ALPINE NOTES

(Compiled by D. F. O. Dangar)

PERSONAL.—We congratulate Colonel H. Westmorland on being awarded the O.B.E. in the New Year's Honours, for his services to mountain rescue. We also congratulate Dr. G. O. Dyhrenfurth on being made an honorary member of the Italian Alpine Club. In 1962 Dr. Dyhrenfurth was elected an honorary member of the Austrian Alpine Club (O.A.K.) and on this distinction too we offer him our congratulations—and our apologies that they are so long overdue.

G. A. MITCHELL.—The Alpine Club's old caretaker, Mitchell, whom many of the members will call to mind both at Savile Row and at South Audley Street, died last November at the age of eighty-eight. He came to the Alpine Club in 1924 and stayed until 1947. The last time he was able to come to the Club was in the centenary year, when he came up to London from the country specially to see the exhibition that had been laid on. He sustained an accident not long before his death and did not make a full recovery; we can now but pay our tribute of gratitude to him for the years of his service.

C. F. KNOX (1938–64).—This fine New Zealand mountaineer was killed last year in the French Alps. Colin Frederick Knox was not a member of the Alpine Club, but was probably known to many Cambridge members. He was at King's College, studying Physics, and in 1963 had led the Cambridge East Greenland Expedition, which had great success.

At that time Knox had had only one Alpine season, which had included climbs such as Piz Bernina by the Biancograt, and the Weisshorn North ridge. But he had six New Zealand seasons behind him, involving Mount Cook (twice, Hooker face and North ridge) and two routes on Mount Aspiring. An excellent obituary notice of him appears in the 1964 *N.Z.A.J.*, but he must have left many friends in this country to deplore the early death of a man who had already, in many different ways, made his mark, with promise of much more to follow.

T. G. LONGSTAFF.—Mr. T. A. Rumbold writes to say that he can supplement the obituary notice in last November's *A.J.* where it was said that Longstaff had never practised medicine. Mr. Rumbold recalls a season (about 1925) in the Dauphiné, when two patients fell to Longstaff's lot. One, a broken arm, was simple to deal with; the

other, Mr. Rumbold himself, was a bad case of food poisoning. Longstaff's prescription for this was an injunction not to climb for ten days, and to take a table-spoon of castor oil every four hours. The mere thought of this seems to have worked a cure, for Mr. Rumbold (who had not the heart to tell his doctor the truth) never took the medicine, yet recovered so rapidly that he was able shortly to depart down the valley for further climbing.

SIR WINSTON CHURCHILL.—The death of Sir Winston reminds us that mountaineering was a form of sport he had tried, and did not appear to appreciate. With Christian Kaufmann of Grindelwald he made an ascent of the Wetterhorn in 1894 (*A.J.* 51. 130) and, in the same year, with his life-long friend L. S. Amery, he climbed Monte Rosa, suffering from mountain sickness and a badly flayed face (*Days of Fresh Air*). We have not come across any other mention of him mountaineering.

T.S.B.

BLIND MOUNTAINEERS.—Siegfried Zinnecker, a blind man who lost his sight in the last war, made the ascent of Mont Blanc last summer with four companions, in spite of bad weather and snow conditions. An even more remarkable feat was that of a blind Dutch mountaineer who climbed the Miroir d'Argentine with the guide Claude Gollut.

MACCABEO.—The alpine career of this famous canine mountaineer has ended. Maccabeo, an Irish setter, disappeared last summer and is presumed to have fallen into a crevasse. Her first expedition was in 1954 when she went up to the Regina Margherita hut and from there crossed the Lysjoch to Zermatt. Every summer thereafter Maccabeo left her home at Gressoney about the end of June and for three months wandered about among the mountains of the Monte Rosa group. She did not make any major ascents and her career was not so distinguished as that of Tschingel, Coolidge's dog, but she was often met by climbers at alpine huts. She had some adventurous expeditions; a British climber once met her on the Lys glacier and saved her from falling into a crevasse, and on another trip she fell into a crevasse on the Verra glacier but was rescued by an Italian customs guard. She was eleven years old at the time of her death.[1]

SCHWEIZER ALPEN CLUB.—*Fürsprech* Albert Eggler has been elected President of the S.A.C. for 1965–67, during which period the *Comité Central* will be formed by members of the Bern Section. The new President was leader of the 1956 Swiss Mount Everest expedition which made the first ascent of Lhotse and the second and third ascents of Everest.

[1] See *A.J.* 60. 378, where her sex was incorrectly stated.

On June 30, 1964, the S.A.C. had a membership of 46,348 in ninety-two sections.

U.I.A.A.—Dr. Edouard Wyss-Dunant, until recently President of the S.A.C., has succeeded M. C. Egmond d'Arcis as President of the Union Internationale des Associations d'Alpinisme. M. d'Arcis, founder of the U.I.A.A. and President for many years, has now been nominated Honorary President in recognition of his great services to the Union.

TONI KINSHOFER.—As a result of injuries received from a fall while climbing in the local *Klettergarten* Toni Kinshofer died at Baden-Baden on October 24, 1964. He was thirty years of age. He had left his stance too soon and fell before his second man had completed the security precautions. Kinshofer was one of the greatest of the younger generation of German climbers. He took part in the first winter ascent of the Eigerwand and had achieved many of the most difficult routes in both the Western and Eastern Alps. In 1961 he was one of the party to attempt the Diamir face of Nanga Parbat and reached a height of nearly 23,500 ft. The following year the route was completed and Kinshofer, with Anderl Mannhard and Siegfried Löw, reached the summit of Nanga Parbat (second ascent) at 5 p.m. on June 22, 1962.

The descent was a fearful ordeal. The three men had to spend a night out at over 26,000 ft. Continuing the descent next day they unroped; Löw fell and expired from his injuries in Kinshofer's arms during the evening. His companion having gone on ahead to get help, Kinshofer struggled down to safety throughout a terrible night and reached Camp III next morning. Though losing all his toes through frost-bite he did not give up his activities and in 1963 was a member of the party that went to reconnoitre the Rupal face of Nanga Parbat and also climbed the North face of the Cima Ovest di Lavaredo by the French *direttissima*.

Once again a momentary lack of concentration, or carelessness, has brought about the untimely and lamentable death of a great mountaineer.

WHYMPER AND SOUTHEND.—It does not seem to be generally known that for twenty-five to thirty years prior to his marriage in 1906 Whymper kept a *pied à terre* in Southend, to which he could withdraw as the mood took him. The *Southend Standard* of September 21, 1911, had a memorial notice of him and I understand from the Editor that the newspaper may make the centenary of the first ascent of the Matterhorn the occasion for a further article. There are still people living at Southend who remember him; one lady recalls how Whymper, when he came back from his travels, used to bring home enormous bunches of green bananas, which he stored in his attic to ripen. A peculiarity

that was noted of him was that when he took a railway journey he used to wrap his legs in a sleeping bag as soon as he had taken his seat in the train.

T.S.B.

SWITZERLAND 1965—THE YEAR OF THE ALPS.—Switzerland has declared this year to be 'The Year of the Alps' to mark the centenaries of the first ascent of the Matterhorn on July 14, 1865, and of the arrival of the first winter guests in the country.

In celebration of these events the Swiss National Tourist Office organised an exhibition of mountaineering in the Alps at the Ceylon Tea Centre, Regent Street, from February 4 to 19.

The exhibition was opened by Mrs. Ethel Blandy, Edward Whymper's daughter; among others present at the opening ceremony were a niece of Whymper's and a nephew of the Rev. Charles Hudson. A number of objects were lent by the Alpine Club. In commenting on the exhibition more than one leading newspaper referred to Michel Croz as a 'Swiss' guide. He was, of course, a native of the Chamonix valley and the greatest French guide of the 'Golden Age'.

BALL'S PYRAMID.—Some 430 miles north-east of Sydney, Australia, a gigantic rock pinnacle towers 1,843 ft. out of the Pacific Ocean; known as Ball's Pyramid, sometimes as Cathedral Rock, it was discovered by Lieutenant Ball in 1788 while sailing to Norfolk Island.

This remarkable peak, with its double-headed summit recalling that of the Aiguille des Ciseaux, has been attempted by no less than eight expeditions but still remains unclimbed.

Ball's Pyramid rises sheer out of the sea and is surrounded by whirlpools; it is therefore exceedingly difficult even to obtain a foothold on it. The first 500 ft. of the climb are encrusted with salt and, according to a member of last year's expedition, 'are eroded so you could knock away chunks of rock with a stick. To make things more difficult the top half is covered by bird droppings which are very difficult to get a foothold on'.

The latest attempt was made towards the end of last year by a party of Sydney students. They found landing on the rock so hazardous, because of the heavy seas, that not all of them were able to get ashore the same day, and so difficult was the ascent that at one stage seven and a half hours were spent in climbing a little over 200 ft. Four men were selected to make the final assault and, secured to the rocks, they spent a night of bitter cold and frequent storms of rain. By morning a gale was blowing and 'ahead lay 600 ft. of vertical rock broken only by long overhanging pitches and bands of crumbling stone'. In the violent wind it was unsafe to stand upright and the party, after sleepless nights on the Pyramid, were no longer in a fit state to continue the

climb in the prevailing conditions and reluctantly abandoned the attempt.[2]

A New Map of Mount Kenya.—Erwin Schneider and Hubert Schriebl paused in East Africa in January, 1963, on their way back to Austria from Nepal, where they had been surveying in the Everest region. They visited the three main East African mountains and made survey observations by terrestrial photogrammetrical methods, and a map has now been produced by a Vienna publishing house of the peak area of Mount Kenya, at a scale of 1/5,000 (approximately 1 foot to 1 mile).

The area covered is from Arthur's Seat in the west to Point Lenana in the east and from Kami hut in the north to the heart-breaking scree on the way to Firmin hut in the south. The summit of Batian is almost exactly in the centre.

The contour interval is 20 metres, and the rock representation by Fritz Ebster is in the manner of the finest alpine maps. The relief is further emphasised by very subtle hill shading, and by the differentiation between rock, scree and moraine. The result is a map of great clarity and a superb example of the cartographer's art.

The photography was carried out in the January season when the north-facing slopes carry a lot of snow, which has tended to exaggerate the importance of the northern glaciers a little, and that is the nearest one can get to an adverse comment. The map is also produced in a 1/10,000 reduction, which differs only in the omission of some place names, and of the metre conversion scale.

We now look forward eagerly to the production of the results of the Ruwenzori observations.

R. A. Caukwell.

Mount Kennedy.—In memory of the late President Kennedy the Canadian Government has named after him a mountain in the Yukon. Mount Kennedy, in the St. Elias range, is over 14,000 ft. high and is about 180 miles west of Whitehorse.

Mount Everest Foundation.—Applications for grants for the 1966 season should be received at the M.E.F. offices (c/o Royal Geographical Society, Kensington Gore, London, S.W. 7.) by September 15, 1965, in the case of expeditions expected to leave early in the coming year. Expeditions leaving later can postpone their applications up to January 1, 1966.

[2] With acknowledgements to the Sydney *Daily Telegraph* and *Sunday Telegraph*. I am very grateful to Mrs. E. M. Cutts, of Mona Vale, N.S.W., for having sent me information about this and other Australian expeditions. As we go to press news has been received that another expedition is being prepared in Sydney to attack the Pyramid.

SHISHA PANGMA.—Following the note on p. 216 of the November issue of the *Alpine Journal*, we have now obtained fuller details of the route taken by the successful Chinese party. It lay up the smooth, snowy expanse on the right of illustration no. 53, and then turned left to reach the well-defined snowy couloir descending from the gap between the two highest summits. Part of the route is hidden by an intervening peak, faintly seen against the face of the main mountain; the left hand of the two summits is the highest point.

K 6.—Although reconnoitred from all sides K 6, 23,885 ft., still remains unclimbed. In 1961 an Austrian party came to the conclusion it was not possible from the Kondus valley and in the same year the R.A.F. Karakoram expedition attempted it by the South-west face and reached a height of about 20,000 ft.; the only possible route led to the Western summit and thence to the main summit, which would have involved a two-mile traverse, part of which would have necessitated the climbing of difficult rocks at an altitude not far short of 24,000 ft. An examination of the North face, which rose 7,000 ft. at an almost vertical angle, showed only the utter impossibility of forcing a route up it.

Last summer a party of four from the Berlin section of the D.A.V. made another attempt from the east (Kondus) side but owing to the appalling weather conditions was also unsuccessful. In the course of two months spent on the mountain there was one spell of fine weather —lasting five days. A reconnaissance confirmed that the North side was hopeless and a route was chosen by way of the 'Link-Sar' glacier, a tributary of the Kondus glacier. Camp III was established at 20,670 ft. and this was the highest point reached. The chief difficulties had by then been overcome and future expeditions following this route and enjoying better weather should have fair prospects of success.

GANGCHHEN LEDRUB.—Another attempt, made in 1964, to climb this peak—formerly known as Langtang Lirung—has failed. With a height of 23,770 ft. it is the highest summit of the Langtrang Himal. A small party of five Australians led by Mr. Peter Taylor, after making a Base Camp at 16,000 ft. and Camp I at 19,000 ft., established Camp II at 21,400 ft. on the South ridge on October 5. The next day the leader and three Sherpas continued up the face of a 500-ft. high rock tower to a height of over 22,000 ft. At this point the weather was deteriorating and Mr. Taylor considered that his party was too small to push on any further; after four days of snow the rock tower was unclimbable. According to an account published in *The Australian* the route to the summit from the highest point reached 'looked easy'.

Gangchhen Ledrub is a difficult and dangerous mountain. At least

one expedition considered the appearance of the peak so repellent that it never made a serious attempt.

In 1961 a Japanese expedition under K. Morimoto made an attempt by way of the Lirung glacier and the East ridge. On May 10 the whole party, six Japanese and five Sherpas, was assembled at Camp III, at 18,373 ft. Early the next day an avalanche swept down on the camp; the leader, K. Oshima, and Gyaltsen Norbu were killed. The famous Sherpa had previously reached the summits of Makalu (1955) and Manaslu (1956).

In the autumn of 1963 two men lost their lives in the course of an attempt by an Italian expedition.

HIMALAYAN PLANS.—Increasing difficulties in regard to permits, customs, and other formalities have now to be faced by expeditions intending to visit Nepal. Some of those proposed for this year have not received a permit and others have been abandoned by their promoters.

The Indians will make their third attempt on Everest and Japanese parties will attack Lhotse Shar and either the West Peak or South Peak of Kangchenjunga. Dhaulagiri IV is the main objective of an R.A.F. post-monsoon expedition under the leadership of Squadron-Leader J. R. Sims, and Kambachen will be attempted by a Yugoslavian party.

OTHER EXPEDITIONS.—British climbers are now turning their attention to the Hindu Kush and it is satisfactory to report that a Scottish expedition plans to visit the Wakhan–Pakistan border with an ascent of Lunkho, 22,641 ft., as one of its principal objectives. Another party hopes to visit North-east Afghanistan.

A Scottish-Canadian group is going to the Coast Range on the Alaska–British Columbia border, to a district some thirty miles north-north-east of Wrangell. This party will have a base camp near Mount Ratz, 10,290 ft., said to be the highest peak in the region, and will attempt Noel Peak, 10,080 ft., and explore the mountaineering possibilities of the area.

UNION INTERNATIONALE DES ASSOCIATIONS D'ALPINISME.—The centenary of the Club's first Report on Ropes, Axes and Alpenstocks[3] was marked by holding the annual meeting of the Commission du Matériel de Securité of the U.I.A.A. at 74, South Audley Street, on September 12 and 13, 1964. The President of the Commission, Pierre Henry of the F.F.M., presided with the retiring President of the U.I.A.A., C. Egmond d'Arcis, and there were delegations from Austria, France, Germany, Jugoslavia, Switzerland, and a large home team. Our visitors were welcomed by the Presidents of the Alpine Club and the British Mountaineering Council and were later entertained to an informal dinner at the Café Royal.

[3] See *A.J.* 69. 241.

The principal business of the meeting led to agreement on a U.I.A.A. Standard for General Purpose Karabiners, largely based on the work of the B.M.C. and National Engineering Laboratory. This Standard provides for minimum standards of performance and the control of manufacturing processes to ensure consistency of performance, which has been sadly lacking in most of the makes of karabiner available hitherto. The Commission also set up a working party to study the requirements for climbing helmets. The Mountain Rescue Committee drew attention to the very large proportion of climbing accidents in which serious skull injuries are sustained during the fall, and recommended that helmets be so designed to give protection during a fall as well as against falling stones.

Other topics discussed included pitons and ropes and their maintenance, and the meeting was as fruitful socially as it was technically.

F. SOLARI.