

At about 5 a.m. on the morning of Aug. 18th, 1944, the club arose, slowly with the sounds of "Wakey, wakey" in its ears. This noise came from the staff who were also reluctant to rise. However, we dressed by one light ~~of~~ in the Hall body and then went in relays to the kitchen for a plate of cornflakes. We then folded ~~blankets~~ and had a cup of tea. Sandwiches were packed into the famous haversack~~s~~ and then the lorry arrived outside. Unluckily, it had no sides and I, being one of the last to get ~~on~~, had to hang on for dear life at the front. Rain was in the air but it didn't actually rain hard. Vickory Gibbs lost his balaclava just past Blue Peter Bridge and the lorry continued without stopping to pick it up. In the excitement no one worried about the cold and the time passed quickly and we arrived at Coniston, ~~an~~ all safe and sound. The train was just pulling ~~out~~ⁱⁿ as we arrived, so we piled in, Fr. Atkinson & Fr. Shields with us. Some of us, of course, would get in a compartment marked "Ladies only" but that couldn't be helped. We lumbered on to Foxfield (^{see} memories), the train pushing us for all it was worth (not much).

Then we had our sandwiches, much relieved to find that the Mail train was late and we would therefore be able to catch the taxis at Seascale. At length it arrived and we piled in. Much fun was had by all on that journey. We stopped at good ole Ravenglass and on to Seascale. Only one taxi was there so ^{we} fitted the small ones into it and began fooling about till the rest should arrive. I explored the beach finding one pair of pumps which I ~~carried~~ back. Then two more taxis arrived. More went in those and we had to wait till they returned. At length the first arrived back and I squeezed into it with others. A journey of nine miles was completed to the Wasdale Hut. Oh! here was a surprise. One wouldn't have known we were entering the wildest valley in England. The clouds were right down on top of us, just like the roof of a house. There was jolly old Buckbarrow closely held in on all sides by the mist and clouds. As soon as we arrived at the hut (we were ~~shoved~~ i to the middle bedroom (the window of this room was so high I could practically touch with my hand from outside). Here Mrs. Gass served us with a cup of soup and a cold-boiled egg. There we sat sat sipping soup and shelling the egg piece by piece. When all was ready (about 10.30 am) we all set off walking. We walked the whole length of Wast water, getting a grand view if the screes despite the mist and a less grand view of Yewbarrow. At Brackenclouse we left the road, started to climb up a ghyll whose name I fail to remember, anyway it forked at one point and we went up Brown Tongue, the piece on the right. We walked into the mist. This sentence sounds simple enough, but it means a lot. There was the hardworked staff forever shouting in our ears: "Close up all gaps, keep your eyes on the man in front of you". Then it began to rain - another simple sentence which holds a deep meaning, My rain-coat became drenched. Then I felt the rain creep slowly, very slowly into

my shoes. They became sodden. It was as if I were wading at Blackpool. I no longer heeded the streams. I just walked through them. Higher and higher we climbed. Now on the screes we climbed. When suddenly out of the mist loomed a terrific rock. The water bounced off it in sheets onto us. It was as though someone poured buckets of water on top of us, continually. The rain was now through to my skin and it trickled down my neck. Then a halt was called and Fr. Pearson announced the ~~x~~ startling news that we were lost. Now when Fr. P. is lost it's bad, so we went down a bit and then ascended once again. The mist cleared for one minute and before ^{us} loomed a great ridge. This puzzled Fr. P. still further. Another pow-wow was called and it was decided that we had failed and therefore we had better make back to the hut before ~~it~~ got much worse. So we started the descent. Well, before we got far we had to stop again for the rain was like hail on our faces as a terrific wind was blowing. On we lumbered and at last we reached Brown Tongue and we followed the ghyll ~~to~~ the bottom. At Brackenclough (Rock & Fell Climbing Club) Joe Green procured Fr. P.'s bike and set off to ward the hut inhabitants of our advent. We were exhausted and as we tramped back along the length of Wastwater we conjured up visions of the lovely dinner Mrs. Connolly would have ready for us at Ambleside. Too bad such a dinner should be wasted. Then the awful prospect that the Achille Ratti climbing hut there were only iron rations and a hut, which normally held about 12 people, would have to hold about 50 that night. With such thoughts in mind we arrived at the hut, in groups. I managed to summon enough energy to enable me to trot past others. Arriving at the door of the hut I saw a sodden mass of clothing piled in a small mountain on the floor. I was told to take all ^{wet} things off in other words to strip. I then rubbed myself down & was given a blanket and joined a crowd of ~~xxxxx~~ others in a room full of smoke. Luckily I had kept my jacket in a haversack carried on my back ~~x~~ so that was dry and I could wear it. I was lucky enough to procure the one arm chair in the place and I settled to rest as best I could with fellows lying around on the floor and plonking themselves wherever they could. Meanwhile the good Bro. R was doing his best to prepare a meal. The potatoes had to be dug up and a small stew was made. There being no implements ~~so~~ ^{we} just had to lick it off the plates like dogs. Then I had a spot of burnt cremola pudding with a lot of lumps in it. A ghost story was read. Many slept. The room ~~was~~ was stifling but at length bed-time came and some were to sleep in the barn. Knowing full well ^{WHAT} this meant I endeavoured ^{to remain} in the house. I was in luck. Some had to sleep ~~xxxx~~ two in one measly old camp bed but being rather long they gave me a bed to myself in the middle bed room upstairs. The majority slept in the barn. Fr. P. drove over to Ambleside that night and went in everybody's cases for clothing. He was up all night but returned in the morning with the stuff. All then tramped out of the barn, the livestock coming with them, or rather on them. Fr. P. took articles from the car and held them up. They

were perhaps claimed. Anyway I claimed my bundle: pants, shirt (this would be a collar shirt & of course no collar) and socks. I then changed. It was a beautiful morning. There was just a mist over Wastwater which soon cleared and we had a magnificent view of the scree etc. We had breakfast - rye-vita with jam on it and then ~~some~~^{CAfe} and boiling tea. During this meal (eaten on the wall outside) Fr. P. told us that some would have to go by train from Seascale. This meant a 9 mile walk to Seascale, the possibility of a connection at Foxfield and then perhaps no one to meet them at Coniston. The alternative was to go back ^{Via} Styhead Pass - a bit of a walk for those who were willing enough to do it. A count was taken for each journey. The majority were for Seascale. I decided on the latter course. The train party set out. Fr. P. transported the smaller members of the party in his car to the station. Meanwhile the other party prepared. I, having foolishly left my shoes in the oven for an hour, now found them all bent up. However I got them on and then waited for Fr. P. to return in his car, as he was going to transport us to Wastwater Head in his car. He arrived and the small ones went first. We set out and Fr. P. met us at the crossroads. There was a crowd of us so A. Callaghan and B. Nolan had to stand on the side of the car. B. Nolan was in charge of our gang. When we had left the hut the fields had been draped with clothes drying in the sun.

Well, we reached Wastwater Head safely except that we had to stop once to pick up the disc of the wheel of the car of Fr. P. if you see what I mean. There, Fr. P. left us. We caught the others up and started along the pny track up the side of Gable. We were able to see many famous climbs e.g. Pillar and the Needle. Up and up we went stopping occasionally for a drink at some stream. As we got higher it became easier. We had a magnificent view of Scafell Pike, Wastwater and Wasdale. We then arrived at Styhead Tarn. Here there was a first-aid box and 2 stretchers - a welcome sight. Bernie opened the first aid box which was practically empty as a bloke had just fallen off a mountain and had been killed. Anyway he gave me a piece of cotton which I put in my sock to ease the shoe on a blister I had on my heel. We continued on our way up to Esk Hause to the summit of Rossick Ghyll and before 2pm we were there. We had a good rest there. The weather was glorious and the view we had from there, as usual, was terrific. There was good ole Windermere in the distance and a little to the left good ole Harrisobn Stickle (The Langdales). Well that was the highest we ~~ent~~ went and now we started our descent. It was as usual a terrific drag from Esk Hause to the summit of Rossick Ghyll but we all collected there and prepared for what I considered the hardest part of the journey, the descent of Rossick Ghyll. To my amazement I found it much easier than I had expected. It must have got down since last year. I saw the spot where I had risked my life to get to a piece of hather last year but I didn't attempt any such escapades this time. We then walked briskly along the pony track to the New Hotel, a 3 mile walk,

Arriving there we found to our amazement that the time was only 3.15 pm. so we had about a two hour wait. I suggested walking to Chapel Stile but nobody was in favour of doing that so we settled down to wait. I had two glasses of lovely home-made cider. We seemed pretty well known at this hotel for while sitting in the hotel bar sipping the cider a bloke walked in (a very posh chap with riding britches on) who asked where we were from and then he said "You aren't the C.B.A. are you?" We told him we were and he recalled having one year chased a few of us out of his orchards and how he caught some who got it in the neck. When he had departed one chap muttered "Huh! he didn't catch me".

Well the bus arrived and all was well except that the sixteen of us were at the front of the queue and the crowd behind us. Suddenly the crowd turned round and looked the other way as though the back of the queue was the front (see?). The C.B.A. prepared for battle. However we stuck to our guns and kept looking the right way. So we had half the queue looking one way and the other half looking the other. As soon as the bus stopped we pushed our way to the front and were the first to embark. We, being very polite, crushed up at the back of the bus in order to make room for the rest. The bus conductor nearly had fits when Bernie told he wanted 13 halves and 3 wholes. So he started punching ~~the~~ (the tickets of course) and we all had our tickets by the time we reached Ambleside. How glad we were to arrive there.

The train party had arrived first as they had lovely connections and a lorry had met them at Coniston. So we tucked into a grand feed as soon as we arrived. And so ends the Wasdale adventure. Fr. P. brought all the clothes the next day and we sorted them out. I got all mine back but they were a little blacker than when I had left them. However the whole thing however uncomfortable at the time, I don't think anyone would have missed it for anything. As Fr. Pearson wrote in the Hut log book "It was taken in the true C.B.A. spirit and there were very few grumbles". Well, it was certainly something which I will not forget in a hurry.

AD ALTIORA. VIVE C.B.A.

(Fr. Slattery was about 14 at the time).