

Fylde Mountaineering Club.



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Throughout a year conspicuous for benevolence of the weather-gods on practically every meet, the club has continued to thrive, the membership to increase and the varied activities grouped under the general heading "Mountaineering" have been exploited to the full.

It is this wide variety of activities upon which the success of the club so largely depends. The popular misconception that a mountaineering club consist of a group of dare-devil rock climbers whose sole desire is to emulate the fly and attain the summit of every crag by the use of highly dangerous gymnastics, died hard and it is our duty to stifle the fallacy.

In speaking of the club's activities to a prospective member it is rarely of value to talk of the sense of achievement, the exhilaration and physical and psychological satisfaction which many of us derive from the task of overcoming technical rock climbing problems on the sheer face of the crags. Their love of the open air and veneration of the mountains may prompt no greater desire than to indulge in the mildest form of fell walking, but such a person is not necessarily less valuable as a member than a potential "tiger". A gradual introduction to the more energetic pursuits of the club may well ensue and there is ample opportunity for anyone to become an allround mountaineer if he or she so desires.

It is of paramount importance that it be generally known that all who are interested in any aspect of mountaineering, fell walking, rock climbing, snow and ice climbing, skiing, mountain photography, speleology and geology will be most welcome to the club.



Throughout the last twelve months each of these interests have drawn their quota of adherents according to the season.

There can be few clubs with as consistent and active a programme and no effort is spared in compiling a syllabus which contains features of interest to every member.

During the winter months the snow conditions have been fairly good, and there has been adequate opportunity for wielding the ice axe while the growing number of skiing enthusiasts reveal a marked improvement in the standard of proficiency.

In addition to the climbing meets a regular programme of lectures, film and social features in the town have been well attended. From some of these functions money has been raised towards the ultimate establishment of permanent quarters in Langdale, an objective which, in spite of various setbacks, remains in the forefront of future policy.

An even greater number of members have sought mountaineering experience abroad during the past twelve months, and the Swiss, Austrian and French Alps, Norway and the Pyrenees have been visited and more expeditions planned for this year. The Scottish Highlands, the ever popular Cuillins of Skye, Wales and Derbyshire have also been visited.

The spirit of the club remains high and with the determination of its members to support as many of the activities as possible, with the continuance of the helpful attitude towards fellow members and the creation of that atmosphere of good fellowship which is an integral part of any such organisation, the club is assured of continued success.

R.E.L.

## IMPRESSIONS OF A FIRST CLIMB.

This was it. I had waited in fear, trepidation and fast-~~o~~azing courage. "Dove Slabs" was fated to be my first real climb.

It was rather a good day that last Sunday in August, slightly breezy down below, and with clouds and sunny periods (was I glad to borrow Pat's sweater on the top) I did two short climbs that day, ridiculously easy, I suppose, to all you hardened F.M.C. To me they were upsetting to say the least. At first I was climbing third with Dennis leading, then Pat, self and Noel. Watching very carefully as Dennis, then Pat ascended slowly, I was able to keep my eye on what seemed to be footholds and handholds. Strange they weren't there when I reached them!

"I had been told; "Don't rely on your rope, climb yourself, use your arms for balancing purposes, and find good firm footholds and handholds before venturing, step by step". All these words were ringing in my ears, and then someone said, "Don't hug the rock, stand away from it". "Oh! this was awful"; I thought. Dennis smoking his old briar, up there above, gave me a feeling of confidence, so I, proceeded, slowly

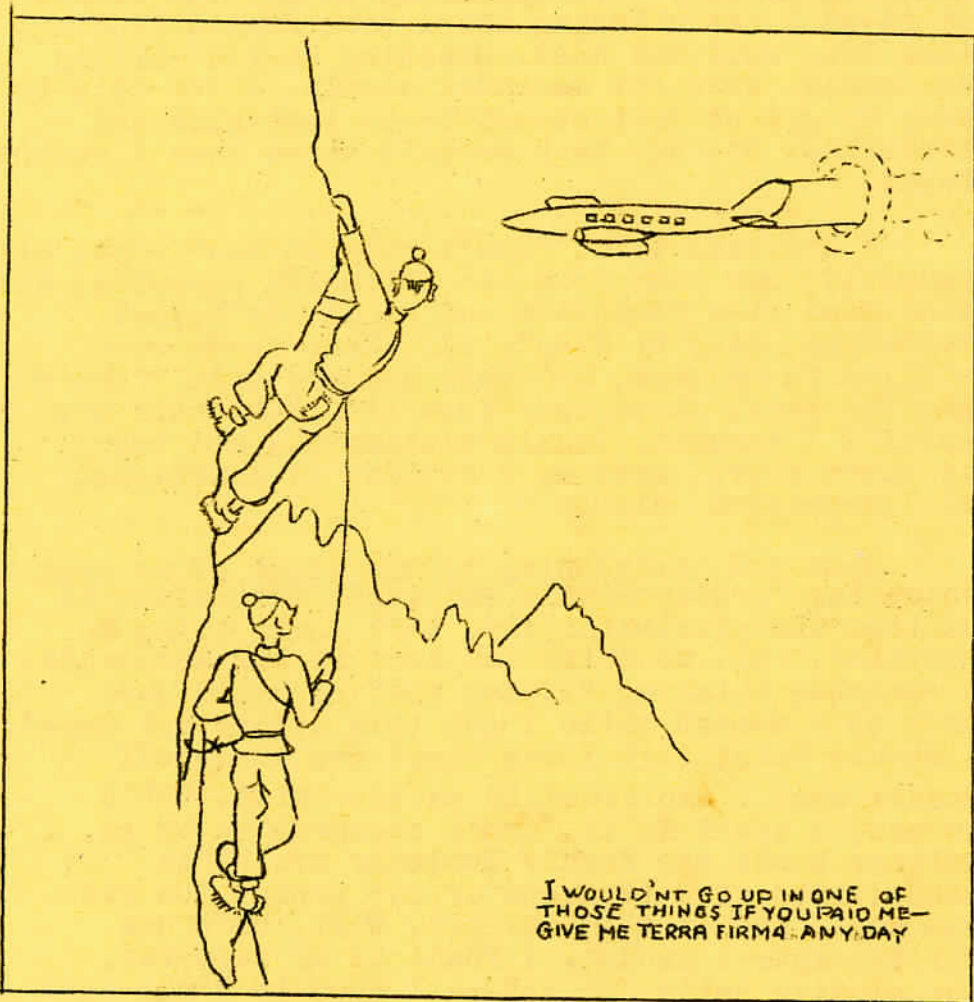
Some one, traversing to the right of me kept whistling "pretty little Redwing", and seemed to me like the proverbial fly, that would cling to anything, and, so swift and sure in his movements. I remember thinking "I wish that he would just shut up a moment while I get this sticky bit done". I should think that I was about two yards off Dennis when I exclaimed in exasperation. "It's no use; I can't do it, can't see anywhere to go, neither hands nor feet". Suddenly two heads bobbed into view (Members of our party) "Oh yes you can", one of them chirped. Well, that was all the spur I needed. I found to my surprise, the elusive holds and before I knew it I was *at the top.*



When I left the coach that evening, tired but happy, Alf, who has always been kind enough to ask after my welfare, said as we parted—"Well, all you want now is lots of practice. You are feeling happier about it all".

So, in 1954 (if my family don't make too many calls upon my time), I shall try to get that experience knowing that in the hands of the F.M.C I shall have every opportunity to succeed.

M.F.



## UNDER IRELAND.

The shrub-covered entrance to Mitchelstown Old Cave, with the awkward pitch which hides a remarkable cavern in which it is not so much the type of formation but their scale which the source of wonder.

At the foot of the "ladder, Cyclopiian walls," completely clothed in creamy white calcite, tower above the head as the probing pencils of light endeavour in vain to penetrate its farthest limits and such is its beauty that one is reluctant to leave lest an ant-climax should follow.

Let us continue, however, down its steeply shelving floor of bleached bones, a veritable charnel house, under a low arch on our left and on through a series of minor halls, beyond which, alternating between the examination of crystal flower-pools half hidden in miniature grottoes and threading a wary way along its false echoing floor, one reaches the dome-shaped West Chamber with its subsidiary passages and pitches. Further on again and we enter the mighty East Chamber and take in what surely must be one of the strangest pieces of cave scenery to be found. In section similar to an inverted new moon; one creeps high up on its curving clay floor and peers warily at the menacing pools twinkling far below; curious channels pierce the floor, both horizontally and vertically, to considerable depths making progress most difficult until a final cluster of huge collonades mark the farthest negotiable point of the cavern. This brief description constitutes only the outline of the cave, and there is much more to do, and some hours to elapse before one emerges once more from its embrace. It is however a "friendly" cave whilst the nearby Mitchelstown New Cave is relatively hostile. Larger altogether, its interior extends over  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles and is so complicated that one section, the Maze, defies a survey.



To describe it fully would be a task of some magnitude so a brief mention must suffice.

Two huge vaults, The House of Lords, and the House of Commons lead into The Cathedral beyond which the weird Gallery of Arches presents a scene from the moon. Further on still and one is in the Four Courts, a complicated and time-taking system among the features of which is a curious clay floor impaled by hundreds of needle stalactites fallen from the roof. Back in the House of Commons one climbs, feeling like Lilliputians, over massive blocks into O'Leary's Cave and on into the beautiful Kingston Gallery and the parallel Sand Cavern, both perminating in the Kingston Hall and a peculiar side system named the Labyrinth - and so it is - a very narrow one too!

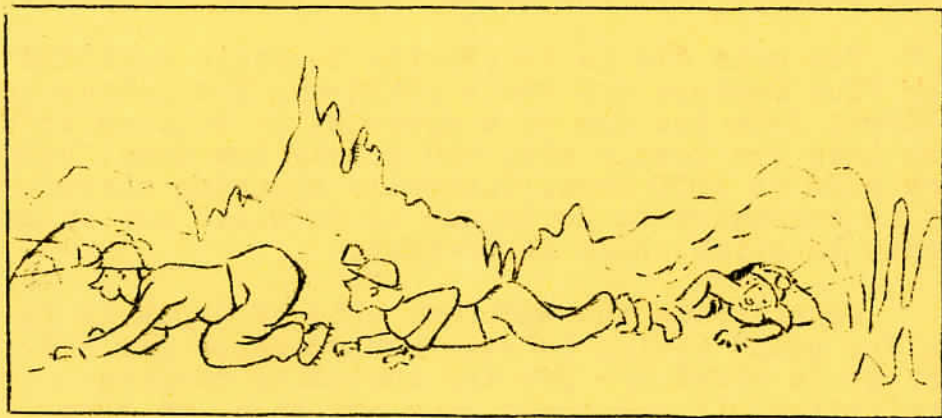
Both these caves are difficult and we welcomed the next day with its festive journey through Counties Cork and Limerick, Tipperary and on into County Clare and Bisdoonvarna. Here ity our next major system and rain heralded our arrival on the barren slopes of Slieve Elva; a mountain dominating the spa. Despite this, we were soon perring down the tree shrouded shaft of Poullangollum, an immense active water cavern over 5 miles in length, the longest cave in the British Isles. The shaft, of 120 feet, was soon bottomed and preparations in hand. We entered via Gunmans Cave and were soon in the master cave of Poullnagollum. One can traverse above the stream with difficulty for the first half mile accompanied by the ever-increasing booming of a waterfall. This sound has reached alarming proportions before a corner is turned and a descent made into a chamber filled with a fine mist from a cateract which crashes down from the roof with a deafening roar, churning the pool below into a maelstrom of white fury.

Half a mile beyond this the passage is joined by another river which sweeps gracefully under an arch on the left after having travelled over a mile from another pot, that of Poullnelva.

.. And so it continues over of a mile before the roof slowly descends to meet it and the river disappears under a curtain of rock, never to reappear.

These three expeditions and several minor ones constitute a most pleasant, though all too short stay in a country, whose simplicity and freshness cannot fail to charm the explorer, and it was not without regret that, homeward bound, we watched Dun Laoghaire harbour, nestling in its now shadowed hills, finally disappear from sight.

A.C.



WHAT I LIKE ABOUT POTHOLES ARE THE WONDERFUL SCENIC EFFECTS



## WANDERING IN EASTERN SWITZERLAND.

There comes a time in the middle years when the climber may be forced, or be quite content for several reasons, to moderate his ambition with regard to the mountains. If he has a young family it may well suite him to find areas away from the main centres where enjoyable mountain walks may be taken, interspersed occasionally by a dash for a higher peak.

On four holidays in Switzerland since the war, my wife and I have made use of the facilities offered by the the Swiss Section of the International Club called the "Touristverein die Natur Freunde" which, being translated means, the "Friends of Nature Club". It is called "TVN" for short. It has 86 club huts scattered over Switzerland, some in popular places such as Grindelwald or Marren, others pleasantly tucked away in quiet valleys. The club has considerable support from the Swiss Trade Union Movement.

The main aim is to provide mountain holidays for Club members and their children. The latter are allowed from the age of 4 upwards. It follows that the huts are mostly situated fairly low down, between say 3000 to 6000 feet. Generally speaking therefore it is necessary to go higher to an S.A.C hut of one wants to climb above 11000 feet.

Considering the exchange rate of about 12 fr to the pound living is remarkably cheap. The hut charge is about 5/- per day including cooking facilities. If one cooks ones own food, it then depends on how much one eats, perhaps another 5/- per day. A family of two adults and 2 children should be able to manage a holiday of 2 weeks on about £20. Special terms are offered to organised parties. The accomodation varies but is generally of a good standard and some of the recently built huts are most charming and comfortable.

The area I know best in Eastern Switzerland is the group of limestone mountains lying north

of the Wallensee, that milk blue lake which revives the weary traveller by rail on the route through Buchs to the Arlberg. Rock walls rise sheer out of the lake to the eroded teeth of the Churfirsten, which slope down the other side in ideal skiing countours from 8000ft to the Toggenburg Valley which lies about 4000ft to 5000ft below. This is a delightful valley, unspoilt although a good motor road runs through it. Mainly a skiing centre it is frequented in summer by many walkers and climbers. There is a TVN Hut on the Chirfirsten slopes at about 4000 ft. From here the grass slope in front of a delightful small lake extends giving excellent warm bathing since its depth is only about 10ft. On the other side of the valley, the Santis, which is about 8000ft and the highest peak in the group, and the Altmann, only a few feet lower, dominates the scene. The area is excellent for all sorts of high walking but rock climbing, except on the Kreuzberg is not to be recommended.

There is another TVN Hut on the lower slope of the Santis, known as the Schwäg Alp, and a thirs which I have not visited near Buchs above the Rhine Valley. This is said to be the best climbing in the Kreuzberg, a turretted ridge on a side valley which appears to be a popular venue for local climbers.

Beyond the Santis to the north stretches pleasant unulating country, well wooded and stocked with orchards, comprising the Cantons of North East Switzerland and, Appenzellerland, St. Gall and Thurgau, bounded on the north by the Bodensee (Lake Constance), in fact the climber or walker might well approach from St. Gall, a memorable and ancient city, the monastery of which was founded by St. Gall in the 7th century. From St. Gall a visit should be paid to Lake Constance; the little towns on the lower lake, with their elaborate half timbered houses being



very well worth seeing. I have also stayed at a TVN Hut near the Wallensee and one in the Dischmatal valley near Davos. The latter can be especially recommended. It is an old not very big hut; but it lies at about 6000 feet and is surrounded by minor ridges and peaks well adapted to exploration by guideless and not very experienced parties. The Hut is approached by a mountain road up which a car can easily be driven, so that supplies are simple. There is an S.A.C. Hut further up the valley.

This summer we also stayed in TVN Huts in Grindelwald and Engelberg, the former being very modern and well run. We did not manage any of the Bernese giants but spent several days exploring the upper glacier as far as the Gleckstein hut (from which the Wetterhorn is usually climbed).

If any member is interested in the T.V.N I shall be pleased to give him addresses and further details. If contemplating a stay of a week or more it will probably be worth while joining the Club, so becoming entitled to various reductions and priorities. Also if one is contemplating a visit towards the middle or end of July or in August, it is advisable to book hut accommodation in advance from this country.

J.F.M.

## THIS SKIING.....!

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Skiing - Kids' stuff! Two boards tied to the feet and a slide downhill. A long weary plod back to the top of the self-same slope and another slide. Pah! why don't people, in the winter months, engage in serious mountaineering instead of gushing like girls over their skis, sticks, baskets, clips, clamps, skins, fancy boots and general what-not?

Besides, this skiing is dangerous. Give me a nice, safe, icy gully, bulging with overhangs, any day. All I want then is an axe, a rope and a companion - alright, a leader.

Perhaps the most amusing aspect of this skiing is the sight of an earnest party setting forth from the club coach, festooned with sticks, skis akimbo, skins and springs, sacks and socks suspended from every corner of their anatomy, anxious lest the half-inch of snow should melt before the summit is reached. By the expenditure of millions of foot pounds of energy, the summit is reached. I should say the slope for real summits mean naught to our earnest skier, who could, perchance, become a mountaineer, with a lot less exertion.

And don't tell me that your skier is a mountaineer, unless he be that rare bird who actually traverses a mountain summit. NO! he is just a snow-slider and back slider from real mountaineering. A ski-mountaineer in this country is as rare as a snowball in a hot summer, and Frank Smythe's books (about real skiing) as popular as Rugby League at Oxford.

And what cumbersome things skis are to transport to the favoured snow patch. They are forever a nuisance, whether in a coach - "Shall we put them in the Boot, or in the rack (heads!) or just leave them in the gangway for everyone to fall over?" or in a car, where special blueprints need to be



drawn to arrange a rack for their convenience.  
I am waiting for a really keen type who is also  
a motor-cyclist, to gladden my eyes by attempting  
to convey his boards to the Lakes, on two wheels.\*

All this will, of course, make no difference  
at all for I am convinced it is a disease, very  
infectious and chronic at that. Well - here's  
to a hard winter next year and may the snow be  
very hard indeed - alright, you can have the  
bottom 500 feet powdery or whatever it is that  
skiers like for their sliding. PAH! KIDS' STUFF!!

After which for safety's sake I had better  
remain -

"A N O N"

\* Editorial note:

Our anonymous friend has obviously not  
seen E.L. going like hell on his  
velocipeed with pillion passenger AND  
skis.

Sub Editor's note:

this person is treading on thin ice!

## CLIMBING IN NORWAY.

### An Account of the traverse of the Dyrgangstind by the North-South Ridge.

The ascent of this great mountain by the North-South Ridge is recognised as one of the classic routes of the "Horunger Groupe" in the "Jotanheim" Mountains of Norway, known to many climbers as the Norwegian Aiguilles.

The rock is mainly of Gabbro of the type found in Skye and forms very sharp ridges and gendarmes.

Starting the ascent from Turtagro the glacier stream was followed to the now extinct ice-fall at the floor of the Stakastalsind glacier which flows down from "Storen", the highest mountain in the district (7,723ft).

Following the right hand edge of the glacier until a steep ridge was reached entailed a great deal of crevasse jumping, but from this point the ascent proper began.

For the first thousand feet the ridge was scaled unroped, saving much time, then the ridge broadened into a steep snow slope and a route was made up the left hand edge. There followed an impressive snow arete on the edge of the mountains imposing east face up which steps were kicked and in places ice axes were used.

At the termination of the snow arete rock was again encountered and the ridge continued upwards in a series of pillars to the summit of the Dyrhaugryen which consist of three small peaks, the highest being 6,320ft.

A short descent to a narrow snow covered col was made and from this point the final stage of the ascent began.



Entailing pure rock climbing the ascent developed into a series of traverses, of about V. diff standard, across the east face until a short holdless slab was encountered. This had been provided with a series of pitons which enabled the slab to be surmounted with the judicious use of slings. A final obstacle lay in the negotiation of a steep crack leading to the summit, (& 050ft) a superb view point commending an uninterrupted panorama of the surrounding peaks and in the distance, on this occasion glowing red in the last rays of the setting sun, Europe's greatest glacier, the Jostedalbreen.

The descent was made via the col on the south side of the summit, thence by means of a rapid glissade, roped together, down a steep couloir to the burgsrund, which was crossed by using a precarious snow bridge and finally down the glacier, along the ringsbreen valley back to Turtago.

E.L.

## A HOLIDAY IN SKYE.

Arriving in Mallaig at noon in glorious sunshine we obtained our first glimpse of Skye looking unbelievably lovely, floating like a fairy island in a shimmering blue sea.

Boarding the fishing boat which was to take us to Loch Brittle it was soon apparent that this was the ideal way of approach since it provided an unrivaled view of the Cuillin peaks. Skye - at last - this was what we had been dreaming about and heard and read about for so long.

The boat landed us only a few hundred yards from the Glen Brittle Post Office where we were to stay and where, for the first time, we heard the lilting accent of the islanders.

Off to an early start on our first morning, which foretold another hot day, we made the ascent of Sgurmain by the Western Buttress, unroped for the most part, delighting to find over 1500 ft of continuous rock, sun warmed and reassuringly rough to the fingers. On reaching the summit the panorama was magnificent - the Outer Hebrides strung out along the horizon; the Scottish Mainland with the last of the winters snow on Nevis; near at hand, peak after peak of the Cuillins rising up in jagged outline in the blue sky.

We were not down in time for the famed Post Office tea of bannocks and pancakes, but we had seen more on our first day than some people see in the whole of their stay. We had been told to expect mists and midgets, but instead the Cuillin were clear on all but two of our fourteen days, and the tins of Dimp remained unopened.

The wealth of flowers in Glen Brittle was an unexpected pleasure. The river banks were a blaze of yellow gorse and broom, their scent a new delight each time we crossed the bridge.



On the moors we found rest harrow, milkwort and tormentilla everywhere beneath our feet. The sea coves were a mass of primrose, roseroot and campion, and the shores covered in thrift and stone crop with their delicate shades of pink.

Looking back on our holiday perhaps our most vivid memories are of the An Stac screws where we came as near to flying as we are ever likely to do; of paddling each evening in the sea, our feet refreshed and tingling after a day on the rocks; of the seals we saw from the headland; the highland cattle with shaggy coats; and of the changing colours on the Cuillin as the sun was setting. Not least was the companionship of Sheila and Jim Donaldson from Glasgow, with whom we foraged for wood on the shore, practised abseiling from the sea coves, tried our hands at milking Rosie the cow, and climbed the Cioch and the Inaccessible Pinnacle.

We did in fact enjoy every minute of our stay in Skye. We were fortunate to have good weather and lucky indeed to have such excellent company. We only wish we were going there agin this year.

M. & J.C.

## ZERMATT 1953.

In the first two weeks of August, 1953 I joined an expedition organised by the R.A.F. Mountaineering Association, to Switzerland, the base camp being established at Zermatt.

The party consisted of fifteen members under the leadership of Tony Smythe who is serving as an officer in the R.A.F. Included in the party, and acting as a guest leader, was Dr. T. Graham Brown of Brenva fame.

The following extracts from my personal diary of the expedition give a brief outline of the activities and may serve as a rough guide to some of the itineraries for members visiting the area.

TUESDAY 4TH AUGUST 1953. - Left Betemps Hut at 4-30 a.m. to ascend Castor (14,380ft). Party of seven on one rope. Crossed Grenz Glacier in South West direction to ice fall which was threaded successfully, then South to Willinge glacier. A long and tiring climb up this to the col and so to the summit, which is over the Italian Border, by 11-0 a.m. A return was made by the same "itineraire" - Vibrams were worn - no crampons were necessary - Two cases of snow blindness reported.

WEDNESDAY 5TH AUGUST. - Left Betemps Hut at 4-0 a.m. a party of four with Pollux (13,900ft) as the objective. Crossed Grenz glacier in due westerly direction to Schmarxe; up a 200ft rock pitch to the snow ridge. This lay at an angle of 70 degrees, and on its lower reaches was wind swept so that approximately 250ft of steps had to be cut. As the gradient decreased, the snow became easier. Gained the head of the Smarxe glacier which was free of crevasses. The col lies to the left of the Breithorn east face.



It took two hours on rock to attain the summit of Pollux. Returned down the Smarxe glacier until reaching the icefall which took two hours to negotiate. It was now 9-30 p.m. The Grenz glacier was crossed in darkness, without incident - much - and the hut was reached at 2-0 a.m. on Thursday. The expedition took 22 hours - rather longer than the guide book indicates. An expedition was preparing to leave for Monte Rosa which I had intended joining, but a very welcome alternative was the flea bag!

SATURDAY 8TH, AUGUST - Left Rothorn Hut at 5-0 a.m. in three ropes. Crossed Trift Glacier in a Westerly direction to the Triftjoch. Commenced climbing the rock ridge to the Trifthorn. The leading rope dislodged a monumental rock which crashed down on the glacier below and spent itself among the party on the third rope who came out almost unscathed but with a severed nylon rope. Our rope found a route on the east side and attained the summit (12,700 ft) at 11-0 a.m. There had only been one short pitch of about severe standard. The reverse to the col was accomplished without incident and Tony Smythe's boulder was passed on the glacier which was now pretty soft. In the evening clouds from the west indicated that the weather was breaking and an electrical storm was observed on the Matterhorn. A rope had been formed for the Obergabelhorn for the following day, but at 3-0 a.m. the bad weather persisted and at 3-1 a.m. the tope bunk was re-attained by means of a strong arm pull!

TUESDAY 11th, AUGUST. - From the Gandegg Hut four ropes moved off at 5-15 a.m. for a short day, the objective being the Hornli hut. Our rope started on easy rock followed by the crossing of the Theddul glacier. Sacks were left at the bottom and the summit of the Theddulhorn (12,800ft) was attained on easyrock. The traverse of the Furggrat was superb, the telefirique station from Brevil (Italy) being passed while a party of trippers de-trained.

It reminded one of Snowdon. The glacier on Cervin's east face had then to be crossed with constant avalanching of snow and rock to be watched for, but despite apprehension the Hornli Hut was reached in the mid afternoon. The S.A.C hut and the Belvedere Hotel were well populated with more coming in. It was apparent that the Matterhorn was due for a mass attack in the morning.

WEDNESDAY 12TH, AUGUST. - Reveille was at 3-0 a.m. and the weather was good. The R.A.F.M.A had five ropes on the Hornli ridge, the first being led by Theodor Biner our 61 years old guide. A good pace was maintained until the Solvay hut was reached. The procession could be seen above being pulled, pushed and cajoled by their guides. The fixed ropes, the icy shoulder, the Swiss and Italian summits were all reached in turn, and there was much clicking of camera shutters. The descent was started at 11-0 am and Hornli Hut invaded by 4-0 pm. Tea, suop, bread and jam were the rewards for this very strenuous effort.

FRIDAY 14TH AUGUST - By candlelight left the comforts of the Tasch Hut at 0405 hours, a rope of four, with the objective Alphubel (14,300ft) Crossed the lower Weingarten glacier then up a dicy gully until we broke out on the left wall by some delicious, clean rock pitches to the Mischabeljoch. Kept to the snow ridge and reached the west summit when a storm blew up and lasted two hours. Meanwhile progress was made to the East summit. Here a descent had to be made to the Alphubeljoch. As one member was "clawless" this presented a problem but by letting him down first and cutting his own steps the joch was reached in dismal conditions in a couple of hours. The hut was reached by 4-0 pm where a substantial meal was had before going down to base camp at Zermatt.



In conclusion, may I urge members contemplating such an expedition to profit by my experience of the return journey and to arrange their continental excursions so that they do not coincide with the French Railway strikes. In my case the delay was only 24 hours, but you never know!

A. McB.



## SKIING IN BRITAIN.

It is perhaps typical of this nation that although we have relatively poor skiing facilities in these islands British skiers have played such a great part in the early development of the sport. The first big ski club to be formed in Britain whose activities centred here, was the Scottish Ski Club in the early 1920's. It is doubtful if those early pioneers visualised a following of the sport such as we see to-day.

The Scottish Ski Club holds its Annual Championship in the Cairngorms at either Dalwhinnie, Coire-Cas or Coire-na-Ciste and it is significant that the event is rarely cancelled through lack of snow. Just prior to the last war a few people braved cold and fatigue to carry their skis up steep fellsides in the Lake District to try their luck on short runs. These keen enthusiasts were the forerunners of the ever increasing numbers who since the war have invaded the fellsides in certain areas whenever snow has fallen.

Between the wars the sport in Scotland had increased slowly, the Cairngorms, Glencoe and the Southern Highlands drew their quota of enthusiasts. Ben-Lawyers gained popularity and provided good sport for week end parties from Glasgow.

It was, of course, quite common to see a fair number of skiers on Hampstead Heath after a fall of snow but it was more of a novelty than anything else. The war came and with the need of training ski and mountain troops. The Continent was fully occupied by the enemy and Switzerland was isolated, with the result that attention was turned to the greater possibilities of skiing in these islands. The Scottish Highlands were an automatic choice, mainly because of the wild rugged country and the more stable snow conditions prevailing there. The activities of the military were focussed mainly on two areas, Glencoe and the Cairngorms,



"the latter area" being principally used for the training of ski troops. During the war many famous skiers and mountaineers instructed the ski troops and were based in the Norwegian Huts at Glenmore Lodge at the Head of Loch Morlich. "It" is from "the valuable information written by former officers and men who served in the area and which from time to time have been published in the journals of the Scottish Ski Club and The Ski Club of Great Britain that the Cairngorms have become what is to be considered the best skiing area in the British Isles.

With the availability of ex. W.D. equipment on the market skiing became within the reach of many hundreds of young enthusiasts. With this increase came the necessity for the opening up of still more skiing grounds easily accessible at week ends and holiday times.

"Already in the Lake District there were three well known areas, namely, Helvellyn and the Dodds above Thirlspot, Skiddaw and on the fells above Langdale. In describing these areas in greater detail it is hoped that the information will prove valuable to present and future members of the club and assist them to obtain the best possible sport.

The "starting" place for the Helvellyn region is Thirlspot, from the latter point a path leads up the fellside by Brown Crag up to Raise (2889 ft), on all these slopes good skiing can be had after a reasonable snowfall. A grand expedition is the traverse of the four peaks beginning with Raise, Stybarrow Dodd, Watson's Dodd and on to Great Dodd descending to the Keswick Road and back to Thirlspot. Practically all the latter summits are large grass covered hummocks and the absence of rock makes it ideal ski terrain. It is said by some enthusiasts that the eastern slopes above Glenridding offer better skiing than any other area in the Lake District

due to the fact that they sheltered from the prevailing winds and hold the snow better than their counterpart on the western side. A ski lift is sometimes in operation on these slopes. It run by the Lake District Ski Club and skiers can make use of it for a small charge.

Skiddaw is less accessible for the average person without transport but it is an excellent skiing ground. The approach to this area is best made from the western side and the starting place is Peter's Hoise, about  $2\frac{1}{2}$  miles on the Bassenthwaite Longlands Road. From here a path leads up to Skiddaw House via Dash Beck. Almost all the high slopes on this side of the mountain provide good skiing and again are sheltered from the prevailing winds. Like Helvellyn the slopes are covered for the most part by grass and mosses and are reasonably free from rocks.

And so to Langdale, undoubtedly the most popular area from the clubs point of view due to its easy accessibility for members. Langdale is perhaps one of the most rugged areas of the Lake District and the fellsides rising steeply from the valley make access to the ski runs more laborious. Grinding up the Gimmer Track to Harrison Coombe can be very wearysome when heavily laden with rucsack and skis.

The three main areas are all situated on or about the Pikes and are best approached by way of Mill Ghyll. When Stickle Tarn is reached the left hand track can be taken which traverses above the source of Dungeon Ghyll and over into Harrison Coombe, all the neighbouring slopes provide good skiing after a reasonable snowfall. Alteenatively one can bear right at Stickle Tarn, over the right hand shoulder of the slopes of Pavey Ark and into the bowl behind.

High White Stones which lies behind Harrison Stickle is also quite good but is very exposed and is not to be reccommended when a high wind is blowing. Skiing can often be obtained on the col



between the Band Mountain and the Bowfell massif. Another spot which is worthy of exploration is the long slope which connects Stonesty Pike and Cold Pike above Red Tarn. Here a long smooth reasonably rock free col connects the two pikes and the slopes are at a gentle angle.

As regards Scotland, Ben Lawers and the Cairngorms are the two principle skiing grounds. The centre for Ben Lawers is Killin which has Hostel, Hotel or cottage accomodation. The Scottish Ski Club have a Hut on Ben Lawers and they also operate a ski-lift when conditions are suitable for skiing. Being farther south than Cairngorms the area does not retain the snow quite so long and to avoid disappointment it is advisable to write to the Scottish Ski Club for information on snow conditions before setting out. On the other hand one can almost certainly count on finding some skiing in the Cairngorms between January and April although skiers who are prepared to go high can very often ski well into June after a good winter.

The principle centres in the Cairngorms are Aviemore, Kingussie and Dalwhinnie. There is good Hotel and cottage accomodation at all three, and Hostel accomodation at the first two places.

From Aviemore a reasonable motor road runs to Glenmore as far as Glenmore Lodge; the three principle skiing places in this area being Coire-na-Ciste, Coire-Cas and Cairn Lochan.

The C.C.P.R.E. run winter skiing and climbing courses at Glenmore Lodge from January to Easter and the all-in charge including ski instruction and hire of skis etc works out at about £6. 6. 0. per week per person.

For persons without transport staying at Aviemore, cycles equipped to carry skis, can be hired in the village for 2/- per day. From Kingussie the best skiing areas are on Carn-Ban-More, Sgoran-Dubh-Mor and above Loch-Coire-ant-Lochain,

These latter areas can be reached by way of a motor road as far as Achlean and thence on foot. The more hardy types who wish to get nearer the mountains may camp at Glenmore or stay in the Norwegian Huts for the use of which application is made to the Forestry Commission for Scotland at their offices in Edinburgh. There are also one or two serviceable bothies in the area which are maintained by The Scottish Mountaineering Club, such as the Courroir Bothie in the Llairig Ghru, the upper and lower bothies in Glen Einich near Sgoran-Dubh-Mor and the Shelter Stone at the head of Loch Avon.

Skis are the only feasible means of travel in the high Cairngorms when the hills are snowbound during the winter and are a rapid method of getting about on long expeditions. One has to be prepared to go long distances in this region to explore the area fully. Skis for ascending are an absolute, unless one is prepared to wade waist deep in soft snow. Ordnance Survey Sheet No. 34 "Kingussie" covers the whole of the aforementioned area and all bothies etc. are clearly marked.

In conclusion it must be added that there is much exploring yet to be done in search of still more skiing terrain.

W.A.C.





## CLUB GOSSIP.

1953/54 has been an active year and the club continues to thrive.

Weather. A feature of the coach meets has been the excellent weather on almost every occasion. Members will be aware of the research and study of our "Met Dept" to affect this. Elaborate instruments are required to work out the dates upon which good weather is expected so that the syllabus can be arranged accordingly. A calender and a pin feature prominently.

MEMBERSHIP. There has been a steady influx of new members, a surprising number of which have been lady members. It is hoped that the fact will have a stimulating effect on the recruitment of more male members in the ensuing year.

Overheard at the Annual Dance. "Not only do our lady members climb but they look good too."

Romance. Cupid lurks in our midst - Our best wishes to Sheila Ross who, as Mrs. Williams leaves us shortly to live in Yorkshire; to Mr. & Mrs. Dennis Scott recently married in Blackpool, and to his brother Noel Scott whose engagement to Pat Tipper has been announced.

Emigrants. Several members are planning to leave our shores to pioneer new routes in the Empire. Among these are Ron Freeston, Angella Cassidy and Jean Mc.Kie. Our former Treasurer Clive Wilson now settled in Canada writes to convey good wishes to his many friends in the Club.

Speilio. It is understood that some of the club troglodites are planning a further trip to Ireland. Is it the caverns or the colliens which are the attraction?

Rumour. It can be definately stated that the story about Phil Coomber wanting to buy a pot-holing



helmet is untrue.

Look before you leap. The lingering perfume  
Alan Brown has been wearing is known as  
"Fleur-de-Wallend"

Advert. The mystery food from which Ken Marsden  
derives his stamina are known as "Bungonuts".