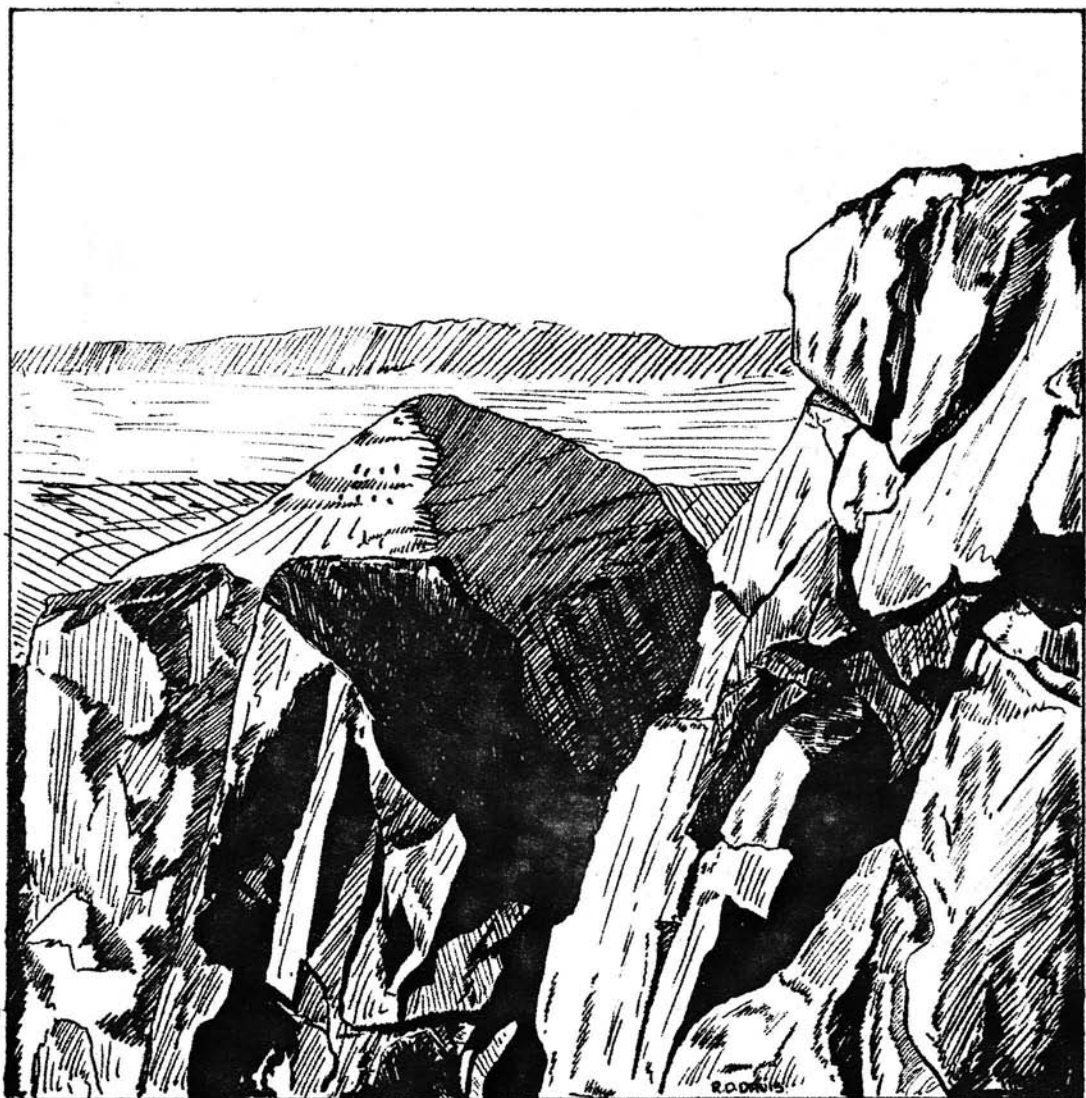


# THE CEUNANT

## MOUNTAINEERING CLUB



SEPTEMBER

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# News Letter

E D I T O R I A L

So far this year the weather has fallen short of last year's excellence. Low cloud and showers have all too frequently been the lot of the wanderer in the mountains. The ardent mountaineer, however, will still plod on with enthusiasm unabated, knowing that the effort will be worth while. Suddenly, the mist which has surrounded him all day will darken, break and disappear on the wind in a mass of flowing streamers, and far below he will see a magically clear view of valley or lake, and around him the towering magnificence of storm topped peaks. This is the moment which will make up for many wettings and disappointments.

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One problem, which is with us in this as in any other mountaineering season, is that of litter. Car and train-borne trippers are responsible for much of the garbage which is deposited in every lay-by on the Llanberis pass and on the summit of Y Wyddfa itself, but these places are unfortunately not the only ones to suffer. The popularity of a peak these days can be fairly accurately gauged by the amount of junk which adorns it. Tryfan is usually well provided with orange peel, lunch bags, empty tins, bottles, etc., and the shelters on the Carnedd plateau make convenient dustbins. The mess in the observatory ruins on Ben Nevis when last seen defied description.

The odd thing is, one never catches people dropping litter around. Meet anyone on Tryfan on a summer afternoon and he will look at the mess, shake his head, and say 'disgusting, isn't it?'. Yet the litter continues to accumulate. Does the same person empty his pockets when nobody is looking? Eating sardines, etc., straight out of tins seems to be a practice followed mainly by itinerant rock climbers, so perhaps one may attribute this part of the debris to these gentlemen. Bottles and paper bags appear to be the prerogative of walking parties. Most mountaineers carry oranges.

The litter louts, whoever they are, are presumably not insensitive to the great natural beauty of the mountains, otherwise they would not visit them. They carry their

lemonade bottles, sardine tins and lunch packs joyfully when they are full. Why can they not carry them away again when they are empty, and leave the scene unspoiled for the next comers?

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In the temporary absence of the editor, Mike King, this edition of the Newsletter has been produced by Ivor Corbett at the request of the Secretary.

Except where otherwise stated, the opinions expressed are those of the acting editor and are not necessarily endorsed by the committee.

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New members - The following have been elected to membership of the club:-

Miss K. Stafford	A. Mynett
R. Coxon	M. Walters
A. Fowler	D.J. Williams
M. Manser	

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The Club was represented at the annual meeting of the British Mountaineering Council at the Alpine Club on 2nd April 1960.

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At a B.M.C. Committee meeting on 2nd April 1960, a certificate was granted to Mr. R. James, Ogwen Cottage, as a rock-climbing guide in North Wales.

INVITATION

MR. ALAN GREEN

Requests the pleasure of your company  
at a party to be held at

TYN LON

on 23rd-25th September.

Dress optional

Tools essential

Day membership

At a special general meeting held on June 8th 1960, two sub-clauses were added to the constitution:

- "4f. Notwithstanding the above, day-membership may be made available on payment of a fee as decided by the committee.
- g. Only members of the Club may stay at the Club huts.

The second of these sub-clauses was added so that the Club would not be liable to pay income tax on profits arising from hut lettings, and the first then became necessary so that outside bookings could continue. Guests are now made day members for the period of their stay, and the total amount of their day membership fees and hut fees will be the same as the former guest hut fees.

A GLOSSARY OF MOUNTAINEERING TERMS

By a Tyro

1. Slab - Flat rock at an easy angle, climable by me in favourable circumstances, (i.e. with top rope, fine weather, etc.)
2. Wall - Flat rock at an uneasy angle, unclimable by me in any circumstances.
3. Interesting move - Point on a climb where most people nearly fall off.
4. Crux - Point on a climb where most people fall off.
5. Climb of sustained interest - One on which the leader spends at least two hours on each pitch, while the others wait below in the rain.
6. Direct start - The last point you would ever think of starting from.
7. Severe leader - Gentlemen clad in cap, sweater knickerbockers and vibrams, who wanders up and down vertical and overhanging cliff faces, often without a rope, making fruity comments to other people similarly engaged.
8. Second - Someone who stands around stargazing while the leader's rope kinks, tightens or gets jammed in a crevice.
9. Your rope - Ancient, frayed, shock-strained specimen of loose fibres, suitable only for a clothes line.
10. My rope - Practically new, undamaged, carefully treated piece of equipment.
11. Piton (1939 style) - A horrible artificial aid to climbing used by vulgar continentals and rock-engineering Americans, in order to climb something which they cannot get up with their own hands and feet (which is cheating).
12. Piton (1960 style) - Aid to climbing used extensively by English climbers.

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13. Tarbuck knot - Something tied correctly only by the person demonstrating and incorrectly by everyone else. Once tied, every other climber who subsequently sees it roars with laughter and offers to show you how to tie a tarbuck correctly.
14. Knitting - Certain condition into which the rope gets whenever I am climbing.
15. Stance - Point on a climb, hardly wide enough for one person, where two persons congregate to change over belays. This usually leads to knitting (see above).
16. Gardening - This does not mean looking for Lloydia Serotina, but the despatching of all foliage and earth on to the second man's head, with a callous indifference to whether it is Lloydia Serotina or not.

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THE CHALLENGE TAKEN UP

By one of the younger generation

With all due respect to our Editor, who has at last succeeded in provoking some sort of a response from club members, he is talking nonsense. To insist that mountaineering clubs in general, and our club in particular, should be run 'for the entertainment elevation (?)', interest and education of the mountaineers in the club' is reasonable. However, when this is extended to eating, sleeping and drinking 'mountaineering' the Editor is being more than provoking.

Of course people join a climbing club in order to rock-climb and mountain-walk, but may I venture to suggest that they expect to be able to do more than this. If I may extend Alan Green's opinion (or 'point of view'), people do not join rugby, tennis or similar clubs just to take part in their favourite sport but also to indulge in other pastimes, respectable or otherwise, for which a CLUB should exist. Most sportsmen enjoy 'shooting a line' at the bar about tries nearly scored or fishes almost hooked. Why

must climbers have to act according to a different set of rules? I cannot therefore understand why the Editor deprecates beer-swilling and card-playing amongst climbers (although admittedly under-water swimming does seem out of place!). If a climber does not feel like exercising himself on the crags during a weekend by all means let him fester in the hut listening to Elvis and playing 'chase the lady' (the card game) or three card brag.

As Mr. Green suggests, there is a danger that we are becoming too narrow minded. As far as the editor is concerned this danger no longer exists.

Whilst agreeing with the above named member in his condemnation of some editorial views, I cannot concur with his comments on rock-climbing (as no doubt he intended).

I have yet to hear of a rock-climber boasting about his falls, runner-protected or otherwise. If a climber falls in Wales it is because he is attempting a climb above his competent climbing standard. He should not be condemned for this, because he is at least trying to improve himself and to find what are his ultimate limits. Not until he has attempted harder rock-climbs and failed can he be satisfied as to his capabilities and thus to his competency as a cragsman. Those climbers who stick at Diff. and V. Diff. climbs should be encouraged to try routes of a higher standard, and they will find that such climbs give as much or more technical pleasure than the easier ones. I am sure Mr. Green realises that the use of runners does not make these climbs technically easier, just safer. And if a person knows his safe limits on rocks then he is on the way to becoming a mountaineer.

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#### NORTH OF THE ARCTIC CIRCLE

Tony Daffern seems to be enjoying himself in the frozen north. In a letter to a club member, posted from Ny Alesund Alesund, 'The most northerly post office in the world', he has outlined his journey up the coast of Norway. His first port of call was Bergen, which he describes as a beautifully clean town. They ran into some trouble there, however, because

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'.....it was Sunday, and the customs would not issue a pass for our gear. After raising hell for about thirty minutes we got hold of the assistant passenger manager of the Line and he fixed things for us. We had to have all the stuff weighed .... it weighed just over 3/4 ton...

The trip up the coast was not very exciting. It was raining most of the way, and we had to sleep on deck. Food and beer was very expensive, and we lived mainly on bread, cheese and butter which we bought at the little towns we called in at. We used to go in for one evening meal, which usually consisted of meat and potatoes followed by what the Scandinavians call 'Green table' where all the food is piled on a big table at one end of the room, and one goes and helps oneself. Which means you can eat as much as you want...

There was some marvellous mountains scenery on the way up the coast, but unfortunately a lot of it was obscured by low cloud. I may stop off in the Lofoten Islands for a week on my way back and try to get a bit of climbing in there. Tromso is quite a pleasant little town but we only had four hours there to get the gear off one boat on to the other.....'

Tony tried to keep up his climbing practise in a rather unusual way....

'We managed to persuade the Captain to let us go up the mast, and found it quite exciting. The mast leaned inwards quite a bit, and the ladder was on the overhanging side, and slippery'

The boat on which they left Tromso for Spitsbergen was 'small and matey'. There were about thirty tourist class passengers, including six of the Midlands party and two other expeditions, of which Tony says...

'The other expeditions were going to a bay about 40/50 miles south of us, and are doing physiological work, that is they study the body's reactions to variations of light, climate and working hours. One party is taking blood tests every three hours. Rather them than me!

'....We sighted Spitsbergen at about mid-day on Saturday (presumably 2nd July) and arrived in Longyearly at about 8 o'clock Sunday morning. For the last few hours the sun has been shining for the first time on the trip,



and some of the mountains look tremendous. Longyearly is a little shanty town, with about 1000 inhabitants....as it is now Sunday the local store is not open so there has not been much to do.'

Not much to do, but plenty of comings and goings, apparently...

'A large ship arrived just after us with a party of Americans on board. They belong to some oil company and have come here to look for oil. They have two helicopters with them, and fortunately are not likely to come anywhere near us.'

From Longyearly the Midlands party sailed for Ny Alesund, where presumably their work starts, because Tony says that he is unlikely to be able to write again until on the way back.

So with the hope that they manage to avoid being annoyed by Americans, or inconvenienced by polar bears, we wish Tony and his colleagues all success in their endeavours.

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REPORTS OF RECENT MEETS - by John Daffern

Welsh 3000's meet, 10-12 June, 1960.

A dozen members and guests turned out to attempt this classic walk. Bad weather delayed the start, but the meet leader marched us up to Snowdon summit in  $1\frac{1}{2}$  hours. This point was reached at 9 a.m. in an extremely thick and wet mist, but after we had completed the first sections of the route to Nant Peris, the weather became steadily clearer and it later blossomed out into a fine afternoon, but with a strong cold wind. Near Llyn Ogwen our support party met us and provided refreshments at this most critical point of the journey. For those who did not wish to continue, this was a haven from which they were driven back to Pen Ceunant. Much later, four weary people, having completed the remaining Carnedd section, found the same support party in the valley above Aber, and were returned from there to the starting point.

Time taken:- from first to last summit, 12 hrs.28 mins.

for whole walk: 15 hours and 20 minutes (approx.)

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Many thanks to Colin Coleman for a well organised meet, and for giving us the benefit of his experience. Our support party, Bun Dally and Bill Martin, are worthy of praise indeed. At Ogwen and at Aber they plied us with unlimited tea and a variety of eats, and gave us every help and encouragement. For them it was a very busy day, catering for people coming off the hills at many different times and driving them all back to the cottage. Many thanks for providing such well organised support.

Tremadoc 24-26 June 1960

Few members attended this meet, but those that did enjoyed excellent weather. On Saturday morning Hounds Head Buttress was climbed, after which it became too hot for further effort and the party retreated to a beach on the Lleyn Peninsular, where the Cave and Crag Club were found to be already in residence.

On Sunday more climbing was done including Poor Mans Penterey and other routes on the main cliffs. Later the heat won again and a search was made for a pool marked on the map nearby. It was eventually located but had nearly dried up.

Pleasant memories of far-off days and fine weather!

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Talking of meets, four members had an interesting day, in extremely inclement weather conditions, arising out of a meet to Pontesbury.

The day dawned very wet indeed, and after cogitating on the problem for some half an hour in the streaming downpour and investing fourpence in a telephone call to the meet leader (who it is believed had not at that time got out of bed) it was decided to convert the occasion into a music festival at a little known locality called Coln Close. There, some quite unsuspected crags were discovered; Coalhouse Chimney, which was solo'd in carpet slippers, and Gas-pipe wall, which provided an opportunity for some glorious exposition of the layback technique. The trouble was there was no way off at the summit, and the aspiring cragsman had either to climb down again, or let go with everything and hope that he bounced.

The record playing equipment behaved very well, the repertoire being augmented at one point by a somewhat fortissimo clamour from an Ice-cream wagon. The gentleman in charge of this contrivance escaped censure only by reason of his being soaked to the skin and patently browned off. The meet broke up at 9 p.m. (still raining).  
P.S. A couple of keen types actually went to Pontesbury! Their car got stuck in the floods, and serve them right!

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OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES - WINTER 1960/61

Meets information

September 9/11th	Private transport meet to the Yorkshire moors. Camping or Bed and Breakfast. Leader, D. Davis.
September 23/25th	WORKING PARTY, TYN LON.
October 7/9th	Private transport meet to the Rhinogs, Inter-varsity hut. Leader, J. Burwell.
October 23rd	Private transport day meet to Dovedale. Leader, M. Vickerstaff.
November 4/6th	Private transport meet to Borrowdale. Camping or Youth Hostelling. Leader, M. King.
November 13th	Private transport day meet to the Roaches. Leader P. Hay.
November 25/27th	Private transport meet to Tremadoc. Cave and Crag hut. Leader, E. Webster.
December 11th	Private transport day meet to Baslow. Leader, M. Kerby.
January 8th	Private transport day meet to Stannage. Leader, J. Daffern.
January 20/22nd	Private transport meet to Llanberis. Leader P. Hammond.
February 3/5th	Private transport meet to Ogwen. Camping, or Ogwen cottage. Leader, J. Buckmaster.
February 17/19th	Private transport meet to Rydd Ddu. Oread Club hut. Leader M. King.

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March 4/5th 'Moonlight meander' in the Berwyns.  
Private transport. Leave Birmingham  
7 - 8 p.m. Saturday.  
Leader E. Webster.

March 17/19th Private transport meet to Llanberis.  
Leader J. Burwell.

April 14/16th Private transport meet to Cader Idris.  
Leader G.Wood.

April 30th Private transport day meet to Froggatts  
Edge.  
Leader M. Kerby.

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INDOOR ACTIVITIES - 1960/61

Indoor meets will continue to be on Wednesday evenings from 8 p.m. at the Cambridge public house, Cambridge Street, except on Lecture evenings.

Lectures are held at the Friends' Institute, Moseley Road, starting at 7.30 p.m., as follows:-

October 5th 'Lesser known islands of Scotland,  
including:- Fair Isle, Foula, N. Rona and  
St. Kilda.' Ralph Heaton.

November 2nd Talk by Stan Moore.

December 7th Member's evening. Will members wishing  
to show slides, please contact the indoor  
meets secretary.

1961

January 4th To be arranged.

February 1st 'Limestone mountains in Austria and  
Yugoslavia'. Dr. G.T. Warwick.

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JOTTINGS ON MOUNTAINS AND CAMERAS  
by P.A.H.

These notes are only odd jottings to help to meet the cry of the Editor and in the hope of starting off some photographic articles. (What about it, you Ceunant

photographers? - Ed.)

Last October a Microcord, a Paxette and a Zeiss-Ikon Nettar climbed Cnicht on the backs of two of those 'Always-carry-a-camera' types. In twenty minutes one HP3, one FP3, an infra-red and two Ektachrome films jostled for exposure in these cameras, behind a variety of filters. U.V's, X8 reds, X4 or 5 oranges and an infra-red were used.

Flash equipment was used in Lockwood's chimney, the other basic ingredient being an HP3 film with settings of f8 at 1/25th.

An impressive slide of the Y Wyddfa buttress above Glaslyn is available from the top zig-zag of the PYG track. Lliwedd appears insignificant from this angle.

Rich sunset colours with the side of Llyn Peris and the banks of the river leading into it in black tones have been obtained on Ektachrome at f6.3 for 2 seconds (hand-held). The film used was the old Ektachrome, not the new fast one.

An interesting variation of 'Langdale Pikes from Blea Tarn' has been taken from amongst the trees at Blea Tarn instead of alongside them.

The big waterfall between Stickle Tarn and the New D.G. offers a lot of possibilities. The banks are ideal for photographers.

A nice photograph, in black and white or colour, of Skiddaw and Derwentwater can be taken from about three miles south of Keswick on the Borrowdale Road below 'Ashness'.

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THE WHITE BLACK MOUNTAINS  
by Hugh O'Neill

"Its snowing down here--what is it like with you?"

"Hell!" said Tony.

"How about investigating the Black Mountains again?"

"Fine"

"Pick you up in Evesham--usual time."

So another trip was born. We have, during the summer examined the Black Mountains and Brecon Beacons from several angles; and although there is a reasonable North Face to Pen-y-Fan and Corn Du which lie due south of Brecon town; these slopes turn out to be little more than a series of steep grass pitches and boulder problems. Winter might

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we thought, put a different face on them.

Several of the valleys terminate in long shallow sills under the high plateau and of these Craig Gwaun-taf and the crags above the Cwms Oergwn and Cynwyn are always worth inspection. Unfortunately they all involve 1500 feet of grass for 50 feet of climbing. The rock is Millstone Grit ---well stratified sedimentary rock which gives large steps and footholds, and often a climb is just a series of mantleshelfs---many overhanging. As with most sedimentaries, however, the breaking strength is very low, and "Look mum it came away in me hand;" can often be heard from a falling leader.

It was for these valleys that we headed and the crags were the aim.

The lower slopes were the usual interminable tramp, where the 10 lbs of nailed boots soon became the 18 lbs of ice stilts and every so often you would be wallowing in drift snow up to the waist. The sun shone warmly and the ground was soft at first, soon however the subsoil hardened and the snow was unbroken. Above about 1500 feet there had obviously been no thaw, but the snow was not hard enough to bear any weight---mine at least; and each pace was an effort.

Out onto the col, to be met by a piercing blast---goggles were necessary as ice particles were being swept in great clouds across the plateau. There was not a brass monkey in sight!

On again, and now the slope was stiffening---snow hid scree from grass, and a wild war dance was resorted to in order to keep vertical as first one foot shot away in a shower of stones, and then the next was plunged into a deep drift; until at long last the sill was reached. The rocks were plastered in loose snow and for the first tentative explorations the gloves were removed. These were soon replaced and the 'Joué au rochè' abandoned for

a 'Joué a neige'. The gullies were extremely interesting as these are all just off the vertical. Again the snow was powdered and loose, but climbing was not necessary as the wind whistling up from below tended to take you straight up the gully and out of the top like a cork from a champagne bottle---the difficulty was in landing again.

We stopped just below the plateau for sandwiches and hot soup. The wind was building up now and fresh snow was approaching from the west. Slowly the life was frozen out of the ungloved hand around the soup cup. All around great plumes of wind-blown drift ice were making the tops into miniature Everests---below, the crest of the ridge was moving and becoming indeterminate in shape as the clouds of drift moved on.

Refreshments taken, we pushed on up the last of the sill and out onto the plateau. We did not see anything of the next two miles; it was a question of heads down and shove; then crash and dig out of the drift. Although the weather had closed right in there were still the odd shafts of sunlight chasing across the moor, and these highlighted the weird shapes of the drifts in the many peat erosions. It was like a vast lunar wilderness. Although human tracks were soon half filled and lost any definite shape, the prints made by a fox were clear and the finest detail of the needle sharp claws could be seen. He must have been very hungry for there was not another sign of life.

We were nearing the last slope down to the car when the snow started. It did not fall but just lay in the wind until it met a vertical obstruction. Each tuft of grass had a fluted flaring on the windward side, whilst the tearing gales had gouged either side, and the vacuum to the lee had removed the snow almost to the roots.

Now the car, and the thick cladding of ice and snow was chipped from hose and slacks leaving the material bone dry. Boot laces were frozen stiff, boots hardly damp.

Driving back we could see the snow falling on all the tops, but at about the 1000 foot contour mark, the white blanket thinned and down in the valleys we had sleet and driving rain.

We filled the car with petrol at Hay and the garage

proprietress sold us the only bottle of lemonade that she had in her home---curses on these Welsh licensing laws! The Wye and the Usk were full but clear and clean; green ice-laden water belied the summer's stagnation, and the blood stirred. Somewhere the salmon were running, whilst others, spawned and spent, fell slowly back to the sea.

Oh! one last hint!---never go up the Tal-y-Bont reservoir road when they are running a rally in the opposite direction---it just is not worth it.

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"In a revolutionary age when the words of the wise are on every climber's tongue, and the intention to obey them in a few climber's minds, it is refreshing to record a striking instance of strict adherence to one of the cardinal canons of orthodox mountaineering. We have been advised that before we try to climb a mountain we should look at it, and in the present case this unquestionable advice had been (most) conscientiously followed. We had looked at the East Buttress of Lliwedd for twenty years."

J.M.Archer  
Thomsom ref.

A good second will always follow the climber he is belaying with his eyes. He should climb with him and constantly think of what to do if he should fall. If this is done then certainly the climber will soon develop a feel of what to do and when. He will always be ready for the emergency, and he will apply a proper technique, and not thoughtlessly adhere to any one way of belaying, which in a particular case might be entirely uncalled for.

Hans Krause.

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Footpath from Nant Peris (Gwastadnant) to Ogwen

Evidence is required in support of a claim that a public right of way exists on to the hillside above Gwastadnant, on the route to Ogwen via the Devil's Kitchen. If anyone can offer evidence of usage and give specific details of the route used please contact your Ramblers Association representative, J. Daffern.

The Ramblers Association are still anxious to hear of any footpath closures or obstructions that members (or others) may discover.

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