenges. The thought of having an epic at this stage was not on, so we decided to walk out by Milana Nulla, the way we had come in.

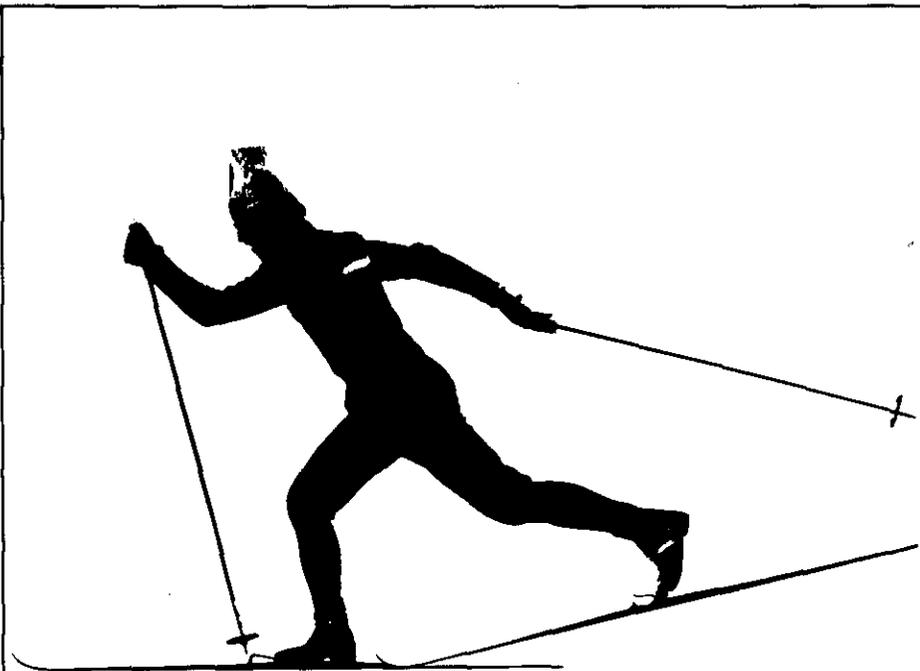
WALK-OUT

While the every-energetic Wangyal went on down to fetch porters, the four of us followed at a more leisurely pace. A lot of the snow had melted: flowers were out: and the smell of pines, juniper and thyme was wonderful. On Fred's suggestion we agreed to bivouac on the way down, and not to sleep at the 'Rodent House'. But this was not to be so, because just as we were choosing a site to bivvy the clouds opened and we were treated to a mother and father of a thunderstorm. A brave attempt was made to ignore the storm, and a fire was eventually encouraged to heat up a brew, but after a while the mice didn't seem too bad an alternative—at least they would be warm and dry. And so on we went. One compensation for the mice was the simple but excellent meal cooked for us by Sringating and his lovely eldest daughter. The chippattis they made tasted like heaven.

One very notable event on the walk-out was meeting a Himalayan bear. These unpredictable animals stand 8 ft. tall and are a most terrifying proposition, particularly when only 20 yards away. It circled round us and eventually cleared off, much to everyone's relief. After that we kept very close together!

CONCLUSIONS

One mountaineering philosophy is that success is only achieved if you get to the top. It is a philosophy held by many, and I heard it repeated only recently on television by a well-known mountaineering commentator. To me it seems to be a very narrow philosophy: it also has connotations of competition, which in mountaineering and ski-ing I personally find distasteful. By this philosophy we failed. But too much happened on this trip for it to be a failure. The four of us had worked well together in preparing for the trip, and once we left Britain we had one adventure after another. We saw things and experienced things that we'll never forget. And throughout not an angry word passed between us. As regards the mountaineering our



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objectives were too big for the time available. We should have either allowed more time, or had more high-altitude porters, or tried to do less. Nevertheless we had some fine ski descents in magnificent mountain scenery: and that is what we went for.

Would I go again? To go ski-mountaineering in the Himalayas requires time in preparation, money, and hard work. On this trip there was a fair amount of time and money spent; there was a lot of hard work, and not enough enjoyment. It is a question of getting a few things sorted out so that the balance is there. And what is in balance for one is not necessarily in balance for another, so it is very personal. However, time is a great healer and you soon forget the unpleasant things in life. So my answer is no longer an emphatic 'No' but a guarded 'Possibly'!

APPENDIX: TECHNICAL REPORT

SKIS

Rossignol Choucas. Construction: short and wide plastic-metal ski, similar to the Haute Route and specially made for ski mountaineering. Lengths used were 180-190 cms. Advantages: light to carry, fit easily on rucksack being short, good on all types of snow and particularly on ice. Disadvantages: the loss of length over a standard ski means a loss in skin surface, unless skin manufacturers start making wider skins.

BINDINGS

Marker M4 and Rotomat TR. This a well proved and excellent combination for touring. Being in a class of its own, we didn't even consider any other binding. I replaced the Marker safety strap with Salomons, which I find quicker and easier.

BOOTS

Galibier R. Pontenvers double ski mountaineering boots. Good points: warm and dry feet, good support for downhill ski-ing, vibram soles. Bad points: very heavy (5¼ lbs per boot as against 3¼ lbs for Val d'Or and 3¼ lbs for Garmont shell ski boot); buckle design meant they could very easily slide off the straps and be lost, so these had to be altered. On the large sizes they only increased the length of the boot and not the width. Fred discarded the rather flimsy inner boots and replaced them with Caber flow-fit inners; this also meant cutting out the tongue of the outer boot, but the result was very satisfactory.

GAITERS

Our requirements were for a gaiter that (1) came down to the welt of the boot for maximum boot protection, and (2) gave easy access to the boots for

adjusting the buckles. We looked at the ones which were on the market and discarded them all on design faults. Dave designed a gaiter and we had it made up by an equipment manufacturer: the result was excellent, giving warm and dry feet all the time, and easy access to the boots.

SKINS

Colltex stick-on. Having used these for three years now I would never go back to ordinary skins. Advantages: much lighter, easier and quicker to fit and to take off, no balling-up in wet snow between the ski and the skin; only one point of weakness, namely the front hook. Disadvantages: they can give adhesion trouble in very cold or in very wet conditions. On this trip we had the cold conditions and we kept the skins warm by either sleeping on them or by keeping them in the sleeping bag with us. The glue wears off the tail end of the skin first, and so this has to be touched up occasionally. The manufacturer's instructions should be followed on (1) cutting the end of the skin to an apex 5 cms from the end of the ski, and (2) when touching up the glue, leave to dry for six hours before using.

HARSCHSISSEN

On this trip cutting down on weight was very important, and harschsisSEN are quite heavy. However we took them and used them quite a lot.

CLOTHING

The main requirements were lightness, warmth, snow proof. With a few individual variations we all had something like: long johns and vest (Damart or similar), shirt or polo-neck, pile jacket or woollen pullover, breeches or salopettes, Duvet jacket, Duvet boots, Duvet trousers, Rohan jacket, light waterproof cagoule, Dachstein or pile mitts, wool hat, sunhat. The Rohan salopettes and jackets were very good.

TENTS

For Base Camp we had two Vango Mk.V's and one Mk.IV. Being double skin tents and pitched in the shade of small trees we were given good shade from the very hot sun. As they were pitched on snow we used branches for pegs. The sun was so hot that the snow melted quickly outside the tents' own shade, and we had to repitch them on occasion. Away from Base Camp we used a large single skin nylon bivvy tent, supported by our skis and sticks. This was light to carry, and was an ideal item. One snag, of course, was considerable condensation from our breath, which immediately froze onto the nylon: any movement of the sac caused a refreshing little ice shower. If the weather had been bad away from Base Camp we would have dug snow holes. For this we carried two shortened aluminium shovels and two snow saws.

COOKING

At Base we had two one-pint paraffin Primuses, a pressure cooker and two billys. Away from Base, we took one of the Primuses, the pressure cooker and one billy. Cooking in the bivvy tent was impracticable, so Wangyal (our Sherpa) dug a small snow hole for the kitchen. Paraffin was estimated at one litre per day while using snow, and one pint per day while using water. When cooking for ourselves in populated areas we were very concerned about polluted water: to purify water we used 5 Puritabs per 5 litres and left to react for half an hour. If the water was then to be drunk, it was then boiled for at least 5 minutes. The pressure cooker was a particularly useful item.

FOOD

High altitude food was bought and prepacked in Britain. Menus were: Breakfast: porridge, tea/coffee, dried milk, sugar. Lunch: individual packs consisting of 1 Mars bar, 1 Kit Kat, 1 Fruit and Nut or 1 Plain Chocolate, 1 bag mixed nuts, 3 boiled sweets, 3 butterscotch. Evening: dried meat, dried veg., potato powder, tea, coffee, lemon powder, soup.

For Base Camp we bought some extras locally, and Wangyal produced really excellent chappattis, rice, dahl, onions and potatoes.

The problem is to get the necessary calory intake, and we all lost at least a stone in weight.

FIRST AID

The policy on first aid was to cover major accidents rather than minor ones. The kit included an inflatable splint, Piper stretcher (used with the injured person's skis and sticks), analgesics (oral and injectable), and a variety of bandages and pills. A visit to India will inevitably result in severe stomach disorders due to polluted water and food while on the way up to the mountains. This can be quite serious as it completely drains your strength, and the problem should not be treated at all lightly. We tried three different courses of pills, none of which worked.

MAPS

There are 1:250,000 maps of the area prepared in 1954 by the U.S. Army. The detail on them is so bad as to be useless. The Survey of India has maps of the same scale, but these are restricted on military grounds and are unobtainable. We used sketch maps from previous expeditions, as found in the Alpine Journal.

AVALANCHES

We had one short heavy fall of snow and one or two light ones. Generally, there was a lot of snow around as the winter had been heavy. Several small avalanches came down in the afternoon sun, but we were well away

from them. One big ice avalanche came down in the night near our highest camp, and a steep gully avalanched in the afternoon—these were the only two of any consequence. There was little wind slab. After the heavy snow fall, conditions consolidated very quickly with the hot midday sun and cold nights. We carried Autophones.

CREVASSES

Because there had been so much snow in the winter, the crevasses were well filled and there was little danger. In fact we never roped up for crevasses. The roping-up systems we had were full body harnesses of individual choice, incorporating self-rescue prussiking systems. Two of us put our feet into the same bergschrund, but that was the only incident we had.

CLIMBING EQUIPMENT

Two 150' 9 mm ropes; ice axes and crampons; one ice hammer; selection of ice screws and rock pegs; 2 slings and karabiners each.

FILM

Kodachrome 25 and 64 for colour slides; Agfachrome 25 ASA Super 8 Cine. Cameras were two Olympus OMI's, two Rolleis and a Canon Super 8 Cine.

TRAVEL/FREIGHT

Normal return air flight London/Delhi in 1976 is £263, with excess baggage at £3.83 per kilo. We arranged return flights for £220 with air freight of equipment at £1.13 per kilo. There are many variations of travel possibilities, and many traps to fall into. For example, we were charged 120% Import Tax on our high altitude food: if we had known this before we could have avoided it by applying in advance for exemption.

PORTERS

The low altitude porters to Base Camp charged about £0.80 per day, plus one packet of cigarettes a day. They supplied their own food, carried about 50 lbs, and carried up above the snow line. It was not necessary to supply them with rucksacks as they used ropes. We employed one high altitude Sherpa called Wangyal. He charged £2.00 per day; we supplied his food and tent; he supplied the rest of his equipment. He was worth his weight in gold, and I wish we had employed more like him. He is a very fine mountaineer, completely trustworthy and reliable, and never gets tired.

ACCLIMTISATION

We tried to do a quick, light-weight expedition. We gave ourselves little time to acclimatise, and we carried loads ourselves. The combination of altitude, load-carrying and crippling midday heat was difficult to bear. I really think you need the time to acclimatise, the routine of establishing camps—and preferably Sherpas to load-carry for you.

ENGADINE GLACIERS ON SKIS

Walter Kirstein

There are three kinds of skiers—Cross Country, Pisteskiers and Tourers. The Cross Country runners are well known in the Scandinavian countries as the skiers who have developed skiing in the past. They are appearing in ever growing numbers in the Alpine areas to-day. Known on the continent as Langlauf it is much easier to learn and it is not very strenuous as long as one does not intend taking part in competitive skiing. There is a saying 'Langlaufer live longer'. We can debate whether this is right or wrong but it is certainly healthier to move along under one's own steam on the level or up gentle hills than to stand in a long queue waiting for ski lifts or cable cars to be taken up to the top station only to ski down in a comparatively short time, as the Piste skiers are doing. This is the aim of a very large number of skiers to-day and I can understand them. There is nothing better to improve skiing standards, nothing finer to find your ski legs again after the long summer interval.

The Ski Tourers are skiers who, I think, will be of most interest to members of the ABMSAC. They are the more ambitious skiers or ski mountaineers. Ski mountaineering in its proper form includes, in the Alps, hut to hut tours and ascending high peaks. A recent classic example was the East to West Traverse of the Alps in 7 weeks which included Monte Rosa and Mont Blanc and was done without guide by a party of 8 skiers from the Ski Club of Gt. Britain led by Alan Blackshaw, former President of the B.M.C.

Half my adventures in the mountains, most of them in the Alps, have been spent doing nothing else but ski tours and when I think of those times I cannot help feeling a bit nostalgic about them. The traverses of the Silvretta from Austria to Switzerland or in the opposite direction, the Oetzal, the Valais High Level Route from Saas Fee to Verbier which included two 4,000 m. high peaks, an ascent of the Palu from the Roseg Valley with my Swiss Section in 11 hours, not counting the 5 hours descent to the Boval Hut carrying our skis half of the time downhill because the open crevasses had to be crossed. Unfortunately all this is far beyond my capabilities to-day.

However, I have found one way of ski touring which still gives me as much satisfaction as I ever enjoyed in the past, that is the touring scheme arranged every year in March in the Engadine by the Combined Services Winter Sports Association in conjunction with the Ski Club of Gt. Britain. Our touring leader in St. Moritz is Commander Stuart Ferguson, a Scotsman with all the good features of a Scot and a character appreciated by all who know him well. What a godsend he is for the successful organisation of this yearly touring scheme. He learnt skiing much later than most people do, only on retirement from commercial life. I met him soon after he com-

menced skiing and took him with me on a ski ascent of the Piz Cambrena. Ever since he has been a keen enthusiast for this kind of high Alpine skiing. In earlier days he used to telephone me at my hotel in the early morning 'Walter, what are we doing to-day?' Do you think we can run down to the Val Bevers under present conditions? Now he knows so much more about local conditions and dangers that I have to ask him about skiing conditions if for some reason I am not skiing with his party.

Last Winter (March 1976) I hesitated to book my Engadine holiday as there were no snow reports from St. Moritz at the Ski Club in London which was a rather ominous sign. Nevertheless I went to St. Moritz, only to find the Corviglia slopes practically bare. The piste skiers went up by train and stayed in the area of the higher ski-lifts returning by train to St. Moritz.

Stuart, however, knew where the powder snow was and took us up to the Saluver Valley. Using skins and sometimes ski crampons (Harscheisen) we walked up to the Fuorcla Palud Marscha in about 1½ hours, by-passing the rocks of the 'Trais Fluors' (Romansch for 3 flowers). This fuorcla (col) leads from the Saluver Valley to the Val Suvretta de Samedan. First we had to carry our skis down a steep gully where there was not as much snow on the rocks as in normal winters but once we were away from the rocks and on the Vadret (small glacier) of the same name as the Fuorcla we found 3 ft. of simply ideal powder snow, the dream of the ski tourer and not one crevasse open. To me it seems strange that skiers who 'wedel' down the pistes with an elegance that I shall never acquire have often difficulty in sailing across these powder slopes. For me this is the real skiing. The skis carry one with speed and ease down from the high mountains to the valleys, sometimes in a matter of minutes. Because of last winter's snow conditions this ideal snow did not last right to the end of the tour. Lower down the snow got heavier as it was warmer there. In normal winters one has to be very careful in that area—two huge avalanches very often cover the whole of the lower part of the run and we have to make sure that the avalanches are down before we arrange the tour, but this winter there was no avalanche danger at all.

One of the loveliest winter days I have ever experienced in the Engadine was the last day of my holiday this year. I had promised to take a group down the Morteratsch glacier from the Diavolezza and the forecast was good. How disappointed we were in the early morning when the train passed through Morteratsch station and instead of having the spectacular view of the high mountains from the train we saw only mist and clouds. Arriving early on the Diavolezza we could hardly see the house and outside the icy North wind was blowing the flag straight from the flagpole. We went indoors to have a warm drink and when telling my party that I would take them down to Morteratsch but they would probably not see a thing, a guide at the next table got up and was surprised that I did not recognise him. He had been with me some years ago on a summer traverse of the Palu. When I asked him about the weather he said 'Do not worry, in half an hour the sun will be shining'. Right he was. First we could see the Pers glacier below us and very soon the clouds lifted and the many peaks from Cambrena to Morteratsch—Palu, Bellavista, Bernina—appeared in brilliant sunlight.



Vadret Palüd Marscha
by Walter Kirstein

The first steep slope down to the Pers glacier would be very hard for some hours, until the sun had softened the ice. However, I had promised a friend in Zurich, a member of my SAC section Uto, to spend the evening with him on my journey home so we had to start our ski run from the Diavolezza early. Here my new 'compact' short 170 cm. skis really helped me, they never let me slip out of control and we were soon down on the Pers glacier. I know this tour for 50 years, it was my first glacier ski tour in the Alps. Then we walked up 3 hours to the Diavolezza Hut, a very much smaller hut than now. At that time there would have been no more than 2 or 3 parties but sometimes we skied down completely on our own. This time it was



P12 Cambrena and P12 Palü
by Walter Kirstein

nearly like those former days. The cloudy morning had probably deceived many people as there were few parties of skiers.

The crux of the run is the Isla Pers, a steep rockslope leading down to the level of the Morteratsch glacier. In summer one finds there rocksteps, which we walked down on our Meet in Pontresina in 1972. In winter when iced this descent can be rather tricky but now we found powder snow there and got down without difficulty. The long straight run to Morteratsch station had spring snow, that bit of salty (slightly wet) top layer on a hard base, which makes spring touring safe, easy and very fast. We arrived in time for lunch at the station, early enough for me to catch my train to Chur and Zurich.

My friend knew on which train I was due to arrive at the Hauptbahnhof in Zurich. That was my good fortune as he found me fast asleep in the train. Without him I should have gone on to Basle, still dreaming of that marvellous Morteratsch run.

ASSOCIATION ACTIVITIES

THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held at the Connaught Rooms, Great Queen Street, London, WC2, on Wednesday, 17th November, 1976 at 6.30 p.m.

About 25 members were present. The President, Mr. M. Bennett, was in the Chair.

1. Minutes

The Minutes of the Annual General Meeting 1975 which had been circulated were approved and signed by the President.

2. Election of Officers and Committee for 1976

- a. On the proposal of Mr. Frank Solari, seconded by Mr. Peter Ledeboer, Mr. F. E. Smith was elected as Vice President.
- b. On a proposal by Mr. F. E. Smith, seconded by Mr. A. Sperryn, Mr. R. A. Coatsworth was elected as Honorary Secretary.
- c. On the proposal of Mr. Whyte, seconded by Mr. Ledeboer, The Rev. F. L. Jenkins, The Rev. J. M. L. L. Bogle and Mr. F. A. W. Schweitzer were elected to serve on the Committee.
- d. On the proposal of Dr. Riddell, seconded by Mr. Bennett, all other Officers and Committee being eligible were re-elected to their posts.

3. The Annual Accounts

The President asked Mr. Wendell Jones to present the Accounts for the year ended 30th September, 1976.

Mr. Jones recorded that he presented two sets of Accounts for review by the Meeting. That of the Association of British Members of the Swiss Alpine Club were for approval if thought fit; but those of the Association of British Members of the Swiss Alpine Club Ltd. would be presented to a Meeting of the Company at a later date. Mr. Jones drew members' attention to the greatly increased subscription income for the year and noted that this was due to the fact that the majority of the subscriptions were remitted to Switzerland without great loss in exchange to the Association and that it further reflected the increase in the Association's subscription as raised last year. The expenditure of the Association was roughly comparable with last year's with the exception of an increase caused by the Journal and a reduction in printing and postage accruing to the Association as a proportion of this expenditure was deemed to be on Limited Company business. He recorded an excess of income over expenditure for 1976 of £300.

The President invited questions from the Meeting. Mr. Richards asked whether it was possible to show within the balance sheet the exact nature of the transactions with Switzerland so that Association members could assess more easily the position of their Club independent of the parent Club. It was noted that this was already shown in the notes to the Accounts but the Honorary Treasurer would consider this point for inclusion in next years' accounts. On a question from Mr. Solari as to the 'written down' value of the projector to £1 the Honorary Treasurer recorded this was usual accountancy procedure and could do the Association no harm. A proposal that the Accounts be received and adopted was proposed by the President and seconded by Dr. Riddell and passed nem. con.

The President proposed a sincere Vote of Thanks to the Honorary Treasurer for his customary clear accounts noting that two sets of Accounts had to be produced again this year and this involved the Honorary Treasurer in a great deal of extra work. The Vote of Thanks was carried with enthusiasm.

4. Any Other Business

The President proposed a Vote of Thanks to the Swiss National Tourist Office for all their help during the year, mentioning particularly Mr. Imoberdorf. He also proposed a Vote of Thanks to the retiring Vice President and Honorary Secretary as well as to the members of the Committee. These Votes of Thanks were carried with acclaim.

Mr. Solari asked whether up-to-date copies of the Rules of the Association would be available at the Special General Meeting on 1st December. The Honorary Secretary agreed to make copies available to members.

There being no further business the Annual General Meeting closed at 6.58 p.m.

ASSOCIATION ACCOUNTS 1975-1976

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT

for the year ended 30th September, 1976

	1976	1975
<i>Income from Members</i>		
Subscriptions (Note 1)	1,441	267
Entrance Fees	37	46
Life Membership Credit	46	44
Profit on Sale of Ties	8	6
Insurance Commissions	1	29
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	1,533	392
<i>Less: Expenditure</i>		
Hire of Rooms	100	100
Journal (Note 2)	639	436
Printing, Postage etc. SNT0	223	156
Printing, Postage etc. Association	120	249
Insurance	8	9
Entertainment	129	37
BMC Subscription	65	69
Lecture Expenses	11	—
Sundries	28	14
Depreciation, New Projector	32	33
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	1,355	1,103
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	178	(711)
<i>Add: Investment Income:-</i>		
Association Investments	130	121
Building Society Interest	44	35
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	174	156
<i>Less: Taxation (Note 3)</i>		
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	52	66
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	122	90
<i>Excess of Income over Expenditure</i>		
(1975 Deficit)	<hr/>	<hr/>
	£300	£(621)
	<hr/>	<hr/>

BALANCE SHEET

30th September, 1975

	1976	1975
<i>FIXED ASSETS</i> (Note 4)		
Projector (N.S. Finzi Bequest)	1	33
Equipment at Swiss Tourist Office	1	1
<i>INVESTMENTS</i> at cost (Note 5)	1, 872	1, 872
<i>CURRENT ASSETS</i>		
Current A/c.—ABMSAC Ltd.	—	292
Stock of Ties at cost	5	17
Debtors	124	112
Cash on Deposit—Building Society	1, 098	27
Cash at Bank	7	11
	<u>1, 234</u>	<u>459</u>
<i>DEDUCT: CURRENT LIABILITIES</i>		
Current A/c.—ABMSAC Ltd.	291	—
Creditors	107	67
Subscriptions in Advance	234	164
	<u>632</u>	<u>231</u>
<i>NET CURRENT ASSETS</i>	602	228
	<u>£2, 476</u>	<u>£2, 134</u>
<i>SOURCES OF FINANCE</i>		
<i>Life Membership Account</i>	872	830
<i>Accumulated Revenue Account</i>		
Balance at 30th September, 1975	1, 204	
Add: Excess of Income over Expenditure	300	
	<u>1, 504</u>	<u>1, 204</u>
<i>N.S. Finzi Bequest</i>	100	100
	<u>£2, 476</u>	<u>£2, 134</u>

M. BENNETT *President*

R. WENDELL JONES *Hon Treasurer*

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

J. LLYWELYN JONES
Hon. Auditor

9th November, 1976

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

1. <i>Subscriptions</i>	1976	1975
Income from this source is made up as follows:-		
Subscriptions — Town Members —		
Year to 31/12/76 110 @ 3	330	
County Members —		
Year to 31/12/76 302 @ 2	604	
	<u>934</u>	598
<i>Less: Adjustments for subs in advance</i>	84	
	<u>850</u>	
Surplus on Flat rate of Subscription levied against the sterling equivalent of Subscriptions due to the Swiss Sections of the S.A.C. (1975: Deficit)	584	(338)
Miscellaneous	7	7
	<u>£1, 441</u>	<u>£267</u>
2. <i>Journal</i>	1976	1975
Cost of the journal is made up as follows:-		
Printing	551	447
Despatch cost and other expenses	128	49
	<u>679</u>	<u>496</u>
<i>Less: Advertising Revenue</i>	40	60
	<u>£639</u>	<u>£436</u>
3. <i>Taxation</i>		
The Association is liable to Corporation Tax on its income from outside sources.		
4. <i>Fixed Assets</i>	Cost	Depreciation to date
New Projector (N.S. Finzi Bequest)	166	165
Equipment at Swiss National Tourist Office	80	79
5. <i>Investments</i>		
These are as follows:-		
£1, 000 4½% Agricultural Mortgage Corporation Deb. Stock 1977/82		
£1, 080 Brunner Investment Trust Limited Ordinary Shares of 25p		
710 London Scottish American Trust Limited Ordinary Shares of 25p.		
Cost of these holdings was £1, 872. Aggregate market value at 30th September, 1976 was £1, 923 (1975 £1, 954).		

NOTES REGARDING ALTERATIONS TO RULES

At a Special General Meeting of the Association held on 1st December, 1976, some very substantial amendments were made to the constitution of the Association. The most important of these amendments was the creation of a new class of members to be known as *Affiliate Members*. The reason for this radical change from the principle that members of the Association had to be members of a Section of the S.A.C. was the very disturbing decline in the number of British climbers joining the S.A.C. and the Association, coupled with an increase in the numbers of existing members who were not renewing their membership. These developments were an inevitable result of the greatly increased cost of membership of the S.A.C. consequent upon the disastrous decline in the value of the £ sterling against the Swiss Franc.

It was considered that it was vital to the interests of the Association that those British climbers who would, in easier times, have wished to join the S.A.C. or remain members, should be kept together as a nucleus from which a further expansion of S.A.C. membership may be expected in the future. It would be far easier to allow groups of enthusiasts to disperse than it would be to get them together again when the U.K. economic situation improves. It is, of course, hoped that as many as possible of the existing S.A.C. members (and especially those who will be able to continue climbing in Switzerland) will continue to be members of their Sections.

Certain amendments were also made to the Rules relating to the qualifications for 'Retired' membership of the Association.

There are set out below particulars of the different classes of membership of the Association and the annual rates of subscription and rights applicable to each class:-

Ordinary Members

<i>Qualification</i>	Membership of a Section of the S.A.C.
<i>Subscriptions</i>	Flat rate to S.A.C. Section, at present £16. To Association: Town Members £3 Country Members £2
<i>Eligibility for Office</i>	May hold any office in the Association
<i>Voting Rights</i>	May vote on any resolutions at General Meetings.

Affiliate Members

<i>Qualification</i>	Men or women who have attained the age of 18, have a genuine love of the hills and an interest in Switzerland and the S.A.C. or the Ladies' Swiss Alpine Club.
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<i>Subscription</i>	£5
<i>Eligibility for Office</i>	Not eligible to hold office as President, Vice President, Hon. Secretary, Hon. Treasurer or Hon. New Members Secretary but may hold any other office save that not more than three ordinary members of the Committee may be Affiliate Members
<i>Voting Rights</i>	May vote on any resolutions at General Meetings other than resolutions directly affecting the Association's relations with the S.A.C.

Retired Members

<i>Qualification</i>	Having retired from active climbing on the Alps and having either (a) attained the status of an S.A.C. veteran or (b) attained the age of 60 and been an ordinary member for at least 10 years.
<i>Subscriptions</i>	Town Members £3 Country Members £2
<i>Eligibility for Office</i>	Not eligible to hold any office.
<i>Voting Rights</i>	No right to vote at General Meetings.

Honorary Members

<i>Qualification</i>	Having rendered outstanding service to the Association or to mountaineering generally.
<i>Subscription</i>	None
<i>Eligibility for Office</i>	} As for Ordinary Members
<i>Voting Rights</i>	

Notes

1. Town membership for Ordinary Members and Retired Members indicates residence within a radius of 50 miles from Charing Cross: members of the classes residing outside such radius are Country Members.
2. The new regulations regarding eligibility for Retired membership do not affect those holding that status prior to 1st December, 1976.

THE ANNUAL DINNER 17TH NOVEMBER, 1976

This was again held at the Connaught Rooms. The official guests were:-

His Excellency the Swiss Ambassador and his Lady

Mr. J. Rial,
The Swiss Embassy

Mr. and Mrs. E. Imoberdorf,
The Swiss National Tourist Office

Mr. and Mrs. G. Band,
The Alpine Club

Mr. and Mrs. G. Hall,
The Tuesday Climbing Club

Mr. and Mrs. Randers Heen
Åndalsnes

The Royal toast was proposed by The President.

The toast to the Swiss Confederation was proposed by Mr. P. S. Boulter, and His Excellency the Swiss Ambassador responded.

The President proposed the health of the Association.

The Guests and Kindred Club were toasted by the Rt. Rev. the Lord Bishop of Leicester, and Mr. G. C. Band, representing the Alpine Club, replied.

THE HUT

Peter Ledeboer

In reviewing the first year of the life of our hut, one inevitably thinks back to the opening ceremony on 4th October 1975. What a marvellous party that was. Lakeland weather at its very foulest (as always happens on these occasions) but what a crush, what quality in the speeches and what enthusiasm! (I can still remember Hektor Meier, representing the Central Committee of the S.A.C., trying to dry his wet pound notes on a coffee pot!) And Sid Cross, who ought to know, declared that this was the best hut opening he had ever attended.

I believe this to be a very good omen for the future. In spite of some doubters, this ceremony confirmed to my mind more than anything else the Committee's faith in bringing at long last to reality what most members wanted.

Financially, Year 1 has proved a success greater than we had anticipated, which is also a good omen. At the same time this is a relief, because we simply could not afford to risk a loss. In these inflationary times it is difficult to budget for all the running costs, particularly electricity, and so we had to go flat out to get maximum bookings. Remembering that we

have to pay rent, as opposed to some other clubs, a surplus is essential in order to provide funds for loan repayment and for hut improvement.

On hut improvement, it should be realised that we took over from the builders a basically good structure with one infuriating defect—a smoking chimney. This is notoriously difficult to cure, but thanks to the expertise of Brooke Midgley and many volunteers we have now not only cured it but also transformed the lounge with a re-sited Lakeland slate fireplace to provide a proper homely atmosphere.

Of course there have been other problems in the first year. Some members have felt irked at not being able to turn up without prior booking, but with regular club week-ends and with mostly 6 places kept back for members on block bookings, there seems to be adequate capacity for members. After all, this rule does give protection from a 'no room at the inn' situation. Then there is the question of children. I know the rule hits certain families rather hard, but the Committee felt it necessary to apply a lower age limit of 10 in order to protect the innocent from the guilty. However, we are experimenting with designating two week-ends a year as Club meets with children.

To conclude I would like particularly to pay tribute to the enormous amount of volunteer help put in on the endless do-it-yourself jobs on which a hut relies and to the devoted service of Syd Prentice as Hut Warden and by Peter Wood as his Assistant, both of whom have now retired. We have had a pretty good Year 1—long may this spirit continue!

THE OUTDOOR MEETS

THE ALPINE MEET

S. M. Freeman

This year's meet was centred on Fischbiel in the Löttschental, and extended over four weeks from 24th July to 21st August. Once again it was organised and run by Harry Archer and his family, helped by their friends Hazel Ryle and Vera Twinan, subsequently referred to as the Team. They were just as selfless, devoted and successful as last year, in spite of increased difficulties arising from the isolated situation, which made every shopping trip into an expedition. We were met at the funicular station by the Team, and our luggage was conveyed to the chalets, which turned out to be luxurious. The editor's party had a private suite with its own cooking facilities and so on.

The Löttschental must be one of the best surviving links with an older culture, and the situation is idyllic. We even had laid on for us at Wiler the celebration associated with the Feast of the Assumption. For this great event all the valley turned out in traditional costume; the priest in his ceremonial robes was followed in procession by his attendants, by white robed

girls, by soldiers and by military bands, all in their gayest array. An open air service was followed by further processions with displays of flag waving on the bridge at the top of the valley.

The weather was less kind than the other circumstances. Those of us who were there for the last fortnight arrived in clear bright conditions only to learn that climbing had been sadly hampered. Subsequently we had rain after about 4.00 p.m. on most days, with fresh snow at hut height. This was little impediment for walkers, who fared very well unless they were looking for visibility suitable for photography.

The climbers survived such troubles as a 5-day stay at the Finsteraarhorn hut (for little reward) and a bivouac epic on the Aletschhorn and Beich Pass. In spite of difficulties, climbs were done, even the Bietschhorn, ascended in bad conditions and better than standard time by the Wagstaffs. The following list appeared in the log book, unfinished climbs denoted by asterisks. Aletschhorn, Beich Pass, Bietschhorn, Lauterbrunnen Breithorn*, Löttschental Breithorn, Ebnefluh, Finsteraarhorn*, Hockenhorn, Majinghorn, Mittagshorn, Pigne d'Arolla, Bella Tola Rothorn, Sackhorn, Spalihorn, Stielihorn, Tschingelhorn. Huts visited included the Baltschieder, Bietschhorn, Blumlisalp, Finsteraarhorn, Hollandia, Konkordia, Löttschen Pass, Mutthorn and Oberaletsch.

Walks, other than those to the huts, included many passages of the Höhenweg on the N. side of the valley from Restalp to Fafleralp (with all the fun of the fair at the latter place on the Sabbath, an extreme change from our last visit). The paths through the woods on the S. side were explored, and there were endless trips to the fascinating villages for photographic or other reasons. Passes explored included the Ferden, Resti and Löttschen. More extensive pass crossing was done by the advance or walking—in party, who have contributed a separate article.

The attendance, as reported in the log, included A. Andrews, C., H., M., M. and V. Archer, C. Armstrong, G. and M. Bennett, J. Bogle, M. and P. Boulter, B. and M. Clarke, J. Coales, E. Collier, A. C. Davis, J. Dempster, J. Edwards, H. Flook, E. and M. Freeman, P. and V. French, R. Goodsall, I. Haig, S. Harris, R. Hayes, B. Lamb, R. Loewy, W. MacWilliams, M. Porteous, D. Riddell, H. Ryle, C. and J. Sellwood, S. Smith, B. and P. Smurthwaite, A. Sperryn, V. Twinan, E. and D. Wagstaff, G. Warren.

The meet ended with a party organised by Harry and Valda, a happy occasion with, however, a sad side, as it is unlikely that they will be able to tackle the heavy burden of running such a meet for yet another time. This is a sobering thought on which to ponder, and it will be very late to start pondering when these notes reach the reader.

ABM/SAC APPROACH MARCH

D. R. Riddell

A modest Approach March this year. Paul French, as Leader, seemed to have worked overtime like a beaver for months beforehand. It is a tribute

to his planning that his programme, dated Dec. 1975, was carried out exactly, apart from a deviation caused by the transfer to Fischbiel from Fafleralp, as originally planned for the Meet.

This year Paul had his wish to get down to acclimatisation (or 'getting fit') at once.

A pleasant journey from Victoria, marred only by John Coales nearly having an apoplectic fit because of the Folkestone queuing arrangements were so Belsen-like that I was concerned for his continued existence!

Once on the 'Horsa', all was well—except for shortages of all the best items in the 'Self Service'. The ship sailed late, because the French trains had been late getting to Calais that morning.

The train from Calais was only $\frac{1}{4}$ full, and we were able to move from our cramped couchette compartment to a (nearly) empty compartment for our really splendid evening meal. Paul's offering of a Chateau Latour was a poem in itself.

Basle station is not what it was. No 1st class restaurant as of yore. The snack bar which was open had sunk to the depths of King's Cross Buffet standards.

Train through to Kandersteg. Always a thrill, but not to compare with the second breakfast at the 'Zur Post'. Glorious day, and the occasion was graced by the appearance of Bertha & Walter Kirstein, looking like a couple on the 'Grand Tour' of last century.

It was after sending off our surplus luggage from the Post Office—NOT the station, that we dutifully walked to Schwarenbach, eschewing the Stockbahn as heretofore. The walk through the 'Klus' was delightful and the weather was kind throughout the trip (almost). Lunch at the 'Waldhaus' in the Gasterntal before going up the steepish path through the Gurnigal to the Schwarenbachschlucht at the top of which we joined our old friend, the road to Schwarenbach.

There we had a wonderful welcome from 'Dorli' Stoller and daughters, not to mention a pleasant English girl who was 'helping out' and learning her German for her degree course. . . Otto was out on 'business', dealing with the Zinal Rothorn and the Matterhorn. . . .

Next day we walked up to the top of the Gemmi, again scorning any mechanical aids such as Otto's Jeep, or the telepherique down to Leukerbad. It was a perfect day. The immense expanse from Mischabel to Mt. Blanc was breathtaking. Looking at the view it was agreed by all that there was ONE mountain, and that was the Weisshorn. . . .

Down and down to Leukerbad. Shopping. Personally I made no purchases, and the only map I got was FREE. Later we wandered up to a spot called, now, the Rinderhutte, which is on the Landescarte as 'Rinderhalte', where a telepherique and a gondelbahn meet. This is a ski development and unfinished. The dining room was nearly as big as that at the Jungfrauoch. It was nearly empty, only some noisy children entertaining the Village Idiot.

After a good night in a modern dortoir with all mod cons, we walked up the Torrenthorn. The hill is only 2 metres short of the 3000. It was a pleasant stroll across fields, but the summit came as a surprise. It might have been in the Coolins, on the Dolomites. Apart from the tiny segment up which we had come, everything was steep rock. The whole trip only took about 3 hrs. and made it a 'rest' day. But the view was even finer than from the Gemmi. Only about 20 degrees of the 360 were not included. Once again the horizon showed one mountain paramount, The Weisshorn.

Over the Restipass next day to Restialp (Muirhead states 'guide desirable, 35 Fcs.') was a pleasant walk, finally coming down to the Lotschental at Restialp where we turned off left to Kummenalp, where we spent a noisy night. It was Saturday!

Our Sunday walk was to the Lotschen Pass, where we called at the now excellent little hut. In 1967 it was called 'The Hovel'. From there we had our first snow on the walk up the Hockenhorn. Perhaps it should be called 'climb', as there was one nasty corner. . . . Back at the Pass, the weather was indifferent, drizzle. Down we went to Gfallalp, steep path, to the Gasthaus. We all looked forward to a good meal and after the soup with two sausages floating in it, we were expecting the roast beef, potatoes etc. No, the soup had been our Main Meal!

Next morning the gasthaus-keeper provided us with all the coffee we could drink, all the bread we could eat, all the jam and butter we could wish for, and the surplus was such as to provide us with our 'packed' lunch.

The Gfallalp gasthaus is a curious place. Neither hut nor hotel. One needs a map to find one's way about. In fine weather it would be a good spot. When wet, no.

Some rain on our way back to the Lotschen Pass, soon stopped. Lunch at the hut before taking the 'High Road' to Lauchernalp. From there we could see the top of the Telepherique at Holz, but we wandered about for an hour before we finally contacted one of the Swiss Family Archer and found the Chalet 'Knylag' where we received a wonderful welcome, and a Scotch tea of scones, jam and cakes. Scrumptious!

Thus for Virginia French, that indomitable New Englander, Walter McWilliam, the irrepressible declaimer of appropriate poetry, Harold Flook, that chronic dispatcher of postcards, John Coales, yrs. truly and the never-to-be-sufficiently appreciated organiser, Paul French, we had reached the end of a successful and enjoyable Approach March.

NORTHERN DINNER MEET. 1976. PATTERDALE. FEBRUARY 7TH AND 8TH.

W. Brooke Midsley

This year we had our own hut on which to base the meet, as usual some Beatham Cottage places were also reserved. Shortly before the meet num-

bers of members booking were so low it seemed that it would be sensible to cancel the booking of George Starkey Hut and retain the few places at Beatham Cottage. Fortunately a late flush of bookings brought numbers up to a respectable level, and 61 members and friends attended.

Saturday was fine and parties were on the hills, one large party attacking some Dodds and Helvellyn, but there seemed to be no climbable snow around, although rumour had it that some snow was ascended. These intrepid mountaineers must have been desperate for something to climb.

Nat Allen was guest speaker at the dinner, which was held at the Glenridding Hotel; he gave a slide show and a very entertaining chat after dinner. Some of the rock slides were so horrific that the projectionist was frightened out of his sequence and the projector out of glim. The unnatural break gave the audience chance to indulge their thirsts and this was continued until jangling nerves were stilled.

The weather on Sunday was worse than the previous day with intermittent rain. Some intrepid souls went out on the hills, others discussed work on the hut, others simply nursed hangovers and looked sad, pretending they were considering the weather and things.

EASTER MEET AT ONICH, APRIL 15TH TO 21ST

Alisdair Andrews

The Easter Meet was held at Onich near Glencoe based in the Allt Nan Ros Hotel, and was attended by 28 members and guests. It got off to a good start with beautiful blue skies and snow covered tops. Unfortunately the fine weather gave way to several days of appalling weather, after which the fine weather returned for the remainder of the meet.

The meet was as usual very active, and a considerable number of hills were climbed; the main peaks being Garbh Bheinn, The Mamores, The Appin Hills, Ben Starav, The Blackmount Hills, probably the best ascent being the traverse of the ridge from Stob Ghabhar to Clach Leathad and Meall a' Bhuidh by a strong party led by John Dempster in white-out conditions. Also we must not overlook the ascent of one of the Mamores by Kathy Hine giving her first Munro, nor also the 'auld yins' David Riddell and Walter Kirstein, both in their middle to late seventies, who continued their stately progress over the tops.

Midway through the meet we were honoured by a visit from Hektor Meier and his wife and son, good friends of the Association from Switzerland. They came to see Ben Nevis, castles, ghosts and the Loch Ness Monster, but we could only offer Scotch Mist.

Our thanks are due to the hotelier who looked after our inner needs with his customary, if dour, efficiency and to the members, particularly Maurice Bennett, Peter Ledebor and Frank Solari, who showed slides of past meets, well kent faces and unknown parts of the world in the evenings.

Easter Meet at Patterdale

S. M. Freeman

This secondary event was attended by 13 S.A.C. members and guests. Of these, the Cutforth group stayed only long enough for us to cheer them on their way on their walk from W. coast to the E. The rest of us enjoyed some reasonably good clear views following rather discouraging starts. Two distinguished Alpinists had the rare experience, for them, of ascending an English Hill (Helvellyn by Striding Edge and Swirral Edge).

Fairfield was ascended in the murk inescapably associated with that mountain in the Ed.'s mind (though we did manage to find St. Sunday Crag, unlike the last previous occasion when the conditions were so appalling that the Ed.'s party were driven to Grisedale Tarn as the only safe escape).

The highlight was a walk from Kirkstone summit over the High Street range home, completed successfully by two junior and rather wet Midgleys.

A minor record was set up by the Ed., who fell through the mattress of one bed, migrated to another which proved to be incorrectly assembled and lacerated his scalp on the wire mattress above (on reflection, the concussed editor may have confused this meet with another). Altogether an occasion of well varied jollity.

PATTERDALE, MAY 7TH TO 9TH

E. Tuck

The Association meet in May at the Hut in Patterdale seemed to be the right time of year to propose the following challenge, namely the Patterdale Watershed in the day, starting of course with an Alpine start, only some members' Alpine starts are later than others.

Arriving at the Hut late at night and meeting other club members does not make for one of the best ways of ensuring an early start, but most of us managed to get up at about 4. a.m. and the first party of eight set off by car to Dockray. We parked the cars about a mile up the lane from Dockray and set off walking about 5.30 a.m. The morning was fantastic, not a cloud to be seen anywhere. The route ahead lay in the direction of Bruts Moss and on to Great Dodd. From there, well there's only one way to go, just follow your nose. The tops of Watson and Stybarrow Dodd soon fell to our relentless pace.

Before we stopped for morning coffee we had traversed the Raise and Helvellyn, in fact there was so much talking going on that the first hours of walking went by almost unnoticed. After Helvellyn the trail ahead posed somewhat more of a challenge. Nethermost Pike, Dollywaggon Pike and the long slog up Fairfield, well it came and it went (thank God) and a short stop was enjoyed by all, although some gave the impression that they didn't need it.

From Fairfield we took a line taking in Hart Crag and the high ground above Dove Crag, Black Brow and Little Hart Crag and down to Scandale Pass. Above lay the only obstacle left between us and the pub at the Kirkstone Pass, so spurred on by the thoughts of that delicious pint (well I was anyway) we topped Kilnsaw Chimney and Raven Crag, then down to a well earned dinner break.

We arrived at the Kirkstone Inn at approx. 12.15 p.m. and tried to restrict our break to an hour, but I think it was a little longer. We did not know at that time that we were being followed by more of our members who had set off about two hours later than we had from the Hut and were catching up with us very quickly.

On leaving the comfort of the Inn it soon became obvious that we should not have stopped, as things like muscles go stiff when not in use, but Raven Edge and Pike How soon got things going again. John Bells Banner, Stoney-cove Pike and on to the Beacon where the party regrouped and rested. There now remained the last leg, High Street, the Knott, Rest Dodd, Satura Crag and down by Angle Tarn to the saddle between Place Fell and Angle Tarn Pike.

Now you would think by this time, the time being about 6.30 p.m., that everybody would have had enough, but no, it was then that the awful truth came, which was that to do the round proper you must find that little bit more strength from somewhere (for my part I think it was that second pint) and do Place Fell.

However a few more minutes saw us on top and from there, well it was all down hill wasn't it, arriving at the hut at 8.00 p.m., and the remaining party not long after.

All the members taking part did all or most of the tops on the way round. Having been given a splendid day and extremely good company, I can for my part say that it was one of the finest days I have ever had in the Lakes, and I am looking forward to next May when it may be possible to undertake something similar.

Arncliffe, June 25th-27th

John Kemsley

In June, John Kemsley led a week-end meet based on Arncliffe, one of the most attractive villages in the Yorkshire Dales. The Falcon proved to be an excellent headquarters, and 14 members and friends were present at one time or another. On the Saturday most of the party walked all day in broiling heat over the fells to Malham Cove and back by Gordale Scar. The Sunday was just as hot, and even the most energetic were satisfied with a gentle walk to the inn at Starbotton for mid-day refreshments, and thence down the River Wharfe and up the Skirfare to Arncliffe. At this point in the afternoon the meet officially broke up, but it is reported that the two oldest members were later seen disporting themselves in the cooling waters of the Skirfare.

GLAN DENA, JULY 9TH TO 11TH

Tony Husbands

In previous years the summer meet at Glan Dena by lake Ogwen in North Wales has always been very popular, and there has not always been enough room to accommodate everyone in the bungalow, so it was decided to have another meet there in July this year, but in the event only seven members and four of their friends, making a total of eleven, turned up.

However, those that did come had a very pleasant week-end, and after the exceptional heat of the previous fortnight the cooler conditions in the hills were very much appreciated.

Some people walked on the Carneddws and the Glyders, and others did some climbing. The climbs included Crevassed Rib, 2nd. Pinnacle Rib and Soap Gut on Tryfan; the Cracks on Dinas Mot, Craig Ddu Buttress at Tremadoc, and Muir y Niwl on Craig yr Isfa, the last two being particularly good value.

On the Saturday evening the party had dinner at Pen y Gwryd.

RHYD-DDU SEPTEMBER 10TH TO 12TH

A. W. Strawther

The meet was well attended with all the 14 places at the hut taken up, and quite a few new faces amongst them. This was a new location for an ABMSAC meet, and it had all the ingredients of a good weekend. Then the weather took a hand. It began to rain heavily on Friday night and kept this up non-stop till we at last left for home at Sunday lunchtime. However on the Saturday we all turned out to walk the Nantlle ridge from Cwm Silyn back to the hut. By the time we had crossed Craig Cwm Silyn we were all so wet we decided to call it a day and go down. The rest of the day was spent drying out.

A few brave souls turned out on the Sunday, but most people made an early start for home. The final irony of the weekend was having to don water-proofs and go to the village standpipes in pouring rain to fetch water—after all we were in the middle of the Great Drought!

PRESIDENT'S MEET, G. S. HUT PATTERDALE, OCTOBER 1ST TO 3RD

Walt Unsworth

Transferring the autumn meet from Langdale to Patterdale doesn't seem to have made a scrap of difference to its popularity: once again more than forty souls braved the elements. This was far too many for the hut, of course, so odd bodies were dispersed around the dales and only succeeded in coming together for the Saturday evening meal at the Brotherswater Hotel. The splendid repast was organised by Tony Strawther. The weather

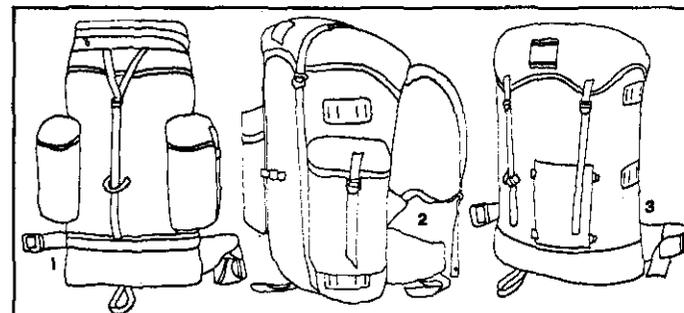
was consistently bad (another Langdale tradition) but that did not prevent our hardier brethren from tackling the fells. It proved to be an expensive meet for the meet leader—he found and bought a house in the Lake District.

Footnote by Editor.

The following was written before Walt's report was received, and it seems a pity to waste the effort.

A group of seniors was robbed of a good climb on Saturday by an unfortunate misunderstanding of local laws. A prudent decision to fortify ourselves before facing the storm led us to an inn which opened at 11.30. Only too late did we discover that another inn opened at 11.00. The lost half hour prevented us from making a stirring new ascent of some great cliff, but in the circumstances we had to settle for a walk at the back of Ullswater. The Autumn colouring was beautiful, and the view across the lake to hillsides revealed fleetingly through turbulent clouds had its unexpected splendours.

It was particularly agreeable to meet so many old friends and some new ones, especially a substantial group from N.E. England. What they did has escaped record, chiefly because the Editor gave the weather best before luncheon time on Sunday.



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MEMBERS' CLIMBS AND EXCURSIONS

Jane and Ken Baldry

An all Austrian year, this. We picked the right fortnight in February to visit Kitzbuhel, being able to ski back to the village by a variety of sheets of ice. Be warned that the ski-school is going through a bad patch. Ken joined a Touring class that did not do much and Jane's ill-assorted class gave her no chance of learning to parallel. We did not have time in the second week to do all the 100 km of pistes, so its back in '78 while '77 is for Zermatt and no school.

September was meant to be a peak-bagging exercise in the Stubai after a look at Obergurgl out of the ski season. The weather had other ideas. We inadvertently attended mass on top of the Hangerer 3021m, with the Vicar-General, an annual binge. We actually found garnets in the Granatenwand which was hidden behind a Lawinengefahr sign last year.

Up at the Ramolhaus hut, the weather dumped five inches of snow on us. During the morning's retreat, we had our first lesson in the general mountain incompetence of Austrian hut visitors. In Switzerland, we tend to be the rabbits but here, we were everyone else's insurance, which was a bit alarming. Down in Solden, we had a good day up the Grieskogel (no grouse visible) with those half cloud filled views.

Then, up to the Hildesheimer hut. When we were well soaked, the rain turned to snow, but as compensation, the Hut was celebrating its eightieth birthday and the DAV Section Hildesheim were there to make us very welcome. Being the only foreigners has its advantages when you have a bit of the language. There being no Zucherhutt in prospect, we had a knee-deep trip to the Dresdner Hut, past whizzing skiers in the cloud. From there, a particularly hairy trip over the Peiljoch to the Sulzenau Hut convinced us that better weather would only increase the avalanche danger and we had better have a walking holiday based on Neustift.

And so we did, with a break at the Innsbrucker Hut to see the fabulous Tribulaun group and have an abortive bash at Habicht in deep snow. We visited the Starckenburger Hut and the dramatic Kalkkogel and observed the ill-bred cows. (Their udders could never fit a milking machine!) A lovely day on the dolomitic Elferspitze while the locals desperately tried to get the hay in finished the holiday and the summer. It snowed a lot that last night. Neustift is only 1000 metres up.

P. S. Boulter

1976 started during a good Hogmanay party—none the worse for happening in Wales. We were at our cottage for a short holiday and, as soon as there was sufficient light on New Year's Day, son-in-law David and I took our hangovers for a walk in the Carneddau in driving snow—the result—revived thirsts and energy for the next day when several of us walked the unsung North West ridge of Snowdon. The tops from Bwlch y Groes by Moel Eilio

and Moel Cynghorion are one of the gems of North Wales, especially in winter.

Our next foray to the hills happened because of a fortunate spell of examining in Edinburgh, and we had two good weekends in the Lake District and Galloway and I had a long walk on the Pentlands. It was cold, snowy weather and when we did Cairnsmore of Fleet in Galloway it was so cold that the whisky in my flask became quite viscous, but it seemed to taste as good.

We went back to Lenzerheide again to ski in February and, as well as piste skiing, we did some enjoyable tops including crossing Piz Corvatsch. The leg (see last year's account) did well and the added tibial screws were no burden. While I was so prolongedly in plaster in 1975 a great venture had been conceived—that of crossing the Southern Uplands of Scotland with packs, light weight tent, dehydrated food and a modicum of alcohol. Mary realized that the trip was going from pipe dream to inevitability when we did several weekends of long walks in Exmoor, the Lake District and the Borders. In the meantime Peter Ledebor had rashly agreed to join the party and on May 15th we were off. We met with bulging packs for a trial trip on Cross Fell in a rain storm and decided that the weather could not ever be as bad as that again. So the next day we left our car at Carsphairn and were ferried round to Glen Trool in thick mist and increasing rain. Like all the best expeditions, we set off into the gloom waving a brave farewell to the friend who had brought us up the Glen. The next day was modified catastrophe, due to 23 hours of rain and a force 9 gale, accurately centred on Galloway and, in particular, on our tent, pitched at Culsharg on the side of the Merrick. The next day we decided to bail out and dry out and wished we had not left our car 40 miles away! However, after some adventures we were dried out, well fed and the sun shone the following morning, so we set off again. This time we went up the Dee to the legendary Back Hill of Bush—an old bothy now refurbished by the Mountain Bothy Association. We camped there for several days and had some epic climbing in the Kells and the Merrick ranges. An incredible view from the Merrick one day took in Ben Lomond, Arran, Kintyre, Rathlin Island, The Mourne, the Isle of Man, the Cumberland Fells, the Pennines and all the Southern Scottish hills. It was so fine a vista that it had to be an augury of bad weather which duly came 3 hours later, and the next day we packed up camp in thick mist and trekked out. The next bit of the trip was done via the Lowthers and the Moffat Fells. We camped at Gameshope above Talla and did all the surrounding hills. They are delightful, lonely and most rewarding—different from the more rugged and rocky Galloway hills, but with their own great charm. Three days in North Wales brought the expedition to a close and 200 miles of walking and 56 tops were achieved in 18 days. It was a very happy party, well fed thanks to Mary, who measured out and packed each day's rations (and who carried her fair share too).

The choice of gear is really important for this sort of trip and Rob Lawrie's boots were their usual success. So too was the tent—a Fjallraven Everest which was light, robust and roomy. To complete the commercial, we slept very soundly on Karrimats in Lightline sleeping bags. (Peter was equally

pleased with his Orion)—great comfort and warmth and under 2 lbs too. Finally the frames that carried it all were Camp Trails with a Haute Route pack for me and a Ponderosa for Mary. They were very comfortable to carry even when loaded with necessities and the inevitable pound or so of luxuries.

We joined the last week of the Fischbiel meeting and abler pens will have written about it. Val and Harry and their family (including Vera) did marvels and the time passed too soon. Sundry walks in the Lotschental were enjoyed and, when the weather turned sour in the valley a party went over to the Bella Tola. An entertaining trip conducted by Otto Stoller and Paul French crossed the Beich Pass and eventually found the Ober Aletsch Hut—fitted carpets and all. One could not imagine a better place for David Riddell's first 74th birthday party and Belalp was a suitably stately place for the second breakfast. The rest of the holiday after the meeting was spent on wanders. Mary and I did the Allalinhorn and were met at Langfluh by Gladys and Maurice Bennett. We did some pleasant climbing in Central Switzerland and finally some ridge walking in Graubunden which took us into September and the end of the holiday. Now, as I write this, it is December—near to Hogmanay—it is again cold and snowy here in Wales—Full circle.

G. R. E. Brooke

In April a week spent in the far north of Scotland, with some pleasant spring days among the Sutherland hills, including ascents of Ben Hope from near Kinloch Lodge and Ben Loyal from Tongue.

A short visit to Chamonix in late July coincided with some freakish weather which afforded little opportunity for serious climbs. An ascent of the Aiguille du Midi by the Arete des Cosmiques in company with Roland Couttet was rendered awkward by several inches of fresh snow.

In November a couple of fine autumn days walking and scrambling over the tors of Dartmoor.

Hamish Brown

I had several months in Morocco again in 1976 with various friends joining for individual ploys. Though the weather was stormier than ever previously known it was great fun and plans are already in hand for 1978! A visit to Mischlifien in the Middle Atlas found a great langlauf ski area, though, with skins only this time, a day trip to Jbel Hebri was all that could be done. Cedar forests, volcanic landscape, and Barbary apes were odd ski associations. Several visits were made to the ski centre at Oukaimeden, a good way to acclimatize, before going on to ski/climb elsewhere. Attar-Tamaskaout gave a 15 hour traverse due to new snow, but a good peak and new. Novelty took me off twice into the back of beyond; once on a trip down the Agoundis Valley and once down the Ourika. The first was done solo, along Adrar Tirkout, the second, with three girls, added Meltsen, a major summit after



Le Tour San Martin
by Hamish M. Brown



Chamonix Aiguilles
by Hamish M. Brown

two bivies and new snow—both probably first British ascents. Eagle Ski Club members had a good innings too, doing several 400 m. summits including a traverse of Toubkal and Tibherine with its crashed plane on top. It was always possible to end Neltner visits by ski-ing right down to Sidi Chamarouch. At lower levels Morocco was as fascinating as ever and several trips were made into the south.

I am already thinking of 1978 and looking for contacts who would like to join in some of the ploys. The following are some of the ideas through Feb./May 78. Do get in touch if you would like to come. A ski trip in Pyrenees and Sierra Nevada; a brief ski/foot visit to the Rif Atlas and Imperial Cities; an exploratory visit to the far eastern peaks; a mule/ski traverse of the McGoun Massif; a birdwatching trip from desert, to peaks, to coast; two weeks in Corsica.

In the summer a trip with Tilman fell through due to illness but I did join a RAS gang to the Julians. Kugy's 'Alpine Pilgrimage' had made this a long-wanted trip. Delightful country, quite the best for flora I've seen, with Dolomitic faces and some real wilderness—many of the things so missing in the western alps. Parts of it have been tamed for the tourist with artificial aids and markings but the high paths and huts make it supreme high-level country. As the beautiful valleys are incredibly deep-set, it is good to stay high. We fed like kings, the local wine was good, the climbing obviously impressive and without much effort the two weeks gave 17 summits or other. Triglav, the highest, is only 2863 m. but an imposing mountain. It has a 4000 ft. face. *Prisojnic* had a hole right through it which gave a novel route. Several other ranges running west to Italy also looked good. Kugy had not overdrawn the picture of his beloved Julians. We met the grandchildren of his poacher-guides, dwelt in his Trenta Valley, as beautiful as any in Europe, and dutifully visited his statue where he turns to gaze up to Jalovec—first on the list for next time.

This year gave a summer to remember at home. Never have there been such biting insects! Several lengthy safaris were made in the north and west, some using canoe, all going in to camp and bothy, seldom seeing another party. The Munros were done for a fifth time and the Corbetts also completed. (These are the 2500 ft. summits but, unlike Munros, they are strictly defined with a 500 ft. drop all round. On average they are better value!) Various commercial courses at holiday times usually went to remote parts too. There is plenty of wilderness left if we can just keep the planning bodies and commissions at bay.

R. E. W. Casselton

The adoption of the triennial report by the Alpine Journal is hopefully sufficient justification for our Editor to permit me, as a new contributor, to go back a few years to 1973. An alpine season with Roger Sager was memorable for my first ever bout of altitude sickness, overnight at the Margherita hut, and not being able to find relief since Roger had used up all the aspirins earlier in the day! We returned superfit to Wales for the 14 peaks, the attempt being aborted at the 8th peak by a ruptured Achilles tendon; a combination of neglect and wrong diagnosis made the inevitable surgery and subsequent recovery more protracted than necessary. Nevertheless I had no wish to emulate P. S. Boulter's achievement of 27 peaks with a plastered leg*—surely a candidate for the Guinness Book of Records!

It was perhaps a year before I fully restored that confidence which allows jumping a stream without worrying which leg was at the landing end. Long days in the Cheviot eventually contributed to the recovery and greatly increased my awareness of the subtle beauty of Northumbria, as well as enhancing my respect for its energy—sapping peat hags.

Discretion proved the better part of valour in 1974 and I regretfully by-passed the Alps in favour of a post-midge season visit to the Highlands, wandering southwards according to fancy between Ullapool and The Fort, days of the Wild West Wind, breath of Autumn's being (Shelley!).

Easter 1975 saw a short ski-touring holiday in the Jotunheimen with a Norwegian colleague, and discovering that langlaufing with a heavy pack required a drastic revision of my basically inadequate skiing technique. This four year absence from Norway brought me face to face with the reality of our ailing economy; a night at a hut which had costed £2.50 in 1971 now approached £8! Such trivial mercenary considerations influence the holiday plans of us all, and ambitious plans for the Alps in Summer were regretfully cast aside in favour of a September visit to the Haute Pyrenees with Malcolm Chapman. In keeping with my recently acquired Shiptonian philosophy we traversed the main range from Somport to Gavarnie, climbing the Voie Normales of the main peaks en route. Mainly we camped and the memory retains contrasting images of both the agony and the ecstasy; the ecstasy of delectable camp sites high in some mountain cwm, and the agony of 50 lb sacs with camping and (largely unnecessary) climbing gear. There seems to be some new Fundamental Law to be formulated here; sacs grow emptier with increasing personal fitness!

With the opening of the Patterdale hut I gradually took an interest in the ABM meets, which I regretted not doing sooner. May 1976 was made memorable by Eddie Tuck's marathon round of The Kirkstone horseshoe, particularly as confusion over the projected timing of our Alpine start meant that I was left behind to eventually escort the two geriatrics at a

* See last year's Journal, Ed.

more reasonable hour. Fortunately they recognised their limitations and by shedding them en route like banana skins I was almost able to catch up with the main party despite a kip on High Street!

A business trip at the end of May gave an opportunity for an early season visit to the Alps with John Martin. Much of the time was wasted in coming to terms with the Swiss Franc and the deep snow lying above 2000 m. There wasn't much we could do about either except lay off the vino and start wading.

I personally wanted to prove that ageing 10 years hadn't diminished my ability to do the Saas Fee-Mischabel hut slog in under 4 hours; we like to think that our near failure was due more to snow conditions than to increasing decrepitude. Improved snow above 3500 m meant that we got The Nadelhorn the next day and this was followed in quick succession by the Dom, Rimpfischhorn (traverse) and Breithorn, all within the space of eight days. My ability to work sadly lapsed for the next fortnight!

The ABM meet at Rhyd-ddu in September was on that weekend when the heavens opened after our long Indian summer; the waters flooding down outside failed to materialise through the taps! Nine hardy souls ventured out on the Nantlle ridge in a force nine gale, excepting W. B. M. who chivalrously chose to take the family for a comfortable drive around the countryside! Despite the apparent coincidence of bad weather with the organised ABM meets, may I encourage more Northern members to come along and participate? With a nucleus of only 6 to 8 regular attenders the organisers feel let down and we badly need more support for the monthly meets at the Patterdale hut, as much as anything to help justify pressurising the Hut Committee to allow greater provision for members.

My visit to the Pyrenees in 1975 provided a bit of copy for Walt Unsworth and eventually led to the offer of free travel to and from Lourdes, an opportunity for an end of season wandering with Pierre Gavarn, an aspirant guide we met last year. Mediocre weather kept us to pass hopping and the occasional ridge scramble where local knowledge proved valuable. Language communication difficulties did not inhibit us and was always good for a laugh; we spent one hilarious evening in a cafe discussing the finer points of the surrounding females in pidgin dictionary language! But be warned, as part of the bargain I taught Pierre some suitable phrases (of his own choosing) for future use on his English clients—typically 'You are climbing like a pilgrim from Lourdes today!' So unless you are thick skinned I would hesitate to recommend Pierre as your potential guide!

N. M. Davison

Avalanche course run by the S.A.C. C.C. followed by practice on the following Ski tours.

Bluemberg. Cristallina. Piz Giuv combined with Oberalpstock. Early April, climbing course in Chur followed by climbs on the Brueggler, Metmenalp Berseeschijen S. ridge and a trip over the Fellluecke via

Tresch hut carried out in mixed weather with Tony, his wife and 4 year old daughter. June. Frieheit S.wand. From the Salbit hut. Meiggelenstock in mist. Salbitschijen E. ridge direct and S. ridge. Fahnengipfel (Alpstein) Sudplaettli. Sewenhut from which was climbed Sewenstock Treverse and S.E. Pfeiler, Hochsewen S. ridge. Piz Bernina and traverse of Piz Palu in poor snow conditions. July. With the C.C. climbing tour to America. Spent three weeks in the Colorado and Wyoming Mountains. Climbed on the Flatirons and in Eldorado Springs canyon near Boulder. In The Rocky Mountain National Park we climbed Hallet peak via Jackson Jonson route, Flattop mountain, Chiefs head, Mt. Alice. Grand Teton National Park. Stayed at the American Alpine Clubs climbers ranch from which we climbed Grand Teton, Symmetry spire (Durrance Ridge SW Ridge) Storm point and Disappointment Peak Gray Slab. Also visited the Yellowstone Park and Cheyenne Rodeo. Back in Switzerland and mixed weather managed to get climbing done on Sulzfluh (Neumann-Stanek route) Santis and Altmann E. ridge solo.

Peter Farrington

As I was lax in writing up last years' climbs my notes also cover 1975 which was not without incident.

Feb. 1975. A training walk on the Paps of Jura before visiting Ben Nevis with W. Gault. From Glen Nevis over to Gardyloo Gully via CIC Hut. A poor climb with much power snow and spindrift. Due to a white-out on top we decided to descend to Steall Car Park by one of the gullies directly above. Whilst re-roping I slipped and fell head first and backwards down our descent route. Unable to brake on the hard ice, I shot over several small crags before stopping 800 ft. below. The only serious damage was to my helmet, though my sac, axe and other equipment had been torn off me and lost. Two days later we recovered all the missing items after a short search. My jubilation at my good fortune was cut short when, just after arriving back at Steall Car Park, fellow member Geoff Causey appeared off Aonach Beag with the news that his partner had fallen and was apparently dead. There was little we could do except escort Geoff down the glen to inform the rescue team. We left for home saddened and disturbed by the comparable events.

I returned to the Ben in March and did No. 5 Gully with Rob Barron, followed by Great Gully on the Buachaille, the latter starting at 5. 30 p.m. and being back at Kingshouse at 9. 30 p.m. A couple of new routes on Islay with Rob in May finished by climbing for the year when a long standing knee injury worsened, resulting in a cartilage operation in November.

By January I was walking again on the Islay hills, and eventually arrived back on Ben Nevis in March with Tom Shaw to do N. Castle Gully. Unfortunately it was short of snow and we were stopped at the chockstone which was verglassed. An attempt to traverse onto Castle Ridge failed but it was an enjoyable excursion. The following month I climbed Castle Ridge with W. Gault and his son Gavin aged ten. It was a magnificent day and we

ambled along to the summit in bright sunshine. In May, a wet walk up Stob Ehan in the Mamores with Tom Shaw then a late decision to go back to the Alps after a ten year absence. I joined Don Morrison's party in Zermatt in August but climbed throughout with Bryan Phillips (A.C.) and David Lewis in marvellous weather. Point de Zinal from Schonbielhutte. From Taschhutte, Alphubel via Rotgrat and descent by S.E. Ridge and the Allalin-horn by the Feekopf. The Dufourspitze from the Monte Rosa Hut and the Riffelhorn on the way back to Zermatt. A memorable holiday in good company. In September the Paps of Jura on a windy and misty day—which was where I came in!

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MEMBERS' CLIMBS

Gordon Gadsby

- Dec-Jan Camping by Ullswater—gales, rain, snow. Walking in the Riding
New Year Mill area of Northumberland. All with my wife, Margaret and
 son, Richard.
- March Camping at Side Farm, Patterdale. Place Fell traverse in
 inclement weather with family.
- April Dolwyddelan—camping beneath the old castle. On North Ridge
 of Moel Siabod on Saturday with family and friends, but gales,
 rain and snow drove us back. Found ourselves washed out
 and retired to barn. Sunday was glorious!
- Easter Camping at White Sand Bay, Pembrokeshire. Climbing on
 Craig Coeton and in Newgales area with Brian Cooke and Stuart
 Bramwell. Coastal walks with family. Weather excellent.
- May Camping at Grange in Borrowdale—Great Gable, Green Gable
 on fabulous day with family.
- June Skye—Camping at Staffin Bay—Weather mixed but magnificent
 sunrise from summit of Alasdair on 3rd June after a bivvy—
 walked in from Sligachan via Loch Coruisk, Gars Bhein and
 Main Ridge traverse; also saw Brocken Spectre in the evening
 Good day with family traversing the Quirang.
- July-Aug. Outer Hebrides—Harris and Lewis. Camped by golden beaches
 in South Harris. On the good days traversed Clisham Group,
 Chiapaval and Roneval all with my wife, son and the Bramwell
 family. Magnificent views from all the peaks. Saw golden
 eagles, black throated divers, sandpipers, curlews, gannets,
 skuas etc. What a paradise if only the weather was more
 reliable! Campfires on the headland most nights and locals
 very friendly. Anyone visiting these islands and wanting an
 experience must call in the bar of the Rodel Hotel on South
 Harris!
- Aug. 28th Morecambe Bay. Walking in the Silverdale and Arnside area.
 Camping at Red Bank Farm. Bird watching at Leighton Moss
 Reserve.
- Sept. 20th Chrome Hill and Parkhouse Hill traverse on a fine sunny
 Sunday.
- Oct. 9th Represented Oread Mountaineering Club at the opening of
 Eric Byne Camp Site below Birchens Edge, Derbyshire, after
 8 years of negotiation by Jack Longland and his committee.
- Oct. 24th Ivinghoe Beacon with son Richard.

- Nov. 7th Dovedale. A sunny day walking by the river Dove and then back along the tops.
- Nov. 13th Snowdonia. Traversed Moel Hebog with other Oread M.C. families—autumn colours very splendid.
- Dec. Bullstones A marvellous weekend on Kinder and Bleaklow sleeping in bothies on the moors. Plenty of snow and blue sky, including a midnight crossing of Kinder Scout by moonlight. All with ABMSAC members Bill Kirk, Stuart Bramwell and Pete Kenyon.

F. L. Jenkins

- New Year A week's skiing at St. Anton.
- April Skiing at Flaine and Val d'Isère followed by traverse of the Haute Maurienne with J. J. Whitehead, J. Roche, R. Cooper and SCGB Party.
- May Half-term break in N. Wales with a school party and J. J. Whitehead. Clogwyn y Person to Snowdon Summit. Return over Crib Goch, Little Tryfan, North Buttress, and Grooved Arete.
- July Led A.C. Party to Centenary celebrations of Slingsby's ascent of Store Skagastolstind. Climbed the mountain with E. Sondheimer and members of the Norsk Tindeklub and descendants of Cecil Slingsby—Jocelyn Winthrop Young, grandson, Geoffrey Winthrop Young, aged 15, great grandson, Philip Gordon, great nephew. Also, E. Sondheimer and I climbed on Soleitind and traversed the Ridge of Dyrhaugstind by the South Face. Rain and snow prevented an ascent of Mitmaradalstind. A visit was made to Andalsnes, but after two days watching water pour down all the Romsdal Walls we fled to England and the 'low' remained stationary over that part of Norway for the next five days.
- August A quick visit to Skye and Glencoe with Jim Roche. Extensive ridge wandering and Aonach Eagach in Glencoe.
- October Half-term break with a school party in N. Wales. Climbing on Tryfan and traverse of the Carneddts.

John Kemsley

Freda and I started our mountain year in Scotland with three gentle days on foot and ski in the Cairngorms in February, but our first expeditions of any consequence were in the course of a visit to Sicily at Easter.

This fascinating island offered us a variety of hill and coastal scenery, wonderful displays of Mediterranean spring flowers, and a wealth of archaeological interest in the relics of successive waves of conquerors

from the Phoenicians onwards. Mount Etna was an obvious target but failed to impress us favourably on a cold, cloudy and blustery day that filled our nostrils with the stench of sulphur and our mouths with whirling lava grit. Far more exhilarating for me was my sentimental journey to the little village of Galati S. Anna, a few miles south of Messina, for it was here, after the Sicilian campaign of 1943, that I had commandeered the railway station as winter quarters for my troop. Now, 33 years later, I was very touched to receive a warm welcome and a day's gracious hospitality from the farmer whose olive groves had sheltered our vehicles all these years before. It was pleasing, too, to find that the schoolmaster's vivacious 14 year old daughter (now an elegant 47) had not forgotten me! Before we left the island we had a very happy couple of days botanising up to the snowline in the 6000 ft Madonie Mountains, a limestone range that gave us some delightful hill-walking and the thrill of seeing massed cyclamen in bloom for the first time in its native soil.

We were in the Highlands again in the summer but because of various commitments could give little time to the hills, and our only new Munro was snatched on a fleeting day from Inverness—Fionn Bheinn, the easy one near Achnasheen that we had been reserving for our old age.

For our summer holiday we tried a new approach to the Alps by flying to Milan and going in from the south. An hour's train journey north across the vast flat plains brought us to the Bergamasque Alps, a range entirely new to us that proved the ideal training ground for limbs and lungs. Climbing up steeply from the Bondione valley to the Rifugio Coca, we spent two nights in this friendly little restaurant hut and had a day's scrambling and botanising on the rock ledges of the Pizza di Coca, at 3052 metres the highest peak of the range. We followed this with a long cross-country walk northwards over the Passo Caronella and down to the tiny village of Carona where the little local inn, perched high above the Valtellina, speedily provided the delights of hot water and appetising food that only the happily weary can really appreciate.

A succession of buses now gave us a restful and scenic lift eastwards towards the Ortler Group, our main holiday objective, and we had the new experience of arriving at our first hut by taxi. From this Rifugio Berni we climbed Piz Tesoro on a gloriously clear day and would much have loved at this point to have carried on to Cevedale by the classic route that keeps above 3000 m for three successive days. Lacking cooking facilities and sleeping bags, however, we were ill-equipped for the two nights in bivouacs which this expedition now necessitates owing to hut changes, and had regretfully to return to the Berni. Fortunately we were able later to climb from the Rifugio Branca to the Rifugio Mantova in superb weather and to complete from there the fine high-level route over Monte Vioz, Pallon della Mare and Cevedale and down to the Rifugio Casati.

Our next move was down to the Rifugio Citta di Milano, rather a special place for Freda and myself as it is here that we first met many climbing seasons ago. Regarding our return visit as worthy of some mild private celebration, we were rather amused on entry to find that a feast had

already been laid on for some twenty minutes later on that very day—not, it is true, for us, but to commemorate the centenary of the opening of the hut in 1876. Our lunch was therefore an occasion for double celebration and a very merry meal, contrasting later with the solemn celebration of Mass outside the hut, a very moving ceremony with the glacier of the Gran Zebro as a backcloth to the altar. An encore came in the form of the christening of a baby who apparently took the priest somewhat by surprise for he had disrobed and was dismantling his altar when she was handed to him.

Our hopes of climbing the Ortler were now dashed by heavy new snow on the high mountains, so with only three days of our holiday left we decided to make our way south to Esino, a small village high above Lake Como, and from there to explore the Grigna. We found that this lovely limestone mountain fully lived up to its reputation for alpine flowers, and though it was too late in the season for its best display we were delighted to see *Campanula raineri* for the first time. Our last day was spent walking down that loveliest of ancient muletracks from Esino to Lake Como, a memory that still returns to cheer me at my office desk on a weary winter's day.

W. McLewin

The state of sterling determined that this was to be 'Monte Rosa from the Italian side'—easy 4000 m trogging that I had been saving up for my old age. So, Gressoney was lonely, but won't be any more for the new ski lift is nearly finished.

With Brian Wood: Vincente Pyramide and Pta Giordani. We went up to the Grifetti Hut by the Old route from Gressoney and did our mad English act by sleeping on the hut balcony where it is not only free but quiet. The route is pleasant too, if you're used to the rush hour.

With Brian Wood: Schwatzhorn, Ludwigshohe, Parrotspitze, Signalkuppe, Zumsteinspitze. Another excellent night on the balcony and a good early start to a superb day, the only unpleasantness being an altercation about 1000 lire for the privilege of sitting on the Margherita hut balcony! Don't say you have not been warned. We wouldn't have minded, but it's right on the top of the mountain. As the weather still looked good we were pleased we had carried all our bivouac gear up to the Balmenhorn bivi hut. Unfortunately either the altitude or the 1000 lire had upset Brian so we descended to the Grifetti to have a low level brew up until he felt better, before returning later in the afternoon. Next day was reasonable, but very cold and windy—we had already given up ideas about the Cresta Rey before we reached the Zumsteinspitze (and had been overtaken by a solo dog going up to the Margherita!). Brian felt poorly so he went back for a sleep and I went across to the Dufourspitze and Nordend and back by myself: good value in places, especially descending from the Zumsteinspitze in fresh, completely unmarked snow. Coming back in cloud down to about 4200 m I was glad of my own footprints, but not of everyone else's, while I tried to find the Balmenhorn hut.

With Brian Wood: traverse of Lyskamm, Castor and Pollux. Our return to the squalor of the Balmenhorn hut a few days later was disturbed by a couple of Italians. They seemed to be trying out a 'mountaineering without food' theory, but we converted them to our 'non-stop eating' method. They had obviously known what they were doing though, and must have only joined in our six course meal out of politeness, because they spent most of the night being sick, and pretended to be asleep when we had breakfast!

Lyskamm was perfect, so were the weather and the snow conditions. A truly superb traverse. Castor and Pollux would have been pleasant without heavy sacs. Sitting at the foot of the west face of Pollux we looked at the Cesare and Giorgio bivi hut and realised we need not have carried our bivi tent, etc., and that in any case it didn't matter because it was snowing heavily. So we walked down to the Mezzalama hut and on to the Rian di Verra where we fortified ourselves with a couple of beers before walking over the Bettafurka pass and back to Gressoney.

Brian produced an exceptional pacemaking effort even by his standards and we were back at our campsite by almost 8.30 that evening.

Brooke Midgley

I took Maurice (Hon. Ed.) at his word (Journal 75) and wrote this year's climbs up in Early January! Even I didn't believe it so here is a modified account.

We arrived at the hut on January 2nd through heavy rain, fighting deep snow over Kikstone. It had nearly all gone by morning, except for a small patch, which we played on, just below St. Sundays Crag in Deepdale. The next two days were dreadful, horizontal rain etc. so I did some wiring jobs in hut (anti frost heaters).

Back to Patterdale January 24th weekend and had a fine but cold and windy day over Striding Edge, and down to Grisedale Tarn to see a large water-spout caused by wind swirling around rocks. It was around 20 feet high and travelled almost across the tarn. (Sober at the time and have witnessses, also sober). Sunday was also good so finished off previous wiring job. (must not wear out expensive boots).

Northern dinner meet written up elsewhere, I hope. Stayed over on the Monday; fortunately it was still very wet so saved boots and worked in hut.

Managed to turn up for George Rough's working weekend at the hut too late to do any work—on Saturday—he managed to catch me on Sunday.

March 26th weekend provided mixed weather but managed to get a party of mixed Dads, Mums and children up Deepdale and over col to Grisedale Tarn. The children enjoyed the odd snow patch and played at mountaineering (more honest than the writer). Sunday was even more mixed, high winds added to mixture—so short walk (Boot Saving).

Twenty one again (maybe a little more) anyway we went to—guess where—Patterdale for Easter and arrived on a perfect day April 15th and my birthday. Hut was fairly full which was pleasing.

Denise (eldest Daughter 8 years) and I did a short walk in the evening over Angle Tarn and Pikes, down to Hayeswater and return via Hartsop.

Good Friday was again shirt sleeves weather and Maurice and Betty Freeman took Denise, Gillian (6 years) Arline and me from the top of Kirkstone Pass over John Bells Banner, Thornthwaite Crag, along High Street and returned via The Knott and Angle Tarn to the hut, 8 perfect hours.

Saturday was less perfect but had a reasonable walk with DEBU Bose and Maurice F. over Hart Crag and Fairfield from Dovedale and returned via Coffa Pike and St. Sundays Crag.

With Peter Boys and son of 6 years we repeated Thursday's walk which was again pleasant. On the Monday I had a lift to the Glencoyndale Car Park and started walking at 11.30 a.m. (I don't like early starts). The route went over Sheffield Pike, Greenside, Raise, Helvellyn (2.30 p.m.) Nethermost and Dollywaggon Pikes, Grisedale Tarn, Fairfield (3.45 p.m.) Hart Crag, Dove Crag, Black Brow, Little Hart Crag (Bloody long way down and up) Red Screes 5.50 p.m., Kirkstone 6.30 p.m. (They were open but I'd no money) so on with the walk over John Bells Banner, Stoney Cove Pike, Thornthwaite Crag 8.45 p.m., High Street, The Knott 9.15 (nearly dark), Angle Tarn and Pikes in Dark, returned to the hut at 10.30 p.m. Tuesday—spared the boots and worked in Hut fitting socket in kitchen; weather of course was perfect.

May 8th was Eddie Tuck's Marathon walk around the valley, which I hope is written up elsewhere, seven or eight members completed the walk which started at the northern end of the Helvellyn ridge over the 'Dodds' and went over the route previously described finishing at the hut via Place Fell, quite a fair day out. The Sunday was spent working in the hut until children decided we should go up Place Fell for a change.

Again for a change we went to Patterdale the first weekend in June, and Saturday was damp with thick cloud. I proved that it's still possible for me to go off course on Helvellyn through being too confident and not using map and compass. Sunday was perfect so we had a committee meeting (N.B. must not wear out boots).

We took our Alpine Holiday early starting on 18th June; Oliver St. John had very kindly loaned us his house in Aosta Valley. We drove there in one day from Surrey, and the following day rested and had only a short walk. The booze was very cheap and we had a marvellous four weeks, mainly good weather except for the evening we nearly got up to the Gonella Hut on Mont Blanc. That was a splendid storm which shot us off the Miage Glacier. We walked up La-Trecenta and Gd. Paradiso but the views were restricted by mist. Many good walks with and without family and much eating and drinking. Bought three pairs of boots, one pair for eldest daughter and two for me (no chance of wearing them out providing we keep going to Patterdale).

At the end of 1975 I'd started a practice as a Consulting Engineer and whilst we'd been away things had hotted up and the hills had to take a rest to allow some work to be done (still saving my boots). Well, we did manage a week in early August and did some walking in very hot weather one day we (family) walked from the hut to Brotherswater leaving Arline and Gillian in Dovedale, and Denise and I walked over Hart Crag, Fairfield, Coffa Pike, St. Sunday Crag and back to the Hut. We also had a dam building exercise and formed a swimming pool in Deepdale; it was removed before we left.

Tony Strawther's Welsh meet at Rhyd Ddu in early September was rather damp and windy, I took the family to a water treatment plant on Anglesey on Saturday and home early on Sunday as the weather was still slightly damp. Some roads were flooded and blocked by fallen trees.

The first weekend in October was the President's meet and the weather was nearly as bad as the previous meet but it was an enjoyable weekend (Boots still in good condition).

By not managing to keep quiet at a crucial time I landed the job of moving the fireplace at the hut so we had a week's—holiday??? Well, I had, and George Heeles did all the work whilst I mixed a bit of cement and did some sawing etc. We chased the flue around inside the wall and eventually found it and connected it to the hole we'd made. Well, it kept us off the hills until the following Sunday which, fortunately, was near perfect and we and some other friends and children did the walk up to Boredale Hause to Angle Tarn and Pikes and down to Hayes water, returning via Hartsop to the hut. George Rough and Mell Turnbull have since built a Cumberland Slate fireplace which we are looking forward to using at Christmas, when we hope to go for about a week; maybe we'll have some snow, but I've got some wiring to do so I need not go out in it. My boots are not in as perfect condition as they were at the start of the year, but I have some splendid new ones to look after.

John Milburn

- Jan. 17 Walking in the Langstrath valley.
- Jan. 24 Langstrath. Angle Tarn. Scafell Pike. Return to Grains Gill. Seathwaite. With my son Michael.
- Feb. 7 Grange (Borrowdale) High Spy via Rigghead Quarries. Maiden Moor. Return to Grange.
- Feb. 17 Walking in St. John's in the Vale.
- Mar. 2 Burnbank Fell. Blake Fell. Gavel Fell. Hen Combe. Returning via Holme Wood to Lamplugh.
- Mar. 4 Mellbreak from Kirkstile. This and the previous completed my first walk of the Loweswater Fells.

- Mar. 20 High Seat. High Tove. Blea Tarn. Watendlath. From Watendlath to: Grange Fell. (Brown Dodd to King's How)
- Apr. 9 Helvellyn via Striding Edge. Whiteside Bank. Raise. Sticks Pass for Keswick. With my friend Tony Dale.
- Apr. 10 Climbing in Burtness Combe with Tony Dale.
- Apr. 11 The Old Man of Coniston via Goats Water. With my wife and Tony. A very wet day.
- Apr. 17 Latrigg. For the benefit of my two sons Paul and Bryan.
- Apr. 27 Fairfield Horseshoe.
- Apr. 29 Mosedale Horseshoe.
- May 7 Grisedale Pike to Whiteside to Causey Pike.
- May 13 Glaramara via Hind Gill. Allen Crag. Esk Pike. Bowfell. Crinkle Crag.
- May 22 Fellbarrow to Low Fell. With my sons Paul and Bryan.
- May 27 Buttermere Circuit: Robinson. Hindsgarth. Dale Head. Fleetwith. Hay Stacks. High Crag. High Stile. Red Pike.
- Jun. 8 Blencathra via Hall's Fell. Bannerdale Crag. Bowscale Fell. Returning by the same route.
- Jun. 26 Ennerdale Horseshoe. With my son Michael (age 11 yrs).
- Jul. 3 Comb Gill. Glaramara.
- Jul. 9 Lonscale Fell. Jenkin Hill. Skiddaw Little Man. Skiddaw. Sale How. Great Calva.
- Jul. 24 Great Dodd via high level crossing of Wanthwaite Crag. Returning to Clough Head. With sons Michael, Paul, and Bryan.
- Jul. 28 Isle of Arran. Cnoc Breac. Beinn a'Chliabhain. An evening walk on my first visit to Arran.
- Jul. 30 Goat Fell via Meall Breac, then over the impressive Stacach ridge and its four pinnacles to North Goat Fell.
- Aug. 4 Beinn a'Chliabhain. Cir Mhor. Caisteal Abhail. A grand route, with excellent views all around. An interesting route runs from Beinn Nuis, on the Glen Rosa side, to Suidhe Fhearghas, on the Glen Sannox side and covers completely the ridge of mountains from south to north.
- Sep. 18 Dock Tarn. Great Dodd. From Stonethwaite, descending to Rosthwaite. With sons Michael and Bryan.
- Oct. 2 St. John's in the Vale: Tewit Tarn to High Rigg.
- Oct. 9 Lingmell. With my son, Bryan.
- Oct. 23 Ard Crag to Knott Rigg. From Rigg Beck.

- Nov. 20 Grasmoor, from Lanthwaite Green, by the direct climb which lies between the north and west faces. Return via Gasgale Gill.
- Nov. 21 Seathwaite. Base Brown. Great Gable. Brandreth. Grey Knotts. From Grey Knotts a visit was made to the Plumbago Mines. With the Workington Rambling Club.

A. Partridge

The year started with a pleasant weekend near Kinder Scout on a photographic course. A walk along Froggat Edge in a snowstorm was followed by a walk on Kinder Scout. February saw The Northern Dinner at Glenridding. March/April, on a package holiday walking to the Annapurna Sanctuary and returning via Gorepani. Looked at Mt. Everest the easy way, I used a plane.

On my return I had a good time on the Arncliffe meet visiting fresh country. July, the Glan Dena meet. The Glyders etc. Good weather, the last two Welsh meets being very wet. I hope to finish the year with a weekend on Dartmoor.

Barrie Pennett

We started the year with a family ramble from Malham (Yorkshire) on New Years' Day but unfortunately the ramble was marred by a heavy fall of snow as we trudged on the moors above Malham.

During the early part of the year we did quite a lot of rambling with the Lower Wharfedale Group of the Ramblers' Association, including walks in the Burley and Menston moor areas, Denton Moor, Ilkley, Hawksworth moor and Horsforth areas. We also took part in rambles organised by the Yorkshire Dales National Park Committee.

Easter saw us in the Wharfedale area of Yorkshire, and in hot sunshine on Good Friday my wife and I and our six years-old son David walked in the Buckden area, finishing at the top of Buckden Pike, which affords wonderful views.

Once again the highlight of the year was undoubtedly the two weeks we spent at Adelboden in the Bernese Oberland in May and June. We took a Chalet and catered for ourselves. This proved to be ideal and we found we had plenty of time for walking. The weather was very mixed with some hot and sunny days, while on other occasions we had heavy rain and some snow. David has developed into quite a keen walker and was eager to get out into the Alps. Because of our young son we confined ourselves to easy walking and we enjoyed rambles to the Hanenmoos Pass; a short walk to Stiegelschwand and Schermtanne to Horn and back to Adelboden. Another enjoyable walk was to the Engstligenalp and the waterfall. Another day saw us at the top of Niesen where we had glorious views of surrounding peaks. We used the Niesenbahn to get to the top but walked back down through delightful country to Fritigen. It was indeed a wonderful walk.

Another fine walk was from Adelboden by Schlegli to Hornli and by the Lower Hornliweg to Tschentenalp, Tschentenegg 1930 m and then to the top of the Swandfeldspitze 2026 m. The walk down to Hornli and then along the Upper Hornliweg is a delight.

On a warm, sunny June day we walked to Vorder Bonderalp and then onto the Lohner waterfalls which are near to the SAC Lohner Hut. Another day saw us up the Kuenisbergli but this ramble was cut short by low cloud and heavy rain. The walk back to Adelboden through the pine woods to Stierenberg Fahrni, Eselmoos, Fuhre and Boden is most enjoyable.

We had hoped to attend the Alpine Meet at Fischbiel but I was unable to have two weeks in August. We did, however, visit the Lotschental on a foul wet day. We drove up the valley by Post Bus to Kippel, Wiler, Blatten and on to Fafleralp. Even through the pouring rain we could see that the Lotschental is a wonderful area. Our visits to Grindelwald and Lauterbrunnen where we had hoped to do some short walks were also marred by low cloud and rain. So as not to tire David too much we made use of the marvellous fly-rail passes which give you unlimited free travel on Post Bus, rail and steamer and reductions on cable cars and chair lifts etc.

Despite the changeable weather we did quite a lot of walking and enjoyed the delights of travelling by Swiss Post Bus, steamer and train. It was indeed a marvellous holiday even though the £ was worth only F4.74—it dropped to F4 while we were there but we were alright as we had changed our money into francs before our holiday.

During a short stay in Dorset in August we walked in the Purbeck Hills. A particularly fine walk is from Studland near Poole over Nine Barrow Down, Ailwood Down, Blenscombe Hill, Rollington Hill to Corfe.

We spent a week in the Lake District early in October, staying at a farm in Borrowdale. We began with a steady walk in the Grasmere area but the main walk of the holiday so far as our son David was concerned was the walk from Patterdale to Helvellyn by Striding Edge. We returned by Swirral Edge over Catsycaam and back to Patterdale where we viewed the SAC hut. Other walks included Robinson (2417 ft), Sale, Loughrigg, the valley walk up to Watendlath and over Hazel Bank to Rosthwaite and a number of other minor fells.

Once again we have had an enjoyable year of walking and our son is becoming quite accustomed to his mountain and fell excursions.

O. B. St. John

In July 1974, the St John family set out to convert a dilapidated house in the Aosta valley. Gradually all the necessary services have been installed, the inside is now completely renovated and the whole restored and redecorated, inside and out. During this period of intense activity, mountaineering had to be relegated to a lower priority but the occasional foray has been possible.

In July 1976, in the middle of a season of perfect weather, it was unfortunate that, having settled into the Torino Hut, on the only possible spare day, a sudden storm arose, leaving several inches of snow in the morning with intense cold and minimal visibility. However, we were determined not to waste our day out, so we set out rather late for the Rochfort ridge. This proved most spectacular due to poor snow and a visibility often down to a few yards, with occasional glimpses down into the abyss on either side. The crest felt most exposed and we were quite glad to be back, after the double traverse, on terra firma, at the 'breakfast place' at the foot of the Dent du Geant. As I had climbed this the year before with my eldest son and his wife, I decided to let my other two sons climb it on their own whilst I took photos, as the view was steadily improving. The Dent was plastered with snow and ice which discouraged quite a few parties, but my two sons returned safely in due course, suitably impressed.

Now that our family Hut is in going order, and has already been used by family and friends as a convenient base, we hope to be able to profit more by it ourselves. The whole ranges of Mont Blanc, the Valais in Switzerland and the Graians are easy of access as well as the many more modest peaks around. The skiing is good too. We were at Courmayeur at Christmas where they are busily extending the pistes to allow skiing almost into the village. At Easter, we skied at La Thuille, about 25 minutes away, as there was a shortage of snow at Courmayeur. La Thuille was quiet even over Easter and there are some longish expeditions, via the Little St Bernard Pass, which make a welcome change from 'piste-bashing'.

Ernst Sondheimer

This year I found the rain abroad whilst England sweltered. Fortunately July 21st was kind enough in Norway to allow the two-man A.C. delegation to make its jubilee ascent of the Store Skagastolstind—efficiently led by Fred Jenkins and accompanied by sundry Slingsby descendants and incredibly tough Norwegian veterans. The jubilee dinner the same evening at the Turtagro hotel lasted almost as long as the climb. Two formidable octogenarians, Slingsby's daughter Eleanor Winthrop Young and Noel Odell, contributed excellent speeches. Later that week a fine day was spent on the Dyrhaugstind: a climb up a steep wall followed by a ridge walk with fantastic views. Then the weather broke and we sat frustrated in Andalsnes, peering at the Romsdalshorn through the pouring rain. Apparently we were dead at the centre of Northern Europe's low pressure region. At any rate I can confirm that Norway is most beautiful, unspoilt, and expensive for beer-drinkers. At the end of August I spent another wet week in the Engadine. On one long solitary day I lost my way in the Albula mountains above Filisur, where some local hobgoblin had provided new way markings which led up and up and finally stopped at a vertical rock face; on another day the Fextal was traversed in a succession of thunderstorms. Then the rain turned to snow. When the weather finally cleared we were at the Lenta hut with designs on the Rheinwaldhorn. Three feet of soft new snow on the slopes leading to the Lentalücke gave strenuous exercise and finally de-



The Ringstiader
by Ernst Sondheimer

The Hortungtinder
by Ernst Sondheimer



feated the attempt. We'll be back! A day on the Sälifluh provided consolation: this is a magnified 'Harrison rocks' in the Jura overlooking the town of Olten, an idyllic spot away from crowds where the grade of each climb is conveniently painted on the rocks. My final 'achievement' was the ascent of Monte Subasio behind Assisi—yes, on foot, to the amazement of the Italians who of course go by car. It is in fact a rewarding walk but hardly qualifies for these pages.

Les Swindin

The start of the year saw me in Scotland, but unfortunately in the wrong place for snow. Whilst most of Scotland was apparently suffering blizzards, the white stuff was noticeable only for its sparsity in Glencoe, nevertheless I enjoyed several good days on the hill. The rest of the winter provided me with many days out but only two days of decent winter climbing, on one of which I had excellent sport climbing Chock Gully on Dollywaggon with John Oaks.

I had better luck in Tignes where I went skiing with Barbara for two weeks at Easter. After talking about it for several years we eventually got round to doing some ski-mountaineering. After a bit of piste bashing we went to attempt our first peak on skis. This first try ended before it began. It started snowing as we reached the hut, snowed all night and was still at it in the morning. Visibility was practically nil and the half metre of new snow really put the dampers on things. We were in luck a week later and climbed the Gd. Aig. Rouse in perfect weather and snow.

At Whitsun we returned to Scotland and were again disappointed by the weather. Great plans were abandoned but quite a number of Munros were ascended.

Back in England and preparation for the Alps, with weekend visits to the Lakes and to Wales, but somehow I didn't do a great deal of rock climbing although I made up for this to some extent with a week's climbing in the Lakes at the end of August.

Our Alpine trip was quite extended but the climbing wasn't in any sense. We travelled out via Pau, to visit friends, and sampled the Pyrenees by making a day trip from there to climb the Pic Du Midi D'Ossau. Then to Champex. Our first outing was to Mont Velan. We turned back from the Col de la Gouille in fog. Next, and now joined by John Oaks, we visited the Trient Hut. A day of rain followed but on the second day we tried the south ridge of the Aig Purtschelle. Although I'd never experienced it before there was no mistaking it when I did, that is the singing rock indicating the onset of a storm. We were 15 ft from the summit but gave it a miss. In no time at all we were abseiling in haste straight down the side of the mountain, the shortest way to the Glacier below. Lightning struck and John swears he felt it through both arms, and our other companion claims he was lifted from his feet by it. Barbara and I were suitably sheltered at the time but it sounded awfully close. It didn't take long to reach the glacier.

Snow in Champex drove us to St. Moritz, a bad move as it snowed even harder there. The Dauphiné was better and we climbed the W. summit of the Rateau. The apparently fine weather took us back to the valley and Saas. From Topali we managed to climb the east ridge of the Bishorn and descended to the Turtmann hut and then climbed the N.W. ridge of the Brunegghorn on the way back to Topali. Two excellent outings. Then the N.W. ridge of the Dom for John's last route.

Barbara and I had our eye on the Lenspitze-Nadelhorn traverse but more snow altered our objective to the Nadelhorn alone which we thoroughly enjoyed in spite of the poor weather. After that we gave up and came home.

The rest of the year I stayed fairly active with many week-end outings, there being three particularly good ones in November, when I managed to combine some pleasant rock climbing with fairly extended walks.

N. E. D. Walker

A very quiet year in comparison with previous seasons. Pleasant weekend jaunts in the Chiltern Hills with my wife. In October a visit to Mittenwald with my wife; some pleasant valley walks in the Karwendels and Wetterstein Range; nothing exciting, all very enjoyable in glorious weather.

OBITUARY

Dr. A. W. Barton

Dr. Barton, who died in August 1976, was a man who was distinguished in many fields—particularly in the fields of science and education. He was educated at Nottingham High School and Trinity College, Cambridge. After a spell as an assistant in the Cavendish Laboratory, he became Head of Physics at Repton School in 1925 and he held that post until 1939. He was Headmaster of King Edward VII School, Sheffield, from 1939 to 1950 and Headmaster of City of London School from 1950 until his retirement in 1965. He was the author of textbooks on physics.

Arthur Barton took a great interest in Association football and was a first class referee. He served as a referee at the Berlin Olympics in 1936, and was a member of the Panel of Referees of the Federation Internationale de Football Associations.

Arthur came to climbing rather later than most, being about 50 when he was persuaded by the Concierge at an Hotel at Zinal that he should take it up. After that he became a dedicated climber and hill walker and was active up to the time of his death. He was nearly 60 when he climbed the Matterhorn.

It was in 1950 that Arthur joined the S.A.C. and the Association, and he became a member of the Alpine Club a few years later. He was a loyal supporter of the functions of both organisations and attended many Alpine and Easter climbing meets of the Associations. His wife, Alison, was his constant companion at Association meets and functions and she also became an accomplished mountaineer.

Arthur was President of the Association in the years 1963/65 and continued to take an active interest in committee affairs regularly thereafter. He also took a great interest in introducing young people to the hills, and several of his nephews came to the mountains through his introduction.

Arthur Barton was dedicated to high standards and integrity in anything he did and won the respect and affection of all those who came to know him.

M. B.



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