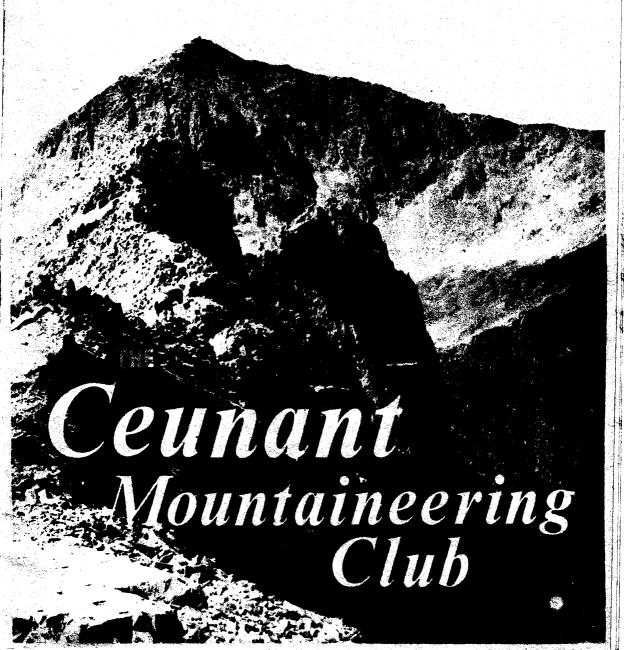
NEWSLETTER

JUNE, 1964



EDITORIAL

A complaint was brought before the committee recently about the behaviour of certain members at the Annual Dinner. During the dinner, and particularly when the Club's speaker arose to reply to the guests a steady stream of projectiles were hurled from certain quarters of the room.

The shooting was generally poor, probably due to the amount of liquor imbibed by the gentlemen concerned, and the hail of wet serviette balls aimed at Roger Lavill did nothing except make watery splodges on the wall behind him (although the chairman was later observed to fish one out of his lap). However certain members and their private guests were hit (probably by mistake), and they, like Queen Victoria, were not amused.

There are several angles to be considered when a problem like this arises. In the first place, nobody seriously expects a Mountaineering Club annual dinner to be like a Vicarage tea party. On the other hand, some clubs have been banned from hotels in North Wales following the furniture being broken up; this leading to complaints to the B.M.C., and so on. Somewhere between these extremes lies what can reasonably be tolerated, and undoubtedly our moderate display of high spirits came well within the safety region. Nevertheless, to say, as some people have done, that they would do the same again given the chance, even though they knew they were causing annoyance, shows a sad lack of consideration for other people's feelings.

Then again, what were our guests thinking about it all? We don't know, but the twinkle in the eye of our distinguished principal guest never disappeared. Who knows, perhaps he would have welcomed the opportunity of throwing some of the missiles back?

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Since the missile slingers were among the younger members and the objectors among the elders, it was seriously suggested that we should have two dinners, one a merry-everything-goes razzle in North Wales, and the other a solid, staid banquet in Birmingham. This sounds like an attempt to split the club into two factions, and as such cannot possibly succeed. We have no doubt that old and young would attend both functions - and take their serviette balls along, too.

In any case there is nothing new in all this, as the complainants seemed to think. The editor has distinct recollections of a dry biscuit whistling past his ear at the Dolbadarn function the year before and of the respected, long serving member of the committee who threw it!

Obviously, on these occasions, a reasonable standard of behaviour is expected from members. Equally obviously, people are not going to sit around in solemn silence all the evening as if they were in a doctor's waiting room. The only danger seems to be that the fun, once started, might get out of hand, and since no official action is comtemplated by the committee it might be as well to close the matter by asking members to bear in mind:

- a) The annual dinner is the main official function of the year, at which the club is 'on show' to its guests;
- b) Even wet paper and brussels sprouts can damage party dresses and suits, and in a large mixed company there will always be someone who doesn't find these juvenile frolics very funny.

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Talking about party dresses, etc., why is it that every year one or two people turn up at the annual dinner dressed in climbing gear and mountaineering boots? Do they imagine they are making a protest against formal convention, or is it just too much trouble to do what everybody else does, and pack a suit or sports jacket for this special occasion. This may seem a niggling point, but these gentlemen look just as out of place at an hotel dinner party wearing old pullovers and vibrams as they would climbing on Tryfan in a lounge suit.

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

Publications Editor: I.D. Corbett, 420, Shirley Road, Birmingham, 27.

CLUB NEWS

FORTHCOMING OUTDOOR MEETS

July 10th-12th	LLANBERIS	Tyn Lon. Pre- alpine training. Leader, D. Stokes.
August 14th-16th	CRAIG-YR-YSFA	Camping in Cwm Eigiau and possibly hut. Leader, J. Buckmaster.
August 30th	WATER-CUM-JOLLY	Day meet. Climbing and walking. Limestone cliff on river Wye between Millers Dale and Cressbrook. Leader, P. Hay.
September 4th-6th	LANGDALE	Achille Ratti hut or camping. Leader, J.Daffern.
September 18th-20th	CWM SILYN	B.A.I. hut or camping. Leader, R.Lavill.
October 4th	STONEY MIDDLETON	Day meet. Free climbing, pegging and walking. Leader, A.Daffern.

The Dolomites evening, which was advertised for Wednesday, May 6th, failed to materialise, and we apologise to those members who, following the advertisement in the last Newsletter, made a special

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effort to be on time, only to hang around for most of the evening waiting for news as to what was going to happen.

In fact, the film which was supposed to have been booked turned out to be not available, but unfortunately this was not made known.

LOCKING-UP AT TYN LON

The first arrival at the working party on the Friday night after Whitsun found half the lights in the cottage on at the switches, the water not turned off at the main, and the backdoor unbolted.

Will all users of the cottage please carry out the following check-list before leaving:-

On no account should perishable food be left lying around.

Tins should be burnt, flattened, and placed in the dust-bin.

Leave the cottage as clean and tidy as you would wish to find it, and before departing:

- 1. Turn off calor gas at the cylinders.
- Flush W.C. well and sprinkle Harpic in pan.
- 3. Turn off water at stop-cock (in the footpath in front of the cottage under the washroom window).
- 4. Rake out fires.
- 5. Lock coal shed, and bolt back gate.
- 6. Bolt windows and draw curtains.

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- 7. Switch off all lights and then shut off electricity at main switch (in the cupboard by the window in the living room).
- 8. Lock all doors.

PROSPECTIVE MEMBERS

As from June 17th, prospective members making their first application will be required to pay the sum of ten shillings. If they carry on and become full members, this payment will be regarded as being on account of their first year's subscription. If, however, they do not become full members within one year, the payment will be forfeited, and a further ten shillings will become due.

It is regretted that if anyone sent their money to the Treasurer at the address quoted in the last newsletter it went astray.

Tony Mynette's present address is:

20, Danzey Grove, Kings Norton, Birmingham 31.

New Members

G.M.R. Ladell, 14, Welwyndale Road, Sutton Coldfield.

H.F. Castle, 52, Leominster Road, Sparkhill, Birmingham 11.

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Mike and Rita Connelly have asked for space in this Newsletter to say how delighted they were with the Ewbank they received from the Club as a wedding present, and to thank everyone who contributed.

MEET REPORTS

ANNUAL DINNER, MARCH 14th by M.E. Connelly

There was a change of venue for this year's feasting and novelties, from the more familiar Dolbadarn in Llanberis to the Prince Llewellyn Hotel at Beddgelert.

Perhaps it should be said right away that this change did not turn out for the better. Far greater numbers attended than anticipated, in point of fact, seventy-five bodies were crammed into a dining room normally seating only fifty. Consequently, and in spite of the scurryings of Buntie Smith and her staff, the service to all points was not as smooth as might be desired. Beer and wine were not easily come by at the table, but again, it cannot be denied that the hilarious effects of copious quantities on a large number of people were apparent early during the meal.

We were delighted to welcome as our guests, Capt. S. Livingstone Learmonth, J.P. who needs no introduction to anyone who visits the Tremadoc cliffs; Mr. F.A. Smith, F.R.G.S. from the Merseyside Mountaineering Club, and Don Roscoe of Rock and Ice fame who was also principal speaker.

Mike Kerby was first on his feet to speak, and introduced these guests in his traditionally fine style. Modestly and wittily, and in a manner made famous by Manchester plumbers, Don Roscoe replied, holding our rapt attention

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for over half an hour. His discourse ranged from 'peaks that were still virgins' to lesser mortals who were not.

When at last, amidst a hail of sprouts and soppy serviette balls, Roger Lavill rose to wind up the official oratory for the evening, one might perhaps have been forgiven for wondering if the mood of buoyancy and humour would be sustained. Dead pan, Roger played it cool, and kept one and all helpless in their seats, talking, as far as I can remember, about of all things, a meat pie purchased in Llangollen.

The formalities over, there was a mass exodus to the bar. The Captain chatted amiably about Willy Bicycle, Jack Parket got the Folk Songs going, and the bitter ran out. This might have been an opportunity to sing "Where has all the Flowers gone", but by now wits had become well numbed.

Discussions raged, and one fancies that certain of the elders were not amused over the mixed vegetable battle which took place during the meal. One 'elder' member challenged Peter Holden to a duel, or perhaps it was just a fight, but withdrew the invitation when it seemed probable that it was going to be accepted.

When finally, in the small hours, energies spent, a motley array of vehicles left Beddgelert at a great rate and with much noise, and wound their weaving ways back to the hut.

It is understood that Chris' folly, a hole in the wall in the Gwynant, has been repaired and is ready for his next attempt.

TYN LON WORKING PARTY 23rd/24th MAY by Bill Yale

Right from the start it seemed there was a hoodoo on the job of water-proofing the roof of the cottage. The drums of "goo" had long since arrived at Tyn Lon, but it awas assumed that the other half of the material - a roll of reinforcing fabric - was still floating about on British Railways. All attempts to locate it had failed, and so a second lot was despatched, and duly received at "Fred's place" in Birmingham. The non-arrival of the first lot, complete with typical Welsh weather, thwarted our attempt on the job on the Annual Dinner week-end.

At last we thought everything was ready, and a small working party, consisting of nine members and guests, was organised for the main purpose of doing this particular job. On the Saturday morning it looked as though rain might again foil our attempts, but it soon cleared, and we awaited the arrival of Fred. He was rather late because it appeared he had forgotten the fabric and had to turn back for it!

It was about midday when Fred made the ghastly discovery - the drums contained the wrong type of "goo". A frantic telephone call to the suppliers in Chester confirmed this. They also assured us that tyey closed at 2.0. p.m. on Saturdays. It seemed we were again doomed to failure.

Ivor Corbett saved the day. At 12.30, he and Fred set off on a desperate drive to Chester with three 5 gallon drums of wrong "goo" in the boot of his car. We had little hope of his succeeding but he did, and just after 4.0 p.m. they arrived back at Tyn Lon with three 5 gallon drums of the right "goo", propped up on the back seat, surrounded by old sacking and anoracs. Thanks to Ivor the job was done after all, everyone having a go at some time or another which explains the black figures which were seen prowling about the village. A bonfire was afterwards made of all the ruined clothing.

A report would be appreciated on the effectiveness (or otherwise) of this repair from any members who happen to be at Tyn Lon during, or just after, heavy and prolonged rain. Signs of moisture should be looked for in the following places:

- 5) The notorious wall at the junction of the older part of the cottage with the outhouse, in the vicinity of the drying room.
- ii) The wall and ceiling in the dormitary in the older part of the cottage, above the staircase where the new plastering has been done.
- iii) The outside wall (on the inside, of course!), near the communicating opening between the two kitchens.

Among other jobs which were done on this weekend, were the replacing of some of the missing roof
slates and freshly broken window panes, the fixing
of the newly acquired fire extinguishers, and the
completion of the painting of the new food shelves.
In the housework department, Laura made all the old
pots and pans in the kitchen sparkle almost as good
as new.

The coal store, being on the verge of complete collapse, caused by sheep wandering over its roof to get to the Tyn Lon pasture, was repaired as well as possible. By building up the wall and replacing some of the wire fencing, the sheep were, as far as we know, prevented from doing further damage. However, we found that they could not be deterred by any obstacle from getting to the grass of Tyn Lon's camping ground, and as we prefer the grass to be cropped short, anyway, one of their routes from the Churchyard was still left open to them. The suggestion has been made that we incorporate a new coal store in the porch which it is proposed to build eventually around the entrance to the outhouse.

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As always on these working parties, may I thank all who took part, and this applies especially to Ivor, for his gallant effort.

CWM BOCHLYD 29th - 31st May by Fred Price

The meet got off to a slow start, with only one tent at the Camp site on Friday night. An eminent club member, who had hoped to creep into somebody's tent, had to bivvy out. Luckily it was fine, but he complained of being trampled over at 4 a.m. by a party from a nearby camp who were looking for their tent. Reinforcements arrived in the old red van on Saturday morning, and struggled up the waterfall to find four keen types ready to set out.

A good time was had by all on Saturday, with ropes on Glyder Fach and Tryfan. Two veteran members found Thompsons Chimney on the top of First Pinnacle Buttress quite impossible, and assumed that an essential hold had recently fallen off.

Rosemary set a new trend in barefoot climbing, but most of us felt that our feet were not pretty enough for antics of this kind.

After a swin in the lake by two of the party, the long trek to Bethesda was rewarded by much needed refreshment and a visit to the Fair. An explosion on the way back turned out to be a flagon of cider shattered on the rocks, to the great grief of the stay-at-homes who were lying awake waiting for it to arrive.

Sunday started wet, giving a good excuse for festering, but later improved. More routes were attached, although most people wandered over the glyders and Fryfan in the mist. The only outstanding feature of the day

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was an aquatic display by Basil, at the close of a satisfying weekend.

JOTTINGS FROM THE MEET RECORDS

CADER IDRIS 21st - 23rd February

Attended by six members and two guests. Friday night was spent comfortably in a barn, because on arrival the weather was foul and the campsite unsuitable. Saturday came with more rain, and a new (very good) camp site was found. Eventually the meet party set off up Cader. The top was reached rather dangerously because the whole area was covered with a layer of thin ice, making progress interesting.

Sunday morning brought steady rain, so most of the party had a stroll down the river valley to the Mawddach estuary. One sensible member spent the day in his tent.

Two members who were supposed to be coming on this meet were incapable of finding Mid-Wales. By sheer coincidence they arrived at Tyn Lon.....

BORROWDALE Easter

Attended by seven members and seven guests.

- Friday Walk over Scafell and Scafell Pike.
- Saturday Party attempted Phoenix Ridge (V.Diff) on Great End and failed!

 Retreated up a Diff., gave up climbing and walked over to Watendlath.
- Sunday Walked over Blencathra via Sharp Edge assistance given to idiots wearing sandals and leather soles on snow covered ridge.

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Monday - Climbing done in Bowderstone area:-Quayfoot Buttress, Thor's ridge, Woden's Way.

The following additional comments appeared on the meet sheet:

Friday - Two stayed in bed all day.

Saturday - Four stayed in bed all day.

Sunday - Four stayed in bed all day.

The number of people present on the meet never was a reliable guide to the amount of activity that took place!

TREMADOC 10th-12th April

Attended by sixteen members and five guests, about half staying at the Cave & Crag hut and the remainder camping at the end of the track. The fine weather which we have traditionally come to expect on these Tremadoc meets gave out on us this time, and the whole weekend was dull and overcast, with several hours of steady rain on Sunday morning. Not until Sunday afternoon did the wonderful panorama across the Tremadoc Estuary make itself seen from Pant Ifan. In spite of this, everyone was active, and walking and climbing parties were out in the district on both days. Routes completed included the remains of Hounds Head Buttress, Valeries Rib, Olympic Slab, Craig Du Wall, and Lockwood's Chimney!

The only other happening of note was the convening of an impromptu committee meeting at Pant Ifan on Saturday evening. The settling of the outdoor meets programme for the current year had become a matter of urgency, and the Secretary took advantate of the presence on the meet of nine out of ten of the committee to get the matter finalised there and then!

BIRCHENS EDGE 19th April

Attended by five members and three guests. Weather was dull, windy, and finally wet. Many climbs of all standards top-roped. Played dominoes v the Yokels of Yoxall - and lost.

MOELWNION 1st - 3rd May

Attended by 16 members and 11 guests.

Saturday - half the party went climbing on Glogwyn yr Oer in very heavy rain. In a fine period later in the afternoon, a walk was taken to the Waterfalls and the old railway - principally to dry out. Sunday - weather dull and cloudy, but dry. Routes done: Orang-Utang: Kirkus's Direct: Chic: Slick: Slack: Pied Piper. A fine crag for medium-grade climbs.

SCOTLAND: CHRISTMAS 1963 by P. Holden

The week previous to Christmas was very cold with clear blue skies and hard frosts. This, combined with reports of heavy snow fall was terrific encouragement for us, and gave us fantastic dreams of snow and ice covered mountains. Joe Brennan and myself were to leave Birmingham on the evening of Friday 20th December; John Pettet and Tony Mynette following on Christmas Eve.

Joe and I journeyed north on a cold, crystal clear night and reached the Scottish border that evening. Next morning brought another good day and by the time we reached Rannoch Moor, our excitement was rising because in all directions we could see superb snow-covered hills beyond frozen lochs, and we were tensed for our first view of the Buchaille. It was no disappointment, and we feasted our eyes on that shapely mass that thrusts itself from the Moor.

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We pitched our tent by Coupalls Bridge at the head of Glen Etive. That evening we were thrilled to see a herd of deer grazing on the hillside opposite us. The weather was still cold and clear, and we determined to find a way up "the Buchaille" the next day. There was no snow at camp level but there appeared to be plenty higher up so we were satisfied. I had one small mishap soon after we arrived - I fell through the ice into the stream and got both feet very wet. This proved a bad thing because my boots froze solid in the night, and next morning I had to thaw them over the stove.

Sunday morning saw us setting off early up the Buchaille by way of Great Gully (1,300 ft. long and in the summer described as an easy scramble). The previous evening we had met a chap called Hugh in the Clachaig Hotel, and he was climbing with us. We looked at the gully with keen interest - an impressive sweep of snow and ice opening out at the top of the ridge to a large fanshaped snow patch. When we got to close quarters, it struck home that it was a long ribbon of water ice. This was a bit of a shock to us, more so to Joe because he had not brought his crampons along.

We entered the gully just below the 80 ft. pitch, which looked to us uninitiates a reasonably steep piece of ice. Two of us cramponed up and I started cutting steps, slowly gaining confidence in my crampons and enjoying myself tremendously. At about 30 ft. I reached a level platform and decided to belay, using two ice screws as there was no rock. The screws went in very well if they were started with a few blows of the hammer, reducing the amount of cracking in the ice. The others came up, Joe managing quite well without crampons. Hugh took the next pitch, about 60 ft. finishing steeply on a large platform below an ice bulge.

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The bulge was quite steep, and I had my feet scrabbling for adhesion when a step gave way on me. Then I did a silly thing by dropping my ice-axe to hang on the wrist strap, which unfortunately was not round my wrist. Luckily its descent was halted by a slip fielder at the belay. I managed to crampon over the top of the bulge, and then spent five minutes dancing round while my fingers returned to life. After this pitch there were a few hundred feet of easy angled ice, then it steepened and we were cutting steps once again. At the first platform I took my crampons off and sent them down to Joe. Moving without crampons was good practise for step cutting and balance, but it was very tiring.

The day was fast passing and we reckoned on another hour of daylight with about 500 ft. still to go before we reached the summit.

When Joe and Hugh reached the top of the ice I was resting about 100 ft. below them, having cut myself a platform on which to stand until a pair of crampons was lowered to me. Above the ice, it was a mixture of snow and rock, and Hugh and I set off after Joe, who, rid of his crampons, disappeared into the dusk at a high speed. The crampons may have been a slight disadvantage over this section, but Joe came to a sliding halt where it became a clean frozen snow slope, and we offered a tow rope. Soon the moon was out, and in three full rope lengths of steep, hard snow we were out of the gully, Joe was the most thankful, because he had exhaused himself on the last section by doing it without cutting steps to save time.

From the top of the gully we gained the summit of "the Buchaille", Stob Dearg; had some food and contemplated the wonderful view, perhaps magnified because we were now relaxed and receptive to it. The moon was nearly full and combined with the snow to give us extensive views of ranges of hills, and down in the valley we saw the lights that belong to that

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other world, so different from the stillness and peace of our surroundings (dare I mention that we were bitterly cold and hungry and that the lights we saw came from those undesirable places where a drink and a warm fire could be enjoyed!). The highlight of our party on top was the removal of crampons, trying to relase the frozen buckle when the metal kept sticking to your figers. Here we thought rubber gloves would have been a distinct advantage. descent began, and we had no trouble following our planned route in the moonlight. When we reached the Glen Etive road, Hugh (the navigator) had to go only a $\frac{1}{4}$ of a mile to his camp, while we had to walk 21 miles up Glen Etive before we could enjoy the luxury of a 6 ft. x 4 ft. tent.

Monday was cloudy and we felt about as bad as the weather looked - stiff and generally out of condition. It was therefore quite a surprise to find that we really had burning ambitions to see Loch Etive. From there the view of the "Buchailles of Etive" is a splendid sight, beautifully proportioned, reminiscent of - well, you know if you have seen them. We used our inherent woodman's skill to frighten off some deer just as I was about to photograph them from 50 yards. Never mind, everyone has photographs of deer face view! Altogether we had a very enjoyable day in a very remote part of Scotland.

That evening in the Kingshouse, over a pint, we made plans for the next day. It was decided that we would travel south and look at a recommended ice-climb- the upper couloir Stob Yhabbar. The party had now grown to four with the arrival of Mike, Hugh's companion. He had no crampons, but this would not matter because there was only 20 feet of ice to overcome on this climb!

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We rose to find the sky overcast, but by 9.30 we were off, full speed ahead for the Bridge of Orchy, and along the old road towards Inveroran. After a few miles we took the very rough track to the Glasgow University Club hut, where we left the motor, and set off for the couloir about four miles away.

The approach valley was bery pleasant and contained a large number of deer, which treated us with respect and kept their distance. The valley rose to about 2,000 ft. where it joined the head of another valley and opened out into a large couloir. This was very impressive, being above the snow line and the contained lake frozen solid. Finding the upper couloir was a little awkward because the photograph in the book was misleading, having been taken later in the season when the snow was covering all the features. Instead of being faced with a smooth snow slope, we were looking at a large expanse of snow-plastered buttresses, divided by deep gullies containing plenty of hard snow. Higher up, the snow steepened and thinned out, making things awkward. Mike, whilst leading, slipped at this point, saving himself with his ice axe from an unpleasant slide. The steep snow led us to the foot of a buttress which was cleft by a large gully, wherein our route lay. The first pitch seemed to be up ice between large boulders, and did not look too steep from below.

It was 1 p.m. when I started up with about 300 ft. ahead of us to the top, two hours work perhaps! Naturally the ice proved to be steeper than it looked, and made interesting climbing, Mike having difficulty without crampons. The gully continued for about a 100 ft., then steepened into solid ice. This pitch necessitated step cutting, and I began to look with keen interest at the bulge ahead. Cutting the steps was warm and interesting work, but for those down below it was cold and difficult to

appreciate being showered with ice chippings. I traversed diagonally across the ice, hoping to avoid the bulge on its right hand side. When I reached it I had about 80 ft. of rope out, protected with two ice screws. To the right of the bulge was smooth vertical rock, covered with verglass - no way out there, so the bulge had to go. The ice on the rock was too thin for good holds for the right foot, but great caverns could be carved for the left. I stepped on to the bulge with my left foot, balanced with my right, and proceeded to convert my left-hand hold on top of the bulge with great difficulty into a foothold. This done, I stepped down for a rest. The problem to think about was getting my right foot to my left foothold, then making at full stretch with my left foot for the hold on top of the bulge, with poor aid from my ice axe in the snow-ice above. At this juncture, Mike, who had been sitting at the top of the first pitch for the past couple of hours, suggested that he would like to be out of the gully by dark! Reasonable sentiment perhaps, but he was lucky not to be pierced with an ice axe at the time. The problem was tackled, but the left foot was reluctant to leave its cavern and I nearly pulled myself off extricating it with left foot at full stretch onto hold, muscles started getting cramp and the pull up was very difficult, leaving me somewhat shaken, and feeling rather insecure. Now I could see to the top of the gully about 180 ft. away. I moved on up the snow and began to search for a belay; it was dusk and no belay was in sight, nor could I find a crack in which to insert a peg. The full 120 ft. of rope was out when I saw a small spike and a crack, into which I inserted two pegs. It was now dark and once again there was an excellent moon, but unfortunately we were in the shadow of the gully. Joe came up quickly, almost losing his crampon on the crux. We threw the rope down

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for Hugh, then had the difficult task of bringing Mike up. Eventually we succeeded, with great use of both ropes. I then extricated myself from the cobweb of ropes and set out on the last pitch, eyes fixed on the skyline with a craving for the top, and the moonlight. Just 15 ft. from home, the rop ran out and I had to belay round my axe buried in the snow. Whilst trying to contrive the belay I noticed there was no feeling in my left hand fingers, I hastily withdrew them into my finger mits and suffered agony as the blood began to circulate. Leaning over the ice axe groaning, I pulled in the rope one handed as Joe came up. disappeared over the top and I was soon up with him, feeling a tremendous sense of exhilaration. packed the equipment and continued up the ridge to the summit.

After a short rest for a meal, we set off down, not really wanting to leave such a wonderful place. A narrow rocky ridge, rather like Crib Goch brought us onto a broad shoulder leading down. The valley we wanted was way below us, and we descended by a glissade, Hugh (brave man) going first and declaring it fit for the purpose. I was a little wary but gradually let myself go as I gained confidence. A short scramble down a gully brought us back to our approach valley, and a tired but satisfied foursome stopped off at the Bridge of Orchy for a much needed drink.

Back at the camp we enjoyed a hot meal as the temperature dropped steadily. It was so cold that water fetched from the stream iced over by the time I had walked the 30 yards back to the tent; we were certainly glad of our two sleeping bags each. At about 10.30 John and Tony arrived and had great difficulty in pitching tent on the frozen ground. We gave them moral support until we fell asleep to the tap tap of the peg hammers.

We woke in the night feeling strangely warm, to hear rain lashing down. Unbelievable - it had

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thawed. This was a great disappointment, but as it was Christmas Day, we tried to be cheerful, making full use of an old gramophone belting out the Christmas "spirit" as rendered by such as Little Richard, Victor Silvester, Bill Haley, "The runaway train", and your friend and my friend - Liberace.

This was enough to drive us from our beds out into the rain and across the moor. Our object for the day was Stron na Creise, the left hand guardian of Glen Etive. Our ascent was up a snow gully and as we gained height, the rain became hard pellets of We did manage to have some good views across Rannoch Moor during breaks in the weather, including an unusual view of "the Buchaille", when the snow covering it appeared a definite blue. We followed the gully until it ran into scree near the top, and finished on some very hard snow. The wind was tearing at us on the summit, and we soon started back down, I for one, trying to forget the conditions by thinking of everyone back home sitting down to their Christmas lunch, then relaxing in front of a roaring fire, and switching on the "goggle box". No. I did not envy them.

We were descending by way of a rocky ridge, but soon conditions became dangerous and we traversed off awkwardly to easier ground, Tony having difficulty with snow collecting in his glasses, leaving him stranded on icy holds until assistance could be A gully was found and we descended it quickly until we came to a vertical step about 10 ft. high: an awkward place under the conditions. descended it with some difficulty, and at the bottom cut out a large platform in the snow to give a landing ground for anyone who slipped or decided to jump. But that was wasted labour because the first gust of wind sent snow down the gully like salt out of a container, and I found myself standing up to my knees. Joe was having trouble and I retreated down the gully when he said he was going to jump. Eventually I talked him into climbing down.

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which he did, not very happily. Tony was next and as he could not see much he decided to jump into the unknown, landing rather heavily, but unhurt. John, having watched this unorthodox descent, calmly climbed down and we descended the raminder of the gully in leaps and bounds.

Back across the moor it was raining hard and the ground was very soft in many places. When we reached the river we had hopped across from boulder to boulder in the morning, we found that these boulders were no longer visible, thus we were forced to wade. The water was cold and very swift-running, and leading the way I suddenly slipped and found myself groping on hands and knees, much to the amusement of my "friends". I was seen to stagger out of the water singing "Happy Christmas".

This Christmas Day was finished by a good meal at the Clachaig Hotel, where we left our wet clothes overnight in front of the fire (a most friendly gesture by the management).

Boxing Day, it rained, and our only activity was the construction of a drainage channel for the stream that was flowing under our tent, and getting Joe's car towed away because it refused to start.

Friday - rain. We collected Joe's car, broke camp and set off back to the Lake District under most appalling conditions. The night was spent with other Ceunant members at the Achille Ratti Hut, and on the following morning we completed the retreat back to Birmingham.

B.M.C. NEWS

SNOWDON NATIONAL NATURE RESERVE

The Nature Conservancy announced on 29th April that they had completed negotiations with the owner of about half of the area of Snowdon which they wish to establish as a Nature Reserve.

They have accordingly declared as a National Nature Reserve land comprising 2,300 acres, extending from the oak woodlands on the shores of Llyn Dinas and Llyn Gwynant to the summit of Snowdon and Lliwedd, including Cwm Llan and the Watkin path.

The Conservancy confirm earlier assurances that public access for walking over open country will not be restricted. The public, must, however, observe the normal conditions contained in the "National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act, 1949". These include prohibitions on the following:-

Driving vehicles; lighting or causing fires; killing or snaring animals or birds; bathing when told by public notice not to; damaging the land, plants, roots or other things on or in it; leaving gates open, breaking through walls and fences, leaving rubbish or litter; engaging in riotous, disorderly or indecent conduct; disturbing or annoying others lawfully engaged; holding a political meeting (shades of Mr. Gladstone!).

The Conservancy aim to foster a general appreciation for the conservation of the country-side and to carry out educational work through their wardens. The B.M.C. hope that all clubs and their members will assist them in every way, including help in preventing damage to property and avoiding nuisance of all kinds.

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People are asked not to disturb the netting which has been put down on areas of scree. The purpose of this is to try to re-establish vegetation which may have been lost through intense grazing, with consequent loss of soil.

Camping in Llanberis

Vaynol Estates had received Planning Authority approval for their application for a camping site at Nant Peris.

Access to Mountains

The B.M.C. report that negotiations are proceeding very slowly, and there are still access difficulties. The hope now is that the Planning Authority would use its powers to secure access agreements and access orders.

Guide Books

It is understood that the following reprints of the C.C. Guide Books will be appearing in the shops by the end of July:

Llanberis North

12/6d.

Cwm Idwal

12/6d.

Tryfan and Glyder Fach 12/6.

Yellowslacks

The National Park Boards have requested that the National Parks Act should be strengthened to prevent destruction of climbs such as has taken place at Yellowslacks (see comment in March Newsletter).

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At Yellowslacks itself further destruction has ceased, and access seems likely to be secured, either by the owner agreeing to it, or by the Peak Park Planning Board making an access order.

Scarthin Rocks

Climbers are to be allowed to use Scarthin Rocks at Willersley Castle, except before 1.0 p.m. on Sunday mornings. Wildcat Rock and other rocks on the Castle estate may not be used.

The Peak Committee are considering whether it should recommend the wearing of helmets for climbs on limestone in the Peak.

B.M.C. NEWS

The Exeter and District Climbing Club has produced "A Climbing Guide to Chudleigh Rocks". These are a limestone outcrop about 10 miles from Exeter, on the Exeter-Plymouth Road (0.5. map No. 176, reference 864788). They vary from 90 ft. to 150 ft., and about 35 routes, mostly above severe standards, have been climbed there. They are generally sound, but owing to the loose nature of part of the crag, it has become the custom to wear a light fibre crash hat while climbing there.

The rocks are about 5 minutes walk from the main road, and are a convenient stop for anyone travelling down to Cornwall.

The guide (1/6d) may be obtained from the Hon. Sec. of the Club, whose address we have, should anyone be interested.