

ACHILLE RATTI CLIMBING CLUB

December 1968.

Bulletin No.30

Side 1

Dear Member,

Mass at Langdale

Christmas is once again almost with us and for those Members who contemplate spending it at Langdale, the Bishop has arranged to have Mass said at Bishop's Scale on the following days:-

Sunday	22nd December
Christmas Day	25th "
Sunday	29th "
New Years Day	1st January, 1969
Sunday	5th "

I'm not certain of the time yet, so see notices in the Hut. It is also possible that Mass may be said from March onwards and it may well be that it will be at an earlier hour, say 8.30a.m. due to the difficulties of arranging Masses in neighbouring centres all at the old time of 10a.m.

Its' not definite yet, but watch this space!

Management Committee

Two years ago we had an Appeal to raise funds to purchase Tyn Twr and very successful it was. We bought the house and are now in process of converting it and have the cash put aside for this. Good, that disposes of that! In fact, it will dispose of most of our liquid assets at the same time! Just take a look at some of the things on the Management Committee's Agenda-

- (a) The provision of decent family accommodation at Bishop's Scale (£?)
- (b) The conversion of hogg house into Chapel to allow
(a) (£1000)
- (c) Repairs to Bishop's Scale. (£300)
- (d) Repayment of Tyn Twr Loan to Members in 1970. (£600)
- (e) Diocesan Loan (£750)

Staggering, isn't it? Or is it, really? Older Members declare that the spirit and fellowship within the Club was never better than when we had £5000 of debts hanging over us; it gave the Members something to work for and keep in view.

Now, we have to raise more cash; we've discounted a loan - we've already got one! What then? Well, that is where you come in. The Management Committee want your IDEAS on how to raise money. What do you suggest? What would you support? A sponsored walk? Dances at the Co-op, Chapel Stile? Raffles, bingo, jumble sales or what? There's a tremendous amount of talent and goodwill amongst Members - we want to hear from you of any good fund-raising schemes you know of and would support. At the back of this Bulletin you will find a sheet on which to make your suggestion(s). Don't just ignore it - after all, you're fully paid-up Members and entitled to have your say, so jump in with both feet - it could be fun!

Highland Reel

It seemed a good, safe year for crossing the border.... the monsoons having been expected now for the last couple of months, had so far not materialised and Scotland was enjoying its driest spell since 1958. Lily-white bodies, after only a few days of porridge, haggis and Apollonian revels, were returning bronzed warriors. And, it must be added, clan warfare had long since died down; claymores well and truly wiped and out of sight; but for the odd skirmish in and about the Celtic and Rangers camps, the country was basking in a period of tranquility; and tourists, even English, were not only allowed - but welcomed.

So it was that Fred and I bought a couple of kilts and set off for Scotland, crossed the border, (referred to, laconically, by the Romans as "the edge of the civilised world") and motored on some distance before pulling in at a farmhouse hard by the western shore of Loch Lomond and at the entrance to Glen Fruin - in which the MacGregors had massacred the Colquhouns on some bitter afternoon years ago - and yet from this tragic affair there had survived the odd, rather more fortunate Colquhoun whose descendants many years later were to build a lasting and living memorial a formidable stronghold announcing itself as the "Colquhoun Inn".

Our business, however, on our first day, was not with the latter, but took us to nearby Arrochar and more especially to Ben Arthur, which stretched itself to its topmost broken crags; culminating in a finger of rock probing the heavens at 2,891 feet. This peak, commonly known as "The Cobbler", gave ground grudgingly from the start ... our route beginning by the Torpedo Station on Loch Long and proceeding at first along the south bank of Buttermilk Burn and over unyielding and deceitful terrain, to work up the Corrie and to the small col between the central and northern summits. The highest point was the top of a slender column of rock to the south - a small rock climb of compelling interest and airily perched above shattered cliffs; whilst a small cairn set on a sloping slab of rock marked the summit of the "Cobbler" for semi-skilled spidersmen.

Our next expedition involved an initial scenic trip taking in Loughs Lochy, Oich, Garry, Loyne, Cluanie and Duich, by the road which goes by way of Fort William, Spean Bridge, Invergarry and Croe Bridge, from where a tramp of six and a half miles brings one to the highest waterfall in the British Isles - Glomach. But sensible travellers choose to break the journey - and we were judicious to the last drop!

I don't suppose we could have been in the Cluanie Inn more than quarter of an hour when he arrived a tall, lithe, debonair, young Scotsman in a red tartan shirt and soft red and white climbing boots and having about him all the qualities of his warrior ancestors. A cheerful, cultured fellow, he enthused over the toughness of various hill tribes and in particular the Pathan tribesmen, who, he told us (with something akin to loving awe in his eyes) left nothing of their victims save the skins. There was something of the dying embers of former clan warfare still smouldering in the light of our handsome young clansman's eyes - they shone with an unholy glee. Fred told him about his Gurkha friends during the war and how, upon being attacked by a low-flying aircraft, one Gurkha had lifted his machine gun and had brought down the aircraft. Thereupon, he had dashed over to the blazing plane to cut off the pilot's ears, but had had to withdraw on account of the fierce heat, and his disappointment was beyond all possible human comfort. It appeared, from Fred's narrative, that the acquisition of human ears to hang on their belts was, to the Gurkhas a time-honoured custom.

The expedition to the highest waterfall in the British Isles is by no means too formidable a task and even the most timid pilgrim need have no qualms. From Croe Bridge you enter the Inverinate Forest, well and truly booted up and carrying an ordnance survey map of the district which has the route clearly marked with a heavily-dotted line; This, along with a compass is all you need, and it seems only a minute or two before you arrive at Dorusduain Farm - where you enquire the way to the Falls from the small bay in the deck chair, who informs you that the route is along initial forest paths with little pointed signs which say "The Falls" and assures you that it is a long walk. You hurry off, hanging on to his very words and quietly assure each other that one cannot be too careful in these days of Scottish National Militancy. The way lies along rolling fell-side, flanked by steep mountains on either hand and climbing steadily for some few miles before dropping to the top of a very tight gorge; (the track is known as the Pass of the Nose) and it is from the tip of this narrow gorge that Glomach plunges down over three hundred feet into a narrow basin making an impressive sight and a worthwhile trip even after a prolonged dry spell.

The dry spell showed no sign of abatement the following day and a gentle plod up an old military track at the head of the Pass of Glencoe, known a trifle too romantically as the Devil's Staircase, led to a col from where Stob Mhic Mhartuin (2,315ft) and Beinn Bheag were realised and afforded a good view of Blackwater Reservoir to the north-east....but this stint of exercise was but a prelude to the next day's target.

Buachaille Etive Mor (or "The Great Shepherd of Etive") assumes the shape of a pyramid of rock when viewed from the Kingshouse Inn close by the junction of Glen Etive and Glencoe; and has for the fell-walker but two routes up - one on the Glen Etive side and the other up a steep corrie. There is, however, a third way up the noble "Great Shepherd of Etive" and its ascent by this third route, which is called the "Curved Ridge", is a rock climb, graded easy in the text book and described by returning cragsmen (who, it must be added, keep well off it) as a good scramble and of great scenic interest. They are such merry fellows these cragsmen of "The Great Shepherd". It's something the heather gives off! And when it comes to imparting advice to enquiring fell-walkers, they are at their best - and, it may be said, they didn't come across such ready listeners as Fred and I every day. They gave us the "valued customers" treatment, urging us to consider no other way up but the "Curved Ridge"...ah yes, there were, they concurred, the recognised routes of ascent...plebs ways, they hinted, and tradesmen's entrances, so to speak, but we would do well to dismiss these tracks....we were made for higher things. How I thanked them for their trouble and how they kept their faces straight! They must have had many a laugh over our encounter.

And so, Fred and I toiled up the loose steep track to the foot of the northern rugged face and looked at the start of the ridge which was a big vertical wall of granite, punctuated with good footholds and handholds. There was a deep sharp gully to fall into on the right and a great drop to the head of the pass behind us. Apart from this it offered no difficulty to the man who could still bite his right toe nail whilst hanging from a chandelier.

Our biggest fear, as we jackknifed our way up the face like two hunchbacked caterpillars, was the uncertainty as to what it led to next. It was "scenic" all right...I hadn't seen my boots at such close quarters (whilst wearing them) before and the north buttress of "The Great Shepherd" was split into frightening dark chasms through which wreathed wisps of mist and made a Valkyrian fortress of the place; but impressive it may have been - a twelve hundred foot north-east rock face isn't trivial in anybody's book - there was a time and place for sight-seeing and my whole world was suddenly contained in the next minute niche of the rock as I followed Fred, whose scraping boots had disappeared somewhere in the lap of the gods. Up narrow cracks we hauled ourselves and along precarious rock with much loose stone where there was space to stand, past a cairned chimney and then, quite unexpectedly, the safe summit ridge was but yards away and in seconds we were at the summit cairn of Stob Dearg 3,345 ft. the highest point of Buachaille Etive Mor. The view was marred by lingering cloud and we descended by way of the Corrie to Altnafeadh much chastened by the earlier experience, of our unexpectedly rugged ascent. But not before a sudden lapse of sanity on my part urged me to take in the Stob na Broige summit (3,120 ft.) the south-west end of our mountain and a good two and a half miles distant; a feat of lunacy which put me a considerable distance behind the more sensible Fred. We felt all the nobler for having met "The Great Shepherd" personally and we raised our glasses to this encounter that evening in the Glencoe Hotel.

But came Wednesday, and our agreed day of departure. We began our return from Scotland along the "Conquerors" Way - by the roads that had known the hurrying feet of the Jacobite stragglers; through the Great Glen to Inverness before moving south to take in Culloden Moor, Bannockburn and Killiecrankie, in the process of which more lochs were added to the already impressive list of those we had seen; mountains of scenic grandeur fell back on either side and numerous monuments - milestones of Scottish history - bade us pause and hearken to their gaunt message.....these were things we could - and would see again, we assured each other, sealing this our new-born intention with big knowing nods, for we were big knowing fellows! But from this little trip of ours, the simple, trivial, unexplained things would remain bright enough to bring a gleam to Memory's eye. The atmosphere invoked by those green burial mounds of the clans who fell on haunted Culloden Moor; the odd grey ruin on the occasional misty islet; the patch of Tobermory that would for ever be Fleetwood; the glass drained not fifty yards from the black tree-clad hillock upon which James of the Glens was executed for a crime he never committed; the dramatic stillness of Beinn Sheag; and that moment of time, somewhere along the western shore of Loch Ness, when Fred broke the silence and cut across my thoughts as he muttered solemnly, gloomily and not without a little ire (after the manner of a man who had been brought there under false pretences,) "I'VE-SEEN-NO-MONSTER"..... and thereby dispelled the myth for all time.

Maurice Osman.

Just too late for the last Bulletin came the following missive from John and Angela Britt:

"Announcing the arrival of Stuart John Britt, (Bonatti Jnr.) on 2nd September. Climbing weight, 71lb 7oz. (3.5Kgs), max. reach 20½" finger grip: FORMIDABLE!"

Congratulations to John and Angela (even if it is a bit late), sorry I couldn't reproduce the card!

Father Brian Passman

From Peru, some news from Fr. Brian Passman who spent a few days at Langdale in the summer. He is now going to a parish up in the Andes but we hope to hear from him again in due time.

"This is the season of earth tremors. We had three in one week one of them bad enough to send us scattering out of the house. But the worst of all came at 8 45a.m. and lasted for well over a minute. This was about two weeks ago. We all raced out of the house half dressed as we were. For fully half a minute we watched the Church bounce up and down before our eyes and the windows buckle and bend

while the frightening underground noise rumbled and roared. Miraculously there was no damage to our buildings, a tribute to the anti-earth quake type of construction. Fr. Pat. Gavaghan who was staying with me at the time was in bed when the tremor came. He didn't bother to get out. Mr. and Mrs. McCarthy, an English couple who are working out here were also staying with me for a couple of days at the time. They ran out barefoot. Eugene McCarthy used a phrase which I have not heard since the war. "Somebody's getting it bad." We knew we were not at the centre of the quake. Fortunately the centre was out at sea and many miles - about two hundred - to the south. The only people who were killed were killed in a panic stampede, not directly by the earth quake.

Hard on the heels of this came the revolution. The P.P. came dashing into my bedroom early one morning to tell me to switch on my radio. We listened to the news broadcasts until the stations were taken over by the army. Fr. Gavaghan and I had been out to see a late night film the night before and if we had taken a walk after it as he wanted we would have been in the Plaza de Armas when the coup took place and the President was frog marched out of his palace. This is the third time we have had this type of revolution in Peru. We went down town to see the tanks and soldiers. As far as I know only one person was killed. So far life goes on as normal!

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NOTICE - FROM THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

I have been asked to make the following points to clear up some uncertainty regarding children and the Rules of the Club.

Only Full Members may bring (their own) children.

Children and infants are charged 3/- each per day
(Members Fees)

Other children under the age of 17 years may not be brought or signed in by Members as guests.

I should also mention that Graduate Members may not bring Guests at all and that no-one may be a Guest at any Hut more than three times in a year without applying for Membership!

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Another of our Members in Peru, Fr. Gerry Hanlon, sends his best wishes to everyone, remarking that on his return to England, the Priests' Room at Langdale will be one of the first places to visit and hopes that the electric blanket is still there. He also writes an account of a climb, the first by any Member in the Andes.

Youth passes all too quickly, and life becomes much more complicated when there are small hands tugging at your waistlength, and the money in your pocket has to do more than put a gallon or two in your bike and a few pints under your belt. Its simple enough to stuff your pit and your rope in your sack, but for a mother with small children, there's nappies and bottles, and spare socks and warm shirts and jumpers and endless things to remember, instead of just a comb and a spare blouse. It is SO much easier to stay at home, where everything is to hand, and there are no young lads pulling their faces about moving their gear upstairs.

But still the new parents come, and it must be that they ALSO are keen on the hills. And so, we should welcome them; everyone of us, old hands with grown up families or single members. To the single lad they are the proof that life as he knows it does not necessarily cease when he gets married. And 90% of you will, few escape (again with notable exceptions).

True, families bring their problems. Parents must not expect to turn a hut into a nursery, to expect silence because poor little Willie is having difficulty getting off to sleep, or to change stinking nappies in the kitchen. In life you must accept the rough with the smooth. Members know that they must pig in together, in the dormitories and in the kitchen, and so must the families be prepared to muck in together in the families room. You can have your own chalet if you wish, but at Butlins not Bishopscale.

It is also up to the parents to earn the respect of the young lads, by getting on the hill, and not just boozing or moping around the hut, to show that they deserve this privilege of bringing their children to the huts. The carrying frames on the market now are very comfortable for the wee bairns, you don't have to make your own as we did.

I have been hearing for years now the prediction that Bishopscale is about to be overwhelmed by a tidal wave of babies, that the hut will disappear behind rows of drying nappies. Well, it hasn't happened yet. What some folk don't seem to realise is that babies don't remain so for very long. Gillie's kids are almost old enough to become members in their own names, mine are competent on the hill under their own steam, and perhaps it won't be very long before the wheel has turned full circle, and we have members who came up first with their parents, bringing their children.

Over the years, I have seen many hard young lads fall by the wayside. Where the hardest rock or the foulest weather failed to deter them, the responsibilities of family life have. We see them no more. Are you the next?

All problems can be solved, and it seems to me that a little more tolerance and understanding, on all sides, would help to make our club into what every climbing club should be; an association of people brought together by a common interest, to help each other in the pursuit of that aim, to further our knowledge and experience of the hills.

J.F. Foster.

Arran for Easter?

I have fancied a trip to Arran for some while now, it looks so wonderful from the mainland, set as it is in what must be one of the finest estuaries of an industrial river, the Firth of Clyde.

Yet, its such a long hop for even a stretched weekend, and for main holidays I rarely stop until I'm north of Glasgow. So that leaves a little holiday, for which the 4 days at Easter, with perhaps a day tagged on both ends, would be ideal.

Perhaps you too have fancied Arran, especially if you read Matt and Jan Bennett's article in the last bulletin. I am intending camping there next Easter, and I hope it will turn into a club meet. We could take 3 or 4 passengers, further details in the next bulletin.

- - - J.T. Foster.

Anyone contemplating trips at home or abroad and wanting information on travel, hotels, trains etc., may like to know that Margaret Whittle is now manageress of a tourist agency and is willing to help Members with enquiries or bookings. Phone calls from out of town can be transferred to the agency.

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Ashton, PRESTON. Tel. 28542

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ANNUAL DINNER

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Our thanks are due to Barry Ayre who organised the Dinner (he started last November), the Speakers and all those who helped with the raffle or in any way whatever. To next year, then!

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Two items, one from John Tasker, the other by me (a little thing on the Art of Survival!) are held over until next time.

- - -
Not much news from Antarctica at the moment - Adrienne Matthews, Harry Wiggans sister, tells me that many were asking at the Dinner why it was he hadn't replied to letters. The reason is that messages can go in but only family telegrams of 100 words per month can come out until the ice breaks up usually in January - February. You should be hearing from him after that. For the record, both he and Ken Doyle are well but as you can appreciate, at the moment, news is

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scarce. Harry has been beaten back by weather from one expedition but were about to make another attempt. Ken has been out with survey teams most of the season. Keep up the letters!

* * *

Do, please, return the form at the foot of this page and they will be handed in to the Management Committee for study. We want to get as many Members and Graduates interested and involved in activities as we possibly can do and at the same time, if anybody thinks they can organise anything, a coffee-morning, jumble sale, raffle, anything at all then just say so. It will be the Spring before we really get anything under way.

That's about it for another three months, A Happy Christmas then, and every good wish for the New Year.

Brod,

Editor
T.P.BRODRICK,
22, Fairfield St.,
ACCRINGTON. Lancs.

'Please turn over'

Secretary
J.B.AYRE,
53, Lythe Fell Ave.,
Halton, Nr. Lancaster

tear along dotted line

ACHILLE RATTI CLIMBING CLUB

To the Management Committee

I suggest.....

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Name:

Return to
T.P.BRODRICK,
22, Fairfield St.,
ACCRINGTON. Lancs.

Don't just sink into a torpor after your Christmas Pud but get out the 1" Ordnance Survey map which contains all the answers and exercise your knowledge of the Lakes. Some easy ones, some not, and some the product of a downright twisted mind. The price of a couple of pints and honourable mention for the first TWO correct solutions received by me. Good luck.....

Brod.

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| 1. Not Stork and not a lot, either.
(Butter-mere) | 11. No church under here. |
| 2. This feature's not straight. | 12. Only K.9 Members here. |
| 3. The sombre armour's lifted here. | 13. Main shopping centre? |
| 4. Where the Ladies of the Lake
live? | 14. What the joiner dislikes
in wood. |
| 5. This Prelate's not of the
Established Church. | 15. Stone walls don't make a
musical sound. |
| 6. This watery predator's Russian. | 16. Mini's. |
| 7. Ascot Rant (Anag.) | 17. Did the once and future king
meet Medusa? |
| 8. What Theseus forgot. | 18. This stream's upset at the
top. |
| 9. Not the upper stream. | 19. 'forms series of bends, twists
in line or surface' (Dict.) |
| 10. Means a sheepfold when on the
other leg. | 20. 'I climbed the dark brow of
mighty ' (Scott) |

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