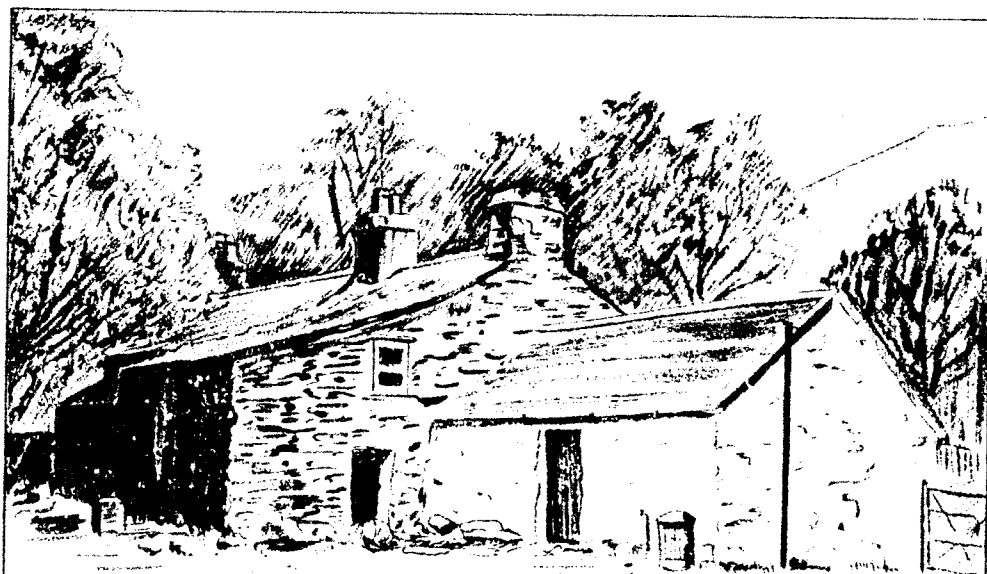


# The **Cumant** Mountaineering ULub



NEWS LETTER

DECEMBER, 1962

E D I T O R I A L

So the season of good cheer is approaching again, and after a sloppy summer we look like having a slippery christmas. Never mind, there may be some snow in Wales for a change.

As we sit in our motionless cars and buses, jammed in the fog and ice bound chaos of a pre-christmas afternoon rush hour, we have plenty of time to ruminate on how we might be better employing our time. It would be nice, for instance, to escape from all this yuletide inspired pandemonium to the peaceful quiet of the hills; but think of all the things that have to be done before the 25th-----

Did we hear somebody say they were going climbing for christmas? How do they find the time? The very best of luck to them, good climbing, and the compliments of the season all round!

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Where the wind from Cwm Idwal, Cwm Llydaw, Cwm Glas,  
Comes welcoming over the scree:-

"Come home, mountain friends, to your Rest on the Pass,  
Come back, mountain climber, to me."

(The Pen-y-pass Song)

September saw the end of an era in the history of mountaineering in Snowdonia, with the death of Mr. Owen of Pen-y-pass.

The name of Owen Rawson- Owen probably means little to the present generation of mountaineers, and the Gorphwysfa (Resting Place) Hotel at Pen-y-pass is mainly known as a rendezvous from which to start the 'Horseshoe' and at which to get tea and buns at the end of the day.

Pen-y-pass has, however, been more to mountaineering than this. Mr. Owen took over the hotel in 1903, enlarged and improved it, and proceeded to establish a tradition of hospitality and mountain 'atmosphere' which proved a source of inspiration to some of the great mountaineers of the age. Mallory, Winthrop-Young, Archer-Thompson; these names and

### PAGE THREE

many others which would be instantly familiar can be found scattered throughout the visitors book.

In many ways, the noisy restless world of 1962 passed Gorphwysfa by, and left it a rare relic of a more gracious age. There was no telephone to bring intrusion into the parlour, and no radio sets, record players or other instruments of mass torture to disturb the flow of conversation in the lounge. And no matter who was in residence, from whichever walk of life they came, the conversation was always easy and familiar. Once within these walls all were mountaineers, and nothing else mattered.

It is too much to expect that the white house on the Pass should remain unchanged under new ownership, but we can at least hope that it will be allowed to remain, as it's tradition demands, the home of the climber.

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Except where otherwise stated, the opinions expressed in this Newsletter are those of the Editor, and are not necessarily endorsed by the Committee.

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### CLUB NEWS

It has been reported to the Committee that stale bread has been left lying around Tyn Lon on several occasions recently. As this sort of thing encourages rats and mice, will members please make sure that their foodstuffs are cleared away before leaving the hut, and that ALL PERISHABLE ITEMS ARE DESTROYED.

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The following regulations have been laid down regarding the letting of Tyn Lon to other clubs:

Exclusive use of the hut by visiting clubs is only

PAGE FOUR

granted on weekends when the Ceunant club has a two day meet elsewhere.

On other weekends, partial lettings may be made to members of other clubs, up to a maximum of twelve.

The hut list, showing all bookings made at Tyn Lon, is on view every Wednesday at the Cambridge. Members intending to use the hut, particularly where a large party is envisaged, are urged to consult this list before finalising their plans.

The Hut Warden, Bill Yale, should in all cases be given as much advance notice as possible when members intend to stay at Tyn Lon.

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Have you heard the one about the judge who only used to listen to the prosecuting counsel and then give his verdict? When asked why he never heard the defence, he said he used to, but found it confused him! It is rather like that with the Tyn Lon drying room equipment. Anxious to get the job as right and efficient as possible, we have consulted numerous authorities as to the best way of going about it. And the more we enquire, the more conflicting and confusing is the advice we get.

Anyway, it looks now as if the drying room will be heated by a 5 kw. fan heater, with some form of air extraction. This is thought to be the most convenient and easily workable system, though the problems associated with pouring dozens of bobs into the meter have still to be considered!

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The Club held a 'party and dance' at the Crown Hotel, Hill Street, on the 8th November. This was our first official function of this type, and it proved to be very successful. There was an excellent attendance, including several members we haven't seen for ages; and with plenty of food and drink and a few party games thrown in, a good time was had by all.

## PAGE FIVE

The idea arose in the first place from the failure of the dancing part of last years annual dinner celebrations; but its success points to the possibility of similar 'home' functions in the future.

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### Members activities      by Tony Daffern

At last the club has an 'Excess' leader. Mike Connelly has had a very successful season, his climbing including Cenotaph Corner, Diagonal and Anthropology in the Pass; The Fang and Barbican at Tremadoc; a number of fine routes on Gimmer and White Ghyll in Langdale; and the difficult routes on the Main Wall at Avon Gorge. These latter included a two day second ascent of the Girdle Traverse of the Main Wall, his second being Mike Manser.

There has been a good deal of activity in the club this summer, which has been marred only by the appalling weather. Many epics have been recorded on the more well known routes in the Pass.

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### Other Notable achievements, 1962

J. Buckmaster	)	Aiguille de Chardonnet; Mont Blanc
P. Hay	)	(Gouter Route); Cardinal and Aiguille
T. Briston	)	de l'M. from Chamonix.

J. Brennan	)	Cioch Direct in the Cuillins.
D. Stokes	)	
R. Jennings	)	

A. Fowler		Lion.
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J. Daffern		Zinal Rothorn from Zermatt. Also attempted The Dom and the Matterhorn but was turned back by bad weather.
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R. Reeves	)	Marmolada and Marte Cristello, in the
Joan Thompson	)	Dolomites.

PAGE SIX

D. Batson		Barbarian, Ogof Direct (with M. Connelly), Kirkus' Route.
W. Martin	)	
M. Walters	)	Cigne D'Arolla, and traverse of Mont Blanc de Cheillon. Attempted Zinal Rothorn, but turned back by bad snow conditions.
W. Yale	)	
B. Jones	)	Completed 3000'ers walk, Bill creating a personal record of 11 hours 17 minutes.
D. Batson	)	
T. Briston	)	
T. Mynette	)	
J. Pettet	)	Climbed 10 peaks in the Oetzal Alps.
C. Wilkinson	)	
K. Rice-Jones	)	
M. Connelly		Dauphine Alps - Superdirect, S. Face Dibona, S. Face Direct, Meije (with R.Cadwallader).
R.Cadwallader		N.Face of the Aiguille de Plan N.Face of the Aiguille de Midi, (with bivouacs) Mere de Glace face of the Grepon.
A. Daffern		Aiguille de Chardonnet. Left Edge, Girdle Traverse of the West (Cloggy).

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Tony Daffern and Gill Haworth were married on 13th  
October, and we wish them all the very best for their  
future happiness.

Their new address is:- The Old Rectory,  
Ipsley,  
Redditch, Worcs.

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CLIMBING NOTES by M.N. King

Despite indifferent conditions, the summer of 1962 has seen a total of twelve new "climbs" (one hesitates to use the word "routes") on Clogwyn d'ur Arddu. This is, to say the least, extraordinary. Most of them are reported as being on the Far East section. Furthermore, the Great Wall in the Vember area has yielded to the doubtful tactics of being abseiled on from above, and then climbed with direct aid from slings left on the way down. This is no doubt exciting indeed for the performer, but if a piece of rock can only be climbed by these sort of tactics, it would be more respectful to leave it alone. One feels a little sorry for people whose standard of climbing is so inordinately high that they have to seek entertainment in this way.

If these reports are correct in the detail so far submitted to the writer, one fervently hopes they will remain unrecognised.

There is without doubt tremendous pleasure and thrill to be had from opening up a new area of cliff or mountainside, and to find an "impossible" looking section of rock going at mild severe standard or less, should be an experience without parallel. For Roberts and Cooke, the finding of such a relatively straightforward climb as Main Wall, Cynr Las, must have been the experience of a lifetime. We are not digressing, merely excusing the desire to climb new rocks - there ain't much left! There's an arete right of Broadwalk - but we don't care - its all we can do to get up the odd "diff" nowadays.

Has anyone done East Gully Grooves lately? There's a line sling jammed in a narrow horizontal crack out to the right - this is the line of "The Shrike" - a Brown effort, which our spies report has not yet had a second ascent. How about it?

The report by our friend C.T.J. on Castell Cidwm ay Lyn Cwellyn in the last C.C. Journal doesn't seem to have awakened much desire to visit the spot. The routes don't

PAGE EIGHT

appear to have been tried more than the once, and the name doesn't mean anything when raised over a pint pot; except to the Cromlech Club. We may be misinformed, but "the find of the year" 1961 hasn't been found in 1962. How about leaving the Pass and its Corner to the masses - no disrespect to our members who have climbed this long and hard pitch - and climbing in an atmosphere remote from the road and other parties?

Lliwedd has been visited this year. A great place this, it is marvellous to wander alone on the West Buttress whilst ones friends are attempting the Central Gully Direct. (They failed, as have many other strong parties apparently). One can stroll anywhere on this West Buttress (unlike another West we know of), but to do a guide book route, such as the glorious Rocker Route, demands a flair for route finding and "guide book anticipation"! Locate the start of this route, then throw the guide book away and climb the crag. This should tax the mountaineering powers of anyone limited at V.Diff standard. But we are digressing this time.

Someone, we were about to say, has climbed direct the right wall of Slanting Gully by way of some overhangs and a piton, linking up with the right hand Buttress climb. Not very noteworthy we are told, but who knows? Go and see.

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So, in the same year, the Eigerwand has killed two Britons and two others have climbed it, in apparently extraordinarily good conditions. A noble achievement but - why encourage all the Press hullabaloo? In a "thank you" letter for our hospitality, Don Whillans wrote - "So Chris and Ian have climbed the Nordwand. I sincerely hope the craze to throw away lives will stop, now 'the first Briton' has climbed the face." We need say no more. Sympathy and congratulations in the same breath. Not good.

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Who is this "old man Rebuffat"? This old man has a route made this year, VI Sup., on the Cima Grande - no details.

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Where does one "bivvy" on the Girdle of the Pinnacle, Cloggy? Behind Pinnacle Flake no doubt! For this route took a couple of days originally! Anyway the details are available from Sheffield University M.C.

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Red Slab is decorated with rotting slings this year. It is not clear whether the "written up" way is that originally taken by Streetly. Some say that Brown's ascent took a line much further left - not that we hold more than a passing interest ourselves mind - but there are rumours in Ceunant Club circles.

Rumours again, this time that the left hand arete of the Left Wall, Corner Dinas Cromlech, has been led.

Anyway, a girl has climbed Cemetary Gate - so let's move on.

The East Face of Tryfan is a good place to lose someone you don't want. Just solo up by the Quarter Gully Ribs and find a nice deep groove - sit in it and smoke contemplatively for twenty minutes and you will be alone. Then clamber up and admire the Terrace Wall. What a nice line the long so-called "Chimney" makes. Why this criss-crossing of routes on this lovely wall? The Variant takes the moves of least resistance. Good. The Bastion is excellent - the Central Route crack goes nowhere, the Linear Climb is the best. Straight upwards and well held on roughest rock - dispense with the rest.

Lean comfortably on the flake in the middle of the ordinary traverse and take a look across at the side wall of Central Buttress. See that curve of Bubbly rock? What a pity that North Side Route is dislocated so many times and requires a blind left eye. I doubt if that piece of rock ever sees the sun and the climbing is Hard Severe if not V.S.

There is a lot of rock on this mountain - good, grey rough stuff where it has been steep enough to have avoided heavy traffic, not serious but friendly; as Edwards says

"A good place for talking". Talk your way over the Central Block Milestone, then. Notables have been extended here, notables who have likewise been "harassed" on Suicide Groove and won't attempt Suicide Wall. Why are the very hard climbs at Ogwen so neglected? Mur-y-Niwl is a magnificent sensational wall, rivalling Clogwyn d'ur Arddu's Pinnacle. Clogwyn Ddu well positioned high in the Nameless Cwym, boasts a semi-artificial climb. There is an obvious chimney break in the cliff, narrowing downwards to a crack and then, unfortunately, dropping off altogether into space. One has to creep up on this route from the side, regrettably, tramping around in slings and things. Anyway, it's a good line, begging to be reached. Anyone care to try direct from below?

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"As much hill walking as possible should be done in all weathers, for it helps to develop stamina and mountaineering sense" - quote, S.M.C. Journal - Modern Scottish Winter Climbing. How about that then? A few good trudges in preparation for the winter season? Snow should be good this year.

Ice climbing is well into its "mechanised" era. On vertical ice it is accepted practise to use a high piton and long sling to support the weight whilst climbing. With such "tricks of the trade" have things like Gardyloo Buttress and Orion Face direct been climbed in conditions of hardest ice by Robin "Wheek" Smith and Jim Marshall. Thinking of trudges, by the way, our 3,000ers meet saw a bit; notably one gent getting inside 12 hours. What a long way it is from Llewellyn to Foel Fras! It's funny how it was never written up in the hut log - does it perhaps compare with the 3,000ers effort of a visiting club written therein? Never mind, we can't all be keen.

Talking of "getting a move on" in the hills, the Cuillin Main Ridge is down to 4 hours 33 minutes. Not that this sort of competition has anything to do with future mountaineering or any other mountaineering for that matter, though if it catches on, it will no doubt have a great deal to do with future accidents.

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"...how impossible it is to escape the march of progress. Mountaineer scientists, tiny embryonic Slessers, lurk behind every chockstone" - so wrote Tom Patey after coming across bathygraphic surveyors in Torridon. But, despite the crowds, there are some big cliffs hereabouts which were explored by Patey and Bonnington - visual XS climbs turning into tactile Difficults - good stuff, let's go. If its too bad to climb we can always knock off a few more Munros from the 277.

Arran is a delectable isle and has provided several more climbs this year. Even the Cobbler is mentioned amongst the New Route write-ups for Scotland, but the Scottish find, of course, over the last year or two, is that unpronounceable slab around the Glen Etive side of the Buachaille. Call it Etive Slab, but I should think it's worked out by now - Whillans was there in the spring.

That mecca of British mountaineering, however, the Isle of Skye (had we ink of gold we should pen the name thereby) has provided the odd route, though alter that adjective, when referring to Bonnington's fabulous King Cobra of Mhie Coinnich. Superlatives only describe this magnificent way we are told. Two years old now, it was repeated this year.

There is so much to do and no time to do it in.

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TIMELESS TALE by R. Costello

Eye half open. Light through fabric, bright, yellow. Damned dawn. Close eye, bag warm. Another hour. Two hours.

Mound alongside moves. 'Whasser time?' Don't answer. Asleep.

'WHATEVER TIME IS IT?' Hell. 'Five o'clock' That'll fool him.

Didn't. Scuffling, gettings up, elbows in back. Deeper into bag. Warm, cosy, dozey --- he in crevasse,

PAGE TWELVE

swinging from prusik loop; huge yeti nibbling through rope, foaming at mouth, yellow foam, red eyes. Gong of death keeps time, clang, clang, CLANG!

'Porridge ready'. Ugh. Yeti vanished.

. . . Must make a move. Yes, must. Struggle from bag. Grope for boots. Wont go on, loosen laces, still no go. Change feet, better; heave, wrench, on. Shirt. Where shirt? Under bag? In sack? Fumble through sack. No. Clobber everywhere, no shirt. Thought, wearing shirt.

Now for breeches. Ghastly thought. Breeches over boots? Have to try. Half on, jammed over heels. Heave. No go, better remove. Can't, jammed. Undo boot laces, then. Can't, jammed under breeches. Panic, trussed like chicken. Foully trussed, ha, ha. Must do something. Hop round tent, frantic, grasp, grapple, pull, push . . . they're off! Collapse on bag, exhausted.

'Good lord, aren't you up yet?'

My friend, you are very near death.

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MEET REPORTS

THE RIVALS 5th - 7th October by I.D. Corbett

For once in a while the weather relented, and an excellent turn out of 30 members and guests had a most enjoyable and wholly dry week-end on our first meet to the Llein Peninsula.

The camp site, about one mile from the Trevor headland, was almost idyllic. A few feet from the tents the field fell sharply away to a shingly beach and blue sea. Far to the right the sandy arc of Caernarvon bay and Anglesey showed mystically through a light haze.

Indeed, the only hindrance to perfect peace and beauty was the Trevor Quarry, which, besides being an eyesore, periodically unleashed a barrage of bangs which shattered the

still air and set the earth trembling beneath the tents.

After the climbing section of the party had got over the initial shock of finding that they had to walk two miles to the foot of the crags, they set off early on Saturday along the beach.

The climbing in the area is mainly confined to the Five Buttresses overlooking the sea at Trwyn-y-Gorlech. Despite the description in "Where to climb in the British Isles", the possibilities were found to be limited due to vegetation.

Most of the climbing was done on number 5 buttress.

The walking party set out much later. Most of them had no very clear idea where they were going except that they were following Dave Batson who had the air of knowing the way.

The first part of the route led over very low sea cliffs, with here and there isolated stacks standing offshore which were the home of many cormorants. The huge birds, silent and statuesque, engaged everyone's attention as they would suddenly swoop into the water with scarcely a ripple, disappear completely, and pop up many yards away. Later in the day, a pair of seals was seen near the spot.

Eventually, after a stretch of bouldery beach, the 'track' led up again, and began to traverse the headland. It was here that Dave began to lose his party, since steep smooth grass slopes topping 100 foot cliffs rising vertically out of the sea didn't appeal to everyone. Some went up, some went back and Batson went on. The way everyone wanted to avoid at all costs was down. One of the 'up' parties found the going on loose rock even tougher than Batson's traverse, not to mention nearly ending up in the quarry workings.

On Sunday morning most of the 'tigers' decamped and headed for Tremadoc, having got tired of digging their way up the five buttresses. The only climbing activity on the

headland seems to have been an ascent of 'Eifel Tower' on Buttress 5.

Walking parties were again out in strength however, some covering the lower peaks of Y Garn Dhu and Y Garn Goch to the east of the headland, and others, mainly those who didn't make it the day before, The Rivals themselves. The traverse of these two peaks is an ideal outing for anyone wanting a gentle, short day with a view thrown in. For the archaeologically minded, the magnificent Iron-Age ruins on Tre'r Ceiri, on the lower peak, are well worth a visit, and one can sit on the ancient ramparts, munching sandwiches and imagine wood-painted Celts sweating up from the valley to bring news of the latest Roman advance!

Back at the camp, it was apparent that sea, sky and sun had had a partial triumph. Three of the party were lolling on lilos in front of their tents, reading bits of the Observer, and listening to a portable, tuned to a suitably pianissimo level.

Everything was almost perfect. But Birmingham was over four hours away, and there was nothing for it but to strike camp and get on the road.

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TYN LON WORKING PARTY MEET 3/4th NOVEMBER by Bill Yale

It was on this week-end that Tyn Lon saw what was probably the biggest invasion since the last Annual Dinner meet, approximately three dozen members and guests attended the Working Party and Guy Fawkes celebrations. The hut almost burst at the seams. An absence of tents was conspicuous, but it was not the typical Welsh weather which drove all the would-be campers indoors but the hazards accompanying the earthworks and tree-felling operations which were in progress.

The organisation of such a large working party proved to be quite a task, but a tremendous amount of work was carried out. It appeared that some members were permanently employed on washing up!

PAGE FIFTEEN

The earthenware drain was exhumed, backfilled with sand, and bridged with slate slabs so that cars (perhaps with one exception) may now be parked at the rear of the cottage without the risk of disappearing into a "crevasse". One broken pipe was discovered during the excavations and this was duly repaired and haunched over with concrete.

The tree, which split in a storm one week-end and has caused consternation among campers with it's groans ever since, was not completely felled, but most of its "sails" were taken off, and it is now considered to be reasonably safe. In the course of this operation we were treated to an exhibition of how not to abseil by A. Westwood, who nearly hung himself in the process.

Work proceeded on the drying room and a ceiling of insulating board has now been added.

The kitchen in the old part of the cottage showed considerable improvement after Fred's skilful use of plaster and trowel.

The danger of acquiring neat little holes in heads has now been eliminated by Mike Connelly who made a very effective job of putting up a ceiling in the attic dormitory, thereby covering the projecting slating nails.

Ron Bearman put into practice his idea of making a window in the door of the new dining room, and this has made quite a big difference to the amount of light in this part of the cottage. Ron achieved a minor triumph by managing to keep his kit of tools intact for two whole days against all comers. All he lost was a pencil.

After stentorian efforts by Harold Jupp, a flue pipe was fixed into the stove in this room and although the fixing of the stove itself was not completed fires may now be lit in it without having to remove the iron sheet which blocked the mouth of the chimney. This effort was not without its engineering difficulties, and at one point Harold had to be restrained from dropping the pipe down the chimney on a rope!

PAGE SIXTEEN

Basil overcame the difficulties which had thwarted the previous working party and neatly completed the waste water outlet from the showers.

Butchery began on the controversial timber which had lain in the kitchen for so long. It had previously been decided that this timber should be used, after all, for the purpose for which it has been purchased - i.e. for food storage "pigeon holes".

In addition to all this, numerous small jobs were carried out and the dormitory in the old part of the cottage is now almost ready for its first coat of paint.

It had been hoped that we might once again make an attempt to cure the leaking outhouse roof at its junction with the main wall of the cottage but, unfortunately, the proper materials were unobtainable. Something will certainly have to be done about this before we can hope to have an efficient drying room, as water now runs down the stone wall into the drying enclosure.

We have gone a very long way towards completing the task which we set ourselves when we bought Tyn Lon but there still remains a lot to be done. The old part of the cottage is now quite habitable but its condition can be improved a lot. Any weather-bound member may do quite a lot towards making the attic dormitory more pleasant by filling in some of the holes in the walls with small stones and grouting them in. The lintel over the small window, in particular, needs attention. Some cement will be found in the drying room and the sand is outside near the iron gate.

May I offer my sincere thanks to all those members and guests who helped to make this working meet such a successful one.

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The bonfire party which took place on the Saturday night was organised by Tony Fowler, and indeed the success of the entire meet was due in no small measure to his efforts (or to the large barrel which had appeared in the old dining room). Thanks are also due to Mary King and Val Yardley for organising the food.

Unfortunately the bonfire and fireworks were a "washout".



## PAGE SEVENTEEN

The lumberjacks had provided plenty of fuel, but the attempt to ignite the sodden logs in the pouring rain failed dismally. However, the high jinks in the common room seemed to compensate adequately for this, and as the festivities heightened even a member noted for his sobriety became highly infected with the party spirit. A very much respected pillar of the club was lost for two hours, and fearing that he had blown himself up in an attempt to light the bonfire (he was last seen with a can in his hand muttering something about procuring some inflammable liquid) a search party was organised - presumably to look for the bits. He was found almost immediately, intact, asleep in his car.

When morning came the floors of Tyn Lon were littered with bodies (singly and in pairs) which had remained where they had fallen the previous night.

The problem of the unused fireworks remained. Since they had been bought with communal funds, it was decided that contributors should take their share away with them. Unfortunately, nobody seemed to want any. A large bagful remained, and someone suggested having another party on a subsequent Saturday; but it was felt that to fill the air with rockets on any weekend other than November 5th would be to invite the attention of every rescue party in the valley! Not to mention the possibility of the logs lining the car park drive-in being dug up for use on the bonfire.

So - want any fireworks?

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### Other Meets

Two members motored to Millstone on 18th November, decided it was too cold to get out of the car and motored home again! There is hope from this region, however, as three people who went up the day before the meet discovered some likely looking crags not far away which might merit another visit sometime.

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The only report we have had from the Burbage meet, 2nd December, is that it was cold, foggy, windy and not very pleasant. Since the weather ruled out any serious climbing, most of those present went hiking for the day.

THE SOUTH FACE (DIRECTISSIME) OF THE MEIJE  
by R.G. Cadwallader

"Bivouacs are seldom necessary in the alps but it is often preferable to sleep out rather than face the horrors of a crowded hut." F.S.Smythe.

The Promontoire hut is a wooden box with 16 places, 500 ft up a low lying spur of the Meije. On July 23rd last year Mike Connelly, Mike Richmond and myself shared it with 39 rowdy Frenchmen. We had hoped for an early night. After "moving over" several times as more people arrived we registered a slight protest; this started an argument that lasted several hours and with odds of 13 to 1 we could not win. We eventually dozed off at about midnight. Three hours later we picked our way through the mass of bodies on the floor and went out into the moonlight. The sky was clear and it looked like being a good day.

From the hut a steep loose gully led down to the glacier, and the only sounds for the next hour were the crunch of crampons in the crisp snow. At last we were at the bergschrund handing over unwanted axes and crampons to Richmond who took them back to the hut for us.

For 400 ft. we moved together on easy ground, from now on the route would be a direct line up, the face to the summit. We were amazed to discover two Germans here who had obviously taken Smythe's advice. Both parties set off to take the lead fearing that the others would hold them up, and in this way several hundred feet of 'severe' climbing was quickly covered. We were just ahead when, at one third of the way up, the difficulties increased. At the top of a vertical crack came a "delicate pendulary mantleshelf" which I was glad not to lead. I next found myself 'off route', and retreating from the top of a steep wall proved difficult as one of the few holds had broken off under my foot on the way up. The next pitch was little better; I sat in the bottom of a chimney with chunks of ice falling on my head while Mike solved the problem. He started with a lay back on a sling doubled through a peg, from this position he loosed the sling with his left hand in order to grab a hold on a ledge level with his left ear, moved his right hand over to this ledge and mantleshelfed up. I was happy to finish that pitch.

## PAGE NINETEEN

After 200 ft. of easier climbing we came to a substantial ledge traversing the face at mid-height. We later found that the Germans gave up at this point.

Route finding was difficult and we lost much time here. At last we found the way, but the climbing now was delicate and exposed with few places for rest. Four to five hundred feet of this brought us under an overhang, a short traverse right revealed a further 800 ft. of vertical wall above. It was now 3.30 p.m., this could mean a bivouac on the face. Fortunately there was an easy ledge leading to the left and we were able to make better progress on the left hand edge of the wall. It was strenuous climbing and we were both tired when we arrived at the top at 5.10 p.m. We understood now why the Meije was the mountain chosen for the badge of the Club Alpin Francais.

After an hour at the top for rest and food, and of course the view, we started down. The daylight slipped gradually away and it was dusk by the time we were half-way down the ordinary route. After a 70 ft. rappel in pitch darkness we once more agreed with Frank Smythe and found a reasonable bivouac site. The night quickly passed with the aid of numerous pieces of chocolate and we were meeting the first parties starting out on the traverse of the mountain at 5.00 a.m. At 8 o'clock we were back in the wooden box where Richmond was waiting with numerous mugs of much-needed coffee.

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## PROFESSIONAL MOUNTAINEERING

by M.N. King

The spread of professional mountaineering is upon us, increasing season by season. A certain well known body is setting up a Permanent School in the Lake District. Adequate, indeed comfortable livings are being made by several hundred people; local guides, 'school' directors', their employees etc., and conventional incomes are every year supplemented by weeks and sometimes months spent instructing at mountain schools and centres. The mountain schools are constantly 'selling' to local educational authorities throughout the country, the idea of adopting mountain training as part of the physical curriculum for selected candidates. These people, introduced to the mountains by professionals, seeking

further professional instruction, are the "clubmembers of tomorrow." Their outlook is considerably different to that of the club and self trained amateur.

The professionals, moreover, are the example to which all climbers should aspire, their methods are the correct ones, no other views should be held than theirs. All mountain craft, despite the fact that principles have not superficially altered from those adopted throughout the ages by amateurs, should now be based on professional principles. This no doubt would be a good thing, except for the fact that the professional 'bodies' themselves cannot agree on anything; in fact, the opinions passed by one particular school of another, are, to say the least, abusive.

There are signs, also, of professional organisations seeking authority for 'a controlling influence' on the sport. Following a regrettable accident to members of a school party, statements were issued condemning "non-professional" instruction for beginners and school children.

Accidents in the Welsh Hills have been the subject of remarks in the Press by professionals involved in the rescue, remarks which have appeared to be critical of the victims carelessness and errors of judgement. Does this not infer that, with proper professional instruction, the accident would never have happened?

The spread of 'professionalism' is real and, in time, all club climbers will have been professionally trained. It isn't too far fetched to foresee an era of 'Certificates of Competence' and 'Licences to Climb!'

Certain aspects of the matter are still in our hands. Guides Certificates are issued by the British Mountaineering Council, a 'council' of amateur clubs, of which we are a member. However, anyone can set up a 'mountain school' and be fairly confident of custom. One reason why they can expect custom, of course, is that many clubs will only open their ranks to experience and competence.

Professional mountaineering, not just guiding, is here to stay.

Think on it.

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