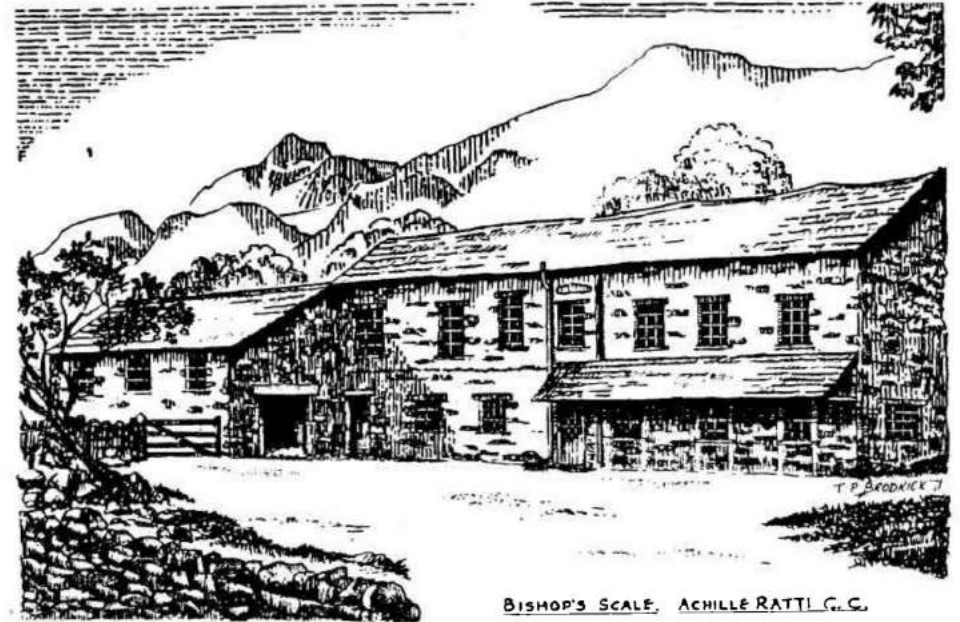


Achille Ratti Climbing Club
Journal — 1988



BISHOP'S SCALE, ACHILLE RATTI C.C.

Issued as a tribute
to
The Right Reverend
THOMAS BERNARD PEARSON
Founder President
1942-1987

A.R.C.C.

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CONTENTS

Acknowledgements

Introduction

The Club to 1946

Report of the A.G.M. 1946

Memories and Foundations

Langdale 1945

A.R.C.C. Training Course 1950

Tributes to Doctor W. Park

Tom Donnelly

Letter to the Editor 1961

Rawhead — The challenge

Annual Report A.G.M. 1961

BISHOP T. B. PEARSON

CLUB ARCHIVES

FATHER TOM WALSH

BOB MELLING

BROTHER JOSEPH

BISHOP T. B. PEARSON

BISHOP T. B. PEARSON

BISHOP T. B. PEARSON

JACK WHITESIDE

CLUB ARCHIVES

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would particularly like to thank Father Tom Walsh, Bob Melling and Jack Whiteside for their contributions. Also Mrs. Patricia Rogers, widow of Reggie Rogers, (Committee member from 1949 and Club Chairman, 1954 to 1966), for most invaluable help with archive material and photographs.

Thanks also to the many people who have given of their time in talking to me and answering my queries.

No doubt there must be many more who I should have consulted; if there is anyone who would like to contribute an article about our late President or about the early years of the Club, then please do contact the Editors of the Bulletin.

The articles included here mention many individuals who were associated with the Bishop, however the limited nature of this publication inevitably fails to recognise the contribution made by many others who worked with his Lordship throughout the years from 1942 to the present. A full history of the Club from say 1950 awaits and deserves an author.

The photographs are thought to be by the late Tom Donnelly.

George Partridge



The Right Reverend THOMAS BERNARD PEARSON
Bishop of Sinda
Auxiliary Bishop of Lancaster and Bishop in Cumbria

INTRODUCTION

The death of the Club Founder President on 17th November, 1987 marks the end of an era in the history of the Club.

To our younger and newer members he may have appeared as a rather distant figure, somewhat remote from ordinary Club activities. They may not appreciate that Achille Ratti Climbing Club would not exist had it not been for his personality and energy. He had a quite remarkable gift for inspiring people and generating enthusiasm in those around him. "T.B.P." and later, "the Bish" as he was affectionately referred to had great vitality and derived much satisfaction from introducing young people to rock climbing and the mountains.

You may read later the Bishop's own account of the infant years of the Club, written in 1946. What is not revealed in this modest account is the energetic commitment he had to the Club which culminated in the decision to buy Rawhead, the hut known now as Bishop's Scale.

He felt very strongly that the presence of a Catholic climbing club in the valleys was apostolic work, as evidenced by the building of the Chapel of Our Lady of the Snows at Bishop's Scale and his and the club's work for the establishment of the Chapel of St. Philip Howard at Glenridding.

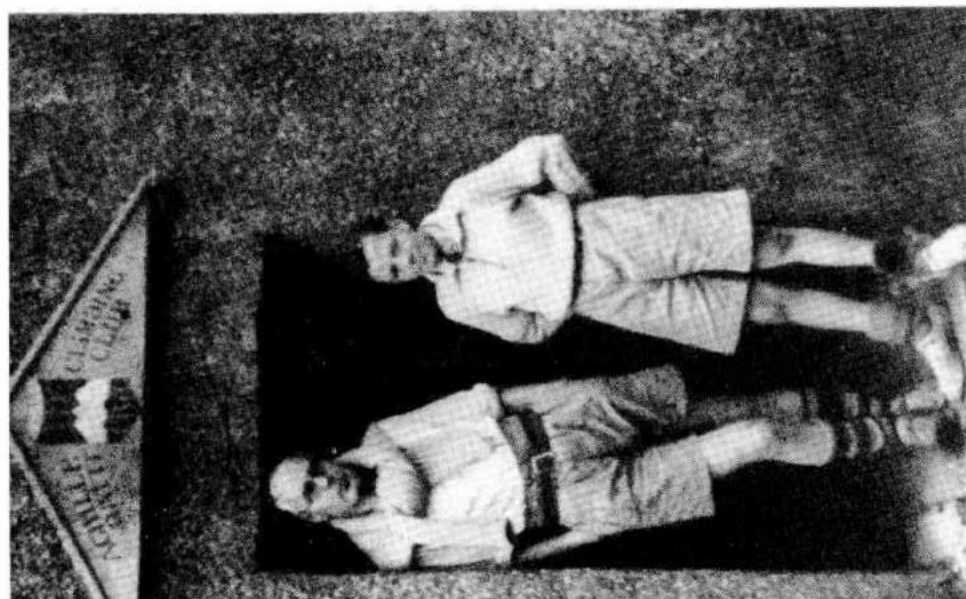
The articles included here may allow old friends and old members to remember, and newer members to become acquainted with the man who wrote . . . "the spirit of the hills is to overcome obstacles and venture new and better things."

In conclusion, may I quote some words spoken by Monsignor Wilfred Buxton (Hon. Secretary of A.R.C.C. 1949-54) in his address at a service at Carlisle on the eve of the Bishop's funeral:

"Bishop Pearson's abiding love was for the hills, a love that was first conceived in his student days on excursions to the Abbruzzi mountains. He was voted President for life of his own baby, Achille Ratti, and having myself been secretary of that body in its early years, I can vouch for his enthusiasm for introducing young people to the Lake District and passing on to them his own rock climbing skills.

. . . "In these latter years he found relaxation for mind and soul in solitary walking in the hills, occasionally he would ring and ask for company.

'Ad Altiora' — On to higher things — is the Achille Ratti's Club motto. Bishop Pearson has answered that call for the last time. There is no summit cairn higher than that which he has now achieved. May God have mercy on him, and grant him eternal rest."



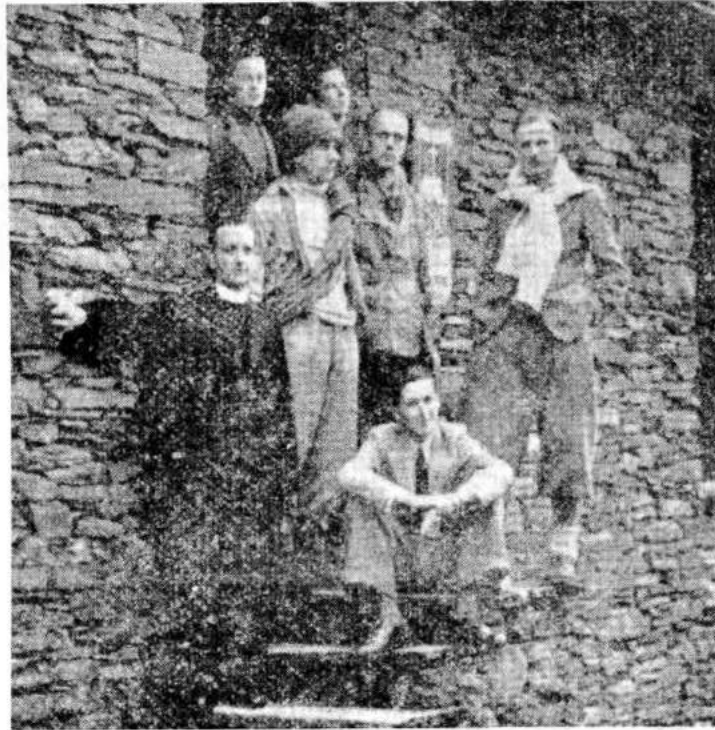
THE CLUB

THE "Achille Ratti" Climbing Club is now well-known in Catholic circles, and to many other people besides. Since it has been mentioned in the Catholic press so many times recently, numbers have wondered at its origin and purpose. Few know that for a long time it was called the "Catholic Boys' Association Climbing Club," and that in those days it belonged to a few mountaineering enthusiasts of the Blackpool C.B.A. It was started simply because a number of us from the Boys' Club wanted to climb the hills and found it very inconvenient not to have a base from which to operate. Almost from the beginning we realised that it was too selfish to keep such advantages to ourselves and so organised it as a Catholic Mountaineering Club without any restriction as to its being a sub-section of any other organisation. It was at the suggestion of Mr. Arnold Lunn that we changed the name to "Achille Ratti," for the obvious connection with the late Pope, who was a skilled and keen climber, and also because the whole development of the Club was in the line of an ordinary mountaineering Club, and the name "boy" was likely to be misleading. When you read further on in this article how the acquisition of the most recent Hut has been made in response to a need to introduce boys to the hills it will indicate how quickly the Club departed from its original purpose.

Many people have wondered why we started a mountaineering Club. The real answer is that we did not group together and say: "There is no Catholic Mountaineering Club, and so we must begin one." It just came into being as we have already said, and having happened, we found that it evidently responded to a long-felt need. Priests in particular hailed it with delight because it solved for them the almost insuperable problem on such holidays of daily Mass. Catholic young people welcomed it because it was somewhere to go where they could be sure of meeting their own company. More than that the friendship that exists between Catholic Priests, the Religious that teach in our Colleges and the Laity has very deep roots, and when to this is added the common passion for mountaineering one can easily understand how such a Club should begin to flourish at once.

Perhaps the part that some are least able to comprehend is the mountaineering! We have often been charged with introducing young people to a dangerous sport. Now that is taking a very narrow outlook on mountaineering, for to us the definition of a mountaineer is simply

CATHOLIC CLIMBERS OPEN HUT IN THE LAKE DISTRICT



MASS in honour of Our Lady of the Snows was offered at the opening last week of this Catholic climbers' hut in the Lake District.

The hut, as the picture shows, is a stone building. It stands just by the Dungeon Ghyll New Hotel at the foot of the famous Langdale Pikes, Great Langdale, near Ambleside.

The Mass was celebrated by Fr. Thomas B. Pearson, chairman of the climbing club of the Blackpool Catholic Boys' Association, whose first hut this is. With him on the steps are Fr. G. P. Atkinson, parish priest of Ambleside (hut secretary), and members of the committee, who during the day made various climbs.

The hut has a kitchen, lounge

and dormitory, with hot and cold water and electric light. In the dormitory is a priest's cubicle.

In the lounge hangs a notice from the Bishop of Lancaster, allowing any priest who obtains permission from the parish priest of Ambleside to celebrate Mass for one week: everything for Mass is kept in the hut. There is also a library for climbers, first aid equipment and climbing ropes.

The hut is being run on the same system as an Alpine hut. Members may obtain the key from the hut secretary and stay there as long as they please if accommodation is available. Full particulars may be obtained from the hon. secretary, C.B.A., Climbing Club, 17, Lindsay-avenue, Blackpool.

Old Langdale Hut 12th June 1942.

"one who loves the hills." Once a person loves the hills he delights to read about them, to hear about them, and above all to be amongst them. Rock climbing is only a part of his mountaineering. It is not the purpose of the Club to encourage people to take up rock climbing. Rather it begins from the fact that there are many who are very keen rock climbers and many others who are anxious to begin. Keen spirits of this kind who go amongst the hills, when they are faced with the challenge of the rocks, will climb whatever happens. It is all to the good that they should belong to a Club which has sound traditions, and which has amongst its members those who are able to lead and to train in the art of good climbing, and also to teach the right attitude towards the sport. It must be admitted that there are far too many who rush at the rocks and think every climb is easy until they get on it. It is too late then to find that it has obstacles that are beyond their powers. All climbing clubs deplore this type, and still more the accident, which is not really an accident at all, but the result of foolhardiness.

The existence of the Club is a great help both in avoiding such mishaps and in directing this fine pioneer spirit into proper channels. During the mountaineering course that we held recently we saw on the one hand the amazing keenness of our Catholic young men for the hills and their great capability of endurance born of years of youth hostelling, and on the other hand their entire underestimation of the difficulties of rock climbing. Perhaps it would be better to say that they had not a proper respect or reverential fear of the rocks, for the difficulties are not great except in relation to the exposed positions and the vagaries of our English weather. It was by seeing really experienced climbers take the greatest care, and having to feel their dependance on the rope, that taught them that "cleverness" was no substitute for rock-sense and skill.

However, this article is meant to be merely historical but since we shall be read by large numbers of young Catholic men who intend to join the Club, and, what is more important, by their parents, it seemed advisable to say a word or two as to our *raison d'être*.

In the Autumn of 1940 I was taking a party of boys up Scafell Pike. As we were walking along the Mickleden, just where Gimmer Crag towers like a Dolomite over the valley, John Schofield was listening with adolescent ardour to accounts of life in the Alpine Refuges. In his innocence he asked why we did not have similar Huts for the lads of the C.B.A. When it was pointed out that such a project needed money he remarked that it had always been said that "in the bright lexicon of

Young Mountaineers of Blackpool



The Wasdale hut is the further of the stone buildings. Picture (facing Wastwater Scree) by Mr. T. Donnelly.

THREE years ago the "Achille Ratti" climbing club of the Blackpool Catholic Boys' Association was formed.

Since then the club, open to boys of 16 and over who can prove a genuine love of the fells and some aptitude for mountaineering, has made remarkable progress under the excellent supervision of its founder and president, Father T. B. Pearson, Ph.D., of St. Cuthbert's Church, S.S.

There have been many excellent climbs.

When the coming holiday time arrives a party will travel by train or cycle to one of two well-equipped huts or base camps, the Langdale camp facing Mill Ghyll at the foot of the famous Langdale Pikes, and the Wasdale camp lying snugly in one of the finest rock-climbing centres in the British Isles—Wasdale Valley.

Langdale hut is installed with electric light generated from nearby waterfalls.

There is hot and cold water, and stoves heat the three rooms—kitchen, lounge and dormitory. A library is admirably equipped

with books on mountaineering. Accommodation is for 12, and a member has only to obtain the key from the hut secretary, the Rev. Father Atkinson, of Ambleside, formerly of St. Cuthbert's, Blackpool, and provide his own food.

All other necessities are kept at the camp.

A short distance from the hut are Pavey Ark, Gimmer Crag and Bowfell Buttress, ideal trial grounds for the young climbers.

The Wasdale hut is a more recent acquisition. It is a 200-years-old, solidly-constructed farmhouse, with outbuildings.

It stands on the narrow strip of fell between Buckbarrow and the great Wastwater Scree, and is close to Great Gable, Scafell and Pillar, on all of which the members have tried their skill.

Thanks to the sound belaying and team work on the rope, so far there have been no serious accidents.

It is appropriate that the members have named their club after the late Pope Pius XI, himself a fearless mountaineer.

Youth, there's no such word as 'fail.'" These facile phrases are apt to come back upon one, and the challenge had to be accepted, especially as the motto of the C.B.A. was "ad Altiora," and should at least then lead to the hills. It would, however, have remained a pleasant day dream, but for its being mentioned to our friend Mr. Cyril Bulman, of the Dungeon Ghyll Old Hotel. Now Mr. Bulman is not like a placid tarn that just reflects ideas, he is rather a cataract of productive energy. Before long he had found us a place that we could convert into a climbing Hut, namely the superbly situated Langdale Hut behind the Dungeon Ghyll New Hotel.

Mr. Bulman is our first honorary member, and shares that privilege alone with Mr. Arnold Lunn, and has ever been our source for sound advice and practical help. And it is right that he should be so, for in spite of his fine business acumen he has all the spirit and zest of a boy. With the formation of a Club, Father Atkinson of Ambleside, became the Secretary. There have been many famous names amongst the Clergy connected with Lakeland, but his name will live on in Lakeland annals for many a year to come. He is an enthusiast who has spared nothing, least of all himself, to make mountaineering a practical reality for Catholic Youth. Plans would have remained plans had he not fulfilled the role of carpenter and plumber, painter and decorator, furnisher and fitter. The comfort, the utility, the splendid altar of the Langdale Hut, are all the result of hours of patient work, and it is to the edification of the people of the valley that they have come to know him best in his working attire, tired out and having a cup of tea with them when he had been working for "those boys." Behind this practical gift there is a keen apostolic spirit that sees great possibilities in the mountains to help those adventurous youths who are suffocated with the artificialities of modern town life to regain perspective in the grandeur of the hills.

Langdale is the most popular Hut amongst the climbers. It is the most accessible by rail and road from the South, and itself provides the most accessible approach to the rocks. The nearby crags are convenient for all weathers, and Pavey, Gimmer and Bowfell are within easy reach. Added to this the fact that there is not a climbing Hut in the whole of Great Britain that commands so magnificent a view as the alpine aspect of the trees, with the numerous cascades of Mill Ghyll rising in tier on tier and flanked by the imposing crags of White Ghyll, Pavey and Harrison Stickle.

However, popular though Langdale is, it was only to be expected

that the time would come when Wasdale would attract our attention. It was our original idea merely to seek a "bivouac" where we could lay our heads at night when we had tarried too long on the Gable, Pillar or Scafell. Several times we treked over the Esk Hause and the Sty Head Pass to seek such a place, but all in vain. And then Father Atkinson took up the quest, and when he had only just learnt to drive a car ventured up the fearsome hill at Ulpha by the Travellers' Rest, and made his way over Birker Moor to Wasdale. Providence was kind. As he was retreating from the valley, disappointed, he heard of Mr. Gass at the Ghyll Farm, and a new era opened up for the Club. Mr. Gass had the farm at Buckbarrow and offered it to us. After a further discussion all was settled and Buckbarrow became our second Hut. The character of the Wasdale Hut is entirely different from that at Langdale. It is a lonely farmhouse, situated on the Fellside right under the rocky shoulder of Buckbarrow. This splendid cliff on the North, and the imposing sweep of the Wastwater Scree on the South, form a wild setting, whilst to the East, aloof and inspiring, the Scafells are in full view from the level of the lake to their summits. The house is cosy, with thick walls and casement windows of little white-framed panes. After a long day on the Fell, or a battle in a blizzard of snow to the top of a peak, it is the climbers' reward to spend his long evening by the huge fire-grate full of blazing logs, and savour in anticipation the aromas coming from the oven. The nearest farm for supplies is the Gasses, at The Ghyll, and they are also our next door neighbours, even though they are half-a-mile away. Still, if they were literally next door there could not be more neighbourliness, and many have been the happy times when visits have been interchanged. The remoteness of Buckbarrow, and the difficulty of easy access, have conspired to make it less popular than Langdale, but to many it has an atmosphere and a charm that can not be found anywhere else, and from a climber's point of view, if he possesses convenient transport, which most conveniently is a car to take him to the head of the valley, it is the key to all that is best.

The acquisition of the next Hut was more in the nature of an accident. We had no further aspirations at the time. But Father Atkinson heard of the cottage, shown on Bartholomew's map as "Raise Cottage," and in reality the old Isolation Hospital towards the top of Dunmail Raise. We first went to view it on a morning when it was raining in truest Lakeland style, convinced that if we saw any possibilities in it on such a day, then it must surely be worth while.

The entry was not promising. Indeed it looked as if there had been

a bomb on the ground floor, it was so pitted and mutilated. But one glance upstairs was sufficient to indicate to us the possibilities, and soon we were in negotiation with the owner. Eventually an agreement was concluded, and the third Hut, the Dunmail, came into our hands. Plans have been got out for its conversion, and we hope that it will be on modern and convenient lines, including such items as a drying room, and hot and cold shower baths, as well as good central heating, all of which are necessary for its purpose. Perhaps it should have been said earlier, but the real reason of this Hut was because there are so many who have charge of Colleges or Clubs who are anxious to introduce boys to the hills and yet cannot take them to the Climbing Huts that we felt that something ought to be done to meet this need. Here was the ideal situation, on the slopes of Helvellyn, centrally situated between Keswick and Grasmere, and easy of access, being on the main road and connected by a regular bus service with Windermere station. At the same time there can be separate quarters for the Club members, who will appreciate them for fell walks as well as for some nearby rock climbs, and perhaps most of all for its possibilities in the way of winter expeditions in snow on Helvellyn, and even skiing on the north slopes when the snow is good.

One does not want to say too much in this first account of how the Club came into being and so rapidly took root. But one must mention the two vice-presidents, Mr. Tom Donnelly and Dr. Francis Rickards. Mr. Donnelly brought to the Club an almost passionate love of the Lake District, and has rendered invaluable service by his sound business experience and caution without timidity. He is best known for his photographs, for he has now a complete record of the Club's activities by means of his Leica camera, and his photographs will often, we hope, appear in this journal. Dr. Rickards brings enthusiasm and always work. He is the life and soul of any expedition — the first to present himself for work and the last to be downhearted. What more can a young Club trying to face difficulties and disappointments ask than that? We are thankful to say that we have not had need of his professional skill. And, though, there are many other names whom we hope to include in good time, we ought to mention the Editor of this journal, Dr. Park. A keen alpinist and well-versed in all things connected with the mountains, he took us up, as it were, from outside, and gave us great courage and help to carry on the work that we had begun. For that we shall always be grateful, and now still more for this proof of his interest by editing this first little journal from the Grampian Sanatorium where he is at present detained. May he soon recover.



Buckbarrow 1943



Langdale 1945

That, then, completes the story of how Achille Ratti Mountaineering Club came into being. But it is only the beginning of the story. It is up to the enterprise and spirit of the members to see that it develops into a saga of adventure and progress. There will be more difficulties, we can see some on the horizon even now, but our lessons of the hills would be superficial indeed if we had not learnt that the spirit of the hills is to overcome obstacles and to venture new and better things.

T. B. Pearson



AD ALTIORA.

THE ACHILLE RATTI CLIMBING CLUB.

Under the Patronage of
His Lordship the Bishop of Lancaster.

President; THE REV. FR. T. B. PEARSON.

Vice-Presidents:

Dr. F. S. RICKARDS

T. H. DONNELLY

Hon. Treasurer:

T. H. Donnelly, Esq.

Hon. Secretary:

Rev. G. P. Atkinson.

Members of the Committee:

The Rev. W. Park, D.D., Fr. J. Bamber, Messrs. J. Doherty,
T. Whitaker, F. Glenn, N. Hartle.

The Annual General Meeting of the above Club was held at the Langdale Hut on May 31st, 1946. We herewith submit the Annual Report and Balance Sheet for the year ending 31st March, 1946, together with an account of the proceedings of the said meeting. The Minutes of the 1945 General Meeting were read and adopted.

THE HON. SECRETARY'S REPORT.—The Annual General Meeting of 1946 sees the Achille Ratti Climbing Club in a very interesting and adventuresome position. That is in keeping with the spirit of the Club, and like all adventures it is accompanied by dangers and risk. However at the moment may I submit my report on the past year.

MEMBERSHIP.—This has been the cause of a certain amount of anxiety in the past. Our numbers in a sense have been hypothetical, because a few members have shown no interest in the Club and have not paid their subscriptions since their entry, some of them as far back as 1942. Consequently, with the approval of the Committee, I have

revised the list of members and, apart from those who are still in the Services, I have crossed off the books those who have not paid their subscriptions since becoming members of the Club. These defaulters number 17. There have been 8 resignations and 3 deletions from the membership list. This makes our present membership exactly 100, eight of whom have been elected to the Club during the past year. It was discouraging to have crossed members off the books, but it was the only alternative to a false position. During the year two of our number have become Life Members.

THE HUTS. Langdale.—During the year considerable work has been done at the Langdale Hut. The kitchen has been improved and enlarged by taking the partition down, blocking up the old entrance and making a new one by way of the dormitory. This has necessitated the making of wooden steps, with hand rail, at an approximate cost of £15. The kitchen and lounge have been painted throughout, and the blankets laundered. The accounts for this work are not to hand and therefore not mentioned in the Balance Sheet.

Wasdale.—Everyone speaks in the highest terms of the Wasdale Hut. The Club is indebted to the Rev. President for keeping a very jealous eye on the property and maintaining its good appearance. There is nothing to report in the way of new furniture or improvements. The expenses at Wasdale have been: the year's rent of £52, Calor Gas £2:4:0, Coal £1:15:0, and Logs £1.

ATTENDANCES AT THE HUTS.—During the year 88 people made use of the huts. Of these 8 were non-members. An analysis of numbers gives the following financial figures: from members fees, £21; from non-members, £6:17:0. These figures of attendance represent a falling off of numbers as compared with last year's (93). However the difference is small and is doubtless due to travelling restrictions and the call of the Services.

FINANCE.—The Balance Sheet as at the year ending 31st March, 1946, showed a credit balance of £194:12:1. This encouraging and surprising state of affairs demands explanations and I shall have to introduce one item of the agenda to do so. In January the Committee decided to enquire about the acquisition of a new hut, namely the old Isolation Hospital situated on Dunmail Raise. The enquiries were successful and negotiations for the new property were begun. Realising that we would require money urgently a circular was sent out to the members of the Club soliciting their help. As a result, many members who were in arrears with their subscriptions sent them in, many sent donations and a loan of £200 was negotiated. This accounts for the abnormally large balance. You will also notice on the Balance Sheet an account for £33:2:8, for beds, blankets, etc. These were bought in anticipation of the new Dunmail Hut.

THANKS.—Again we express our sincerest thanks to all who have assisted the Club by their kindness, co-operation and financial help. We would especially mention our landlords, Mr. Bulman of Langdale and Mr. Gass of Wasdale. Also our most congenial and helpful neighbours, Mr. Black, proprietor of the Dungeon Ghyll New Hotel, and Mr. Whalen, of Chapel Stile. We also express our sincerest thanks to Miss A. Dawson, Mrs. T. Donnelly, Dr. F. Rickards and the Rev. Frs. McKeown, Henry, McKenna and Wrighton for their generous financial help.

The Hon. Secretary's Report was unanimously adopted by the meeting.

The Balance Sheet was then presented to the meeting, proposed, seconded and adopted.

The meeting proceeded to the Election of Officers and Committee for the coming year. These were elected as above-mentioned.

In accordance with the constitution that "all members are eligible for re-election at the Annual General Meeting," it was then proposed and seconded that all members be re-elected with the exception of three whose conduct, in the opinion of the Committee, was prejudicial to the spirit and good name of the Club. Their names were deleted from the books. The President expressed his dislike of such drastic action, but hoped that it would serve as a reminder to members that the Club was determined to preserve its ideals and deal severely with breaches of discipline. He trusted that this action would be a lesson to others.

Various suggestions, presented verbatim or by letter, were then discussed by the meeting.

1. The question of members who were still in H.M. Forces paying their annual subscription. It was unanimously agreed that the Club would not ask members who were in the Services to pay their subscriptions, but suggested that such members re-apply for membership on demobilisation. On the other hand it was felt that as the Club had been built up and owes its present happy position to the spirit of sacrifice and generosity, financial and otherwise, of most of its members, it would be in the spirit of the Achille Ratti if members who could pay their subscriptions would do so. Noble examples, like the member who sent his subscription in the thick of the battle of the Rhine, and the Navy member who sent his pay allowance as his ship weighed anchor for Eastern waters were acclaimed with pride.

It would be greatly appreciated if members who can would pay their subscriptions by Bankers' Order to District Bank, Ambleside.

2. Concerning the Entrance Fee and Subscription of a new member: the following resolution, approved at a Committee meeting

on January 3rd, was passed unanimously as a constitution of the Club: "All subscriptions are to be paid by April 1st each year. Anyone becoming a member between April 1st and September 1st must pay both Entrance Fee and Annual Subscription. Anyone becoming a member after September 1st must pay his Entrance Fee, but will not be liable to the Annual Subscription till the following April 1st."

3. It had been previously voted at a meeting of the Committee that a Club Magazine — of excellent quality — should be produced in October, with Fr. Park, D.D., as its first editor. At the General Meeting this decision was queried on the grounds of heavy expense. Fr. Park however, with his customary noble generosity, has guaranteed that the Club will not suffer financially. Consequently the Club will publish its first Journal in October. We rely on members to give it their loyal support. To our expressions of thanks to Fr. Park may we add our heartiest good wishes for his future good health and a speedy return to the hills he loves so much and the peaks he loves to conquer.

4. In a letter a member suggested that it would be more convenient for members if the Annual General Meeting was held during some week end. In spite of difficulties it was decided that this suggestion would be accepted if at all possible, and it was left to the Committee to decide.

At this juncture the Rev. President rose to announce officially the acquisition of the new Hut at Dunmail Raise. He had visited the property together with the Hon. Secretary and reported to the Committee on the advisability of buying it as another mountaineering centre. Expert advice had been sought and we were advised to begin negotiations as soon as possible. These had now been completed and the new place was ours. We had to borrow £1,000 from the diocese to complete the purchase. The new Hut is on the very top of Dunmail Raise, in a beautiful and commanding position, standing in 2 acres of fell land, and is built of stone. It is spacious and well-built. On the whole it was in good repair, the internal features being in particularly excellent condition. The President announced that this new venture was to a certain extent a departure from past policy. The place was too big to be used exclusively as a climbing hut, therefore it was suggested that some of it, approximately two-thirds, should be used as a mountain hostel for small parties of boys, and the rest be used as the exclusive and private quarters of the Achille Ratti Climbing Club. The property had cost £799. It was the opinion of the Committee that the new property should be fitted out with the best equipment possible with a view to its purpose. It must be made warm and cheerful, with the best of accommodation, fittings and cooking facilities. It was to be a "show place," a model of what a mountain hostel should be. It was useless to baulk at necessary expense. The Committee considered it desirable to have an architect's opinion on

improvement and renovation. Mr. P. Traughton, of Blackpool, had kindly done this gratis and had drawn up plans in accordance with the Club's requirements. These specified for complete internal reconstruction, showers, baths, h. & c. water system, drainage and sanitary arrangements and external renovation to the windows and roof. The Secretary had obtained an estimate for the work to be done and the President called on him to read the same. The estimate was studied in detail by the meeting and after much discussion it was decided unanimously to accept it. The total cost of the work was £648:17:0. The Secretary was empowered to write to the Ministry of Works to obtain the necessary permit.

The President announced to the meeting that there was an old-fashioned central heating system already installed in the building. As the premises were so large and Dunmail Raise could be bleak and cold the Committee advocated central heating. This was accepted by the meeting and it was decided that the Hon. Secretary should approach some expert firm for their opinion and estimate.

The President then went on the question of finance. This was the paramount problem, and one on which he invited suggestions as to how the money was to be raised. Amidst loud applause three of the members made a joint offer of £250 at least, a magnificent gesture which was most thankfully appreciated by the astonished President. It was then left to the members to explore suggested possibilities and report to the Committee.

The Hon. Secretary then announced that on the supposition that the Ministry of Works gave permission to carry out the reconstructions at Dunmail Raise, the work could not possibly be finished before the end of August. Already parties of boys had been booked for Dunmail, and the meeting was asked to give its judgment on what should be done with these bookings. After discussion, in view of the financial position and the contacts and bookings already made, it was proposed, seconded and passed that these parties should have the use of the Langdale Hut, and the meeting instructed the Secretary to furnish the Hut according to the requirements of the parties.

This was the final item on the agenda and the meeting ended in the late hours of the night. It had been a memorable and important occasion.

In sending out this Annual Report the Committee would like to make a number of observations.

It is very obvious that the Achille Ratti Climbing Club has come to stay. What was once the hobby of a few has developed into the sport of an ever growing multitude. The dream of a few years ago has become a great reality. Four years, difficult and hazardous years, have seen the rise to outstanding prominence of England's first Catholic Mountaineering Club. We have climbed from pitch to pitch with bold caution and dauntless spirit, and we are now in a position to view the conquest and gaze on the horizon with fair prospect and confident hope. Our numbers are increasing with the years. We are enriching the Club with men of character and experience, who will add lustre to our name. Our one-time boyish breed is developing into the balanced, manly morale of personal pride, responsibility and confidence in the name and life of the Club. We are the proud possessors of three Huts, and may justly ask has any other climbing club so much in so short a time? We are to publish our first journal in the Autumn. We are undertaking a course in mountaineering in August and September, run by experienced members of the Club, and as we go to press we hear that the course is booked up and no more can be taken. In the light of these accomplishments the Committee feel that the Club can be truly proud of its history and present standing. The words of a new member express their sentiments — "I am proud to belong to such a famous Club."

The Committee would like to state that copies of the Constitutions and Rules will be forwarded to members as soon as possible. They have been revised in accordance with resolutions passed at meetings and in the light of experience.

Balance Sheet for the Year ending March 31st, 1946.

INCOME.			EXPENDITURE.		
	£	s. d.		£	s. d.
Brought forward ...	14	7 3	Rent of Langdale Hut ...	22	0 0
Entrance Fees and Subscriptions	57	10 0	Rent of Wasdale Hut ...	52	0 0
Two Life Subscriptions ...	20	0 0	Calor Gas, at both Huts ...	7	11 6
Hut Bookings :			Beds, Blankets, Pots, Pans, etc....	33	2 8
Members ...	21	0 0	Coal and Coke ...	2	15 0
Non-Members ...	6	17 0	Langdale Hut Insurance ...	3	0 0
Donations... ..	23	0 0	Bank Commission ...	10	0 0
Loan	200	0 0	Re-Payment of Loan to		
			T. Donnelly, Esq. ...	30	0 0
			Balance	194	12 1
	£342	14 3		£342	14 3

MEMORIES AND FOUNDATIONS

Ribble buses took the mob of the CBA down the Langdale valley, to the foot of the Mill Ghyll. The ascent of Jack's Rake was an essential part of the summer camp. The eager ones, the show-offs, raced up the ghyll. I was full of reading about Everest, Nanga Parbat and K2 and walked sedately, murmuring something about 'Sherpa Pace'. The first at the tarn hurled stones as far as they could but as we drew under Pavey Ark all became a little quieter; the looming rock had some effect even on bouncy Blackpuddians. "Where do we go?" asked the nervous; "Up there", said the old sweats.

Fr. P. gathered us together, told us not to throw stones, encouraged us to stick together and keep our eyes on the older boys. He led us in the 'Hail Mary', and presumably avoided the Act of Contrition as too pessimistic. Then he shot up the Rake and left us to it. We all made it, and the older ones did feel quite paternalistic as they shepherded the younger ones over the exposed bits. Gathering above, our leader led us off round the tops but after a while, coming out of the mist, we learned that now we are going down Easedale and back to Ambleside via Grasmere. This would be disconcerting for Mr. Turner at Ribbles, since we had gone down Langdale on a chartered return special! Old CBA hands said it was not as bad as when Fr. P. led the whole lot over Scafell to Langdale but ended up in Eskdale.

Buckbarrow

I do not know what the Christian Brothers thought of it, but the message was for us to be ready at the bottom of the school drive, prompt. The Lancia car was not big but it did have a certain style, and the sixty miles an hour was quite fast for 1946. The flat land of the Fylde soon gave way to swirling fell roads; there were gates to be opened and shut over Barker Moor and then into Wasdale, and Buckbarrow. There was a busy making of fires, the smell of calor gas, going over the dark fields to Gass's farm. In the morning Scafell could be glimpsed through the little window, and there was a slight apprehension as to what Fr. P. had in store for us. But how mature we felt, 15-year-olds with climbing ropes, and slightly posh, too, for the only other people about were Fell and Rock.

We would make our way up and across to the foot of the Needle, or to Kern Knots. Fr. P. was definitely in charge, but the varicose veins did quiver on some of the holds. I once thought he said, 'Hold my b... foot'; the holds were very worn. We wore clinkers bashed into ex-army boots, with socks over them when it was greasy and gym shoes for drier days. Fr. P.'s boots could be studied as you seconded him — made in Italy, with tricornis on the edges; very continental, very catholic. To sit with your back to the warm rock, to look down Wasdale, to race down the scree runs onto the Sky Head track. We and many others were very lucky lads to have been led into such a new dimension of our lives, a deepening, an enhancing.

We found it difficult to say. But we were, and are, grateful.

The ARCC came out of experiences such as the above, and the deepest intention of its founding was that many could share in this joy, for in this joy was a hint of a greater joy.

Fr. Tom Walsh

LANGDALE 1945

The view from the hut doorway was, to a 16-year-old, full of brooding mystery. The dinosaur's back of the upper Pavey Ark cliffs showed over the rim of the higher reaches of Mill Gill, presenting at once a challenge and a threat. Every devotee of the hills has a first impression, a moment when he is hooked. This was my moment and I owed it to a priest in another town whom I had never met. I was a member of a Y.C.W. party spending a week's holiday at the old Langdale Hut* during the war, guests of the Catholic Boys' Association Climbing Club. My introduction to the Bishop was through the entries in the Club's Log Book — thrilling words such as "Gully" "Slabs" "Buttress" "Crack" "Chimney" "Rope" etc., made me wonder what kind of a priest this was. Those early club members seemed to like climbing everything in shorts and indeed my first memory of Fr. Pearson was of seeing him at the Langdale Hut in normal clerical attire, then disappearing into a sort of priest hole, curtained off for privacy, and reappearing with obvious relief in well worn shorts. For the first time in my short and sheltered life I realised that priests were human like the rest of us.

Enthusiastic newcomers to the club such as I, would read the contribution to the Club Log Book over and over again and thus one particular entry of the Bishop stuck in my memory. In it he revealed that one cannot, in comfort, climb the "Brant and Slape" whilst smoking a pipe. Pipe smokers of the club beware! Your Bishop warned you many years ago.

On the few occasions when I actually came face to face with the Bishop his enthusiasm and love for the hills was manifest. This enthusiasm was of the infectious variety and drew into the club many like-minded characters (who will ever forget Brother Joe and his Clapham following?). The club courses of the late forties and early fifties were an expression of the inspiration to spread a love of the hills more widely. My own memory of these courses is of a lot of fun and friendship. For my sins and the sins of the coursees I was designated a "leader" which exalted position exposed my limited abilities to a certain amount of derision from one sceptical coursee. Naturally, as he had paid the piper he had an interest in what sort of tune I was playing, which was obviously not among his top ten. My fellow "leader" took revenge for my embarrassment by inveigling the well-built coursee up a chimney rather narrower than his widest statistic, whilst I from below enjoyed the sight of a pair of boots waving in mid-air searching for holds which their owner could not see. It was fun while it lasted but before long my burly customer was back on the end of my rope asking to be taken up impossible (to me) climbs and uttering expressions of boredom with the paltry fare he was offered. Happy days! And I mean that.

Every member will have similar memories of days on the hill — memories of achievement, friendship, peace, sometimes panic or fear; memories which may, in time, turn me into the Club Bore, but before that dreaded day I just want to say one big Thank You to our late president for making it possible for me to stand in that hut doorway — just a few years ago.

Bob Melling

THE CLUB

Between 1946 and 1954, the Climbing Courses were a major event of the Club year and the Bishop was an enthusiastic promoter of them. The prime mover was Brother Joseph, the author of many articles in the early Journals and Bulletins. The account chosen seems to catch so well the spirit and atmosphere of the period.

Reprinted from Bulletin No 2 August 1951

The Achille Ratti Training Courses 1950

The clearest focused view of the Lake District that remains with me of the past season is the sight of Harrison and Melling leaning forlornly across the doorway at Langdale watching the rain. Thus I saw them at the beginning of the year, again at Easter, and Whitsun and finally in August. They appeared to attract rain, for when seen in Company on the Fells they seemed to move in a personal cloud of rain while the others walked in brilliant sunshine. They became a token of bad weather and gradually became blamed for much of the 1950 downpour. Whatever the cause of the rain, it certainly restricted climbing and resulted in an unusually meagre record in the Log Books. Easter and Whitsun were a total washout and the rare entry of a climb often hides a story of soaking exasperation. The only mention of any days' continuous climbing comes from some members who were leading Mountaineering Association Courses in North Wales where for 15 successive days they climbed and walked and swam with comparatively little bad weather. They began with a delightful two day bivouac on the shores of Llyn Llydaw from which base they were able to take in the Snowdon Horseshoe and also climb Horned Crag, Paradise, Black Arete and Red Wall on Lliwedd. Gylder Fach Direct (Winter Finish, Final Flake and Ordinary) made an interesting day, and the magnificent climb on Pinnacle Wall (Craig Yr Ysfa) overlooking the huge Amphitheatre provided a delightful and lasting satisfaction. A Sunday of weeping skies spent on Bochlwyd Buttress and the Gribin was followed by several clear and busy days on the Idwal Slabs, Holly Tree Wall, the Milestone Buttress, the East Face of Tryfan and Craig Yr Ysfa. Returning one glorious evening from the Sub Cneifion Rib, we found to our dismay that Harrison and Melling had taken up resident at Idwal Cottage. Next day of course it poured and we made immediate tracks for the Lake District.

The 1950 A.R.C.C. Summer Courses began with a spate of climbing that did everybody's heart good. The Lancashire Climbing Club allowed us to use their Hut at Tranearth and a resolute attack on Dow Crag accounted for 21 climbs. Next day the party was handed over to Harrison and Melling (still wet from their soaking in Wales). "Sheep to the slaughter," "tempting fate," etc., are expressions too mild to describe the action of the sadistic leader who allowed these two "orphans of the storm" to take a group of well-intentioned beginners over the heights of Harter Fell. The party returned to Tranearth that evening with completely new ideas of

degrees of wetness and had to face an encore the following day when returning over the tops to Langdale. Harrison and Melling were now segregated to Wasdale and a few days of possible climbing weather were enjoyed by the rest of the party in Langdale. Towards the end of the week, however, Harrison and Melling returned from Wasdale with a thumping deluge and further climbing activities ceased forthwith.

The second Course at Wasdale was probably among the most heartbreaking periods in the lives of the leaders. At breakfast the sun would shine, luring us into the false impression that the weather had rained itself dry. As soon as we stood up, the sun disappeared as though switched off by some mechanical means. There then intervened a period when the weather could be anything and the presumption was always that it would keep fine enough for climbing. Presumption was invariably proved to be the correct word. The rain usually held off until the last of the party had been transferred by car to Wasdale Head, by which time the vanguard was at Kern Knotts or the Napes Ridge. Need I mention what happened as soon as the last of the long line of pupils had fairly set foot on the mountain? Is it necessary to go into the dripping details of the wringing retreat when the only view the Lake District seemed to offer was the sight of water filling the footsteps of the person ahead? Five times in a week we were thus treated by the humid heavens. Once, greatly daring, we defied the weather and got the members of the Course started on various climbs over Gable. Our temerity was severely punished for just at the very moment when the pupils were well away from the ground and in the middle of different pitches, such a storm of lightning, thunder and rain was lashed at us to strike terror into the doughtiest hearts. I glanced apprehensively from the top of Slab and Chimney and saw the blurred outline of one faithful leader sitting belayed in mid air, as it were, looking for all the world as though he were fishing the watery depths for his second man. The wet and woeful members of the party were finally shepherded into the various surrounding caves and fed on ginger cake which helped to vivify them sufficiently to reach Wasdale Head where the ever faithful Jack Connolly and Ted Slade were running an automobile shuttle service to and from Buckbarrow. If Wasdale is ever haunted it will be by the spirits of these two drivers rushing along the lake road in phantom cars in order to pick up the 1950 ghostly climbers, their hoary locks streaming with water.

At least one good point emerged from the damp debris of the 1950 Courses and that was the magnificent good feeling shown by all concerned. But life was never more amusing. The more it rained, the more good humour was generated. The gutters may have been awash with the ruins of holidays meticulously planned, but sunshine never left our hearts.

The Man

I have included these two Memorial tributes because they are by the late Founder President himself and provide some insight and colour into his own climbing activities.

In particular, the first tells us a little of his own first mountain adventures; the second fills in some background to both the early days of the C.B.A. and the financial worries following the purchase of Bishop's Scale.

Reprinted from Club Bulletin No. 4 January 1952

Memories of the late Doctor Park, Editor of the A.R.C.C. Journal by Bishop Pearson.

It is now over a year since the death of the Rev. Doctor William Park. Many of the Club members will have met him, whilst others knew him as editor of the Journal. Those that did meet him will not easily forget him, because he was a person who made a friend of you at once and then indelibly impressed his personality on you by his whimsical, adventurous, cultured and highly catholic qualities of mind.

I first met him at the English College in Rome. He was a pioneer of the mountaineering movement there, along with Bishop Halsall, a movement that since it later caught me up in its wake was the remote cause of the founding of the A.R.C.C. I was invited to join him in an excursion over the Adamello and Ortler Groups of the Eastern Alps after my philosophy in 1930. It was then that I discovered that he was an unorthodox climber. He believed neither in preparations nor in equipment. At that stage I was merely ignorant of them. When he was hungry he had the disconcerting habit of sitting down and, like Elias, waiting for Heaven to despatch a crow or two with supplies. Failing the crows I had to deputise, for he just dug in his toes and placidly refused to move until sustenance arrived. Those of us that knew him realise that he was a brilliant philosopher, a philosopher *par excellence*; he was in the face of his hunger being philosophical, and, I used to think, par a good bit too much excellence. However, I soon realised that the organisation of practical details was not part of his temperament and so I supplied the want. It was not that he was feckless but that he moved in realms of thought and fancy and had altogether a Shelleyan touch about him. On the hills, whether over the rough moraines or on the glaciers he always wore ordinary low shoes. he was light on his feet and held heavy boots in abomination. And this was no stupid fad for he was amazingly sure-footed and I never knew him to stumble or flounder or fail to complete his itinerary through want of being conventionally shod.

There were occasions, however, when we nearly failed to complete the planned excursion through sheer ignorance of Alpine technique and lack of equipment. On this particular trip we climbed up into the Presena Pass by using the steps cut by a guide ahead of us, but unluckily for us his party struck off at the Pass for the Presenella Peak whilst our way lay down the other side. We stood in the Pass looking apprehensively down the dizzy slope of the glacier which led, without consolation,

to what the map designated as the Steps of Paradise! I suggested that he should try it first, and (that was another of his traits, he was without guile) he did. Immediately both his feet stabbed the air and he shot down the ice like a polished stone, spinning hilariously like a top, until he began to slow down in the softer snow hundreds of feet below, and to my relief finally stopped and picked himself up. He was too far away for us to communicate by shouting, and anyway I had learnt all that I wanted to know, namely, that the formidable slope was frozen, so profiting by his experience I joined him a few seconds after by the same un-alpinist and undignified but entirely exhilarating method, only without the spinning and the element of hurt surprise that had been the lot of Dr. Park. And here was the joy of his company. His philosophical vein stood up to the test and there were not reproaches or suggestions that he had acted in the role of guinea pig, just good tempered surprise. He was wonderfully tough on these long journeys and many a time displayed calm and amazing grit where I was ready to panic or to give in. He shows this same detached, analytical and undaunted spirit in the face of his many illnesses and right to the end tried to keep going and did not succumb to self pity.

His record of peaks in the Alps and the Appennines is an impressive one, especially when you consider that he more or less wandered up them without elaborate preparation or fuss but much like a child explores a garden that it passionately loves to be in. I have often thought since that the urge for heights when he was in Rome was also partially to be explained by what was discovered later, the tubercular condition of his lungs, so that the air to breathe was part of the powerful attraction for him. He took up skiing at a later date and became reasonably proficient at it. The Terminillo was in easy reach of Rome and he was able to go even alone for a brief respite in the pure and dustless breezes between long periods of gasping in the heavy air of Rome. On one of these trips he found it necessary to leave his room after he had retired to bed for his breviary in the lounge below. Imagine his surprise when he was instantly escorted by two armed guards who stayed with him until he returned to his room. In that curious philosophical vein of his that we have noted before he took it quite for granted, and only on the morrow did he discover that the reason was because Mussolini had arrived and was slumbering in a neighbouring bed.

From Club Bulletin 1963

His Lordship Bishop Pearson has contributed the following tribute to the late Tom Donnelly.

TOM DONNELLY R.I.P.

When I came to Blackpool as a curate to St. Cuthebert's in 1934 and it was discovered that I was an Alpinist, I was quickly introduced to Tom Donnelly. This was the start of a long friendship and in a sense a cause of the founding of the A.R.C.C., because it is true to say that without Tom I should not have had the opportunity in the early days to go to the Lake District, and later on without his advice and backing to have embarked on the ambitious enterprises of buying the Huts.

The great love of Tom's life was his wife Mary, and after that the Lake District. he was a convert to the Faith, and by his reading had a very deep grasp of it. He supported me wholeheartedly that our activities should not be mere escapism, but recreational for the responsibility of Christian life. I never knew him to put pleasure before his duty to his home and his business. This is surely one of his deepest contributions to the Club, because the spirit that makes it is the soul "that goes marching on".

Tom was not a rock climber, but a fell walker and a tireless one in any weather. Snow, ice, mist never held him back from a long day over the Crinkle Crag, Bowfell and Scafell, and it was to these heights that he was attracted in the early days, well into his fifties. His great passion was photography and with his Leica he ruthlessly disciplined Father Bamber and myself into being faceless foregrounds for the beauty of the hills. Of course we revolted, but since Tom had usually provided the transport and could seldom be persuaded to let us share the entertainment when the grind was over, our revolts were stifled from the outset. The memory of those long days is a happy one indeed, because Tom was a good conversationalist and had a very cultured and wide appreciation of music and art, and could converse intelligently on almost anything. He did not like dangerous places, but love conquered fear and he traversed Jacks Rake many a time or roped up with us in the gullies on Pavey Ark in order to get dramatic shots with his camera. When we climbed the Needle Tom would be in more perilous places than us to get his views. he was particularly proud of the photo that he took of the Mass on the summit of Scafell Pike in that darkest hour of 1940 when France had fallen and we were waiting for Hitler's invasion. It was on July 16th, the Feast of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, and Tom will now know whether the Battle of Britain victory that followed, was contributed to by the effort and fervent prayer that went up that day from the first mountain top mass in recorded English History.

Tom was a careful man. I provided the venture, perhaps at times too much venture, and Tom was the brake. Certainly he became apprehensive after the buying of Bishop's Scale. At one time it really looked as though we had exceeded our borrowing power in spite of the generosity of the Diocese. He had need to fear

because he was a Trustee and the only one who had any money! He was very patient and he never let me down. I shall ever be grateful to him for his support and his calmness, and for his example.

The members of today who only knew Tom in the days when his health was failing, can have little idea of what they owe to him. He was the rock in the early days, and the sage in the later days. But he was a fine catholic, a true gentleman in Newman's sense that he never hurt anyone's feelings, and he was a real lover of the hills and the Lake District in particular.

It is the human beings that make a Club and I am happy to recall his memory to you and offer him my gratitude and my constant prayer for his peace with God.

"Bishop buys a mountain"

John Prince, the Editor of the Bulletin was one of Brother Joe's group of the late Forties. The Club had lost the use of the Langdale hut beside the New Hotel in 1951. The Bishop's determination to obtain accommodation in the Valley is clear in this letter. He succeeded quite dramatically a few months later when he bought his mountain and launched the appeal for funds, illustrated by the montage of newspaper cuttings included here.

Jack Whiteside's account somewhat modestly relates what followed and the President's Annual Report for 1961 ends with a reminder of the Club's origins and the Bishop's aims and ideals. This seems a good note to conclude this tribute to our late Founder President.



Reprinted from Club Bulletin No 14 May 1955

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

April 1955

My Dear John,

I do not envy your task of trying to gather material for this Bulletin.

Members of A.R.C.C. develop hooves for the fells rather than the wings of the Muse.

You ask me to write about the early days of the Club. The early part that I wish to hammer home to the members at the moment is the inspiration upon which it was founded. I did feel most vividly, and still do, that the presence of climbers in the valleys, who actually belonged to a Catholic climbing club of good standing, would be fine apostolic work. The natives of the dales are tenacious and religious and only accept new people slowly. The presence in Langdale, Wasdale and at Dunmail of the A.R.C.C. has caused us to be accepted by those with whom we have come into contact for what we are and not for what they have been brought up to believe Catholics might be. In addition, amongst climbers as a fraternity, we are known to be a climbing force and yet not narrow or exclusive. The very fine reputation that we have, has largely been built up by Brother Joseph. We owe it to him and the ideal behind the Club to carry forward to greater strength.

We have the ideal. But that is not enough. We must try to provide more facilities for our members. This year there must be an all out effort to get a place in Langdale. Believe me, that the prompt payment of subscriptions by members and the finding of new members will galvanise us here into frenzied activity. Everywhere I see motorcars with little tags on the windscreen — 'Reduce the Petrol Tax and Cut the Cost of Living'. When members send in their subs, when they write to the Secretary, when they display tags on their rucksacks, let them blazon "Langdale this summer and make the Club worthwhile".

After all, Dunmail is Hostelling and we are Fell Walkers and Rock Climbers — we want to be more in the heart of things.

That is all for now, John. Ad Altiora.

With Greetings and Blessings to all Members

Yours sincerely,

Thomas B. Pearson

Bishop of Sinda,

Founder-President A.R.C.C.

BISHOP BUYS A MOUNTAIN

Lakes 'club' for young climbers

A Lancashire Roman Catholic Bishop with a love for mountaineering has signed a contract to buy a mountain in the Lake District. He intends to secure the land and its farm buildings as a mountain club for future generations.

He is the Rt. Rev. Thomas B. Pearson, Bishop of Sodor, and auxiliary to the Bishop of Lancaster.

Bishop buys Lakeland mountain for youth

A Lancashire Roman Catholic bishop with a love for mountaineering has signed a contract to buy a mountain in the Lake District. He intends to secure the land and its farm buildings as a mountain club for future generations.

Bishop to buy a Lakes mountain

Plans club for youth

A Roman Catholic Bishop with a love for mountaineering has signed a contract to buy a mountain in the Lake District. He intends to secure the land and its farm buildings as a mountain club for future generations.



Bishop Pearson

the club and use of its facilities will be "a love of the mountains"—and it is a right to sleep there.

SHOP IS BUYING LAKE DISTRICT MOUNTAIN

—As young people's climbing club.

ASHIRE Roman Catholic bishop with a love for mountaineering has signed a contract to buy a mountain in the Lake District. He intends to secure the land and its farm buildings as a mountain club for future generations of young people.

He is the Rt. Rev. Thomas B. Pearson, Bishop of Sodor, and auxiliary to the Bishop of Lancaster.

Only qualifications for joining the club and use of its facilities will be "a love of the mountains"—and it is a right to sleep there.

Now he has to find £3,000 to pay for the mountain land and convert the buildings.

"After all," he said at his home in Blackpool today, "I have bought a mountain—rocks, becks, waterfalls and buildings complete—it's a mighty big object to pay for."

A good deal of voluntary labour has already been provided to provide materials to convert century-old stone buildings.



A bishop buys a mountain—"climbing club for youth"

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Only qualifications for joining the club and use of its facilities will be "a love of the mountains"—and it is a right to sleep there.

The Bishop has less than two months to find the money to pay for the mountain land and convert the buildings.

"Because of National Trust interest in the area, the bishop signed a contract for the land as it was the last chance to secure for ever a home for young men and women who seek exercise and beauty in the mountains."

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BISHOP BUYING MOUNTAIN FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

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Only qualifications for joining the club and use of its facilities will be "a love of the mountains"—and it is a right to sleep there.

The bishop has less than two months to find the money for the land, which is situated high by lonely Dungeon Ghyll, in Great Langdale.

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Bishop Is Buying A Mountain As Climbing Club For Young Children

A Lancashire Catholic Bishop with a love for mountaineering has signed a contract to buy a mountain in the Lake District. He intends to secure the land and its farm buildings as a mountain club for future generations of young people.

He is the Rt. Rev. Thomas B. Pearson, Bishop of Sodor, and auxiliary to the Bishop of Lancaster.

Only qualifications for joining the club and use of its facilities will be "a love of the mountains"—and it is a right to sleep there.

The Bishop has less than two months to find the money to pay for the mountain land and convert the buildings.

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Now he has to find £3,000 to pay for the mountain land and convert the buildings.

"After all," he said at his home in Blackpool today, "I have bought a mountain—rocks, becks, waterfalls and buildings complete—it's a mighty big object to pay for."

A good deal of voluntary labour has already been provided to provide materials to convert century-old stone buildings.

The bishop, who in the past has conducted mass on mountain peaks, became fond of mountaineering in his student days.

Now he has to find £3,000 to pay for the mountain land and convert the buildings.

OUR NEED IS URGENT!

PLEASE FILL THIS IN AND SEND IT TODAY

☐ I should like to become a Patron of the Achille Ratti Climbing Club, and I enclose subscription of (£10 or over) In addition I should like to nominate _____ to become a Full Life Member of the Club.

☐ I should like to become an Associate Life Member of the A.R.C.C., and enclose my subscription (£5) which entitles me to be an Associate Member of the Club and to receive news of the Club in the same way as Full Members.

☒ I enclose a donation to the Funds of the Achille Ratti Climbing Club.

SIGNED *Mary M. Smith*

ADDRESS *Tinto House*

Swansea ☐ Tick in the appropriate box

"RAWHEAD" THE CHALLENGE

The Saturday following the news we read in all the papers "Bishop buys a mountain" I received a message from the Bishop to meet him at Rawhead, that was my first sight of our new hut. I was told by him we could move in right away the sooner it was occupied the better. He asked me what we would need, I said "a few bunk beds, a small calor gas stove" and that was it.

The re-building began soon after, but what a great job Mr. Smith and his two workers did to convert it from shippens and two hay lofts. The worst job must have been to lower the floor levels, the original level can be seen as you take the big step up to enter the present drying room.

The committee meetings from then on were almost weekly events mostly held at St. Cuthberts, Crystal Road, Blackpool, on how to raise the money to buy the hut and then the money needed to convert it. Well it was raffles, raffles and more raffles, bring and buy sales, you name it we did them all.

The committee at that time included the late Mr. Donnelly and Eileen Smith (secretary) and Leo "caveman" Brown, Norman Harrison, John Gilmour, Nev and Anita Haigh and myself, but the bishop once told me that most of the money raised was from the clergy. This was at a time when the money was to be found for all the new secondary schools needed in the diocese. This was eased by the government of the time introducing the Covenant Scheme.

The Bishop was heavily engaged in education as you well know but I never knew him to miss a committee meeting.

The spring and summer of 1957 were all working week-ends including holidays, my constant companion at this time was Ronn Hughes (Taff). I must remember Joyce and John Foster, Tom Finney, Jack Case and many more from the Wigan area. Also Brian Fanning, Fr. Cammock, George and Monica Cammock, Derek Price and also my pals Michael Cray, George Brown, Ted Russell, Bernard Carter and John Britt and not forgetting the very many people from the Blackpool area. Also a very special mention to Monsignor Buxton, John Gilmour, Nev and Anita Haigh for all the practical help and advice given to me during the new beginning of the A.R.C.C.

I am proud and honoured to have played my part.

Ad Altiora.
Jack Whiteside

Reprinted from Bulletin, May 1961

ACHILLE RATTI CLIMBING CLUB

18th April 1961

Circular 3/1961

Dear Member,

At the A.G.M. there were approximately 70 members present — I wonder what happened to the remaining 180. Obviously many were unable to attend due to the travelling involved. Perhaps the good weather kept some members away from this important function.

The President's Report is given below for members benefit.

A.R.C.C. Annual Report

'When I look back and think of the heavy burden that lay on my shoulders during the days after the war when the Club had reached its lowest ebb, and especially to the time when it looked as though the financial burden of the Langdale project might crush us out of existence, I am amazed at the prospect that presents itself today. Stout Cortes 'gazing on a peak in Darien' or Hilary or Tensing emerging on to the summit of Everest, can hardly have felt more satisfaction than I feel at the achievement of the Club today. Somehow I feel at last, that what I have worked for has come about. That from dead ashes something new has been born. There is more than a collection of properties, there is spirit; there is a bustle of activity; there is a keenness and a loyalty, there is an Achille Ratti Climbing Club.

In mere functional terms this is expressed by saying that membership at about 230 is higher than ever before; that active membership is almost commensurate with enrolled membership; that through the bulletin, communications are advancing to be good, with promise of very good to follow; that Hut Committees are working with the efficiency of E type Jaguars and almost as fast; that the Constitutions have been published and are there for every member to observe, and see that they are observed by everyone else; that members are interested in every aspect of the Club, and that the use of the huts is such, that since the opening nearly three years ago at Bishop's Scale, there have only been two weekends, Winter and Summer, when there have not been members there. Now it has reached the healthy stage when they have to sleep on the floor, or else suspended in mid air.

All this is to the good. On the reverse side the wave of optimism had clouded the main issue, that there is still a big capital debt. The Club may never have had it so good as Hut committees gloat over their swollen finances, but I myself and the Lancaster Diocese, and chief creditors have never had it so bad. I suggest that the Capital Debt takes its rightful place in the enthusiastic activities of the Club. Again, I am not too sure of the quality of membership. As a Catholic Club that must always be important . . . what manner of men and women you are.

I think that your climbing exploits are good; and I hope that your spirit of adventure is aflame. I don't want to hear of you dropping off crags, but I do want to hear of you sleeping at the base of them, so that you can be ascending the last

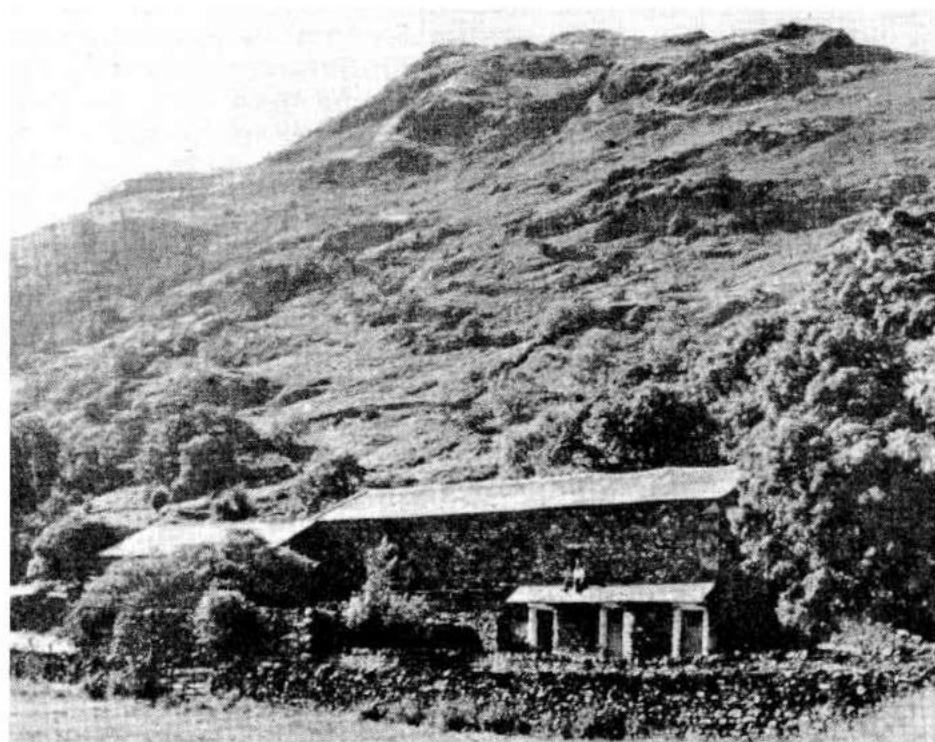
pitch just as the first rays of the rising sun hit the dewy top. Be imaginative and earn the social carousals that you enjoy at nights.

Finally, the A.R.C.C. is not just an ordinary Club. It is always impelled by a Christological urge and it finds unselfish expression in providing at Dunmail a place for youngsters to holiday and learn the spirit of the hills along with their leaders and a priest. Let Dunmail then be the concern of you all just because, in a material sense, you get so little out of it. It too has a Capital debt!

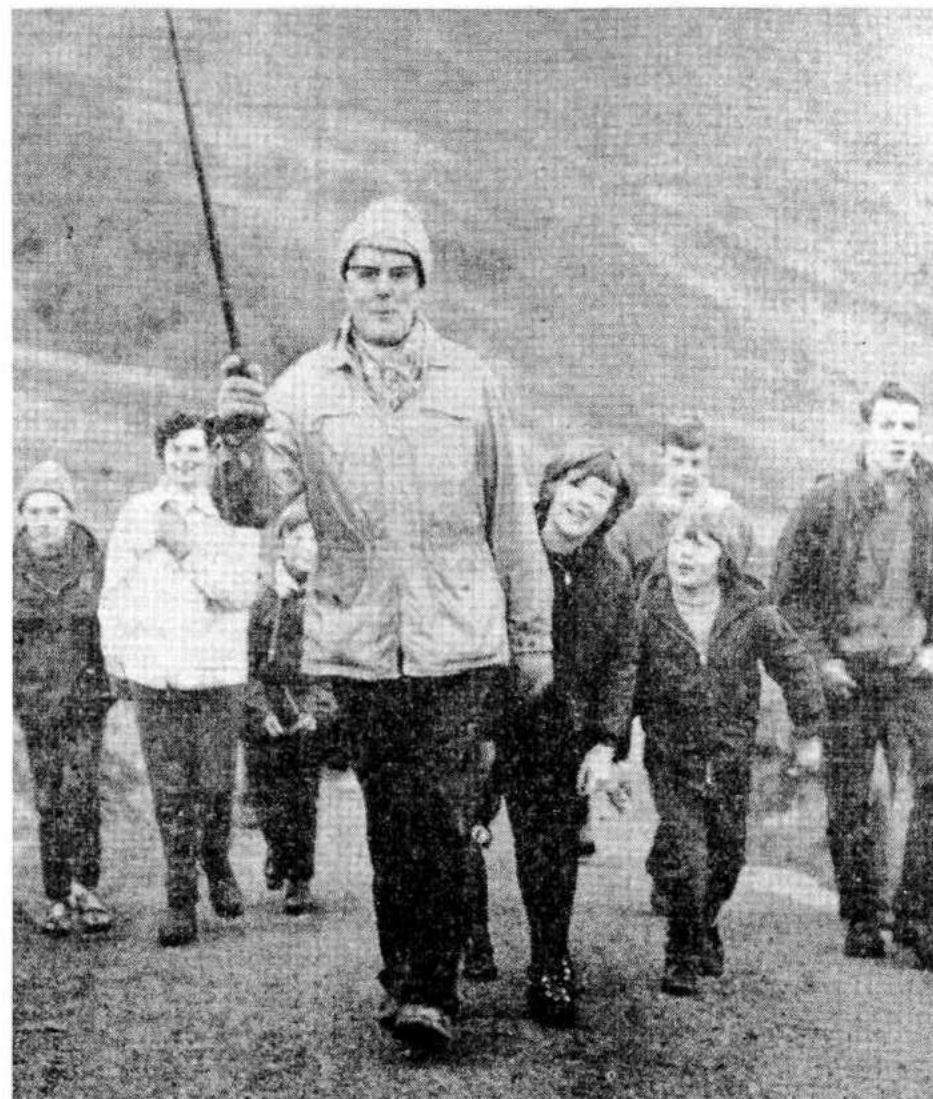
Congratulations and thanks to the splendid team of officers, workers and the members themselves who have made this for me such a memorable year.

Thomas Bernard Pearson
Bishop of Sinda
Founder President

16th April 1961



This former farmhouse was turned into the Achille Ratti club. In the background, the Bishop's mountain.



£8-A-MILE BISHOP. — Among the 600 people who took part in a 15-mile sponsored walk on Sunday to raise funds for a school kitchen at St. Cuthbert's Catholic School, Windermere, was Bishop T. B. Pearson, of Windermere. The Bishop, shown here leading a group in the Langdale Valley, was sponsored to the extent of £8 a mile.

"The Opening",
Aug. 1957.

