

ACHILLE RATTI CLIMBING CLUB

Date: 17th December, 1966.

Bulletin No. 22.

Dear Member,

First, let me thank those people who helped to send out the last Bulletin. 1500 printed sheets had to be separated into 300 Bulletins, then they addressed 300 envelopes and put a copy into each one. This is done every time that we go to press. Many people have congratulated me on the last 'effort', all of which is music to my ears and balm to my soul. But remember that I'm just the Editor and have to depend on contributions from you to achieve anything at all. While I'm on the subject, I forgot to acknowledge the help of Fr. Burns in preparing "The Ballad of Harry Jiggins". Sorry, Father!

I think we can keep the same high standard; we have a climbing epic, news of a Welsh Hut, a fairy tale of sorts and other items, so we're well provided for, but do remember to send in items to me - after all, it's your Bulletin.

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WET DAYS

Somewhere on Deer Biold Chimney you have to traverse out under some loose overhanging blocks, then climb the walls rejoining the chimney again above them. When we were there a river of thick green slime was ooze-ing down this wall and even with an eye of faith it was impossible to see a single hold. With great concern in my voice I announced to Paul that I was going to climb directly over these blocks and that things might be a bit dodgy. With no concern at all he replied that everything would be alright as 'he' had his crash-hat on. 'He' obviously thought this was very funny at the time and I suppose I did when it was all over. It's typical of the incidents that arise when, being very adventurous, we attempt to carry out our pastime (I'm tempted to say 'way of life') in the most unlikely and unfavourable conditions. There's no getting away from it, it rains more than it should do and if we're to get anything done at all we just have to be a little bit masochistic. (Some people would say 'insane' but they don't count).

I'm telling you, it rains all the time in Skye, and it's the perfect place to learn the skills of wet-weather climbing. The rain in Skye falls mainly on the Cuillin and a variety of lichen of which I am now very wary, but was then ignorant, thrives alarmingly in this dark atmosphere. It has the property of being very slippery. Indeed, it must possess a co-efficient of 'slip' remarkably similar to that of ice. I came across a perfect botanical specimen of this lichen once; it had me very excited at the time because I was 130' up a slab with no runners and I had to tip-toe across it into a gully. In the two hours it took to cross all 6'

of it I learned a lot and the poor second nearly died of fright.

When it is wet we usually get mist and this has been responsible for its fair share of mishaps; parties setting off for Durmail over Sergeant Man and ending up in the car-park at the Old D.C. People setting off for Borrowdale via Fisk Hause and ending up on top of Scafell Pike. We actually thought we'd been walking downhill from the top of Rossett onwards - we must have been fit in those days.

Wet weather's biggest and only virtue is that it transforms climbs of a lowly nature into climbs of great status. I remember a climb we did in Borrowdale, 'Corous' on Raven Crag; in the dry it's a classic 'diff' and a good climb. We did it one winter and experienced nearly every possible and impossible combination of weather types at some place in its 500' length. It rained, gale-d and hailed. The sun shone, the snow fell and calms descended. In big boots and 'cags' the Tiger had nothing on this.

Stoats Crag on Pavey undergoes a similar transformation. In summer there's a pitch you hardly notice, a sort of shallow scoop. It's difficult to recognize it as the same forbidding corner-crack that rears up into the mists above you as water drips down your arms and out again at trouser legs. But you'll certainly know you've done a climb when you arrive soaked and shivering at the top. Something you might not feel if everything had been easy. It's fair to say that there are no holds barred on this sort of climbing. You can put socks over P.A.'s, socks on hands and socks on anywhere else you might find useful. Head-jams, standing jumps and the use of a shoulder are all techniques normally frowned upon but which really come into their own in this sort of climbing. Knees assume the role of a second pair of feet. It may be undignified and ugly to watch but it's a definite test in the sheer application of technique to the problem of moving up. The fact that Brown is still unrivalled in wet weather climbing, though a few can match him in the dry, is evidence enough. Obviously there are some routes that just won't go in the wet, to Brown or anybody else, one must be reasonable in choosing. Climbs that overhang are good, so are cracks and chimneys provided you've got the protection. For instance, White Ghyll Girdle, going under considerable overhangs is an ideal wet weather route, whilst the girdle of Pavey, though technically easier, is on an open, green face and an extremely doubtful proposition in the wet. But whatever you choose, people seem to make an extra effort to be cheerful in the face of such potential misery and a good day almost always results.

Chris Mitchell.

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WORKING WEEK-END, 24th/25th September.

A total of 27 Members (and Guests) put in a hard week-end at Bishop's Scale and thoroughly cleaned and painted the kitchen, stairs, toilets and anything else that was reasonably static.

In fact, several slow-moving Members appeared to have been given a coat of Walpamur by the fast-working team. The Priest's Room was also painted, the Chapel and dormitories cleaned and mopped, curtains hung in the womens dorm. and on the landing. The lounge was turned inside-out and the carpet given its annual beating. A wall was built behind the Chapel and the area cleaned up. Dave the Side-car did a neat job of tiling in the kitchen and Mick Pooler found a new hole in the ground and couldn't be persuaded to leave it. It was good to see that a lot of new faces were present instead of just the usual few.

Any surplus energy was mopped up by a hectic football match between the Ratti Rovers and the Langdale Layabouts in which several Members, including the Editor, who was only watching, were trampled into the ground and Terry Hickey distinguished himself by doing a P.J. Proby and tearing the seat of his pants. Altogether, a very enjoyable week-end in which a great deal of work was done.

TPB.

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An A.R.C.C. Fairy Tale

The girl who went climbing.

Once upon a time there was a wild girl who loved mountains and climbing. Indeed, she used even to come to Bishop's Scale for the climbing and not for the Intrigue! Now this girl had in her head ideas about climbing Big Mountains and therefore, influenced by a Well-Known Alpinist who once climbed the Bonatti Pillar, she did form a Bold Plan. She gave up her Nice Safe Job and arranged with another girl of similar ambitions to set out for the Great Unknown in a small-but-brave motor car. They left on Independence Day and came at length to the British Colony of Chamonix. Alas, from the very beginning, the two adventurous girls were foiled by foul weather. In one week they climbed only the Aiguille de l'M, but of this they were proud, for they did go there on foot from Chamonix and did scorn to use the Iron Horse that runs to Montenvers. According to the Plan, our 'heroines' did then part for a while, and the originator of the Plan did team up with a member of A.R.C.C. who is never to be seen on Working Weekends. In bad conditions they stole the traverse of the Chardonnet by the Forbes arete. They returned after many weary hours, having learned much about snow, about the wearing of crampons and about the rescuing of girls from crevasses! Fate then crossed the paths of the wild girl and a Handsome American Climber. This was well, for after several more drowned days her original girl companion did become very unhappy and did seek permission to creep away homeward to her beloved. And yet the wild girl remained in Chamonix until one morning there were restless stirrings in the camp and she set off with the American to find the Dolomites. The small-but-brave car crossed sever mountain passes and two national frontiers; it travelled ways that curled like the coils of a snake; it ascended nearly two miles above the level of the sea and the two new friends saw always mountainous horizons until they came to the Region of Towers.

Misguided by a small volume of Selected Lies about the Dolomites they did climb the three Vajolet Towers and the Cima Ouest di Lavaredo. They did encounter thrilling situations and did perform exhilarating rope tricks in descent and the main hardship was cold, not heat nor thirst. Then one day there arose between them a Difference of Opinion after which she climbed the Stubler-Dibona route on the Cima Grande all alone and descended in a fearful storm of thunder, lightning and hail.

With the towers shaking amid storms the wild girl returned by the plains of Italy to Chamonix, there to rejoice at the triumph of her countrymen in the Cup of the World. She did visit in hospital the leader of the afore-mentioned Bonatti Pillar team. Then she left once more for the mountain village of Saas-Fee, there to disguise her wildness and to climb in an orderly fashion with the Ladies Alpine Club. And the gods did smile on the Meet and they made the sun to shine and all the Ladies, large and small, old and young, matriarchs and debutantes, did climb themselves to a standstill on the Jagigrat, the Schwarzmies and, finest route of all, the North Ridge of the Weissmeiss. And on August 1st they did all celebrate the National Day of the Swiss people and the Typical British Climber in Chamonix was forgotten. Nevertheless, back to that terrible place travelled the wild girl to find it the scene of awful tragedies. Men from the land of the Scots, Irishmen and men from the legendary Rock and Ice-land did recover a casualty from a high place, and yet another mountaineer of our acquaintance was laid to rest there near Lionel Terray and Edward Whymper.

Meanwhile there had arrived among the company "le Maitre," Keeper of a great Mountain Dwelling, with his friend who is prone to accident and who devours much food. The wild girl felt moved to follow the example of le Maitre and climb to the Highest Place of all; she therefore made the attempt at the soonest chance and succeeded with neither frostbite nor sickness, and her reward on the highest summit at sunrise was great. Next day she left with yet another companion to climb the Peigne but thereon she encountered disaster in the form of a wedge which broke and she was saved only by the skill of her second and her magic helmet; therefore the route was abandoned within 200' of the top.

But the heavens showered vengeance from then on and prevented more mountaineering, so as soon as she could bear to sit down the wild girl pulled out of Chamonix and took her bruises and her small-but-brave car across land and sea home to Bishop's Scale, there to bore ARCC members with long tales of her adventures. Thus she won the title of World's Worst Alpinist and she took the moral of this story to heart and went around with Nasty British Rock-climbers and they all lived happily ever after.

Anon.

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WANTED - Good Home for 1961 Morris J4 12 cwt van. Mechanically perfect but could do with a wash. Apply:- John Foster, 29, Braeside Crescent, Billinge, Nr. Wigan.

'No small art is it to sleep;' as Nietzsche once remarked - he could have been thinking of a weekend at Langdale. Whilst no-one dreams of taking a rest-cure there, surely the nights could be more peaceful than they sometimes are. Unnecessarily loud talk in the kitchen and lounge in the small hours can be very disturbing to those who wish to sleep, for the sound carries up to the dormitories. The use of boots on the stairs sounds even louder after 10.30pm and the switching on of lights in the dorms. after midnight is annoying, to say the least. Can I ask, therefore, for a little more thought when using the Hut? As the poet says,

-there, sweet sleep is not for the weary brain,
The pitiless hours like years and ages creep.

A night seems termless hell!

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STRANGE DOINGS IN LANGDALE.

An extra-ordinary event occurred on the day of the Annual Dinner. One of our Members with an hour to spare before the Dinner potted off to Scout Crag to try his luck on Moving Chockstone. He later requested assistance from other Members when he 'stuck'. A rope was eventually brought from the Hut and he was retrieved from his precarious position.

When interviewed in the Red Lion by our non-climbing correspondent, John Britt, Alpinist, replied "No comment" and disappeared in search of the bar.

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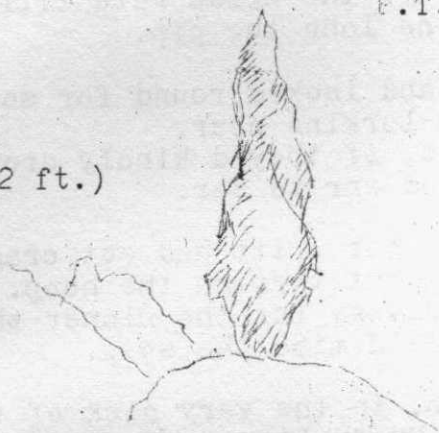
ANNUAL DINNER

The Dinner was held at the Red Lion Hotel, Grasmere on the 12th of November. About 105 Members and Guests enjoyed the meal and the dancing afterwards. We were pleased to be able to welcome the Rt. Reverend Bishop Foley of Lancaster and his Secretary among our Guests but unfortunately, our Founder President, the Rt. Reverend Bishop Pearson, was unable to attend due to indisposition. We had't a Guest Speaker this year but Bishop Foley made a short but pleasant speech and referred to Bishop Pearson's climbing activities whilst studying in Rome - during which the climbing hazards included the unwelcome attentions of an irate eagle! After dinner, the toast of 'The Achille Ratti Climbing Club' was proposed by Barry Ayre.

Later, Mick Pooler (le Maitre), Hut Warden of Langdale was invited to lead the dancing - and he would have, if he could have found a partner capable of following the original intricacies of what Mick fondly imagined to be ballroom dancing. Musical chairs provided the usual riot and the M.C.'s suffered the usual cheating! The raffled bottle of whisky was won by Jean Duckett and other prizes were won by Phil Calvert, Malcolm Grindrod (Lancs. Climbing & Caving) and Judith Hankins. A very hectic Twist competition was won in the end by Harry & Mavis Brophy.

Time needed. 4hrs. Just right for Sunday afternoon. - via
Strands Hotel, ^E - 5 hrs.

M. Hopley.
F.T. Charnock.



ROUND AND ABOUT. John Britt is taking the Technical Teachers course at Huddersfield ----- a letter has been received from George and Anne Cammack in Bahrein, both are well but report that walking and climbing opportunities are nil ----- I believe that Rev. Fr. G. Hanlon of Barnsley, Yorks. has gone to the South American missions. Will any Member knowing his new address please notify the Editor ----- Gurney Pease of the New D.G. has been adopted as prospective Liberal candidate for Westmorland and will stand for Parliament at the next election ----- Members Mr. & Mrs. F.G. Fox of Fulwood, Preston have now emigrated to New Zealand, how about a letter from you? -----

STOP PRESS - WELSH HUT Negotiations proceeding purchase of property at Bethesda. Approx. £2000 required, Members will be allowed opportunity of financing this by means of loan scheme. All Members of Management Committee are supporting this, all other Members who would like to assist are invited to contact Secretary. £10 units. Details published later. Please help.

The Ballad of Moving Chockstone.

There's a Climbing Hut in Langdale, to the West of Chapel Stile,
There's a climber by the name of Johnny Britt.
There's an outcrop known as Scout Crag, that is not too far away.
It's there that Johnny went to do a bit.

Now, the Midi and the Dru, and Bonatti's Pillar, too,
Are credited to Johnny's climbing fame.
So with an hour to spare, he went forth to take the air,
And add still further lustre to his name.

It was raining cats and dogs, but he'd got his climbing clogs,
As he squelched his way along to Lower Scout.
So he came to Moving Chockstone and resolved to try his luck,
This time, alas! his luck had run right out.

With the rain, the rocks were mossy, and the holds were pretty 'chossy',
When at the crux he ran right out of grip.
He was running out of time, all the holds were filled with slime.
The whole thing started giving John the pip.

He swallowed down his grief and looked round for some relief,
And found it in some Members lurking near.
So he enquired with some hope, if they'd kindly drop a rope,
Which only made them grin from ear to ear.

The news was flashed around, that Britt had got crag-bound,
Which promptly sent the Hut right through the hoop.
For the Members were all dressing, for the Dinner which was pressing,
While John was wondering if he'd miss the soup.

They brought him up the climb, in the very nick of time,
To dress and get down to the Ruddy Lion,
Where he breathed a silent prayer, as he propped the bar up there,
In Grasmere, when he might have been in Zion.

Oh, the Midi and the Dru, and Bonatti's Pillar, too,
All bear on them the marks of Brit(t)ish Grit.
But we'll raise our tattered flag, to the honour of Scout Crag,
To Langdale, - and of course, to Johnny Britt!

TPB.

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FOR SALE:- one gent's natty knitted sweater, suitable for 8ft.
giant, or alternatively, will make mini-dress for tall girl. Hand
made by over-enthusiastic amateur knitter. Must sell as present
owner keeps tripping over hem. Apply, K. O'Hara (Paddy),
7, Anthea Drive, Huntington Road, York.

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The engagements are announced between:-

Zita Howarth, of Widnes and Tom Walmsley of Hutton, Lancs.
Alwyn Littlewood, of Bury and Jim Cooper of Blackburn.
Ann Tomlinson and Michael Owen, both of Accrington.

Marriages.

- the wedding took place on the 24th September, of
Ann Snape and Chris. Farrell, at St. Peter's, Lytham.
We wish them all every happiness, both now and for the future.
- It is also reported that Jack and Val. Case are expecting
a happy event sometime this month.

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FORTHCOMING EVENTS

+ A Meet will be held at Buckbarrow on the 18th - 19th
February '67. The all-in cost will be 21/- and prospective
customers should send 5/- deposit with their booking to:
Paul Charnock, 7, Hennel Lane, Walton-le-Dale, Preston by the end
of January at the latest.

+ A working week-end will be held at Langdale on 25 FEB 1967
the more customers the merrier and the usual football (?) match
will take place in the afternoons.

REPORT ON BUCKBARROW MEET.

The end of an Era.

Many of us will remember the Buckbarrow Meets in the days of
Hut Wardens Brown and Kelly. It is inevitable that as the many
stories are told and retold they will become embroidered into the
folk-lore tapestry of the ARCC. Unavoidably, times change and the
world progresses. Mercifully, the following 'happening' came under
the auspices of our new Hut Warden, Paul Charnock. Seven days before
the Meet, only six Members had booked. The Committee envisaged a
quiet weekend without complications. With the blessing of hind-
sight I consider this to be the 'calm before the storm.' Friday
evening found eleven Members in residence (7 male and 5 female).
Saturday, a walk was organised and undertaken, Nether Beck, Scoat
Tarn, Scoat Fell and Steeple. Here, we were surprised to see a
crocodile of walkers coming over the summit. Three of this party
had discarded their shirts, apparently trying to retain their
Costa Brava tans (in October? Yes, the 8th.). We returned over
Red Pike and Yewbarrow with some rain, some mist and a rising wind.

The hurricane hit Buckbarrow when we returned, in the shape
of another six females. Petticoat government was in sight. Six
cowering males and their opposite numbers were filled to capacity
with the culinary skills of Chef Brown. The Meet then adjourned
to the Horse & Groom in Cosforth. The facial expressions of the
males ranged from the bewildered to the hunted.

Ans, soldering iron, lamp, clips

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Only singlemindedness in the art of beer-swilling allowed them to forget the catastrophe hanging over their heads.

Sunday dawned bright and sunny. Was this the calm eye of the storm? After some muttered excuses and a late start, two stalwarts (the Hut Warden and myself) escorted seven females for a short walk to Strands Bridge and along the track to the Screes. After passing through Eastwaite Farm we saw a notice attached to the gate. In bold letters, it stated 'Beware of the Children'. We hurried towards the Screes, with furtive glances over our shoulders. The new rock-fall on the Screes, (of last Feb.) is both impressive and alarming at close quarters. It seems to discourage loud exclamations of wonder. A sensation of movement is experienced and any lone fell-walker would be disinclined to linger. We returned to the Pump House, then walked through the grounds of Wasdale Hall and back to the Hut.

During our tea, which is traditionally named 'Instant left-overs', I thought over the events of the weekend and beyond. Surprisingly, no outright declaration of female dominance, no change in the unwritten constitution of Buckbarrow. Will a whole new pattern of events emerge from this Autumn Meet?

Do the ladies appreciate the spartan simplicity of Buckbarrow, while the men enjoy the gregarious fleshpots of Langdale? Was it significant that Ed. Kelly could not attend and Leo Brown turned Prestonwards on Sunday morning? Finally, I feel a warning must be given to all male Members. Whereas in previous times the more stoic males performed the mundane task of washing in the trough, shirtless, any such exhibition in future will be considered an attempt to emulate the habits of 'Muscle Beach!'

Footnote: About two years ago, I had a tooth removed (on the lower port-side facing north, that is) and have found the gap a convenient place to lodge my tongue ever since!

Wilf. Charnley.

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Well, that's about it for another three months. All contributions will be gracefully received and in fact, one or two items have had to be held over. Sorry, Sherpa! Further items must be sent in by March 31st. Subs. are due on APRIL 1st!!! The A.G.M. will be at the end of April or beginning of May, but there'll be another Bulletin before then. In the meantime, don't fall off and don't get lost - you'll only have our Tame Poet writing rude verses about you if you do!

Cheers, BRODDY.

T.P. Brodrick, (Editor) +++ A MERRY CHRISTMAS +++
22 Fairfield St. to all our readers
Accrington. and a Happy New Year!
Lancs.

Barry Ayre,
Secretary,
17 Scafell Ave.,
MORECAMBE, Lancs.