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## CORRESPONDENCE.

*To the Editor of the CLIMBERS' CLUB JOURNAL.*

DEAR SIR,

In a recent number of the *Journal* I drew the attention of members to certain ancient records which threw considerable light on the early nomenclature of the country round about Wastdale Head. Since that time I have come across a document of similar character and still earlier date, going back into the preceding century. Unfortunately, it does not give nearly so many names as the deeds of 1322 and 1338. Once more we are indebted for a valuable record to the great family of Multon of Egremont. Lambert de Multon had a son, Thomas de Multon, who died, leaving a widow, Margaret, and in the *Close Rolls* of the 22nd year of Edward I. (1294) is entered a list of the properties which were assigned to her, in satisfaction of her claim to dower. For convenience sake we may quote from the official translation of the Latin text, adding, as before, a few words of comment. After enumerating many estates, with which, for our present purpose, we have no concern, the list contains this entry :

“All the lake of Bulmer, with the fishery of Esk, at Rauglas.”

Here U is an evident mistake for N, Ranglas and Renglas being common corruptions of Ravenglas.

“Also Eskdale and Meterdale [*i.e.*, Miterdale], . . . who render £9 10s. od. per annum by these bounds. As Hollegill falls into Irt, ascending to Wassewater on that side, to the stream of Lesagh, and, along Lesagh, ascending to Ederlangbeck, and along Ederlangbeck,

ascending to Le Cauce, and thus, by the boundaries of the Abbot of Furneys to the boundaries of John de Hodeleston, and so by the waters of Esk to the boundaries of Mulcastre, and so, transversely, to Hollegilheved, and, along Hollegill, descending into Irt, as before."

For the sake of comparison, a portion of the original Latin is appended:—

"Item de stagnis et piscariis tam infra liberam chaciam quam extra assignatur eidem totum lacus de Bulmer cum tota piscaria aque de Esk apud Ranglas. . . .

Sicut Hollegill cadit in Irt ascendendo usque Wassewater ex illa parte usque rivulum de Lesagh et sic Lesagh ascendendo usque Ederlangbeck et sic Ederlangbeck ascendendo usque le Cauce (Caute, Cance, Cante) et sic per divisas Abbatis de Furneys usque divisas Johannis de Hodeleston et sic per aquam de Esk usque divisas de Mulcastre et sic ex transverso usque Hollegilheved et sic Hollegill descendendo in Irt ut primo."

This is how I read the Latin record, after, of course, extending the numerous contractions.

There are several points in this document which want clearing up.

*The Lake of Bulmer.*—Is this Burnmoor Tarn, which, in 1322, seems to be called Burmeswater? True, it is the only piece of water on this part of the property, and the two names are not very far apart, but possibly we should look for it nearer the mouth of the Esk, where at that date there may have been one or more lagoons, in place of the present estuary.

*Hollegill.*—From Hawlgill to the foot of Wastwater, the boundary is the same as in 1322, but thenceforward it keeps to the east of the lake, and apparently follows Lingmell Gill up to Sty Head. If so, then Lingmell Gill is, by accident or design, called *Lesagh*. It is, of course, possible that there were

two rivers of the name, one in Wastdale, besides the well-known one in Ennerdale, and it is curious that the deed of 1322, in mentioning the latter, finds it necessary to add the words, "in Eynordale," as if there were another "Lesagh" near enough to cause confusion. On the other hand, if the Ennerdale stream was intended, in the earlier deed, as it undoubtedly was in the second, why is no attempt made to bridge the wide gap between it and the head of Wastwater? Those who argue for Ennerdale would, of course, reply that a line or two must have been omitted from the deed by the copyist, but such omissions, though they sometimes occur, are in fact much rarer in ancient records than one would expect. Whatever stream *Lesagh* may have been, we should have hoped to find the connection with Sty Head clearly traced; but neither that important landmark nor Great Gable is mentioned, and we have nothing to guide us but *Ederlangbeck*, which must be in close relation to "Ederlangtirn," and we have seen reason to believe that that was Sty Head Tarn. At all events the beck in question flows down from *Le Cauce*, which can hardly be anything but Esk Hause, especially since there is really only one stream that can be followed upward from the neighbourhood of Styhead Tarn, and that stream leads towards Esk Hause. The astonishing thing is that, if this identification is right, the pronunciation of the year 1294 was far more modern than that of 1322, when the much purer and more archaic form, "Eskhals," is used. Indeed, *Le Cauce* is curiously near to the form "Ash Course," which, half a century ago, was regularly given in maps and guide books. What are we to say of the document as a whole? The general verdict will probably be that it is vaguely and carelessly drawn, probably by some one who did not know the localities, and had only a very rough and inadequate map to guide him. Incidentally, too, it will be noticed that poor Margaret, unless she fared better in other districts, did not come off with a very fat share. Indeed, one might imagine that she was pegging out her claim, purely from a climbing point of view, for she got Great End, Mickledoor and the

Wastwater Screes, but was chiselled at every corner out of all the productive bits of land.

If some one can now tell us the boundaries of John Huddleston's lands, and those of the Muncaster estate, it will be a great help. The limits of the Abbey lands must be well known, or at least could be easily traced out. It may be here mentioned that as "Delherter-grene" in the deed to 1322 did not quite agree with my original note, I have again consulted the Latin roll, and find no trace of an "er." In this conclusion the official experts concur. The word should therefore stand as "Delhertgrene," or possibly "Delhertgreve," and the earliest name by which Pillar Fell is described is not Harter Green, but Hart Green, or Hartgreve.

May I take this opportunity of saying that in my last letter on this subject in Vol. V., p. 140, Steastonhow was a misprint for Sleastonhow?

W. P. HASKETT-SMITH.

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*To the Editor of the CLIMBERS' CLUB JOURNAL.*

DEAR SIR,

THE "ABOMINATIONS" IN THE HIGH TOR GULLY—AND  
ELSEWHERE.

Mr. W. Smithard deserves the warm thanks of the members of the Climbers' Club for his letter in the *Journal* (No. 23, p. 151), inasmuch as it gives an opportunity to discuss a matter deeply affecting the Club, and every follower of our sport. Before entering, however, into the more important question that he unintentionally raises, let me deal with the small personal matter with which his letter is immediately concerned.

Although Mr. Smithard affects ignorance of the circumstance, he is quite aware that I am the writer of the "Kyndwr

Club Notes" to which he refers. It almost looks as if he were trying to convict me of contradictory statements; but the apparent inconsistency vanishes when I explain that on our first attempt to get into the gully we were unsuccessful, and failed to come into contact with the abominations that we had experience of more recently, when we entered it from the top. To the best of my belief, Mr. Smithard was with us. On that occasion we had both tangible and olfactory evidence of their existence; and the last time I looked into the funnel of the gully, I saw that it was still being used as a receptacle for refuse from the High Tor refreshment rooms. The point at issue seems to be, then, what constitutes an abomination (I mean, of course, in the eyes of climbers), though this, Sir, appears a somewhat trivial matter with which to trouble you. Well, it is, of course, largely a personal question. Some people regard broken bottles and crockery, the excreta of dustbins, and old meat-tins with portions of the contents still adhering to them in a high state of putrefaction, with feelings of indifference; and no doubt they have a right to their opinions. There are, on the contrary, people who dislike such things, and it was for their benefit that I stated what I considered among the objections to this particular climb.

Since I have never attempted to give an account of the incidents of Mr. Smithard's climb, but merely alluded to it in my "Notes," I fear his application of the phrase "grotesquely garbled" to my description of the place must be due to an imperfect reference to the dictionary. In order to save him trouble, I will give him an illustration of the real meaning of the word "garbling," from his own narrative, and thereby open up a much more important question. In a report of this climb, which Mr. Smithard contributed to a daily paper, he said, "Here were difficulties more treacherous than those already overcome, but to go back was out of the question. The leader proceeded circumspectly, but despite his delicate tread the scree kept rattling down, and imprecations kept volleying up from the two unfortunate men below. Of course they did their utmost to dodge the downfall, but both of them received nasty

knocks—one on the head and the other on the leg. At last the leader got on to a boss of solid rock, where he had splendid anchorage. Barely had he planted himself there when the screes under the last man gave way, and from under him a small avalanche of boulders shot down the slope and over the cornice with great velocity, carrying with them a heavy camera and tripod, which were afterwards found much shattered near the foot of the gully. Fortunately the rope was well hitched to the man himself, and the leader held him quite safely without any difficulty. Nevertheless, it was a startling incident, and they all felt thankful when beyond the scree slopes." Obviously, the writer means to imply that one, if not two, of the party narrowly escaped destruction along with the camera, a fact that I have had confirmed on other authority. Yet Mr. Smithard has left out all mention of this grave incident in what purports to be a full, true and accurate account of this first ascent, written expressly for the *Climbers' Club Journal*. This, it seems to me, is a perfectly satisfactory illustration of what is usually meant by "garbling."

In another article to another daily paper, I read that the cragsmen who decry limestone as a practice ground are all wrong, "probably not having tested the rock for themselves." "This particular dictum," *i.e.*, that limestone is no good to the climber, "could hardly be wider off the mark," so the writer urges, "for, as a matter of fact, some of the very best climbing in Derbyshire is to be had on the three fissures of the High Tor." "What the limestone lacks in quantity it makes up for in quality," and "the disposition of the rock walls at Matlock is admirably suited for the higher grades of the cragsman's art." These hazardous statements as to the suitability of mountain limestone for rock-work, a subject on which every experienced climber has a very definite and immutable opinion, are signed "W. Smithard." I rubbed my eyes on reading them, and turned to another lucubration that had recently appeared in Cox's "Derbyshire," which says distinctly, "*The carboniferous limestone is no good to the cragsman.*" This also was written by W. Smithard.

Now, Sir, this letter has reached a length quite uncalled for by the petty nature of the reference to myself, but I have pursued the subject with an aim that is, I believe, in the best interests of this Club. I am not going to say that the High Tor Gully is not a legitimate climb, although I know it to be an extremely dangerous one, and Mr. Smithard admits that he was assisted by the rope on the more difficult portions. What is illegitimate for me to attempt may be a safe climb for a better man. Nor would I adopt the opinion of certain well qualified persons as to the illegitimacy of the other climbs on the same rock, for I have never found anything there, except the gully, which could seriously be called a climb. But I venture to submit that it is not to the interests of this Club, or of climbing as a sport, that sensational articles should be scattered broadcast among the newspapers of the Midlands, describing climbs on this dangerous rock, and praising them in comparison with the far safer millstone grit, without a word of warning to the public. If novices go to Matlock and get killed, who will be responsible? If anyone describes such climbs for the benefit of the general public, it surely behoves him to write with the utmost care, candour and precaution; yet I have shown that descriptions from the same prolific pen differ in essential details. Such ill-considered articles, unfortunately, are some justification for the severe strictures which one of our members, Mr. Winthrop Young, passed recently on a certain class of modern climber, in the "Independent Review." Mr. Smithard's animadversion has left me no alternative but to refer, very reluctantly, to this broader aspect of the question he has raised.

I am, Sir,

Yours faithfully,

ERNEST A. BAKER.

Liscard, Cheshire.

P.S.—The Hon. Sec. gives me to understand that the Kyndwr Club disclaims any connection with Mr. Smithard's letter, although he signed himself President of the Club.

*To the Editor of the CLIMBERS' CLUB JOURNAL.*

DEAR SIR,

I notice a rope has been fixed at the top of the pitch in Shamrock Gully, and as it occurred to me it *might* possibly have been put there by the Climbers' Club, I did not remove it. However, I afterwards asked at Wastdale Head, and they knew nothing about it. It seems to me to be quite useless, and might be a source of danger. Perhaps you might mention this in your *Journal*, and, if you think it advisable, the next time any of your members are near, it could be removed. Of course it is quite unnecessary, as the pitch can be managed very easily by keeping to the true left, and, starting up the Wall just before the pitch commences, and, passing the traverse on to the boulder, keep right ahead, and drop into the gully again, a few feet over the pitch. I am quite sure climbers know of this route, but if it were mentioned again, it might prevent a good rope being left behind in future.

Yours obediently,

J. R. MEWTON.

22 Fountain Street, Birkenhead.

