

CAREFUL WITH THIS ONE,
PETE ITS MY ONLY COPY.

FYLDE MOUNTAINEERING CLUB

NEWSLETTER

NOV. 1984

EDITOR'S NOTES

It's tough at the top, as those at the top are apt to remind us and there are even times when being the editor is no bed of roses. This issue sees me beset by illiterate climbers and all too literate lady members. It's good stuff mind you. Why can't the chairman be more of a man? and if only Dave Earle had given birth himself he might understand.

There are, of course, compensations; the annual dinner approaches and as usual members will be queuing up to buy me drinks. I don't know how I cope.

See you at the 'do'.

Eddie Craig

NEW MEMBERS

The following are welcomed as introductory members:

Louise Fortune 12, Knowsley Gate, Fleetwood. Tel.6547
John Capper 20 Victoria Road, Poulton-le-Fylde.
Steve Wall Kirkham Riding Centre, Southview, Kirkham.
W. Kellaway 7, Caryl Road, St. Annes, FY8 2PZ.
Karen Eliz.Hugill 6, Cameron Grove, Bishopthorpe Road, York, YO2 1LE.
Mr & Mrs.P.Taylor 16, Upper Westby St., Lytham St.Annes, Tel.737180.
Stella J.Godderidge Glat 3, 34 Ripon Road, Harrogate. Tel.509743.
Anne Goward 45, Tenth Avenue, Heaton, Newcastle.
William McCrea 45, Tenth Avenue, Heaton, Newcastle.
Judith Ashton 11, Arnham Road, Preston.
Mr & Mrs.P.Greenland 79B. Banner Cross Road, Sheffield 11.

Full Members:

Glen Brookes
Bob Henson.

Change of Address:

Paul Clarke 10 Cardigan Road, Leeds 6. Tel.740903.
Carole Waterhouse 19 Hawthorn Close, Botley, Oxford. Tel.725370.
Mr & Mrs.P.Robinson 23, Willows Avenue, Cleveleys, Blackpool. Tel.867652.
Mr. S.Walker 6, Fairholmes Court, Fairholmes Road, Thornton.

New Tel. No.:

Roger Brookes' correct 'phone number is Sheffield 669517.

SOCIALS.

18th Dec. Audio Visual The Lake District National Park - P. Eden
19th Dec. U.S.A. Slides and Xmas Booze-up (Hot Pot Supper)

FUTURE MEETS.

24/25th Nov. Family W/E, Stair
8th Dec. Dinner, Waterhead Hotel, Ambleside.
16th Dec. Car Meet, Malham Andy Blaylock
6th Jan. Coach Meet, Howgills
Clear away the seasonal alcoholic haze with
a delightful cross Howgills ramble. Phone now
John Wiseman on Clev.826594.
19/20th Jan. Family W/E, Langdale
26/27th Jan. Members' Meet, Langdale Dave Earle, Phone
Poulton 890283
13th Feb. A.G.M.

17th Feb. In Search of Snow, Mk 22 Jack Jowett
Clev. 853039

HUT AVAILABILITY.

21/22nd Dec. Little Langdale
23Dec. - 1st Jan. Both Huts.
4/5th January Stair.
11/12th Jan. Little Langdale
18/19th Jan. Stair
25/26th Jan. Little Langdale
1/2nd Feb. Stair
8/9th Feb. Little Langdale
15/16th Feb. Stair
21/22nd Feb. Little Langdale.

THE ADVERTS.

1 pr Galibier Super RD's Size 44 (10)
Worn only twice.
£40.

Contact: Martin Dale, 29 Manor Road, Blackpool.

1 pr Galibier Super Pro-Climbing Boots Size 9½.
Very good condition but too small for present owner.
Contact: Rick Reeve on 0695 422966.

KITCHEN SINK DRAMA

Following a proposal at the last A.G.M. that improvements be made to the kitchen at Little Langdale, the Committee have recently given approval for major alterations to be carried out. When you read this work should be well in hand, or completed.

I am given to understand the cost is in the region of £2,600 and the Committee are insistent that they were sober when making the decision. Will it improve my beans and sausages? That's what I want to know.

RE-CONNECTION.

The Secretary is now ready to receive your phone calls on Poulton 890283, having emerged victorious from his recent contretemps with British Telecom.

COACH MEETS.

Some members, including those old enough to know better but who are probably hankering after the 'good old days', are still not clear on present coach meet policy.

Since the arrival of the Tachograph, most coach picking-up points have been eliminated.

The coach now collects people at Devonshire Square at 8.00 am and Poulton, Garstang Road traffic lights at 8.15 am.. People can arrange to be picked up along the direct route between the two points, e.g. Windmill Plymouth Road roundabout etc. but nowhere else. Picking-up points are flexible along the main road to Garstang (except of course for a southerly travelling meet) and up to the New Holly.

STOP CHILDREN!

Come to me O ye children!
For I hear you at your play.
And the questions that perplexed me
Have vanished quite away.

Ah! what would the world be to us
If the children were no more?
We should dread the desert behind us
Worse than the dark before.

H.W. Longfellow.

or alternatively:-

Any man who hates dogs and children
can't be all bad.

W.C. Fields.

Which leads us to
YOUR LETTERS.

Di Norris, a woman in her own write

Sir,

"You have fallen into the traps of cheque book journalism. Armed with less than all the facts, seduced by an apparently illiterate chairman to do his dirty work, and with sexism as your only weapon, you attempt to pen an admonishing article.

Firstly since days of yore it has been considered less than polite to visit the sins of the father on the sons. Since amongst the mothers we could count one teacher/psychology graduate, one midwife/constituency secretary and one teacher/law student, I hardly think it was necessary to mention the professionalism of the fathers; none of whom was present.

Secondly it is patently obvious that neither you nor our revered Chairman, have any children or else you would know that they refuse any attempts to quell their mirth particularly at early hours of the morning and nobody more than the assembled mothers would have wished them to do so.

Thirdly, and lastly it has always been that the method of dealing with miscreant youth was immediate and polite requests to cease disliked activity followed by a less than polite request if disliked activity did not cease. In the case in question I am sure it was well within the Chairman's powers and vocabulary to phrase some effective speech to quieten assembled miscreant youth.

After all said I do apologise to the two members present on our impromptu family week. We did have a jolly good time and left the cottage in a better condition than we found it, and the aim is to have the cottages used more regularly isn't it?

Hope we will all see you there soon."

And the state of Denmark -

Sir,

"Having just received our copy of the F.M.C. Newsletter, I feel compelled to write to you concerning the criticism of myself and my children. I am sorry that if the Chairman felt he had to make this complaint that it was done through these channels and by someone else. Why could he not have had a word himself when we were sat chatting on our last night there?

I am not going to excuse my children if they behaved so badly but it is interesting that the three men involved in these articles do not have any children. I think it smacks of slight intolerance. I am willing however to apologise if Barry feels his holiday was spoilt.

I would like to point out one thing, however, and that is that my two friends were looking after my children as well as their own because I was confined to bed on doctor's orders. I regret the fact that this kind gesture earned them this sort of cheap comment.

One observation I would make though is that I regret that our dear Secretary saw fit to describe me in the light of my husband's profession and not my hard-earned own!!!!, not that I see the connection with naughty children.

/.... 4

I hope in future that such matters can be dealt with in a civilised manner and not in this unfortunate way.

Yours faithfully,

Susan Denmark. "

Any members who are still perplexed by this correspondence and the item referred to in the previous newsletter may seek enlightenment which I shall endeavour to provide:-

One week this summer our stalwart chairman, B. Crook, B.A. (Oxon) departed for the Lakes intent on spending a few days at the Little Langdale hut with his delightful companion the beautiful Christine Ikin. Solitude sadly eluded them as they found themselves sharing the hut with two lady members and nine (count em nine) children. Pandamonium it would seem reigned on a grand scale and after a few days the chairman and his lady fled, unable to maintain a stiff upper lip any longer.

A straightforward case of discretion being the better part of valour. However, questions raised subsequently and a tongue in cheek item by the rascally Dave Earle obviously ruffled a few feathers.

One hitherto unmentioned aspect of this little affair which may be worth consideration is why two members, one of them introductory, could take nine children/guests to a hut in the first place. At one time a member could take only one or two guests to a hut and introductory members were forbidden to take any. Has this changed? and, if so, to what degree? Clarification of this point may help avoid future upset.

FELL RACE 1984.

On a perfect day a mere 10 people turned up for this year's fell race.

The results were as follows:-

Competitor	Handicap	Gross		Net	
		Time	Posn.	Time	Posn.
Liz Rawcliffe	48	66.35	9	18.35	1
Don Nichol	17	47.25	6	30.25	2
Bob Travis	49	80.15	10	31.15	3
Mark Broughton	8	39.30	2	31.30	4
Pete Collard	10	43.20	4	33.20	5
Martin Pickup	3.30	37.50	1	34.20	6
Barrie Crook	16	51.20	7	35.20	7
Eddie Craig	5	41.25	3	36.25	8
Vivian Lomax	17	54.00	8	37.00	9
Henry Iddon	10	47.20	5	37.20	10

Well done Liz! After all these years you've managed it, with the assistance of a generous handicap.

Well done the other nine.

Hope to see a few more faces next year.

Barrie B. Crook

"THE ACTIVITIES LOG"

LITTLE LANGDALE HUT

"A DAY OWT ON T CRAG WIT' BOYZ" 29.9.84.

Today we got in our car and went over Rhino's Pass and "Ask Martin" Knott Pass and after a few minits ended up in Essdale were we went rong and ad too turn rownd and go to Bruvverellkeld were we parked the van and then we walked to Eron Crag and then we ad a drink an then we ad butty and then we ad anuther drink after witch we ad a luk at t'crag and ad another butty an then we said, "Yeah letz do itt Maaaann", And we did it.

We thrusted . up and down an up tituseses owse and wen we got t'top we got down agen an ad a butty an a drink an another butty an then looked at crag an ad another banana an then we did the hole of the Karma Sootra with ourselves an ad a cig an then went for it agen an then that wos it but the flora was pretty boorin.

Ta!

T'Boyz.

THE 8 EYED SPY (1984 Review)

Welcome to this regular (starting next year) peep into the Rock Climbers' chalk bag. Hopefully this little feature will appear in various guises in every newsletter, if we can keep the Editor supplied with pints of mild and promise to keep quiet about his darker side. Here we hope to document the happenings, trends, fashions, even the varying tastes of music and curries of the Club's rock climbers /athletes, bums etc., call them what you will. So any news of routes done, or who you've seen hanging from slings on an E4 or even using chalk on Diffs. Basically, anyone you want to slag off etc. Please write or phone the 8 eyed spy via the newsletter ed. This is just an appraisal of 1984 as the old spy has not been getting his finger out, this season and writing anything; in fact has been too busy climbing!

Kicking off 1984 wasn't easy as it was cold earlier on. The weight belts (mostly hidden ones) were in evidence, down on the local climbing walls hut it was the usual folks who never seem to train, barring the odd gallon now and again who made the early running. Paul Clarke and friends from Leeds were out in early March on Tremadoc knocking off an impressive list of routes including Zukator, Fingerlicker and Vulcan, a glut of E4s and ESs all with the usual big reputations. Easter came and the usual trip to Devon and Cornwall brought out Paul Reid for the one and only time in the year. Mark Broughton with his wife to be was also present. Hartland Quay received a lot of attention with Dale and Reid knocking off every conceivable line and even bagging a second ascent of Nose Delay E2^{5C} before the chalk dust could settle after Mark Millers 1st ascent. The others apparently got very sick on cream teas. The week after this, with snow still on the ground, Scafell was visited by a big team. Martin Dale and Andy Blaylock got off to an impressive start with an ascent of Dyad E3, closely followed by the evergreen Andy Dunhill heaving behind with the unfit Stuart Gascoigne. Also that day, Botterill's Slab was raped as at one time 6 FMC members were all climbing the main pitch at once! Surely one for the record books. The next day saw the two Pauls, Clarke and Greenland, fresh from an ascent of Footless Crow E5 the previous day, on Pavey Ark where they took in the very hard Heartson E3 before sprinting to Gimmer to do the equally hard Making Movies E3 6B. Also on Pavey, Martin broke his duck with Cruel Sister E3 having previously failed twice last year; third time lucky. Martin and Andy kept up the pace with Aurora E3 on Dove Crag. Kevin Stephens whose seconds now all climb with huge butterfly nets, repeated this route not without incident. Having jettisoned half his sack from the crux, he then took a dive, not the first of the year, before succeeding.

Gas Nuttall has not been seen at all this year. Some reports suggest he's in love; others that he took a very long fall. He was climbing quite often with Paul Greenland from Leeds (which might have something to do with the long fall/psyche out report) who was going really well early on with ascents of Footless Crow (with Paul Clarke) and the very impressive Cave Route face (E6) at Gordale Scar. Dave Westby was also missed although he did show up to do his problem at Bolton climbing wall. He was definitely not holding the ropes and pointing out the juggies when Martin Dale completed Man Power (E2/3) on Goat after the abortive all day session in 1983. Andy Blaylock partnered on the ascent. Martin also broke his Duck this year fairly spectacularly with ascents of Four Sticks E2, 4 Failures and Tarkus, 5 submissions. Andy Blaylock also had a good year on Dow, where he led Tarkus E1, Super Direct E1, Balrog E1 and Catacomb, E1.

The lads visited Scotland at Whit with Kevin Stephens and Phil Caley having a particularly good time climbing big hard rock routes such as Shibboleth E2, The Bat E2 and The Pause HVS. Glen Brookes and Sean Smith also had good trips on The Bullroar HVS, which turned into a very long day indeed, and Swastika HVS and The Long Reach E1 on Etive Slabs. Glen was tiptoeing along the Moustache of Swastika whilst Martin was reaching the Long Reach when it proceeded to hailstorm. The air was white (and blue) and knees knocked for a time but all involved hung on and changed to crampons. Andy Blaylock must get the prize for the most unlikely place to. He dropped his trousers and did the business half way up the overhanging crux pitch of Yoyo E1. Meanwhile Mick Tolley had erected his towers on Arran again. With Andy Dunhill and an injured Paul Clarke, he climbed the strangely named Brobdignag E2. Paul and Andy also did the hairy Insertion E3, originally graded E5. Wild eh, boys. Jenny Tolley and Guy Duxbury sailed around the island and managed to dock and hitch back for a pint every night; a major achievement!

Injuries have definitely taken their toll this year. Mark Harding - Mr. Injury himself - did himself in on so many occasions, the only place he's climbed all year is on to the physiothereapist's bed. He did put up the Harding Horror on Bispham seacliffs which must be approaching 6C, repeated recently by Martin Dale who has worked on it all summer!

Paul Clarke fell by the wayside early on with a nasty arm problem after starting the year very strongly. Did Gaz Nuttall also retire through injury? Roger Brookes certainly did, badly breaking an ankle/heel falling off an E4 down Cheedale, a 25fter, all his wires ripped. He has now made a complete recovery and also regained his former form. He overcame a slight head problem to make ascents of Saxon E2 on Scafell, and Cruel Sister E3 on Pavey Ark, two routes not overendowed with protection. Phil Caley and Paul Reid both did their backs in along the way and have also just heard that Martin Dale's knees have gone - Andy Dunhill!

Mick Tolley got his ticking book out this year and heaved his portly frame up some of those routes he's been wanting to do for ages. He got a lift up Saxon with Martin and Andy and also Cruel Sister with Roger Brookes. He now flatly refuses to do E3s unless they are laden with pegs and slings or they happen to be called Jackdaw on the edge of time. The week following Mick's ascent of Saxon the climb got a real F4C blasting with Roger and Phil, Andy Dunhill and Al Peel and Kevin Stephens and party all queuing up to get it bagged. Martin was caught hanging from gear on Nazgul, E3 or was he just testing it? Martin beat Kevin to an ascent of Empire, E3 on Raven, Thirlmere, and Phil Caley, seconding, dismissed the Crux hand over hand as OK in true thug fashion. The lads Martin, Andy, Glenn and Psycho went to the USA to dig out old Fylde recluse, Freddy Snalam. Lucky buggers!! You'll have to see the slide show to see what they did or didn't do. In their absence, Kevin put up a good show giving Wales some hammer. In one weekend he climbed Great Wall E3 and the Boldest E3 on Cloggy and also Resurrection E4 on the Cromlech. Down in Wales things were certainly happening. James Greaves (Jimmy to his friends) and Nick Harnes* made impressive debuts at the Vags hut. Spurred on by a very inebriated Mick Tolley, Nick definitely got the unfortunate team of punters from the south who were doubly booked with us riled. So much so that some of them left to climb Snowdon in the pouring rain at 3am in the morning! James is developing into a bit of a crowd puller. He nearly killed a soloing Ron Fawcett at Stoney Middleton and could well have brought a premature end to one Willie Todd whilst swinging off Extraction E2 at Tremadoc. Crowds formed on both occasions but the biggest was at the bottom of Cloggy, where he performed miracles staying on rock following Martin up the Boldest E3. Tom Knowles climbed more routes in a two week period in August than he has in all his long career. Climbing mainly with Sean Smith, the pair kicked off some really good VSs with Scafell's classics getting the most stick.

Scaffell Crag certainly got a lot of stick this year, some teams making the trip up Brown Tongue no less than 6 times!! Andy Blaylock climbed better and better as the year progressed, culminating with a lead of the very hard 3rd pitch of White Wizard E3 with Martin Dale. Kevin finally got Empire E3 after a series of abortive attempts but could not put the Medlar E3 away. The Bowderstone became popular as the weather regressed. Kevin bought a chalk bag for one occasion and was seen to throw it away in disgust when Jerry Moffatt and circus appeared from behind the stone and proceeded to one arm their way up the hardest of problems. "Hey Jerry! come here and dig this double lunge. It's really cool" said Christian Griffiths, the token American superstar in attendance. After being christened The Sex Dwarf by one passing rock athlete, Kevin resorted to showing tourists where the handshake hole was.

Alan Blackburn proved his ever improving ability on rock by passing up some following Kevin on North Crag Eliminate, E1 on Castle. Well done, Alan, also doing some dragging of his own, notably the Chairman up Mickledore Grooves VS on Scaffell. Martin placed the offending No. 1 friend in Abraxas, E3 on Dow creating a complete cock-up of the job much to the annoyance of a fully recovered Roger Brookes who had just cruised the first 5c pitch. Thus, Martin became disillusioned and took up soloing while Andy Blaylock finally got Man of Straw E1 and Chimney Variant E1 up White Ghyll with Phil Caley. Andy, Al Peel and also James Greaves put in a lot of time on Gimmer climbing all the classics with Al leading James up Kipling Groove HVS. Andy Dunhill Phil Caley, Steve Swindells (now resident in Blackpool again) and Mick Tolley had a good trip to Scotland around this time climbing The Needle E1 on Shelter Stone and Shibboleth E2 on the Buckle in varying conditions. They also climbed some routes on the Dubh loch. Rick Reeves made another comeback; this time with Tom Knowles, just before Kevin, Roger and Al left for the Verdon. Kevin left his gear in Calais to start with, but the team were not deterred and made ascents of the Eperon Sublime and la Demande to name but two routes. I wonder how Kev went on without his chalkbag? Glenn and Sean came back from the USA full of keenness and showed it by climbing some good E1s including Raindrop on Black Crag the same day as Martin and Andy dodged showers on Prana E3 and Andy did brilliantly to lead the Go Between E2 on Quay-foot, in the pouring rain!

Well that's nearly all the climbing that we've heard about; from now on all the climbing that's being done will be social.

You may well think that Paul Clarke has recovered and has been racing up new routes if you've been reading the climbing mags. Not true; he is an imposter who has more hair, glasses and is a doctor. Steve Swindells has been seen climbing again and also Chris Thistlethwaite was over recently and actually left the Thatched for long enough to climb at Brimham Rocks with Paul Reid (2nd time this year Paul!). Mark Broughton has now got married - congratulations to him and her, and that's about all I've heard. "Arfur". "Yeah, Bill" "I've heard that Bipin serves up a mean Bhaji". "Oh, yeh?" "I'll see yer at the dinner fer that literary prize."

Cheers,
Bill Haversack.

THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT OF ROCKCLIMBING ON RAVENSDALE CLIFFS, CRESSBROOK DALE, DERBYSHIRE.

The massive limestone buttresses of the Ravensdale Cliffs rise high above the splendid ash woodlands of lower Cressbrook Dale. They have long been popular with rockclimbers because of their imposing nature and sheltered, sunny aspect. Yet the area is also of prime importance for nature conservation, being a Grade 1 S.S.S.I. and forming part of the Derbyshire Dales National Nature Reserve. Thus, there existed the potential for conflict here between recreation and conservation.

In 1975 the N.C.C. acquired ownership of Raven Buttress, the main cliff, and attempted to restrict climbing to the winter months in

order to protect flowering plants and nesting birds. This infuriated the climbers who had enjoyed free access for many years to what had become a 'Crag of National Importance'. Long and protracted discussion was to take place between the N.C.C. and the British Mountaineering Council over the next few years in an attempt to resolve this dispute.

The problem of erosional damage to scree slope plant communities was alleviated by the N.C.C.'s construction of a proper footpath up to the cliffs, and it was recognized that raptors such as the Peregrine or Buzzard would be unlikely to return even if climbing was to be banned. However, concern was still expressed about damage to cliff-top vegetation as the following extract from a letter sent to the B.M.C. indicates:-

" There has been considerable damage caused to uncommon flowering plants on the plateau above the crag and buttress by the continual effects of trampling by climbers and if these activities continue at present levels, a valuable habitat will be lost without hope of recovery. "(N.C.C. 1977)

In 1983 I set out to investigate this assertion using scientific methods wherever possible. A record was kept of the numbers of climbers using the cliffs and the routes ascended; a vegetation survey was undertaken, and measurements were made of various environmental factors affecting plant growth - slope, aspect, chemical and physical properties of the soil. In addition a control area, Cave Buttress, was also studied to enable comparisons to be made between a trampled and untrampled area.

The results obtained revealed that, while both buttress tops were subject to very similar environmental conditions, they had plant communities which were structurally very different. The trampled area on Raven Buttress is characterised by a short grass sward interspersed with many limestone herbs such as Spring Cinquefoil, Wild Thyme, and Ladies Bedstraw. Cave Buttress, on the other hand, is dominated by tall grasses such as Cocksfoot which grows to over one metre in height and effectively shades out the low growing herb species.

In the absence of grazing it appears that trampling controls the height and distribution of the more competitive grasses enabling the light sensitive but stress tolerant herbs to flourish. Thus, trampling by climbers of the clifftop grasslands rather than posing a threat to this habitat is in fact helping to maintain it. This demonstrates that recreation need not always result in environmental degradation and should not automatically be assumed to do so. In this instance a little trampling has proved a good thing.

Roger Brookes.

Summary.

A brief account of a Third Year Dissertation undertaken in partial fulfilment of the Environmental Studies Degree at Sheffield City Polytechnic, 1984.

OUT TO LUNCH! U.S.A. 1984.

It was a dark and rainy night at the beginning of July when four Fylde lads found themselves driving on the wrong side of the road in a car without gears and seemingly 10ft above the road. Totally wrecked after the journey, Glenn, pulled one out of the bag that night getting us from Denver to Boulder, Colorado in one piece. It was certainly a Big Grip!

We found Fred Snalamb's apartment after a bit of searching at about 1.30 pm on July 1st. Fred was still out on the town, probably just packing up his hotdog cart for the night. He soon turned up and

we hit the beer at 2.30pm finally crashing out at around 4.30pm!! Fred thought it would be a good idea to acclimatize to the usual going to bed time in Boulder early on in the trip. We surfaced the next day, and went for the usual full bore gross out American breakfast.

After a couple of days trying to suss out a dose and generally checking out the best bars and beers and getting drunk, we decided we had better do some climbing as that's what we had really come all this way for. We drove up to Eldorado Canyon, just south of Boulder. Eldorado may conjure up visions of a golden super place, home of the super race. Far from it! Approaching up a dirt road lined with beat up old cars and hillbilly-type residences were people on porches in rocking chairs swotting the odd passing fly. It was like something out of the latest ~~54~~ top video. At the end of the road, there was a swimming pool next to an old Mexican style saloon also looking like it had been lifted from the set of 'The Good, the Bad and the Ugly'. A few tents were scattered about, mostly in concealed spots. A wigwam sat in one corner and a MASH type tent in the other. This was to be our home for the next two weeks. Eldorado was definitely the back of beyond. The crags, however, were a defferent story! God created the earth in 7 days and then on the 8th He created Eldorado Canyon. Towering red walls, painted with yellows and greens greet you as you enter the Canyon. Lines of overhangs topped by the very obvious Naked Edge rake up the immense Redgarden wall on the right side of the canyon which makes the Bastille itself a 400ft cliff on the left side, positively pale into insignificance in comparison. God's golden hour of power was what Jim Collins wanted to rename Genesis when he made the first free ascent; Eldorado must have been God's golden hour of power itself! Here we met up with two other English lads, Simon and Ian, who were doing a grand tour of the States and seemed to be living like Ethiopians, on odd scraps of grain etc..

We climbed in Eldorado for two weeks, doing a route most days except when we were suffering from hangovers from too much partying in Boulder. In which case we made use of the swimming pool which was free to campers. At the weekends, the Canyon would get very busy so we went south to visit the Garden of the Gods, near Colorado Springs. Soft Rock is the title of the guide book and soft it is too. Strange fins and pinnacles of weathered orange sandstone stick out of the plains like something off a Star Trek set. All set out with paths around them for the tourists, just like one big garden. We managed to do the classic Tidricks route but the flakey nature of the rock and the runouts between good protection did not suit us. It was decidedly necky climbing, obviously needing time to get into. We also went up north to the high country around Estes Park, the real gateway to the Rocky Mountain National Park Here we climbed on Lumpy ridge. Loads of granite outcrops stick up on a ridge overlooking Estes with beautiful views of Longo Peak and the famous Diamond. This was where we encountered our first Colorado thunderstorm. Myself and Andy had just completed an ascent of the very recommended J. Crack and Sean and Glenn were having a bit of trouble on an equally fine route just to our left when the heavens opened and a beautiful sunny day turned into a cold wet one without much warning. In the meantime Simon and Ian had been having a go at the Naked Edge in Eldorado when the storm broke and Ian had been struck by lightning on the easy third pitch. There then followed an epic retreat and the end of Ian's interest in having another go at the route. Simon was still keen so Friday was labelled for another attempt with me and Andy in tow.

In the week leading up to the Naked Edge attempt, we climbed in Boulder's other main climbing area, Boulder Canyon. Boulder Canyon is granite and not unlike Borrowdale with small crags scattered everywhere.

We climbed on the elegant looking Dome and also Elephant rock, approached by walking down a pipe carrying most of Boulder's water supply. The route names are amazing and we climbed such classics as Cozyhang, Gorilla's Delight, Monster Woman and the UMPH Slot. Andy and I decided to push it on the 5·10+s in the hope that we may have a chance of attempting a 5·11- pitch on the Edge. In the next couple of days we took in T2, after much jiggery-pokery with piles of stones and protection placing with twigs. I also managed to drop a boot from the top of the third pitch and it then proceeded to rain it down dampening the achievement somewhat. The day after we climbed Superslab in a bit better style. A tremendous climb with far out positions, it was possibly the best we did the whole trip. Glenn and Sean were not idle either, pushing the standards up to 5·8/5·9. They climbed the excellent and fairly necky Anthill Direct which has good views across to the Naked Edge. A day's rest and Friday was upon us - Naked Edge day. The sun was burning down as we got geared up just beating a team of 3 Americans. Andy led off up the first 5·6 death pitch. What happened in the next 5 hours is worth an article in itself. Simon did a brilliant job leading the three 5·11 pitches whilst Andy and myself passed up rock on the last two. I managed to lead the second 5·10+ pitch and Andy led up to the start and also the 5·8 third pitch. The crux first pitch went OK and we all climbed it in good style. It was the famous Bombay Chimney on the fourth lead which gave us all the problems. Simon struggled and didn't get it on his first try; Andy managed, held in by a good back rope and the thing just spit me out into space. The last pitch was the real killer; the most spectacular outing imaginable. Again, it spit me out over the void only rescued by the alert American who had arrived on the stance and was able to pull me in. The last jamming crack is brilliant ropes dangling over 400ft of nothing, sheer hard work! We celebrated on the top with a mouthful of water; it certainly was naked down there!

At the weekend, we swapped our hired car for a Plymouth Reliant and set off across the plains for Wyoming. After 9 hours driving we were greeted at sunset by the Devil's Tower. This massive monolith, which sticks out like a sore thumb above the surrounding landscape, was supposed to have had its strange grooves scratched out by a giant bear trying to get at a tribe of Indians on the summit! The next day, in baking temperatures, we all topped out. Glenn and Sean climbed a variation on the classic Durrance route fighting off loads of incompetent Yanks in the process, whilst Andy and I did Solar, a typical Devil's Tower corner. Bored with stemming, we tried two face routes the next day; the only two on the Tower. Protected by huge bolts, the first one proved to be a real classic, a hard version of Silly Arete Everlasting. The second, led by Andy, was a very pleasant slab pitch called Klondyke. Sean and Glenn climbed Solar, getting a roasting by the ever-present sun.

Escaping from the hordes of tourists, we headed east to the Black Hills of South Dakota. After a night spent in a car park, we awoke in a wonderland of granite spires, lakes and pines. The Needles stuck up everywhere; thin ones and thick, all begging to be climbed. All of America's famous climbers had cut their teeth here and after a shopping trip to nearby Custer (the last stand!) Sean and I visited the Sylvian Lake boulder, scene of some of John Gills more famous problems. The day after, we struggled to find our feet in the Cathedral spires and also discovered that getting down was also as much a problem as getting up! After that particularly frustrating day, we decided to go Needle bagging. Each summit has its own log book, no matter how small. It was warming to see the names of last year's Bolton team in some of them. We all ascended the very famous Tricouni Nail-pin and then Andy and Glenn bagged the Queen pin made famous by one Royal Robbins. There are some amazing names, such as Tent Peg, Hairy Pin, the Phallus, Reunion Rock and Moby Dick. It was on Moby Dick where we found the

brilliant Nantucket Sleighride in the gathering gloom. Sean's first 5 10c! A hard fingery start led into a huge spiralling scoop bristling with quartz nobs and protected by the odd bolt. Absolutely amazing climbing! Andy and Glenn decided to tackle the much photographed Needles Eye. They soon became stars in the tourists eyes and Glenn had to pose with several beauties whilst Andy struggled upwards on the wrong route, rapidly running out of protection, strength and rock. Their finale, the abseil from the top, was also a bit of a let-down as they got their ropes stuck. The next day it rained so we played the tourists and visited Mount Rushmore and then drove back to Boulder via the Badlands National Park and the site of the Battle of Wounded Knee - real Injun territory.

Back in Boulder we moved into a new doss, and Andy and Sean left to visit relatives. Simon and Ian left for New York, so Glenn and I got down to bagging some classics in the Canyon. We had now run into a whole community of British climbers living in or around Boulder and the night-life began to hot up a bit. Glenn and I climbed every day and dispensed with such classics as Hair City and Yellow Spur, and the curiously named "A Hike with Ludwig Dude" up Boulder Canyon. We also got into the habit of getting very wet as the late starts meant that we invariably got caught in the afternoon thunderstorms, regular as clockwork at about 3pm. On Blackwalk in particular we ended up abseiling down a waterfall. We visited the Flatirons, above Boulder climbing the Third Flatiron by the East Face, the best beginners' route in the world according to Yvor Chouinard.

When the others returned from their trips to Canada and Michigan, we had moved in with a curious English climber/socialiser called Strappo. Needless to say the holiday deteriorated into one long party and not much in the way of climbing was done. The last four days were spent around the pool in Eldorado with brief forays onto the Bastille to do the Northcutt Variation and also Wide Country. Glenn and I climbed the classic Bulge on the Whales Back in front of a film crew and then proceeded to get wet again attempting Kings X. Andy and myself left for England with Glenn and Sean staying on for another week of debauchery at Strappo's. They did actually do some routes, notably Ruper and Italian Arete. A good lead by Glenn who was now powering up the 5.9s. They visited Mickey Mouse Wall which is only reached by dodging trains through two miles of tunnels. As they appeared out of the last one it was pouring down with rain again and Strappo's mate Bucket inscribed a classic bit of graffiti on the tunnel wall. I bet it's dry on Cloggy! On the last day or so, English lad 'Dirty' Derek Hersey soloed the Naked Edge, a mind-boggling achievement.

All in all a brilliant trip not really done justice to by this article: only a small slice of the cake!

Martin Dale

Summary: A trip to Boulder, Colorado by Martin Dale, Sean Smith, Andy Blaylock and Glenn Brookes in July/August, 1984.