

FROM THE EDITOR

The following self explanatory note has been sent to me by Ken Martin who feels, as I do, that any further encroachments into the wilderness areas of this tiny overcrowded Island of ours are to be deplored.

When they are part of a Government Policy the mind reels at the stupidity and bloody minded arrogance of those supposedly running the country. No wonder we are in the present economic mess when most of the countries efforts and energies are being poured into such totally pointless, unnecessary projects. When one considers the terrible consequences of such "gimmicks" for the future then the whole stupid idea borders on the lunatic or criminal. Some Senior Civil servant has dreamed this up to justify his expensive existence. Let him, for Gods Sake, have the guts to admit he was wrong. It is not, unfortunately, a quality normally associated with such people.

As we well know, anyone wanting to find out the consequences of saturating a hill area with people has only to come to the Lake District to see the squalid mess thus resulting not to mention the aesthetic consequences of great herds of people storming about all over the place where once there was only peace and serenity and a challenge to cross through or over this wild and unexploited land.

MORE ARGUMENTS AGAINST THE 'GRAMPIAN WAY'

21 Carlin Craig,  
Kinghorn, Fife.  
November 26, 1975.

Sir, -- I am impressed by the general consensus against the 'Grampian Way' project. Some points could be emphasised.

1. The route already exists as a right-of-way, so adds nothing new or advantageous to the public. It is already one of the finest adventure walks, so anything done to lessen its challenge is against the spirit of the game - as would be removing bunkers from golf courses.
2. As the route has been used for centuries the need for signposting is surely debatable. Maps and initiative can still be found.
3. The Countryside Commission has a vital role to play in conservation as well as in provision, something ignored by the one defender of the "way". The publicising of such a "way" must increase pressures (it has in all similar cases). Mountain landscape only comes under pressure very locally but the result can be disastrous. Parts of the Pennine Way are now mud runnels and virtually useless. The Lairig Ghru is already overused.
4. I am not against anyone, singly or otherwise, going to the hills but that opportunity is already there for the taking. Initiative, logistics, judgment and volition are vital parts of the sport and the provision of a "way" would discourage these basic desires - which also happen to be the basis of safety on the hills.
5. Such ways, through mountains anyway, are against the general desires of and traditions of mountaineering. This is not England where things are very different, nor should we risk development for the sake of development.

It is a much harder obligation to restrain - but it is one of the Commission's functions.

6. An increased traffic of less-experienced walkers has danger elements which I am sure the commission has overlooked. The Lairig Ghru and the upper reaches of the Tilt are remote and uninhabited and over the centuries have claimed regular victims. Heights here are nearing 3000 feet higher than many hilltops, and funnelling some of the most vicious winds and storms. It is really a frightening proposition: is the commission willing to take the moral obligation of encouraging visitors? It can be winter any day in the Lairig Ghru.
7. Only massive facilities costing tens of thousands of pounds could cope with such threats, which would make it an expensive "designation". Any man-made contribution is intrusive and potentially the thin edge of a development wedge. Let the commission help with other new and useful walks, certainly. What of the "Great Glen Way" - a mixture of forest and lochside and canal bank, for instance.
8. The "way" slices right through the country's largest Nature Reserve.
9. Perhaps most important of all, some basic principles are endangered. The Scottish hillgoer has a great freedom. Any changing of the balance could have a tremendous domino effect with all the problems we see in the crowded hill areas of England and Wales. However well-intended, development invariably sees the landscape suffering. A classic example is the change in the Torridons over the last decade. National Trust cairns and signs have led to path scars unknown previously.

There is nothing to stop anyone going to the hills. There are more clubs and groups than ever before. Educational and recreational facilities proliferate. Centres and training ensure that precepts are passed on. The novices have never had it so good. But they must be allowed to walk the wild places in the end. The danger of the "way" is that it removes one wild place without, in fact, taming it at all.

Mountain opinion can easily enough be found by approaching the Mountaineering Council of Scotland. It seems strange that no call has come from them to establish such "ways". We have the peculiar situation where a sport is in danger of having its policy and practice dictated by non-participants.

We have recently seen a Pentland Park set up with a "director" (at £3000 a year), car parks and way marks, camp sites, rangers and rescue services all envisaged. This vast, bureaucratic project only has to be mentioned before an Old Pentland gangrel to evoke a laugh.

The Pentlands today could be the Cairngorms tomorrow. It is no joke.

HANISH W. BROWN

THE REPORT, now published, merely dismisses reasoning (as above) as elitist and selfish. The boffins know best! The report confirms our worst fears and three points alone make it a fight we must all take up - or stand to lose all we hold precious in the hills.

1. The report says it is quite possible for "further" development - even after

they have turned the Lairig Ghru/Tilt into another soiled Pennine Way. (The English Commission have now realised their errors and are against further such routes). Nobody seems to want them. The report itself says the outcome is "speculative", the route chosen for no reason!! Yet they would steam-roller it through. Why?

2. This is only the first of "a whole network" envisaged throughout the Highlands.
3. They say there may be times when the Way might have to be "closed" - for stalking forsooth. The closing of a right-of-way for any reasons, must be fought, in the courts if need be. The report is detailed down to every waymark, itself costing thousands of pounds. Then the public is told. All the arguments against it are simply strengthened on studying it.

ACTION - If you want to save the Lairig, Please write NOW (1) to the Scottish Countryside Commission, Battleby, Ridgorton, Perth, (2) to the Secretary of State (who has to approve), House of Commons or St. Andrew's House and (3) the "Scotsman", "Glasgow Herald" or other papers. Only when they have 10,000 letters will they believe the people actually do NOT want their silly scheme. Do this please - and get anyone/everyone else you can do likewise. Or the outcome is morally yours! This is the vital test case

N.B. Ken Martins new address is: MORAY OUTWARD BOUND SEA SCHOOL  
BURGHHEAD, MORAY, SCOTLAND.

#### THE TASTE OF GOOD ROCK

R.W. Reeve

As many of the FMC set off for Skye, at Easter, in search of the elusive Brittle Warden and the legendary lesser-spotted supa-guide, I withdrew gracefully from that expensive scene and went in search of the perfect rock route in all the usual places - Gogarath, the Pass, the Lakes. So familiar are these places to all of the climbing ilk that one doesn't feel compelled to enjoy oneself; however, I did. Six days on rock, ten good routes, some great, all except for one, hard V.S. or Extreme.

At Gogarath, bathed in rich sunlight, GAUNTLET (H.V.S.) was to be our first route and it proved to be a superb choice; a difficult leftward move at ten feet leads to some of the best sea-cliff climbing I've done, with a steady, well maintained standard throughout - the last pitch looks intimidating, a steep lay-away crack similar but harder than the finish of PLOUGHES, but isn't.

The vast expanse of the CENTRAL PARK FACE proved irresistible (as they say) so Dave (Hinton of the VAGS) quickly dealt with TIMES SQUARE (H.V.S.), a sustained but humane route with varying degrees of steepness and spaced holds. In wonderful FMC tradition excitement was just around the corner: I was sat belayed on the headland about 20' above the cliff top waiting for Dave to commence the tricky leftward hand-traverse over big flakes on the face below, when, shattering the sublime peace of mind that comes after sporting activities with decent chaps, I felt a strong tug about my mid-region; my Whillans Harness distended and I was instantly swept off my feet only to land on them again some three feet nearer the cliff-edge. Ho-ho, I thought, ignoring beads of sweat that had just formed on my brow, Dave has fallen off; and he had. A large flake had come loose in his hands; cli bers just beginning the route 200' beneath were cowering like dogs for cover; Dave shouted "I've another piece here, do you want it?" And down that went cascading and exploding as it dropped through the air.

If I could have I would have got on my knees and prayed to God at that moment thanking him for German Technology in general and Salewa Krabs and belay plates, in particular.

Before we left .les, HUNTER (H.V.S.) at Gogarth and DIGITAL (H.V.S.) on DIND were climbed. The former boasts a steep corner crack; it is 5b and hard with some thin bridging moves, within the first 20', about as hard as anything we were going to encounter that week. The latter route was climbed amongst the hordes of the mass; yet it is a delicious piece of climbing, both bold and technical (pitch 3 the crux); I salute you, Birtwhistle, you mad Bozo.

On Easter Monday evening we arrived in The Lakes; Colin Green (Lord Green of Badile) was there, at Little Langdale, but just about to end his Easter holiday; after a long thought (2 mins) he asserted his independence, cancelled a long-promised trip to visit his 'MAM', took two blokes back to Chester and was back at Little Langdale by 9a.m. next day, ready for summit. It was a day that would bring rich rewards; MOBY (H.V.S.) and NORTH CRAG MILLINITE (LS) were climbed both having classic final pitches, the latter climb a gem being well down in its grade. Colin found the tree pitch a bit intimidating as the Yew branch one is meant to stand on to reach good rock holds above, bent horrendously beneath the Alpinists frame, however, the Yew was enough for my weight and we continued unabashed. The narrowing gang-way, for which this classic is famed is not hard; superb incut holds manifest themselves immediately above the gangway and beyond it around a blind move to the biggest jug in the world; the climb finishes neatly around to the left by way of an accommodating niche and a short groove; well protected.

The sun would not stop shining, Dave had arrived, so all three of us marched via Hosedale to the best piece of rock in the world (I'm a bit short on superlatives): Scafell's East Buttress. HELL'S GROOVE (LS) was to be climbed; the sun was hot as I plodded wearily that last steep slope, I gazed upward at the rock and traced out a line I'd only seen in guide-books and photographs, a right-ward moving highlight of rock that seemed to end in a desperately steep rib. Was this the notorious ICHABOD? God, it looked hard! I joined the others who had just sat down to stare up at the colonnade of grooves and vertical ribs of grey-green rock above them, at a stone a short way beneath the hickledore. I cautiously pointed out the mind-bruising line of ICHABOD adding that I was glad that we were going to climb HELL'S GROOVE. "What do you mean?" exclaimed Dave, "That is HELL'S GROOVE"! I felt as limp as a piece of Polony. However, on closer inspection the line looked more inviting. The first pitch, a noted brute that overhangs in two directions, was dealt with quickly but only after it cheese-grated the flesh on my left forearm which was slowly oozing out of a painful arm jam. Dave and Colin completed the rest in classic style on classic rock.

The next day, after Colin had gone back to Chester, Dave and I set off to Deer Fields and the BUTTRESS (LS). And yet another great route, probably the best of the holiday; never hard except for an all or nothing double overhanging crack on pitch 2, similar to that in HELL'S GROOVE but a grade harder. The guide book calls the last pitch THE SECOND CRUX but this is not the case for there are unreservedly sweet holds all the way. It is better to continue pitch 4 and pitch 5 together to give an incredible pitch, as we did, for the stance between hates climbers. Pitch 3 is, technically, the crux; but that double overhang - Oh Boy! - you could have been nasty.

At last the holiday was nearing its close and on a fine Sunday afternoon Keith Locket and I teamed up and saw MARLOT ROCK (LS) off. Again one of the easier Lakeland extremes but harder than NORTH CRAG MILLINITE yet vastly inferior. Why

limb a mediocre route when there are so many good ones about?

Anyone for Skye!

### A REAL TRIP IN CORNWALL

Rupert

After a week in Cornwall at Easter, I'll tell you what you can do with Skye! It all happened one night when Paul came round and said "Ows yer knees", cos I fancy going down to Cornwall. He then went into raptures of delight about sun warmed rock, beer at 12p. and lots of lovely big busted blonds, that clenched the deal. So I went to the Doctors who said I could go climbing again as long as I took it easy, as all was suspected well with the old knees. So that was that, down to Cornwall. I told my Mam who replied "I knew you would give up that climbing lark soon and go and sunbathe on a beach like tourists do" and so it was all settled.

I met Paul in Preston at 5.30p.m. on the Thursday and we set off there and then to Bosigran. We would try to push down in one night with Paul and Phil driving. I did offer but was told that any more offers like that and I would be walking the remaining 375 miles. We stopped off at a Transport Cafe where the cashier was convinced I was a long distance lorry driver and gave me a large discount on my tucker.

We arrived and found a little green house and set up camp about 400yards from the road and 100yards from the crag. All on our own we were, until a rather polite Gent asked if he could camp next to us (fool) so we agreed, but In the morning he moved and never again did he speak to us.

The sun was shining and I was happy, then I saw Paddy, my heart fell. As there were 3 of us I said I would do a route with him. But his bird objected so I soloed behind them for a while then overtook them. The first route was Commandos ridge, a nerve racking Diff full of horror and grease. Surely I thought as I traversed across the sea my Mam was right. The sun shined all day and I did manage to lead a VS called Nameless after a two month layoff. Then we did this superb route called Ochre slab route 1 VS which had a very strenuous last pitch, I declined the lead kindly offered by this guy called Ross so he led it. It looked desperate from below but wasn't too bad. Joe martin and Steve arrived and spent all day thrutching up some H.S called Doorpost. Paul and Phil did Ding and, or Dong but over the week many routes were ascended, like Suicide Wall H.V.S., Bishops Rib H.V.S. Diogenies V.S., Zig Zag V.S., Doorway, Doorpost H.S., Ochre slab route 1 V.S., Nameless V.S., Flanel Avenue S., and many other routes. Perhaps the high light of the week was when Martin and I had just done Little Brown Jug V.S. when Hydrolic Man and Wille Biz turned up (Proctoe and Birtles) Birtles refused to lead it. One up on a mere mortal. Steve did very well holding Joe who fell off Anvill Chorus, fag still in mouth, then leading it one up for Steve. Arnold free router and Florence along with Fawcepts Grace our company, there not all that bad really. They seemed to follow us, until that is, we tried to write Livesey and his car off. Well it was great everything Paul promised and more, I never did find beer at 12p. only Larger, 39p. though.

### HUT TO HUT WALK

June 18-20

After several duff weekends weatherwise we counted ourselves very lucky to get away so lightly on this weekend walk with just a few isolated showers.

Four of us drove to Stair and walked along the Cat bells High Spy Ridge, down to Rostwaite, along the river and then over Glaramara and Allen Crags and home

via Rossett as the weather was not conducive to Esk Pike and Bowfell.

The main party of a dozen or so left Little Langdale, crossed to Elterwater and ascended Silver Howe subsequently following Blea Rigg to Serjant Man. A quick thrash over the ensuing flat summits brought them to the Scafell Hotel before closing time leaving a leisurely afternoon stroll to the hut. John Sealey kindly drove many tons of gear from Langdale to Stair and collected our goods and chattles for transmission back to Newhouses.

The evenings entertainment at the N.D.G. was enlivened by a dance and barbeque in aid of the Mountain Rescue Team. A particularly touching moment came when Rupert met the Team Member who had saved his life a week earlier lowering him off the Kiddies Climbing frame at the Hawkshead Gala. The Stair party presumably consumed real ale.

On the Sunday, in considerably improved weather we followed in the foot steps of the others. Some of the Stair group bused back to Langdale, others travelled via the Scafell hotel (again) and Langstralt. Finally I drove their gear back to Langdale where I was not suprised to see that the vastly increased hut dues had manifested themselves in another "club car". How G.P. does it and still leaves us a profit is a mark of his sheer genius.

D.A. Earle,

N.B. Pleasant to see several of our lady members on this meet.

#### SOCIAL SYLLABUS

Please see Keith to see if anything has been arranged.

#### FUTURE MEETS

A call to the heart of all those people who came to the AGM, or otherwise expressed the desire for coach meets. Where have you been all Summer?

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| Sept 24/26 | Work Party Little Langdale. Come and repair the damage and fair wear and tear from the Summer usage.<br>Leader. D. Earle. |
| Oct 1/3    | Bull Pot Farm. Potholing meet<br>Leader. K. Lockett   |
| Oct 8/10   | Beginners Rock climbing.<br>Stair Leader. J. Sealey   |
| Oct 15/17  | Big Mountain weekend to Tremadoc.<br>Hut Leader. Real big mountain man "Doc Robin" Norris<br>Good pub nearby too.         |

Oct 22/24 Ladies Meet. Langdale  
Oct 31 Coach Meet. Almscliffe. Leader. P. Roscoe  
Nov. 6/7 Work Party and Hot Pot. STAIR. Bring your own sparklers.  
Nov 14 Coach Meet. Troutbeck to Pooley Bridge.  
Leader. J. Jowett.

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WASDALE

7-9 May

The superb weather ensured that the family camping part of the meet had an excellent weekend, but rather wasted the facilities of the Fell and Rock Hut.

Saturday found the majority of walkers on the Yewbarrow, Red Pike, Steeple and Pillar round some finishing over Kirkfell.

The climbers trudged up Brown Tongue into Hollow Stones but were then rewarded by a perfect days climbing. Pikes Crag took a pounding for a change.

Sunday dawned cloudy but soon brightened up. Those walkers not on the Scafells visited the Wasdale Screes and Ill Ghyll Head. The climbers spent rather more time failing or tumbling than the previous day, a notable exception being Keith Lockett. Rick and Sue did C.B.

Altogether a very well attended and extremely enjoyable meet.

Pleasant to see Big Liz again.

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SOCIAL SYLLABUS REPORT

Unfortunately the Jumble Sale had to be postponed as some scouts saturated the same area as we had just canvassed and took most of the cream; Thanks are expressed to those who assisted and also to whoever is storing the jumble so far collected. The Sharples Farm is surely missed.

The football match against the Ski Club was an outstanding success with teams of 12 men + 4 women being fielded. The Ski Club, who admittedly had borrowed our best players, thrashed us 3-1 and the FHC were never really in it. The hot evening made the "Dr. Bods" provided at the Rangers afterwards even more than usually refreshing and a return match was eagerly discussed.

The Ski meet at Rossendale was great fun though it would have been even more amusing had the "hard climbing" set plucked up the courage to come. The journey passed quickly as we described the surrounding countryside in glowing Alpine Terms! All the equipment is provided except a pair of gloves, and the set up is ideal for raw beginners or to loosen up before a ski-ing holiday. Altogether a very pleasant way to spend an evening.

The thursday climbing meets have been taking place as arranged with a hard core of participants receiving much useful practice and several pleasant evenings climbing.

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ADVERTS

1 COPY - HARD ROCK (Brand New) £5.80  
(See Dave Walton)