

In memoriam

Frank Philip Bowden, 1903–68

Frank Philip Bowden was born and brought up in Tasmania. In 1927 he came to Cambridge to work in the Department of Colloid Science and for the rest of his life, apart from the war years spent in Australia, Cambridge was his home. He was a brilliant physicist, dedicated to research, who became a C.B.E. and a Fellow of the Royal Society. He loved Cambridge and many highly attractive inducements failed to lure him away from the Cavendish, and Finella, his Cambridge home. In 1956 he was partly rewarded by the establishment for him of a new chair in the Cavendish in Surface Physics. It was in this particular field that he made a remarkable contribution to the science of ski-ing. In 1935 he spent some time on the Jungfrauoch with Seligman, where he was doing work on glacier movement, and carried out a basic series of experiments in the mechanism of sliding on ice and snow. The results of this research were first published in the *Proceedings* of the Royal Society, 1939. This and his subsequent research formed a basis for revolutionary developments in the use of plastic and other coatings for skis.

I first met Philip Bowden in 1929 when he joined a C.U.M.C. meet in Austria. My brother Claud and I shared a rope with him and spent a highly enjoyable ten days traversing the peaks of the Stubaital and Zillertal. At this time Philip was experienced in the exploration of comparatively unexploited mountain country in Tasmania, but his conventional summer mountaineering was limited to a few expeditions made in the previous year in the Oberland with Max Brünner, the physical chemist from Zürich whom he had met in Cambridge and who remained his life-long friend. Their best peak had been the Schreckhorn. Philip was a natural mountaineer and a wonderful companion, who brought a feeling of respectable maturity to our undergraduate expeditions. Although he went on that year to Saas, with Brünner again, where amongst other climbs they did the Lenzspitze-Nadelhorn traverse, I think he had decided that the sort of climbing which normally qualifies for the Alpine Club was not for him, for the rest of his mountaineering was largely done on skis or was carried out in unfamiliar districts like Corsica and the Julian Alps.

He rapidly became an enthusiastic and expert skier. In 1946 he was elected to the Club on a qualification which included little more conventional alpine mountaineering than I have mentioned but which was rich in ski mountaineering and expeditions in districts as far apart as the Sierra Nevada of Spain and California. Every year from 1927 until his death, except during the war, he visited the mountains at least once. His introduction to mountain travel in Tasmania always coloured his ski-ing. It was a matter of exploration and adventure rather than an exercise in technique. Even a mountain walk in Wales

with Philip seemed to take on a pioneering character. In 1931 he married Margot Hutchison and one of his greatest pleasures was sharing with her and their four children his love of the mountains and his enjoyment of ski-ing.

Philip Bowden's three great enthusiasms were his family, scientific research and mountains. They all three brought out his particular gifts of wise and sympathetic companionship and it was characteristic of his full and active life that he was able to combine the three so successfully. **Peter Bicknell**

N. S. Finzi

I would like to add to the obituary in *A.J.* 73. 296 a few personal reminiscences about Neville Finzi. I met him first in Zermatt at the Monte Rosa in 1935. My climbing companions had returned disconsolately to England, owing to the appalling weather—five days of continuous rain. On their departure the weather promptly cleared and Neville most kindly invited me to join him in a traverse of the Ober Gabelhorn. He had Franz Biner and I took a young man named Adrian Lager. Neville hit upon the brilliant idea of doing the climb straight from Zermatt. We left at 11 am on a perfect morning and reached the summit, via the Wellenkuppe, at 11.30. Descending via the Arbengrat we were followed by a Swiss lady and her guide. The lady dislocated her shoulder and was in great pain, but Neville soon put it back and enabled her to continue. We arrived in Zermatt at 8pm, after nineteen hours. Neville was not in the least tired. It was a memorable day—a climb done in the old style.

I never had the opportunity to climb with him again, but we remained close friends and met frequently at the club. He was always interested in the activities of the younger generation, and so easy to talk to. Of recent years I used to meet him at his home. He continued ski-ing until, at the age of nearly eighty he broke his thigh by a fall in his garden and was furious because the doctors forbade him to ski again. He generously gave all his ski-ing equipment to me for the use of the Mountaineering Club at St John's.

Neville was a most remarkable man. I count myself fortunate to have been numbered as one of his friends, and shall always remember his kindness and sympathetic understanding. **T. A. H. Peacocke**

Henry Selden Kingman, 1894–1968

Henry Kingman died on 12 December, following surgery at the age of 74. He was a leading banker, a former president of the National Association of

Mutual Savings Banks and honorary chairman of the Farmers and Mechanics Saving Bank, of Minneapolis, of which he was president 1937-57, then becoming board chairman. He was a graduate of Amherst, and a lifetime trustee of the college. He was also a trustee of the Mayo Clinic, Rochester, N.Y., and a director of the Mutual Life Insurance Company of New York, as well as of General Mills. During the First World War he served in the French artillery and received the Croix de Guerre.

He joined the Alpine Club in 1938, but had become a member of the Alpine Club of Canada in 1930 and of the American Alpine Club in the following year, giving valuable assistance to its Finance Committee. He was an expert skier and in 1931 took part in a ski expedition from Lake Louise to the Columbia Icefield and return. He climbed extensively in the Canadian Rockies and Selkirks and, to a lesser extent, in the Alps. In Canada he made the second ascents of Mounts Unwin and Charlton from Maligne lake (1929) and accompanied the present writer, with Conrad Kain as guide, when from Peyto lake we made first ascents of Peyto, Mistaya, Trapper and Barbette, completing the tour with a long glacier traverse across the watershed from Peyto lake to Yoho valley. In 1934 we visited the Freshfield group and Bush pass, a season of bad weather when our only successes were first ascents of Mounts Garth and Valenciennes. In 1936 he made the first ascent of Mount Weed. Kingman's enjoyment of life on the Canadian trails made him a most pleasant companion, and his death is a great loss to his many friends. **J. Monroe Thorington**

Brian Ripley, 1943-68

Brian Ripley, whose death on Malubiting is recorded elsewhere (p 224), was a noted figure among the younger British climbers. A member of the Karabiner Mountaineering Club and of the A.C.G., he became a member of the A.C. following the A.C.-A.C.G. merger of 1967.

An architectural draughtsman by profession, he was a dedicated climber, possessed of great stamina and, in the company of close friends, was able to pull off in a few years a wide range of accomplishment in the hills. He was an indefatigable walker and attempted, among other feats, to join up all the Scottish 3000 ft peaks in one continuous walk—and managed to get over 230 of them, out of about 280.

In the Alps he had shown his competence on such climbs as the East face of

the Grand Capucin (in 8½ hours); the first British ascent of the Guides Route on the Crozzon di Brenta; and the Bonatti Pillar of the Dru.

Our sympathy goes to his family and friends.

John Allen

Johann Brantschen (1888–1968). Hans Brantschen was one of that group of St Niklaus guides, Lochmatters, Pollingers, Josef Knubel and others, who achieved distinction in the decades immediately before and after the First World War. His first important engagement was in 1914 with Geoffrey Winthrop Young, with whom, together with his great friend Josef Knubel, he made the first ascent of the Rote Zähne (West) ridge of the Gspaltenhorn, which then had a high reputation for inaccessibility (*A.ŷ.* 30. 96). He acquitted himself so well that Young had intended to take him on future climbs on the great ridges and faces, but then came the war and Young's loss of his leg. This put an end to their first ascents, though later Hans was with him on Monte Rosa and on the Matterhorn.

After the war there were a certain number of climbers who used to engage Hans for the very difficult routes of the Western and Central Alps, some of these clients, like Wilfrid Noyce (*A.ŷ.* 50. 136–7, 312), wishing to gain experience under a really first-class guide before going guideless. But Hans never had the opportunity of again taking part in first ascents of the highest standard. In consequence, he never acquired a wide reputation except with his fellow guides. Among them he commanded immense respect, not only because of his complete mastery of his craft but because of his massive dignity and complete reliability both on and off the mountains.

Hans's happiness lay in doing his job supremely well in the company of those whom he liked and trusted, and he was too big a man to be troubled by his comparative obscurity. The reason for his lack of more widespread recognition was, partially at least, that he was one of the most silent of men and also one of the most self-effacing, except on a mountain. This great gift of silence would not make any general appeal to climbers, but there were some who found it companionable when they realised that it was far from being a symptom of mental lethargy or stupidity. He used to plan his climbs with minute care, and no one could have been more thoughtful of others both on and off a climb. Moreover, he could act with startling speed: I remember an occasion when he was leading Harold Porter and me up a steep slope of hard snow interspersed with bluffs of rock on the Nantillons side of the Charmoz, and, most unexpectedly, a shower of rocks descended on us. Hans's instant reaction was to

jump down some way onto sounder footing (and incidentally more in the line of fire) and whip the rope over a small spike which he had instinctively noted on the way up, just in time to hold Porter, who was second on the rope and had been knocked off his holds by a stone which hit his sack.

One of the leading Zermatt guides, a great friend of Hans, writing to me after his death, applied to him the words on Ferdinand Imseng's tombstone at Macugnaga, 'Bonn guide et honnête homme'. Hans, with his love of verbal economy would, I think, have approved of this epitaph as saying so much of importance in so few words.

C. A. Elliott

A. E. Foot Arthur Edward Foot, who was born in 1901 and died on 26 September 1968, was elected to the A.C. in 1932 and resigned in 1963. He was headmaster of Ottershaw School from 1948 to 1964, but for mountaineers he was best known as headmaster of the Doon School, Dehra Dun, from 1935 to 1948. During the Second World War he was Chairman of the Indian Public Schools Conference (1943-4) and served in 1945-6 on the C-in-C's Indian National War Academy Committee. He received the Kaisar-i-Hind Gold Medal in 1946 and the C.B.E. in 1948.

Sonam Gyatso The death has been reported of Sonam Gyatso at the age of forty-five. He was the oldest man to have ascended Everest. As a member of the successful Indian expedition he reached the summit on 22 May 1965, when forty-two years old. He took part in both the 1960 and 1962 Indian attempts on Everest and in 1958 made the second ascent of Cho Oyu.

P. F. S. Otten (1895-1969). *The Times* for 6 January 1969 carried an obituary notice of the late Pieter Frans S. Otten, of Eindhoven, Holland. Mr Otten had recently submitted details of his climbing, with a view to obtaining membership of the A.C. He was already an Honorary Member of the Royal Netherlands Alpine Club and of the S.A.C. (Section Bern). He climbed in the Alps fairly regularly from 1919 to 1932, and, after the Second World War, he returned to the Alps and continued climbing till about 1951. In later years he made frequent ski tours. An engineer by profession, he built up the Philips Incandescent lamp works in Eindhoven between the wars, only to have it virtually destroyed during the Second War, he being out of Holland all those years. However, he built it up again to be one of the largest electrical and electronic concerns in any country. He was a man of great energy and determination, devoted to climbing and an ardent follower (and supporter very often) of climbing overseas, and it is a matter for genuine regret that his membership of the Alpine Club has been forestalled by death.

Mrs Amy Woodgate Mrs Woodgate, a niece of Edward Whymper, died on 11 January last. She had attended in Zermatt in 1965 at the well-remembered celebrations of the Centenary of the first ascent of the Matterhorn and was one of the guests at the Club's dinner on 11 July that year.