

Cambridge Hannibal
Expedition.

1956

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(headings taken direct from Sir John Hunt's
book "The Ascent of Everest"
are in **RED** —)

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Royal Highness the Duke of Edinburgh . K.G. ~

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I must warn you here that inevitably you will find it difficult to separate the serious from the efforts to be hilarious. THAT is your part of the game — to do your best !

(2)

Forward, you madman, and hurry across those
horrid Alps so that you may become the
delight of schoolboys.

Juvenal Satire X 116-7

The researches of many antiquarians have
thrown much darkness on the subject and it
is probable, if they continue, that we shall
soon know nothing at all !

Mark Twain.

INTRODUCTION



The end of the Lent Term was in sight when, one chilly spring evening in March, three undergraduates could be seen talking loudly as they crossed — second court of St John's College Cambridge. Their tattered ^{gowns} flapped in the wind and, unwilling to get down to work, coffee was suggested in D.1. New Court! They slammed the door after them and someone wedged his "gown" under it to try & reduce the gale. The fire was lit and milk put on the gas in the kitchenette.

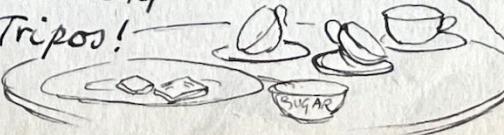
Their discussion concerned a notice recently put up in the screens and perused on their way out from Hall that evening. "Travel Scholarships" were to be awarded to members of the college and to have the exiting word — "Travel" next to such a pocket-bulging word as "Scholarship" was SOMETHING!

"Who gets these ere Scholarships and Why?" and — "Why can't we have a bash?" were the first questions to be asked and discussed.

What was clearly needed was a bright & original idea — — — and ideas were slow in coming — at least to start with. However, it had been a reasonable Hell that night and some one had actually remembered to buy chocolate biscuits — to go with the Nescafé so plans started to hatch. Alas, each brilliant idea seemed to be squashed by the other two who had not thought of it! Deep sea diving in the Med. was "out" — so was the proposed expedition to Tibet. A more realistic view had to be taken.

= "How about Hannibal's trip over the Alps"? Some one broke the stoney silence. The idea seems to have caught on!

— — — Some one yawned. The thought of much work to be caught up on was to say the least uncomfortable. A scuffle for gowns, the turning out of the gas fire and general movement towards the door indicated that the Cambridge Hannibal Expedition was on the move — but, alas, so yet — only towards Tripos!



(4)

This then is what we are all agreed on ~ ~ ~ that Hannibal, in one of the boldest strategic strokes of all time, took an army of nearly 30,000 men together with 37 elephants and many packhorses from the Carthagena of Spain towards the terrible fastnesses of the Alps ~ ~ that he went along the Mediterranean coast through Southern France, fighting much of the way and then turned northwards at the mouth of the Rhône. That he crossed after four days march and travelled another 600 stades to "the Island" where the river Skars met the Rhône. That he travelled 800 stades from here to "the ascent to wards the Alps" and met heavy opposition at this point from the Allobroges. ~ ~ That after much fighting he captured their nearby town and hence gained much needed provisions. THAT an easier spell followed for three or four days during which good progress was made but that he was once again attacked and lost a lot of men and packhorses while passing through a narrow gorge. THAT, at last, he and his men in a state of complete exhaustion reached the summit ridge of the Alps and from their pass looked down on Italy and the distant Po valley ~ THAT after a days camping on the summit a descent was made down the steep slippery slopes. THAT after many more casualties Milan was at last reached and a series of victories ensued which made its glorious climax at Cannae.

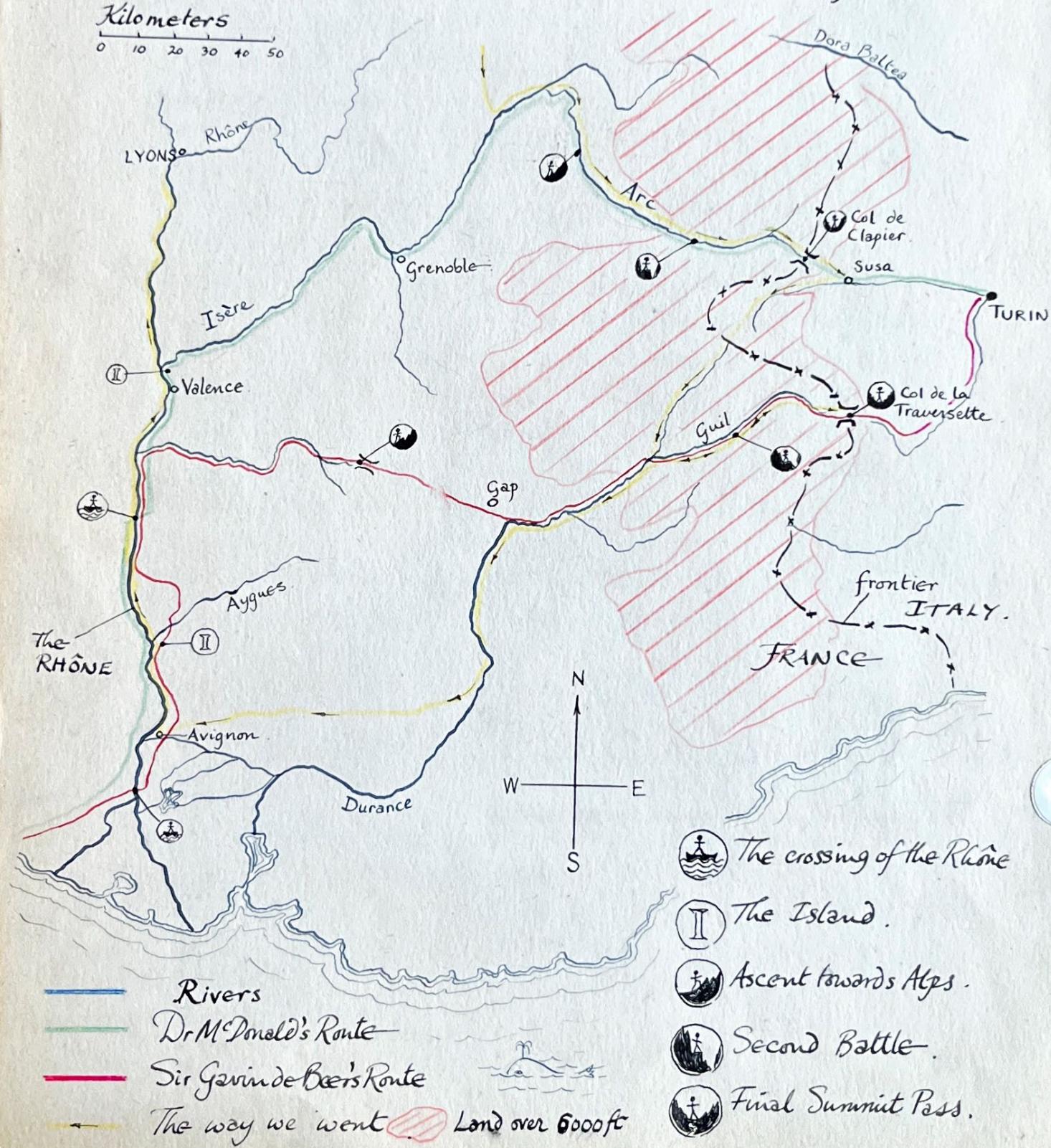
Hence the main points on the route are as follows;

- ① The crossing of the Rhône ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~
- ② "The Island" ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~
- ③ The ascent towards the Alps - scene of the first battle ~ ~
- ④ The narrow gorge of the second battle ~ ~ ~ ~
- ⑤ The summit pass into Italy. ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ and their location is what all the row is about & has been for the last two thousand years ! — — —

From among the many and tremendously varied theories two stand out supreme, for the routes that they support are the ONLY ones that ~~~~
 ① Could possibly fit in with Polybius' travelling times.
 ② provide a summit pass high enough to be difficult in October and with a commanding view of the Po Valley.

These two routes are shown below; —

Kilometers
 0 10 20 30 40 50



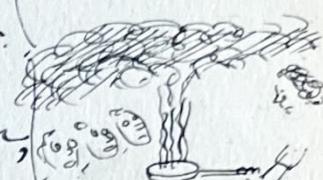
PART 1 : BACKGROUND

About half way through the Easter Term it was decided that we really would like to try and find Hannibal's route over the Alps and it became apparent that the following would comprise the expedition party:

Richard Jolley of Magdalene College; Economist and croquet player. He will be recorded in history as having played C.S. Lewis. Has this affected theology?



David Jenkins of Magdalene College, organiser of Cambridge Fives and potential dog-collar-wearer.



Elizabeth Hoyle of Queen Elizabeth College London, a good cook and potential school marm!



John Merrishaw Hynie of St John's College, engineer, ^{pseudo}aesthete and poetaster. Previous experience; climbing into college due to being waylaid at Magdalene by Jolley!

"HOW TO MAKE - "

Some say that they were chosen for the possible use made of their professional ~~qualifications~~ ^{requirements} during the rigours of an expedition of such a calibre though it is at first sight surprising that a classicist was not included.

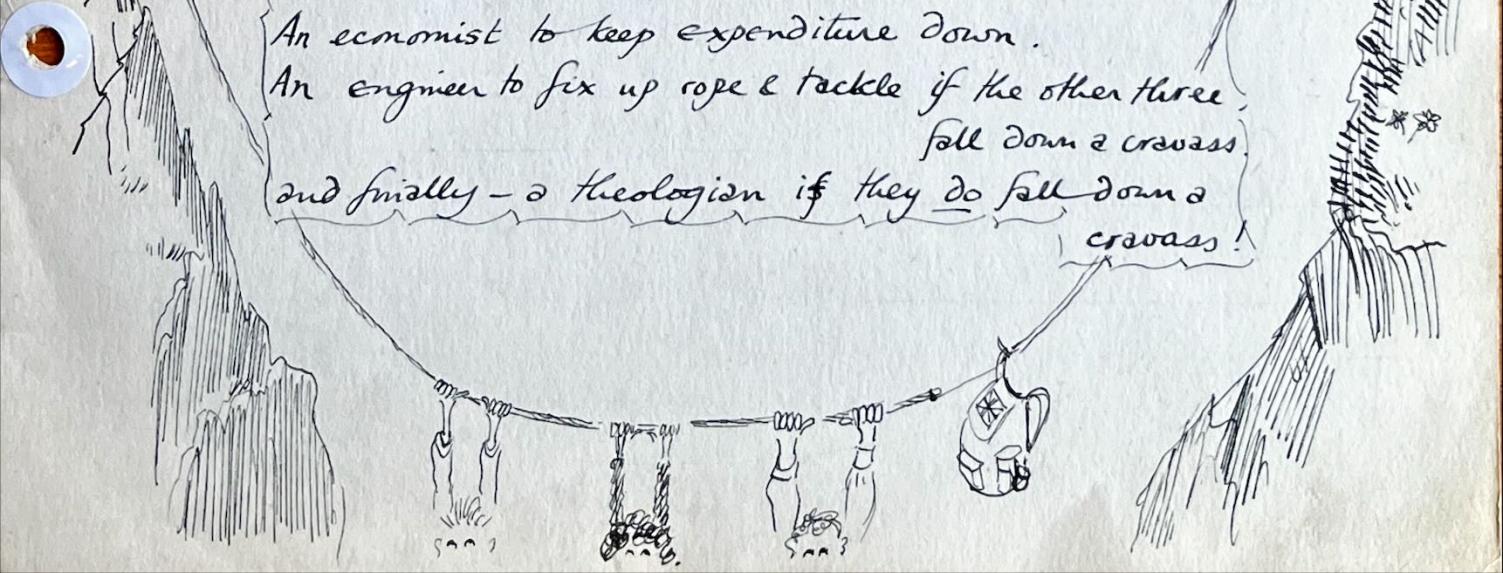
The saying goes ~ ~

A domestic scientist to ensure satisfaction of the inner man!

An economist to keep expenditure down.

An engineer to fix up rope & tackle if the other three fall down a crevasse.

and finally - a theologian if they do fall down a crevasse!



THE PROBLEM:

What confirmed our earlier decisions was the interesting discovery that an intellectual war was being waged by Sir Gavin de Beer, Curator of the Natural History Museum London and the Senior Tutor of Clare College Cambridge - Dr McDonald - over Hannibal's route.



Sir Gavin made his first lunge with a book he wrote called "Alps & Elephants". Dr M^c replied with a straight-to-the-heart stab in the Alpine Journal. Sir G. then produced his T-V programme which seems to have won over most of the telly public of Great Britain while Dr M^c stuck to his unassailable "Marching Time" argument.

To understand what these two learned gentlemen were bantling about we would have to know our stuff so got down to a little reading.

Unlike Xenophon or Julius Caesar, Hannibal had not kept a diary so we had to turn to other sources. Livy and Polybius are the most reliable of these and we found their accounts most exiting reading. We also had at hand the Alpine Journal, "Alps and Elephants" and Colonel Perrin's account. He had gone over the possible routes late last century and in his book gives many detailed maps.

PART II PLANNING

N

ow that we had been able to grasp the situation, the next thing to do, as Hannibal could not be brought back from the dead, was to discuss it with the two living great men in question.

To meet Dr Macdonald was a relatively easy matter as his college lay only just around the corner and a prompt reply to our proposal fixed the tête à tête for the 19th of June. By this time we had got tuned up on such words as Stades, Traversette, Durance and Aiguës — such as to baffle & puzzle all other patrons of the Arts roof-top café — and had a most delightful hour, munching salad and letting fly with questions. It was a good start and our interest was beginning to ~~broaden~~ on excitement.



OF COURSE - IF YOU
TAKE HIM OVER TRAVERSETTE



From Dr. A. H. McDONALD
CLARE COLLEGE
CAMBRIDGE

June 12, 1956.

Dear Hoyte,

Thank you very much for your kind invitation to lunch on Tuesday the 19th at the Arts roof-top cafe at 1.0 p.m., which I am very pleased to accept. As I have to catch the 2.8 p.m. train for London, I hope you will not mind my leaving a little before 2.0.

Yours sincerely,

A. H. McDonald

BRITISH MUSEUM (NATURAL HISTORY)

Telephone: KENSINGTON 6323

Telegrams:

NATHISMUS, SOUTHKENS, LONDON



CROMWELL ROAD
LONDON, SW7

15th June, 1956.

Dear Mr. Hoyte,

I am deeply obliged to you for your kind and appreciative remarks in your letter of 13 June, and I am very interested to learn that you propose to devote your vacation to the tracing of Hannibal's route. Needless to say, if you find another pass out of the Durance basin with a view of the plains of Piedmont, high enough to have preserved the snows of previous winters, converted into ice, and dangerous enough to have occasioned the heavy casualties which Hannibal suffered, I hope that you will let me know.

I am sorry to say that between the dates which you so kindly mention I shall be in the Alps.

Yours sincerely,

Gavin de Beer

Gavin de Beer.

Sir Gavin was otherwise engaged — much to our disappointment but his letter was somewhat of a compensation — especially worth preserving for its superb signature and tinge of sarcasm — "I hope you will let me know."

~~~ We did !

# NEWS CHRONICLE

12-22, BOUVERIE STREET,  
LONDON, E.C.4

# Daily Express

BEAVERBROOK NEWSPAPERS LIMITED

FLEET STREET - LONDON

TELEPHONE  
FLEET ST. 8000

JBB/ES:

20th July, 1956.

26th June 1956.

Richard Jolly, Esq.,  
Magdalene College,  
CAMBRIDGE.

Dear Mr. Jolly,

I have discussed your proposition with the Features Editor and regret we cannot make use of it.

May I express my best wishes for a successful expedition.

Yours sincerely,

J.B. Birks.

J.M. Hoyte, Esq.,  
St. John's College,  
CAMBRIDGE.

Dear Mr. Hoyte,

I admire your ingenuity and your zeal - but I fear that as far as we are concerned it is the close season for elephants, and for exercises of which the chief object (and highly laudable purpose) is to prove or disprove a basically academic point.

All the same, let me wish you and your friends the best of luck on your adventure.

Yours sincerely,

*Anthony Hern*

Anthony Hern  
Literary Editor

Further correspondence showed us that the News Chronicle was not over-enthusiastic and Beaverbrook's boys were more interested in presenting the public with the more "seasonal" seaside snaps and bathing beauties. However a card from Peterborough showed promise and on and after June 21st our Telegraph reading friends were having to be told that we did not support Sir Gavin's theory.

FROM PETERBOROUGH  
The Daily Telegraph

yes : I'm phoning up soon after  
Mark -

Worthing

135 FLEET ST., E.C.4.  
FLEET STREET 4242

**In Hannibal's Track**  
Now being organised is what its participants call "with a little exaduration" - the Cambridge Hannibal Expedition. A third year Johnian, J. M. Hoyte, a third and three others tell me that he and up to 14 days are planning to spend in the French Alps which Hannibal might have taken. They are meanwhile reading up the literature on the subject. Ancient writers are, as usual, quite vague. Scholars to-day agree that Hannibal's route cannot be Little St. Bernard or further south than the Mt. Genevre.

**Less Orthodox Route?**  
Mr. Hoyte, however, is inclined to think that Gavin de Beer, whose "Alps and Elephants" was published between the wars, may be right in his less orthodox route.

PETERBOROUGH

Another result of the article was this delightful telegram from a friend at Wellingborough.

OVERNIGHT = HOYTE      NEWPORT      STJOHNS      COLLEGE      CAMBRIDGE =  
CONGRATULATIONS      ELEPHANT      NEVER      FORGETS      EVEN  
HANNIBAL = AGGIE



THE BRITISH BROADCASTING CORPORATION

HEAD OFFICE: BROADCASTING HOUSE, LONDON, W.I.

TELEVISION STUDIOS, LIME GROVE, LONDON, W.12

TELEPHONE: SHEPHERDS BUSH 1244. TELEGRAMS & CABLES: BROADCASTS, TELEX, LONDON

22nd June 1956

Dear Mr Hoyte,

I was interested to read your letter in which you say that you plan to follow Hannibal's route. We have already done the programme and our filming for it, so I am afraid you cannot help. However, I should be amused to hear of your experiences. It is a very attractive walk up the valley leading to the Col de la Traversette, though we did not find the Hotel des Alpes at Aiguille the most comfortable in France.

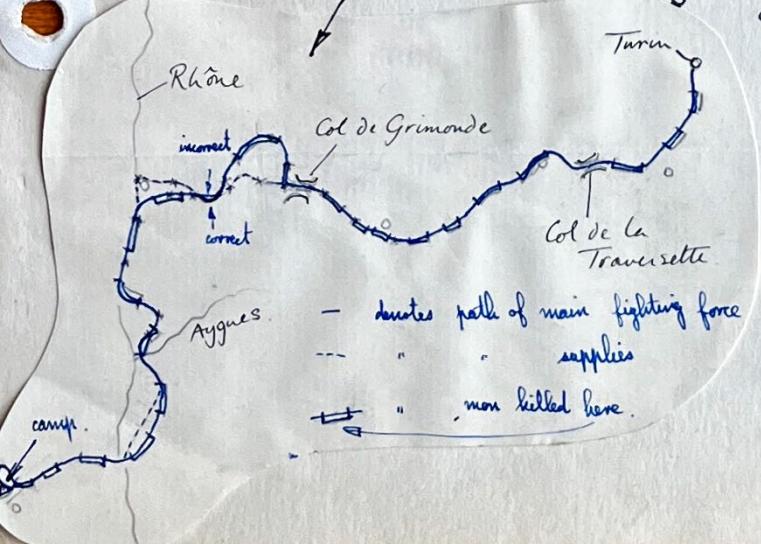
I think it would be a bold, knowledgeable man who brought in a more convincing theory than Sir Gavin's. His answer to the different speeds, I think, would be that the army got

We wrote to the BBC on hearing that there was to be a proposed programme on Hannibal, asking if we could help in any way. This was their reply. It was surprising how convinced everyone was - about Sir Gavin's Theory.



A very interesting aspect of the search for Hannibal's Route is the application of the problem to the "Instrument" or Black Box as it has sometimes been referred to by news papers. A friend of mine at college had one of these and had been using it for medical investigations. Without going into further details I will only say that with the correct application of data, results can be obtained through the behaviour of a rubber diaphragm on the panel. Whatever we think of this instrument all I can give you is the route it plotted. Interestingly enough, not only did it indicate the

path of the main army but also that of the supplies and places where men were killed.



# 9B Finance

Besides applying for a college grant I also asked for assistance from the Robertson Travel Fund. This meant my appearance before the Fund committee and hence busy preparations the night before. The day arrived, the time of the interview drew near and I arrived - I must admit - out to impress! One might almost say that I staggered in - (surmounted by an imposing pile of literature - to show that this was going to be an Expedition with a capital E!)



"So we disposed the proposition that ends is not the circle at both make both ends meet!"



An interesting array of dons confronted me - as I was shown into a large, extremely untidy drawing room at King's. It was clearly owned by a - perhaps by now retired - explorer. One man, I well remember had a Salvador Dali moustache which kept me spell bound! Questions were fired and I tried to unfold the plans - perched on the edge of a vast arm chair with the pile of books balanced on my knee. ~ a ticklish situation at the best of times.

### CHARLES DONALD ROBERTSON FUND

However, all's well that ends well - so that you can imagine my delight when a few days later I received

→ this note! The cycle ride to

Somehow didn't seem irksome!!

Another £10, from the college caused further jubilations!

Dear Sir,

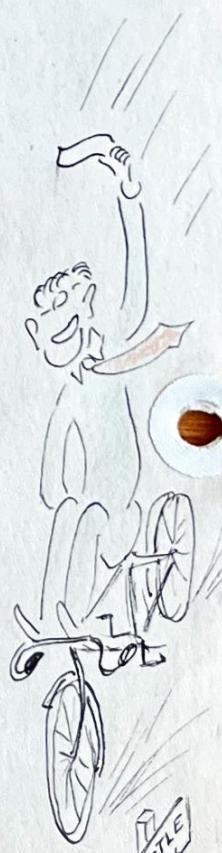
I am very pleased to inform you that the Trustees have decided to give you a grant of £10 for the holiday which you outlined to them.

If you will call on me on Tuesday evening, 22 May, Richmond Rd between 8 and 10, I will hand you a cheque for the above amount.

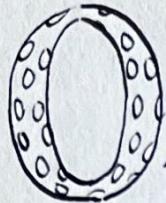
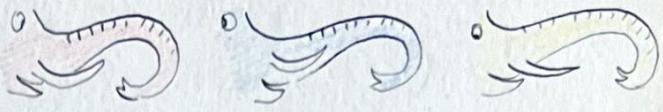
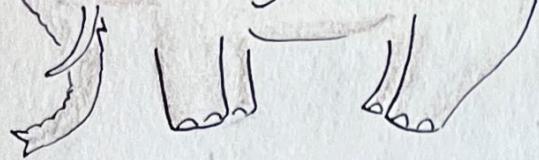
Yours faithfully,

E. Scott

MRS. E. SCOTT  
3 RICHMOND ROAD  
CAMBRIDGE



# Elephants



Very Good

On June the twenty second George Cansdale was consulted about elephants ~~~~~~ However, it was at a Christian house party and over a rather hilarious cup of coffee so not much came of the conversation!

Enquirer - hopefully "Would it be possible to take an elephant with us?"

Answer ; ! ! ! No no no Yes the facts have to be known ~~~~~ for a modern elephant costs nearly £1000, needs a highly skilled handler and eats vast quantities of food. I wished - as perhaps did the Walrus and the Carpenter that elephants had wings and thought back to that poor American journalist who had tried to investigate Hannibal's route before the War with a real elephant in his baggage. The poor animal nearly died of exposure.

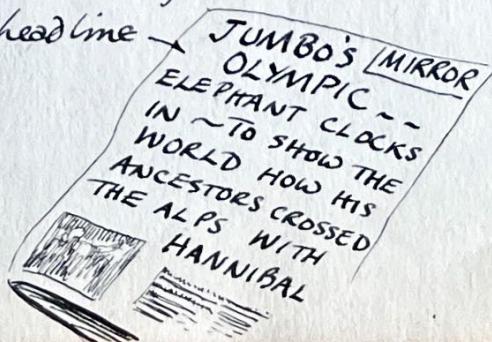


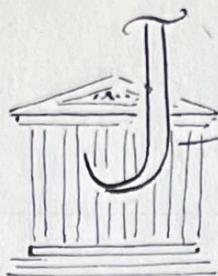
The prospect of hitch hiking with a jumbo was very entrancing!

Pull this instead of horn.

Yes, George Cansdale did sponsor the expedition in one sense for he sent us a book - "La capture des Elephants au Parc National de la Garamba". We are extremely grateful -

An idea - which raised a laugh and nothing more was that of visiting London Zoo and timing the average speed of an elephant with a stop watch. Can you just see the Daily Mirror headline -





July the 5th saw us visiting the British Museum to find out more about Hannibal's elephants and the Carthaginian way of life. It was more than thrilling to handle coins over 2000 years old and to discuss with the experts how they were made & preserved. Several coins of Hannibal's time show elephants - and a fine relic of Carthaginian Spain bears one of unmistakable African origin.



Most of the 37 elephants taken over the Alps were almost certainly African though we have evidence that a few Indian ones were also taken. It is known from Polybius that after the battle of the

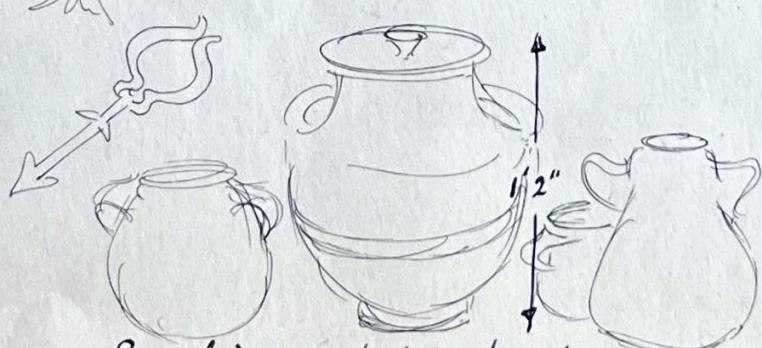
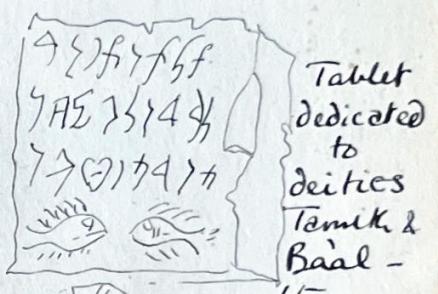
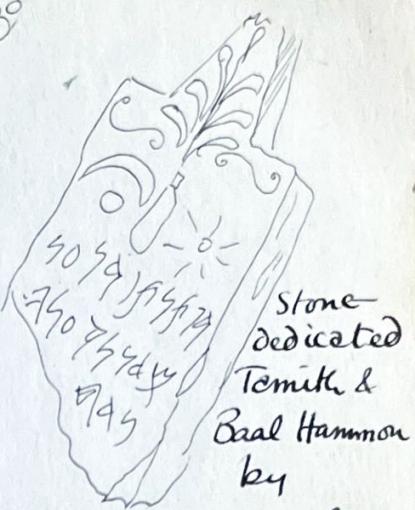
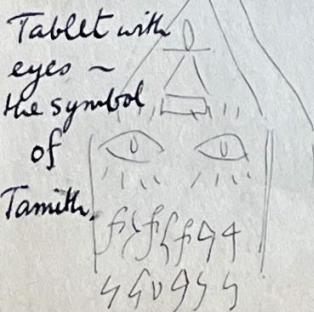
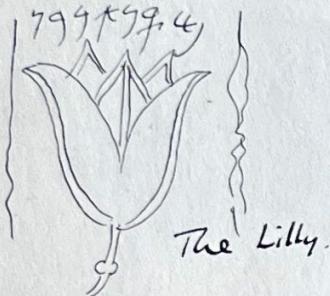
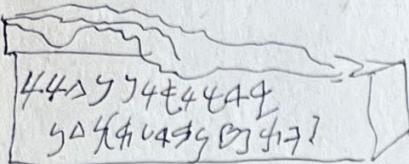
Trebbia all Hannibal's elephants died except one - on which he rode across the Appenines. He named it "Surno" — meaning — the Syrian and as it was from Syria that



we know Ptolemy got his Indian elephants it was probably Indian and may be the elephant portrayed on this coin from Etruria.

These further photographs, purchased from the Museum, show Indian elephants and the "castles" which they wore.





Burial jars containing burnt remains of offered as a sacrifice to Baal & Tamith.

44 - 3rd century B.C. CARTHAGE



(12) A

To CONCLUDE this - the Part II of our report - two more letters should be mentioned. From our planned route it was clear that we would be going into Italy by, probably, both the Col de Clapier and the Col de la Traversette. As they were both on the France - Italy frontier and only had foot paths leading to them, it would be just as well to make sure we would be able to cross over. A letter was sent to the Italian consulate with these results.



Dear Sir,

I am in receipt of your letter of the 4th July.

In view of the importance of the expedition which you are planning to make, I have passed your letter to Dr. Guerrieri, London Delegate of the Italian State Tourist Office, (E.N.I.T.), 201 Regent Street, W.1., who is in a better position to furnish you with full details both from the customs and tourist points of view.

I have asked Dr. Guerrieri to give special attention to the matter, so will you please contact him.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Louis Tamm".

Consul General.

Dear Sir,

In reply to your letter of the 20th instant, I have to inform you that in the official list of Italian frontier passes "Col Clapier" is not amongst those over which it is allowed to enter the country and the nearest pass is Colle di Tenda. "Col de la Traversette" is, however, a recognised route with frontier post.

I would very much like to be assistance to you if it were possible, but the restrictions are specifically imposed by the frontier police authorities.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "R. Guerrieri".

R. Guerrieri  
(Delegate)

Later you find how we were able to cross the Col Clapier - after all!

# PART III: APPROACH

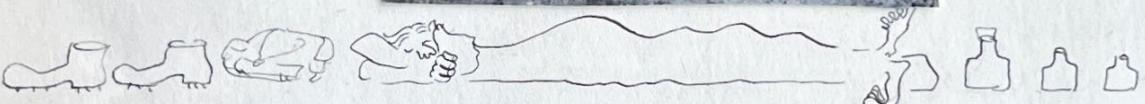
~~~ departure and journey through Switzerland.

The drawing room of Dungate Manor was a hive of activity as ~ late into the night of Monday August 13 we discussed plans, wrote last minute letters and packed. It was a great job trying to discard as much of our impediments as possible for so many things seemed "absolutely essential"

Puzzle - spot the 3 beds!



That afternoon the expedition ~ dressed up in full outfit ~ had posed for a send off photo ~ complete with fire escape rope "for effect"!



Next morning ~ or to be more honest ~ the same day as the light was put out, after an early rise and hurried breakfast ~ my father took Elizabeth & the baggage down to the station ~ while Richard, David and I walked there down over the beautiful, rolling, Reigate Heath. (The poor old car couldn't take us all!)

It was a beautiful morning ~ the air sweet and fresh, from the recent dew,
and our hearts were light!



~ a lovely clear floor!



~ an hour later



~ several hours later ~ almost back to where we started from!



(14)

Sure enough — as had been hoped, the Evening news photographer was waiting for us at Croydon airport so - out came the expedition flag and far away Himalayan look. The big black box clicked and in we bundled — to fasten our lap straps and go over the rainbow!

The Evening News



D

NO. 23,211

LONDON, TUESDAY, AUGUST 14, 1956

TWOPENCE



Expedition Flight

Four University students left Croydon Airport for Zurich today on what they call the Cambridge Hannibal Expedition. The students (from left): Richard Jolly, of Hove, John Hoyte and his sister Elizabeth, of Reigate, and David Jenkins, of Derby hope to trace Hannibal's route over the Alps.



CAMBRIDGE HANNIBAL EXPEDITION

JOHN M. HOYTE

Dungate Manor
Reigate Heath
Surrey.



The Expedition about to leave England.

[Frontispiece]

Richard Elizabeth John David.

PART IV BUILD UP AND ASSAULT

NORTH COL (COL DE CLAPIER)



The road to the Dauphine Alps

Wednesday: August 22nd.

~ saw the Cambridge Hannibal Expedition crossing the Switzerland - France frontier ~ towards Hannibal country. All day long we found lifts few and far between but, after a long wait at the frontier a huge slow lorrie took E. & me to Chambéry. We were able to read Polybius and learn texts for that two hours - as the noise of the engine made it difficult to talk. A French man with talkative English wife took us from there to where the Grenoble road turns off the route to Col du Mont Cenis. From this spot (pointed above) we could see the long straight grey road sweeping on towards the glorious Dauphine Alps with the ranges of many mighty snow clad peaks soaring upwards into the blue. It was an extremely inspiring scene - especially as we realised that our expedition was now to begin in earnest and that we should be mounting right up to a 9,000 feet pass in those majestic foot-nesses. We took shelter in a farmyard - only just in time to avoid a frightful storm of wind and rain. As we stood there ~ with rivers of water rushing past our feet a touch of Farbique was given me ~ the pathos of French farm life. Two oxen came splashing past - dripping wet and steaming at the hunches - led by a young girl in

An Italian fort up
the Valley of
the Arc



Hannibal may
well have
been ambushed
here

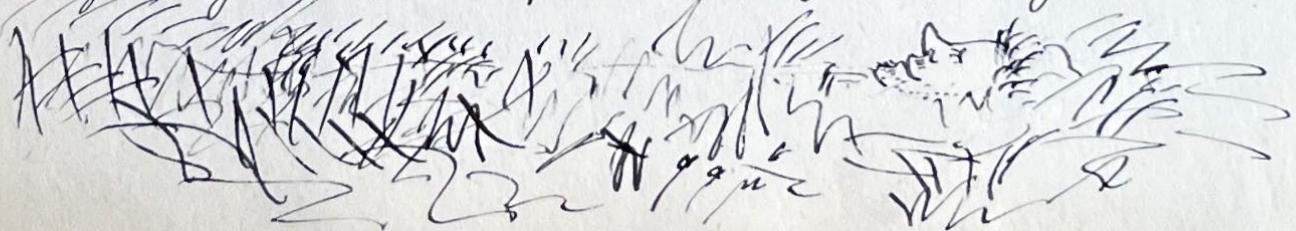


Looking up the valley of the Arc
Near St Jean de Maurienne. Aug 22

more feet. She was being 'talked to' in animated tones by the farmers wife who literally filled the cart the oxen pulled. The voice died away and rattle of cart wheels faded as they rounded the corner. The rain pattered on - and on.

After an unexpected lift in a lorry we reached St Jean de Maurienne and having lost all the despair we had had, walked through the highland town singing 'Margarita-Dance with me' at the tops of our voices.

At last, well after dark, we reached Bramens, our resting place for the night. As we stepped out of the car into the cold night air we knew that after all these weeks of thought and preparation, things had really begun. David & Richard had already arrived and made a comfortable home for us all in a barn. We found their note for us at the village post office directing us to it and we settled down to a good nights rest - deep in twelve foot of hay.



Thursday. August 23rd.

— ascent to Camp VI for the assault !

After a lazy start to the day Elizabeth and I hotted back, down the village street to the main road where the post office was. Elizabeth being the "chief interpreter & linguist" of the expedition had been designated the ticky job of phoning the frontier police to see if we could get permission to pass right over the Col de Clapier. I was there to hold her hand! After much difficulty we got through — and what we believe was permission to go straight over into Italy. On explaining all this to some school teachers who were staying near the P.O. we were told one of them was going up to where we were hoping to make Camp VI (Assault Camp) — by van in half an hour! This was almost too good to be true — but evidently it was so a period of frantic packing, shopping for 2 days and paying bills caused — and then we were off!

The road ran steeply upward giving delightful views of the valley we were leaving. We passed this beautiful little chapel — so obvious waiting patiently to give rest and spiritual strength to weary mountain travellers.



Camp VI proved to be a barn — this time with very little hay in it, over a cow-shed. The inhabitants of the barn were half a dozen French boy scouts! It was quite a treat watching them eat and especially to see the incredible thickness of the slices of bread their mouths were able to open to!

We spent the rest of the afternoon trying to get up to date with all our information about Hannibal.

19



Dreamy rice
22/8/56

The farmer in whose barn we slept (Comp VIa.) Le Planey

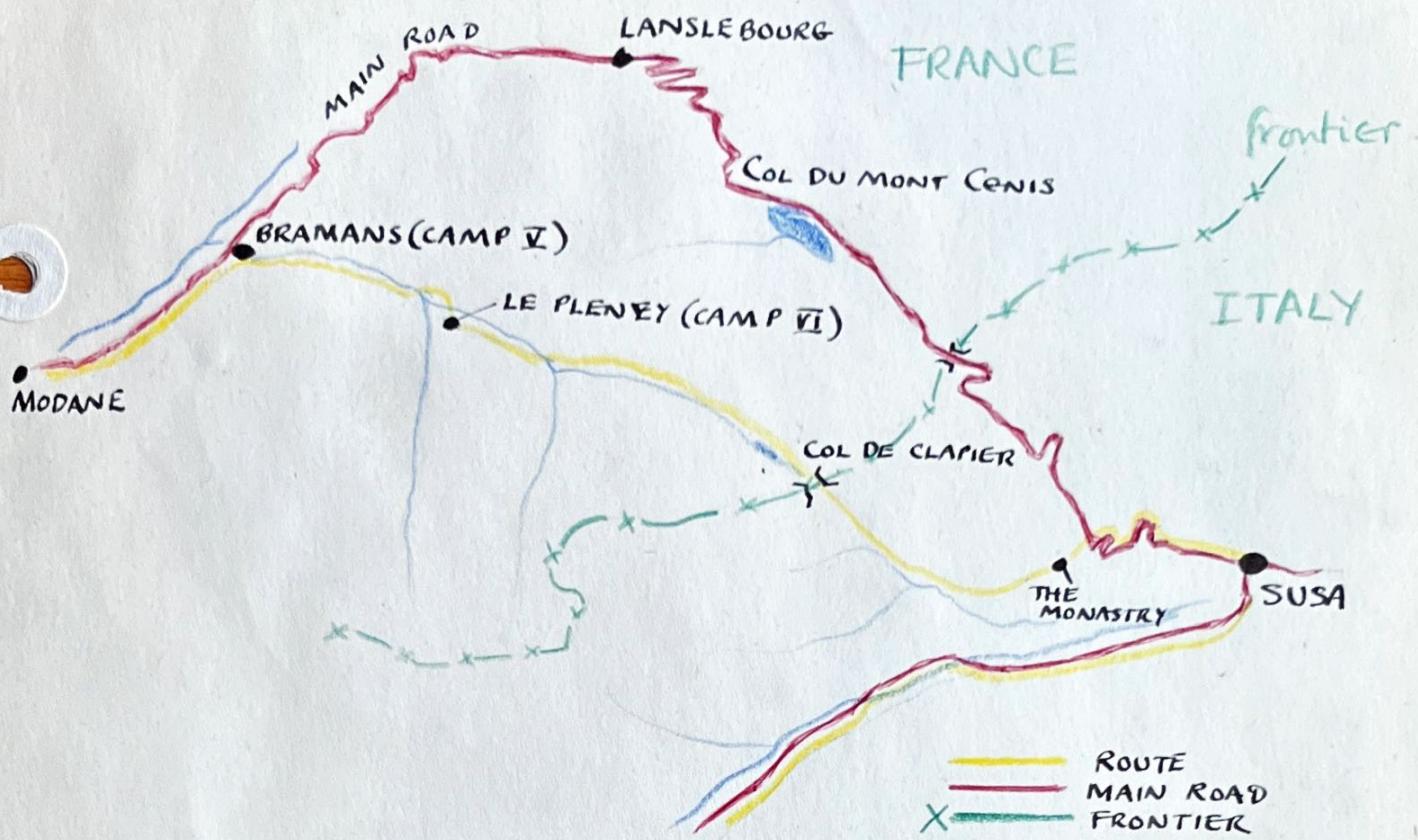
The old farmer and his wife invited us into their living room for a sort of 'party' that evening. It was a roaring success. All the boy scouts came in & we sang and sang and sang.



Friday 24th August.

Assault on the Col de Clapier

(20) 30



Setting out for the assault!

- from the camp at Le Planey.

Difficult part - where we were escorted by the gendarmes

ROUTE



The two french frontier gendarmes
who guided us over the most
difficult and steepest part.
They are pointing to the date
"1812" carved on the rock face,
claiming that Napoleon
had used Clapier when
crossing to and returning
from Italy.

revolver.



Looking back from the way up to Col de Clapier 23/8/56.

Our first glimpse of
the Col de Clapier
as we approached
it from the French
side.



(23)

The pass itself



The bleak windswept lake near the top.
This photo is taken looking back towards the snowy French mountains.

Hannibal's view of the Po Valley.

~~~  
Looking down from  
the pass to the  
Italian foot hills.



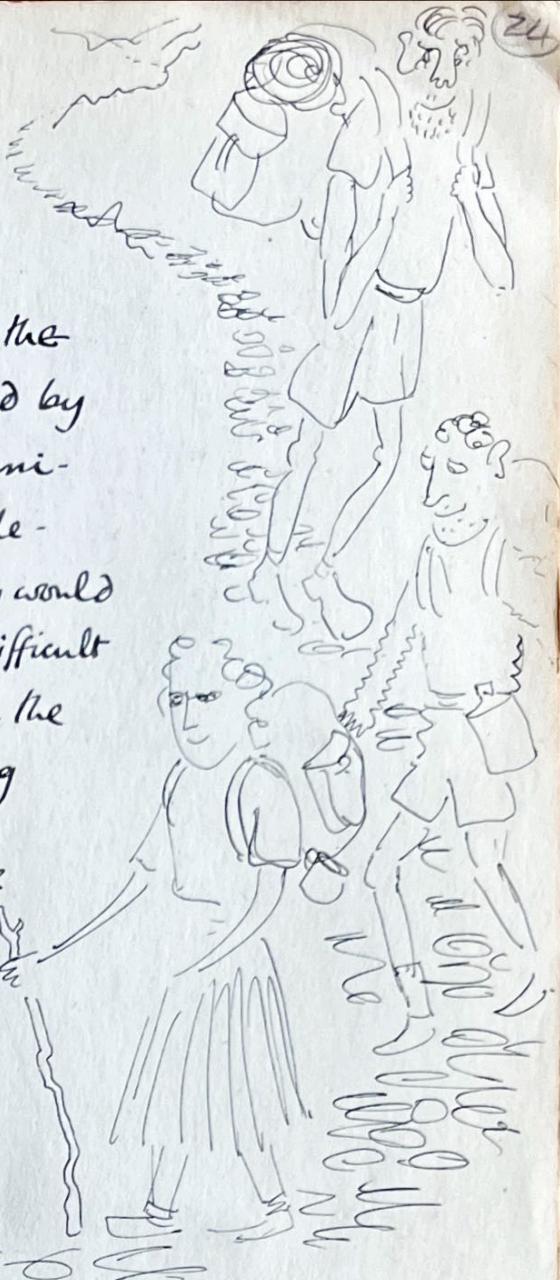
## The ranges to the east of the pass.

After a sandwich lunch, sheltered by a boulder from the terrific wind, we followed the watercourse shown in the bottom left hand corner of this photo, down into Italy.

~ ~ So down, down, down we went ~ ~



The steepness of the route is indicated by this photo. Hannibal and his elephants certainly would have found it difficult ~ with snow on the ground. The crag on the sky-line might well have been the spot where Hannibal had to crack the rock.



The first house in Italy - from Col de Clapier 23/8/56



Col de Clapier from Italy. 23/8/56

bound, in the flickering candle light, as we listened to their natural tenor voices - in perfect harmony - filling the room with delicious sound. It was one of those rarest moments of life ~ when time seems to stand still.

But - alas, it was bed-time. Friendly hands brought out beds for us and we unrolled our sleeping bags - for the night.



Our hosts →

From the valley of the Dora Riparia - looking back, up to the Col de Clapier.

It was getting towards evening by the time we got anywhere near civilisation - and we came to a monastery commanding a beautiful view of the surrounding mountains.

To cut a long story short we were invited in for the night!

We had the evening of our lives! and were given the most delicious of meals ~~~

but the singing was the climax to the evening. We sat spell-

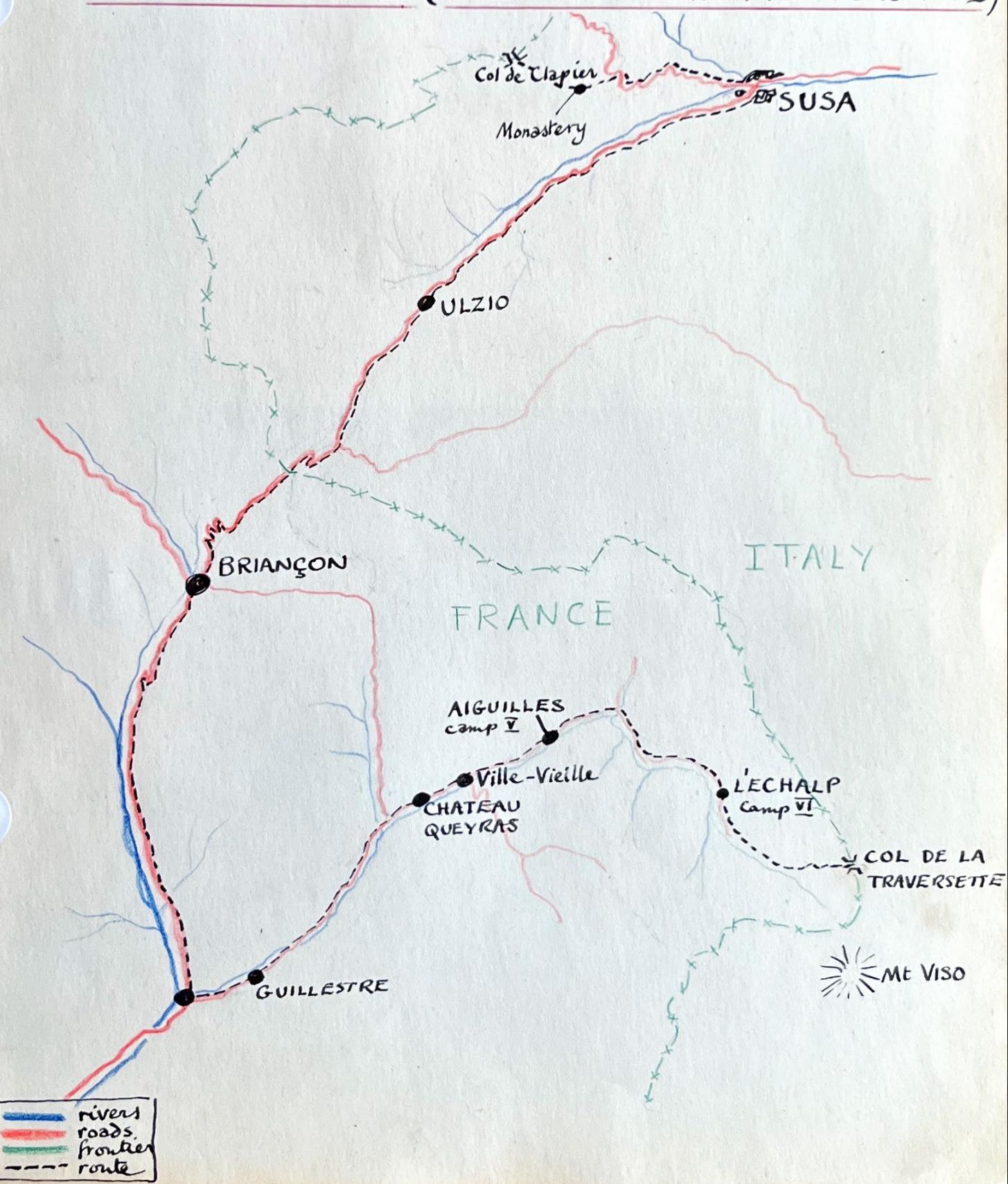


(Saturday August 25th)

(26)

## PART V

# BUILD UP AND ASSAULT SOUTH COL (DE LA TRAVERSETTE)



(27) After a gigantic "English" breakfast — we sang our friends  
a last song and trudged down to Susa — for a much needed  
cup of coffee ~ !



The Forte "of Exile"  
— on the Susa - Ulvio Road.

The road back to France went through lovely country and we wished we had more time — to stop and sketch. Just over the frontier a very interesting English couple took us to Briançon & told us all about the history of Susa and that part of Italy. It was not till late afternoon that we were at Guillestre but made good time up the spectacular gorge of the Guile with its sheer rock faces. Could Hannibal have possibly managed to get up here? we asked ourselves. The last mile to Aiguille — our destination for the night — was covered on the back of a hay cart — and we singing at the top of our voices !



111. 1922

Sunday August 26. - spent quietly at Aiguilles -  
painting, talking to villagers, reading "Hannibal" etc



A French Mountain Home - at Aiguilles

Quand tu entres dans le monde  
Tu pleures - on se rejouit -  
Vis de manier quel moment de =  
ta mort tu puisses te rejouir  
et voir pleurer les autres!

When you enter the world  
You cry - though others rejoice  
But at the end of your life  
You are able to rejoice,  
and the others to cry!

(Written on the wall of the dining room)

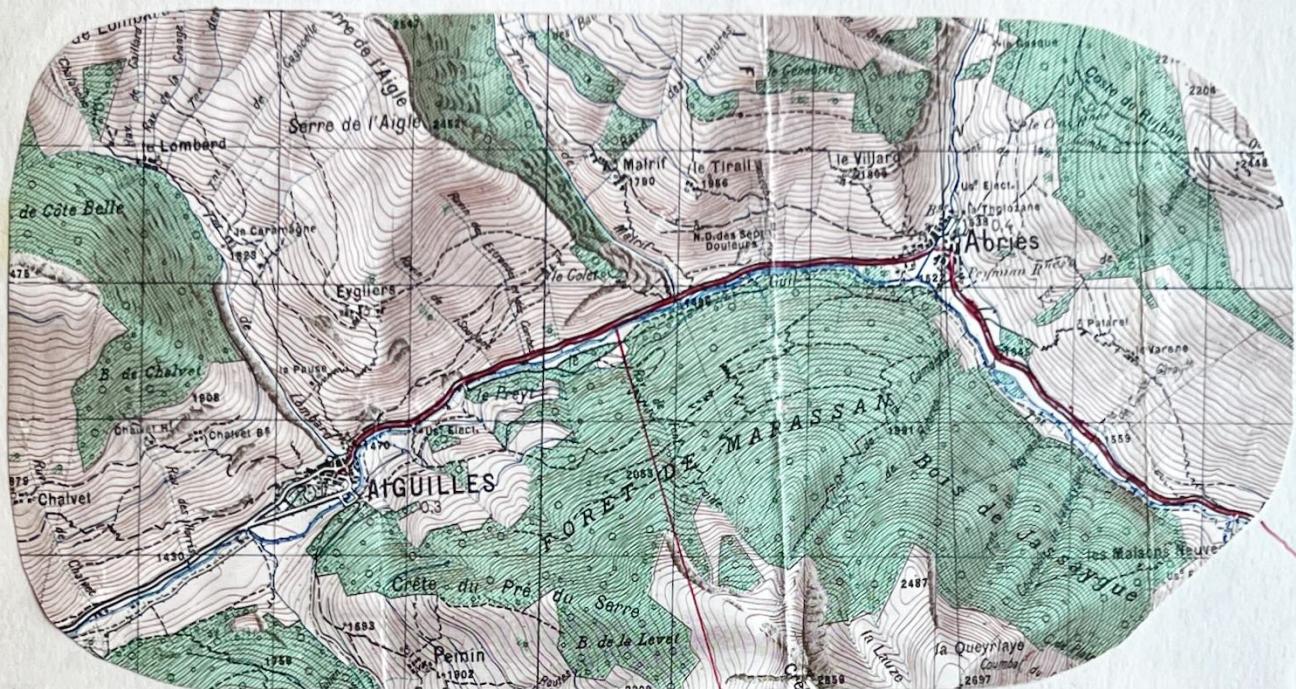


Corbeau

in the museum Aiguilles.



Aiguille



Monday, August 27 (route)

l'Echlap

Monsieur Villan (President of the local tourist Association) ~ and his daughter took us in two car loads to our camp VI (l'Echlap)! We took sufficient food for two days ~ including milk and "last minute" peaches, David's idea! l'Echlap turned out to be a deserted village which had been avalanched, flooded and badly burned during the war. It was the very furthest outpost of civilisation! We made ourselves at home in the desolate "School" ~ and after a delicious supper settled down in the earie half-light to ghost stories and dreaming of an assault on Treversette ~~to~~ the next day.





(3) Tuesday, August 28th.



Taken as we set out - showing the early morning sunlight on the valley we were about to ascend.

→ The haunted village of l'Echalp.

Looking back down the sweeping valley of the Guile →



Traversette



Our first view of the  
Col de la Traversette.

(9650 ft)



The Col de la Traversette - showing its narrowness and the difficult rocky approach.



First glimpses of mighty Mount Viso - from the Col, through the whirling mists of the Italian face

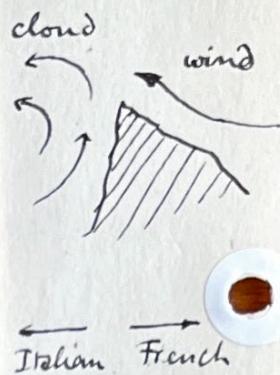


"The mists are clearing"!  
David and Mt. Viso - from the refuge at the Col.

(33)



The cross →



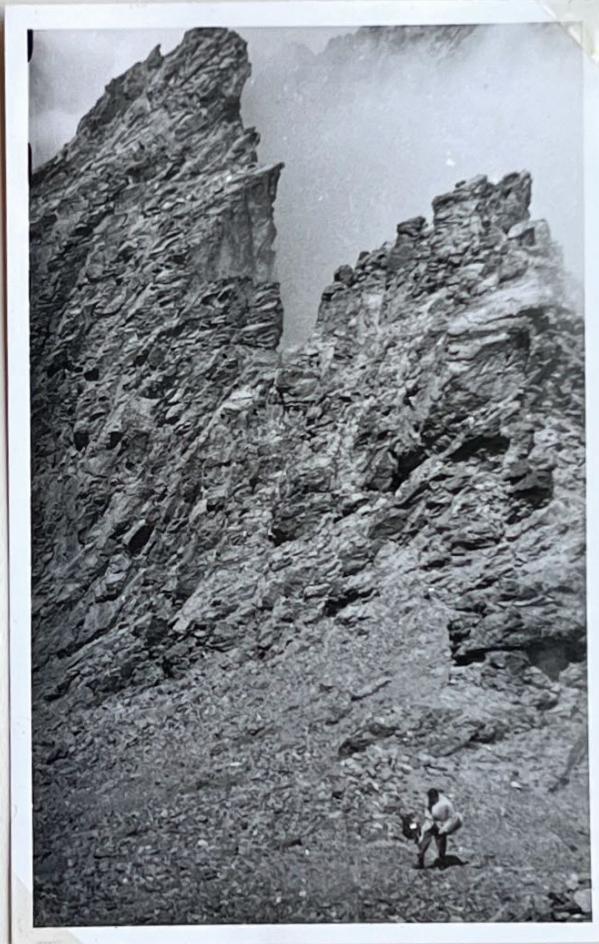
From the Col, looking up towards the  
M<sup>t</sup> de Marte (13200 ft) - showing the cloud

gushing up from the Italian cliff face. A man I met in Belgium described how, while spending a night on the pass he had seen a ghost - standing near where the cross is. Going up to investigate he found that it had vanished!



Italian foothills sloping down  
towards the mist hidden P<sup>o</sup>e

- and Elizabeth munching  
an apple!



The jagged cliffs  
above the pass  
(which is in the bottom right hand  
corner of the picture)

← Mount Viso (12700 ft) standing supreme ~ in the light of late afternoon ~ with all the mists blown away.



Looking eastwards into Italy - from the pass.

The Po Valley; showing the steepness of Hannibal's possible descent.





John at the summit of the  
Mont de Marte (10,200ft)



Mt Granero (10,500 ft)



View of the Southern Alps

Pic Traverse (9270 ft)

↑  
← Views looking  
N.N.W. from the  
Mont de Marte  
↓



The French - Italian frontier

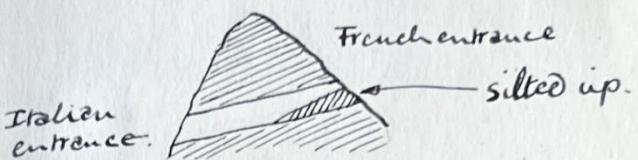


Richard - at  
the French  
entrance.



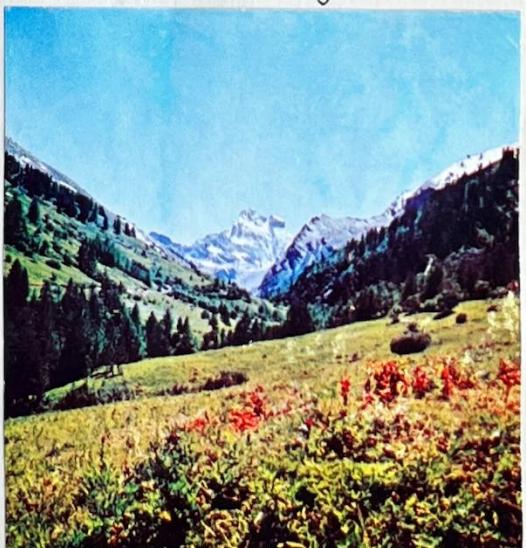
Elizabeth standing at  
the Italian entrance.

### The Col de la Traversette tunnel.



This tunnel was built in the 13th century for trade between France and Italy (so history books say)! Others say that Hannibal made it to get his elephants over\* the most difficult part of the journey! It all adds to the interest of the matter!

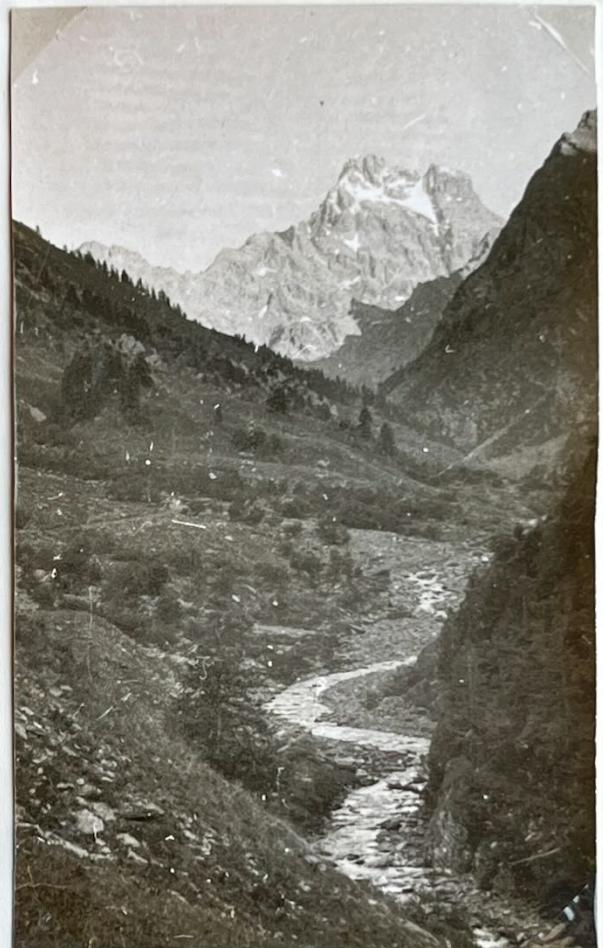
\* or more correctly 'under'



Mount Viso —



Mount Viso in the evening  
light.



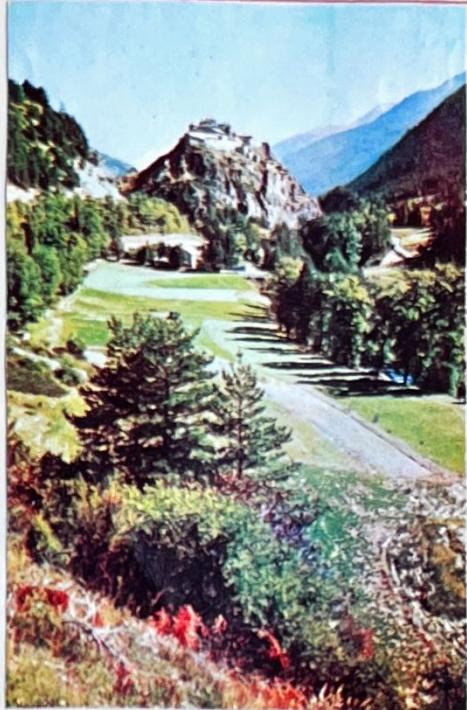
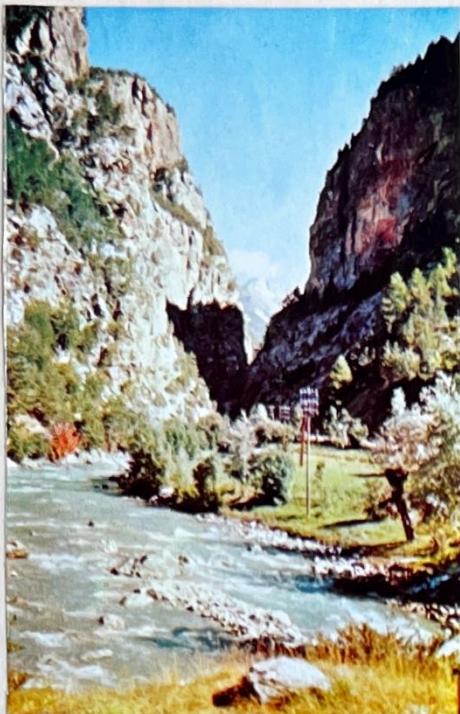
Mount Viso  
later in the evening.

- and so to bed - back at the Hotel des Alpes - Aiguille,

Wednesday. 29th August.

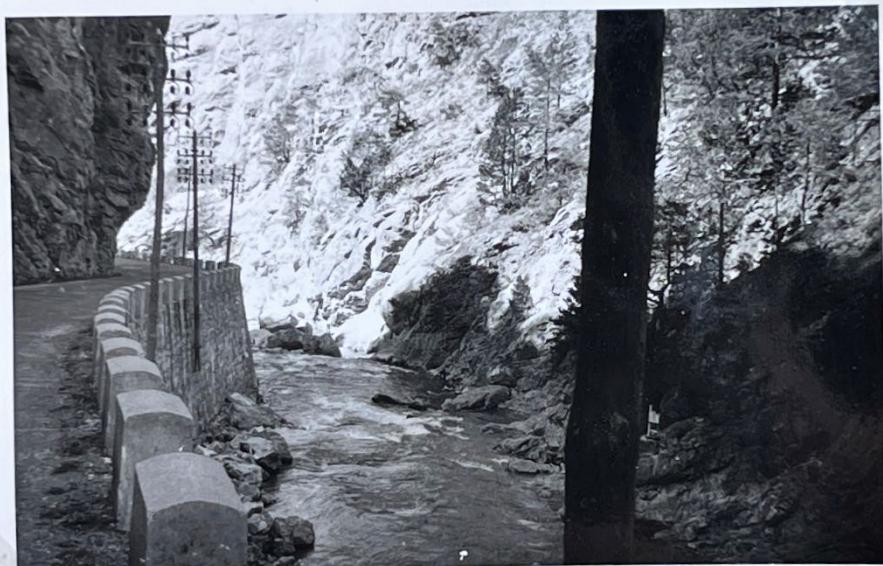
# "THE ISLAND"

## PART VI



The Chateau Queyras  
— where Hannibal might  
have been ambushed!  
(Sir George's theory)

Views of the Guil gorges  
— indicating the difficult  
route Hannibal might have  
had!



A long day's hitch-hiking. destination: Avignon (on the Rhone Valley). Once we were down from the higher Alps, lifts seemed to be more and <sup>more</sup> difficult to obtain. Beautiful scenery all the way. Stopped at the town of Mane for the night.

39

A kind monsieur  
who took me  
down the  
Durance valley.  
(an interesting  
geological  
rock formation  
in the background)



Thursday August 30.

8:30 am start and waited 3 hours just outside the village for a lift - and watching life. It passed as usual along the French road. The dog that had begged for some of my supper the night before trotted past - on some escapade. Two old men - on the edge of 90 came hobbling along - one behind the other. A most extraordinary procession! An hour later they returned... in exact formation. Two girls were playing outside a house further up the road. They watched me racing up and down "in pensive mood" or pirouette to snippets of Breton's songs. Midday found me in the middle of nowhere sitting in the shade of a road-

side tree with a rather barren landscape all around. Not a car had passed for half an hour! At last one came... and wonder of wonders, it stopped.

Avignon at last. Night at the Youth hostel... Too tired to dance on the pont!



Sur le Pont d'Avignon on y danse on y danse



Le Pont d'Avignon.

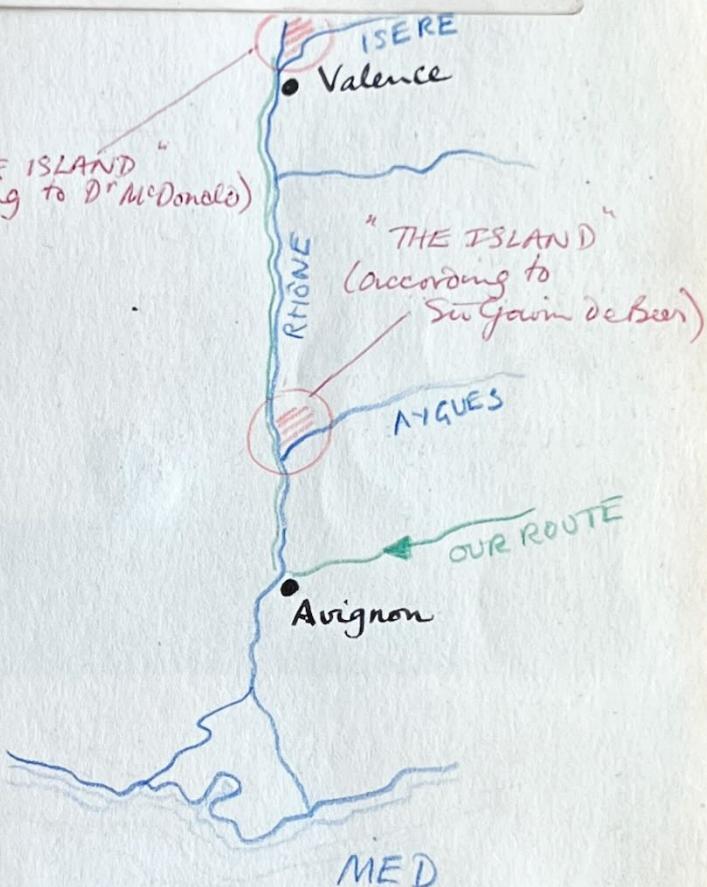
Sept 2

Friday August 31st.

"THE ISLAND"  
(according to Dr McDonald)



"All aboard"!



Our next project was to look at the two possible positions of 'The Island' - where Hannibal turned off from the Rhône valley towards the Alps. Quite unexpectedly we were given a lift on an oil tanker going up to Valence. (at 4 miles an hour!)

41  
Goodbye to  
the  
Pont d'Avignon!



Opposite the meeting  
of the rivers Aygues  
and Rhône. --  
The French Atomic  
Research Centre.



Sic Gavrin de Bee's  
"Island"

- the meeting point  
of the Aygues and  
the Rhône

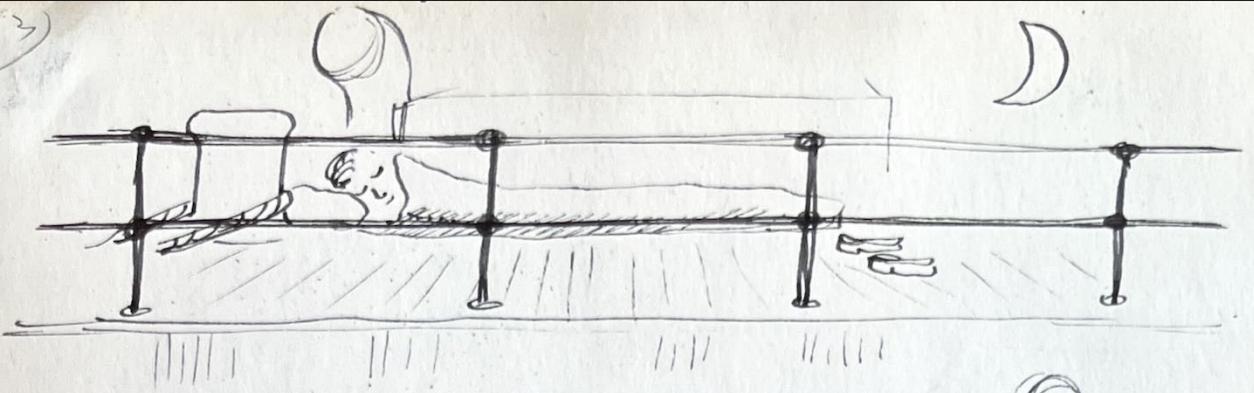
Lunch !



Our host and  
skipper  
at the helm.

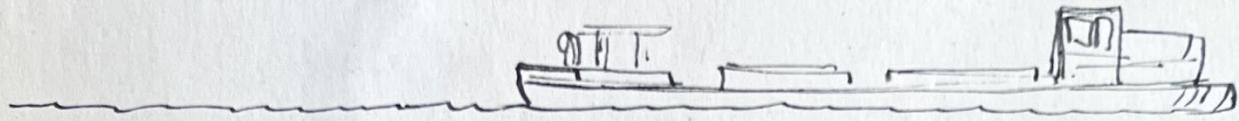
The power station  
and dam  
at  
Donzere - Mondragon.





(43) The tanker moored up at 11.0 pm so we unrolled our sleeping bags and settled down for the night - on deck! ~ till 3.0 am when it started to pour with rain!

Saturday September 1.



Quiet day on tanker, writing up our diaries, having discussions - on a whole range of subjects and reading.

At last, as evening drew on, Valence came in sight and we busily packed. The youth hostel was right by the river so we had not got far to walk to our lodgings. There was a Canadian there who had strong views about "the British snobishness". We had a long discussion!



Table manners! A very realistic photo of supper at Valence Youth Hostel.

Sunday. September 2nd.

(last day of the expedition.)

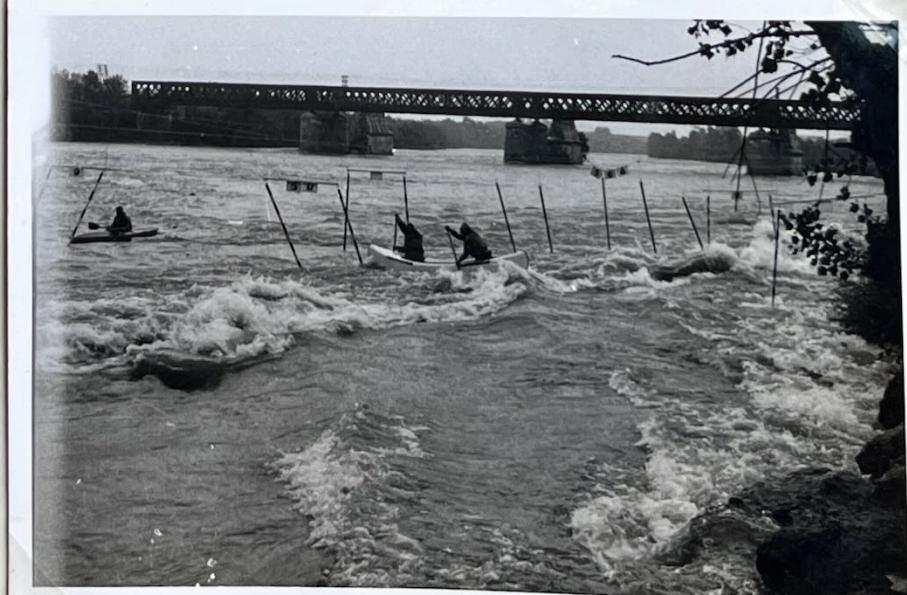
On "The Island"  
of Dr McDonald's theory.  
~ with our borrowed  
umbrellas!



The river Isère

- with "The Island"  
on the right.

'All France'  
canoe competition  
on River Isère.

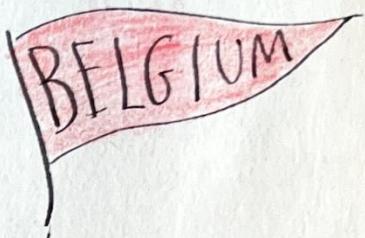
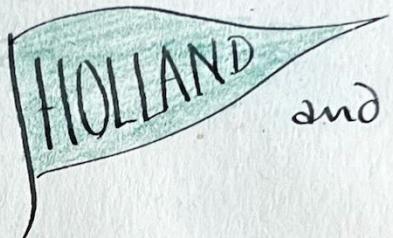
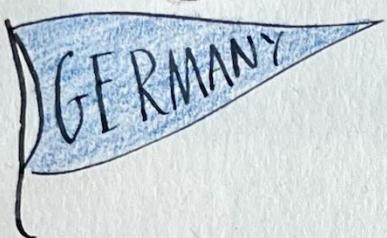


(45)  
~~~ And so ended our  
"expedition." We would at
last have to separate -
Richard and David - by
lorry to Paris, Elizabeth
by train and I, with
another week to spare,
to go - wherever the
whim took me !

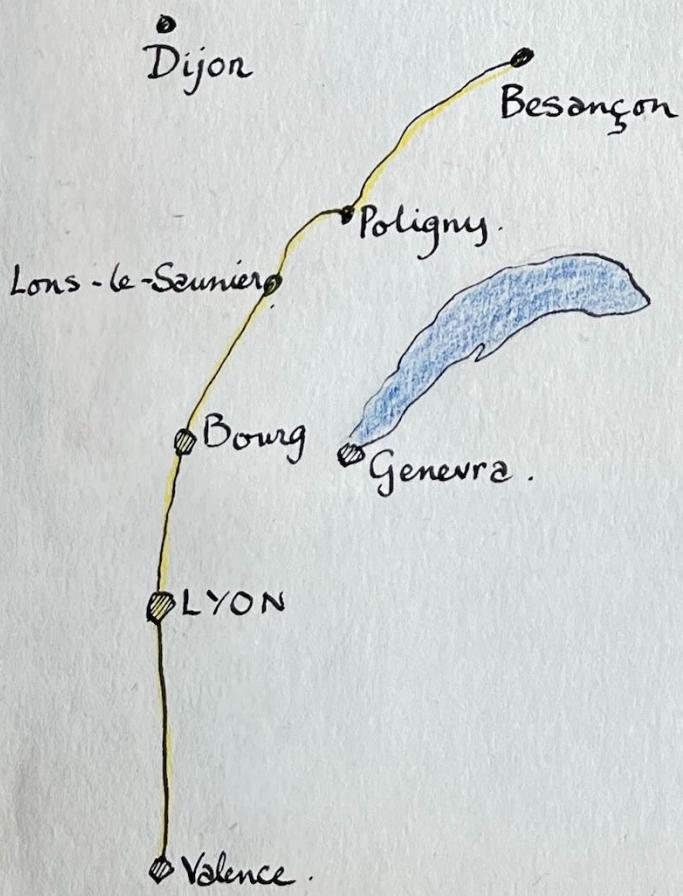
RETURN TO



VIA



Monday. Sept 3rd.



"All on my little lonesome"
I set off from Valence.
It was really slow going &
at 6:50 that evening I was
standing by the road out of
Lyon. "I'll give it another
ten minutes and then book
in at a pension". At
6:57 sharp a car stopped
and we were off! My new
friend told me all about
Pierre Poujade and the
complexities of French pol-
itics. We stopped in a
little village - to catch the
still evening air and have
a drink and were off again
into the night... and so
to Besançon! ~208 km.
beyond Lyon!

47

Tuesday. September 4.



— route
 — rivers
 - frontiers

The Besançon - Belford road was most beautiful - winding down the lovely Doms valley. What a contrast there is between France and Germany. I teamed up with an American couple at the frontier and we settled down at Freiburg Hostel for the night.



Wednesday. Sept 5th.

Spent a fascinating day exploring Freiburg - the superb cathedral and old houses - and the deep dark woods that surround the town.

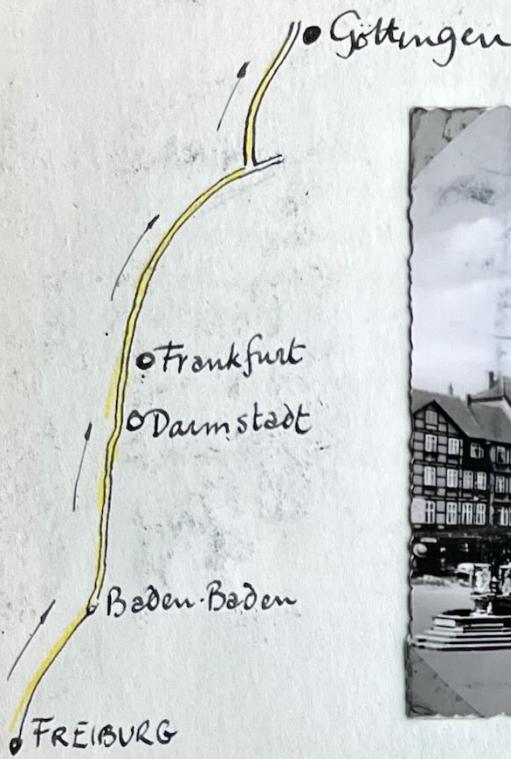




Freiburg Cathedral.



(61) Thursday September 6th. ~ spent mainly in a fast Opal - at about 60 mph! on an autobahn. Covered 568 km = 355 miles. Snoozed at Göttingen.



The Town Hall, Göttingen.

Friday, Sept 7th.

What an expression!

Morning spent in the beautiful Herz mountains! Our road wound in amongst rolling hills and charming old half timbered hamlets.

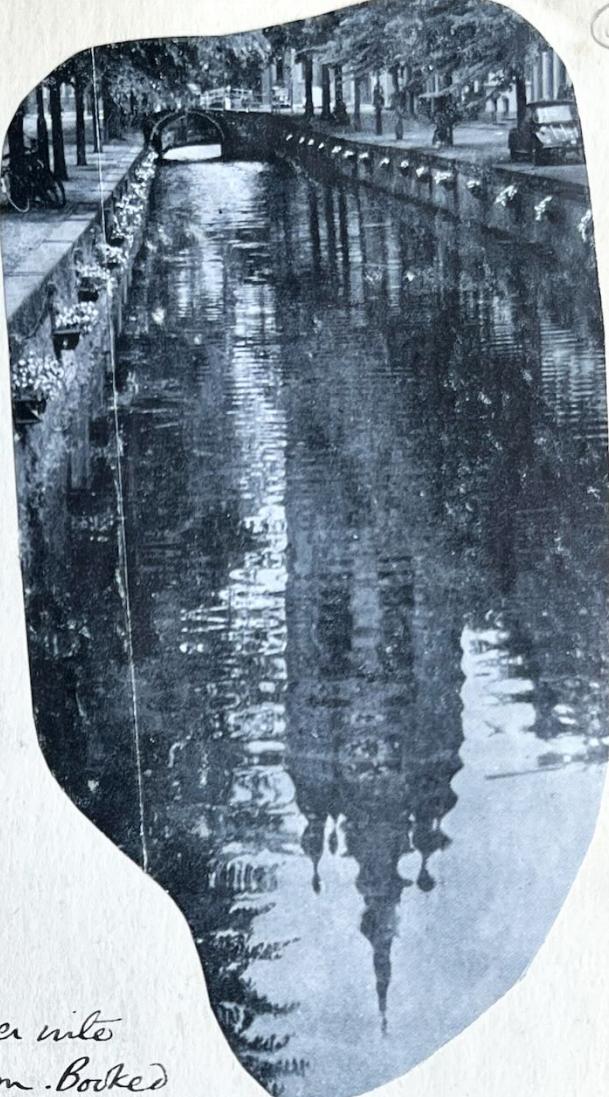
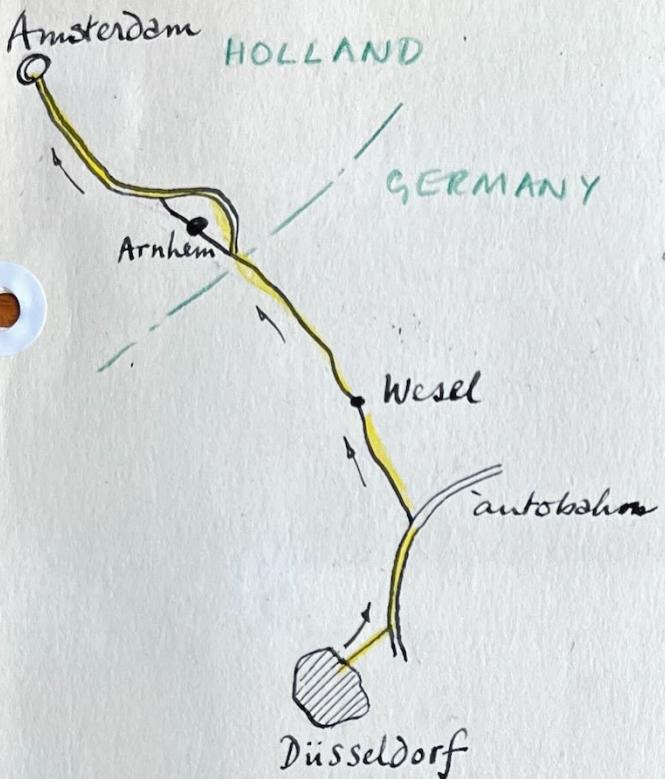
At Hannover I turned west towards the Rhine and was in Düsseldorf late that evening.

Stayed with Hans a friend at Oxford for the night. Most memorable event of the day

— The beard came off!

Göttingen
Linda, Jane

Saturday. Sept 8th.



50

A safe, fast trip - over the border into Holland - and then to Amsterdam. Booked a bed at the Youth Hostel and then spent the rest of the evening exploring the lovely canals and quaint little back streets.

Sunday. Sept. 9th.



Companions of the road.

~ We talked gently of the
beauties of nature ... and then they were
gone. ~ You sentimental old fool!

(51) I went to the Haag - to call on a friend - only to find he had moved from the area 12 months earlier! Made all speed into Belgium - aiming for Ostend. Passed through Rotterdam, Dordrecht, Breda, Antwerpen and ended up with a very late night lift to Gent by a stevedor and his wife. They insisted I should spend the night in their home so....!



Monday, Sept 10. (My birthday) 1956

24 hr

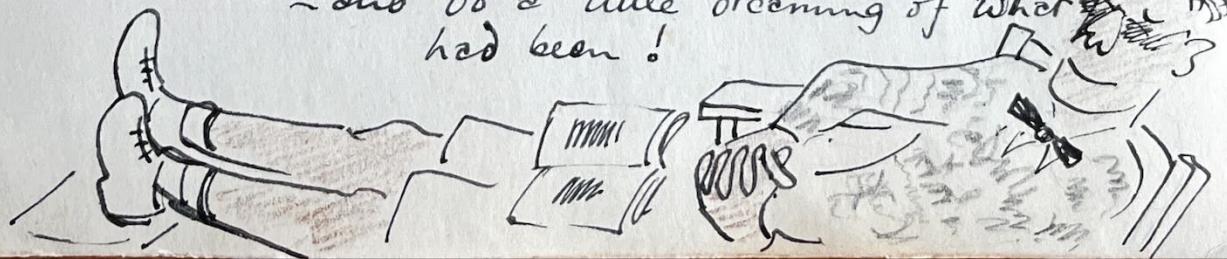


Paul Haesaerts - friend of Salvador Dali, Picasso and Matisse - gave me my last lift on the continent ... to the ferry at Ostend.

I sat in a deck chair - on board, as the sea gulls wheeled overhead and the distant Belgian coast grew faint to our stern - listening to les Anglais returning from a holiday. Everyone was sun-tanned and talking vigorously.

I was content to read "Paradise Lost"

- and do a little dreaming of what ~~the world~~ ^{the world} had been!



PART VII AFTERMATH

The prophet is without honour till the year
 He prophesies the things we want to hear!

George Galbraith,



the time for ease on sun-soaked oil tankers, for
 the luxuriant sleep of fifteen foot deep hay,
 for the heavenly breezes of summit ridges
 was over - and "each went back to
 plough his furrow" in life's great field ~~~

David ~ back to Cambridge -- Theology -- and per-
 haps a little time for Eton Fives!



Elizabeth ~ to start teaching domestic science at Reading
 Technical College



Richard ~ to prepare for work among the Kikuyu in
 Kenya

and

John ~ to the complexities of industrial life at
 Joseph Lucas - Birmingham



To refer back to George Galbraith's saying, there is no doubt that on our return to England we found ourselves in an "honourable" year. It seemed that the British Public would never tire of hearing about Hannibal and his exploits

As regards articles in papers, it was decided at Valence to try and get something into the Manchester Guardian ~ a job allocated to Richard and also to send a report of our full findings to the Alpine Journal to augment Dr McDonald's writings.

Sad to relate this was never accepted.

(53)

The Birmingham Evening Despatch was quick to take up the story.



MR. JOHN HOYTE
—see "Hannibal's route."

Hannibal's route

FOR 24-year-old Mr. John Hoyte a break from 20th-century Birmingham industry means a chance to work on a report on what happened in 218BC—and so challenge the power of television.

Mr. Hoyte is a graduate apprentice with Joseph Lucas (Industries) Ltd. But in his spare time he is preparing a report for experts at Cambridge University on how Hannibal, the Carthaginian general, led an army, complete with elephants, over the Alps to challenge Ancient Rome.

With his sister, Elizabeth, a 22-year-old domestic science student, and two other students, he spent three weeks hitch-hiking through the Alps studying Hannibal's possible routes.

"Historians differ about the pass he used, but the choice seems to lie between two.

"But as far as the British public is concerned there is only one pass in it—the one Sir Gavin de Beer spoke about on television."

By tanker

SIR GAVIN, director of the Natural History Museum, says that Hannibal used a pass in the southern part of the Alps.

"But after travelling over the area we think he is wrong," Mr. Hoyte told me.

To gather their evidence, the students flew to Zurich before starting their hitch-hike which, for 36 hours took them up the River Rhone on the deck of an oil tanker.

Why did Mr. Hoyte, an engineering specialist, and his colleagues—one a theology student and another an economist—turn to history?

"It was something different... and we don't believe in too much specialisation in one subject."

The Robertson Travel Fund Committee at Cambridge wanted a full report of our findings — to make sure we had spent their money profitably! I think they are happy about it now! The Manchester Guardian wouldn't take Richard's article but ~~

THE TIMES

THE TIMES PUBLISHING COMPANY, LIMITED
PRINTING HOUSE SQUARE
LONDON, E.C.4

TELEPHONE: CENTRAL 2000

September 28, 1956.

Dear Mr. Jolly,

Thank you very much for letting us see your article. As you will realize from the attached proof, we are hoping to make use of it fairly soon in The Times and shall be glad if you can let us have any corrections.

I am returning herewith the two negatives and prints we have had made from them, as I am afraid they would not stand reproduction in the paper.

Yours sincerely,

Hilary Hanna.

Secretary to the Assistant Editor

No comment, kid!

— Guardian sent it back, said it fell between two stools and they weren't interested. I didn't change it but sent it to the higher class papers and....

Read your Times boy.
Richard.

IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF HANNIBAL WITHOUT ELEPHANTS

From A Special Correspondent

"Nous suivons la route d'Hannibal" was our stock introduction, reply and comment to those we met this summer during what we called the Cambridge University Hannibal Expedition. There were four of us and no elephants. We always found it best to admit right from the start that we hadn't any elephants. When we didn't people would listen, spellbound at our plans, and then excitedly ask: "Where are you getting the elephants from?" We never had time to explain; their interest was lost in laughter.

The challenge which inspired the expedition came at the end of a critical review of Sir Gavin de Beer's book *Alps and Elephants*, published last year. Sir Gavin argues that Hannibal's route across the Alps is farther south than most other theories suggest, and A. H. Macdonald criticizing this in the *Alpine Journal*, ends: "The best procedure would be to take Polybius and Livy (the ancient sources) in one hand and *Alps and Elephants* in the other... and travel the Alpine passes." We did just that—or nearly that, for we found that books in both hands might be all right when returning from a Heffers or a Bowes and Bowes, but for mountains and rock climbing—?

FEMALES IN FRONT

The start of Hannibal's route lay up the Rhône valley. He had crossed the Rhône at a point four days' march from the sea, not without difficulty both because hostile Barbarians lined the opposite bank and because the fast-flowing river set a problem of elephant transport. But he overcame the first by mounting a successful attack from the rear, and he solved the second by luring the 37 elephants on to earth-covered rafts, leading (as Polybius so significantly records) "two females in front whom the others obediently followed." After this he marched for a further four days up the Rhône (and for a distance of 106 kilometres as Sir Gavin's theory seems to neglect) before reaching "the island" where Polybius says Hannibal turned eastwards towards the Alps.

Because "the island" is described in brief detail by both Polybius and Livy, it becomes the key-point to identify for the western end of the route. However, as the arguments are philological rather than geographical, we contented ourselves with photographing two main contenders for the title and in undecided mood moved to the more interesting Alpine passes. These are important for the particular pass which Hannibal traversed must pinpoint the eastern end of the route.

Our plan was to cross two of the strongest contestants—Col Clapier, a traditional favourite which lies at the head of the Modane Valley leading out of the Isère basin between Bramans and Susa, and farther south Col de la Traversette, Sir Gavin's suggestion, which is situated between the Mont Genèvre and the Riviera and leads out of the Durance basin. Col Clapier was to be first and we hoped to sleep the night in a pleasantly primitive barn at La Plaine half way up.

Only the latter adjective is applicable, for La Plaine had a first and lasting impression of farmyard smell with which we grew strangely accustomed and perhaps strongly identified. But our chief memory is not of this, but of a singing song with some Scouts and the chisel-chinned peasants round a bottle of wine and the dim light of an old oil lamp.

INTO THE MIST

It is difficult to convey our initial disappointment next day as the clouds were low and a gentle drizzle discouraged our plans. The number of different opinions as to whether we could cross in the mist was muddling, but we muddled through to a decision and left at nine-thirty. Our disappointment proved transitory. We climbed rapidly, the weather coldish, but the heavy packs uphill kept us warm. In 25 minutes we met our "guides"—two frontier gendarmes whom we had by good chance contacted the previous day. From them we had obtained the permission we needed to cross the frontier by the usually forbidden Col Clapier route; a smile and a joke had won where many letters to consuls had failed.

They now led the way; behind us snow-capped peaks, on our left a gorge curving towards a glacier and in front emerging on either side some cloud-obscured peaks, the higher on the left. After an hour and a half the climbing was over and our trek was straightforward—the scenery being a strange mixture of deserted planet with the odd tiny evidence of civilization. As we neared the pass the grass wore to a thin finish, the snow drifts came down to our level and the gale gusts grew stronger. Suddenly we were there looking down on the Italian valley with a commanding peak on right centre, and on either side the heavy dark curves of the mountain-side.

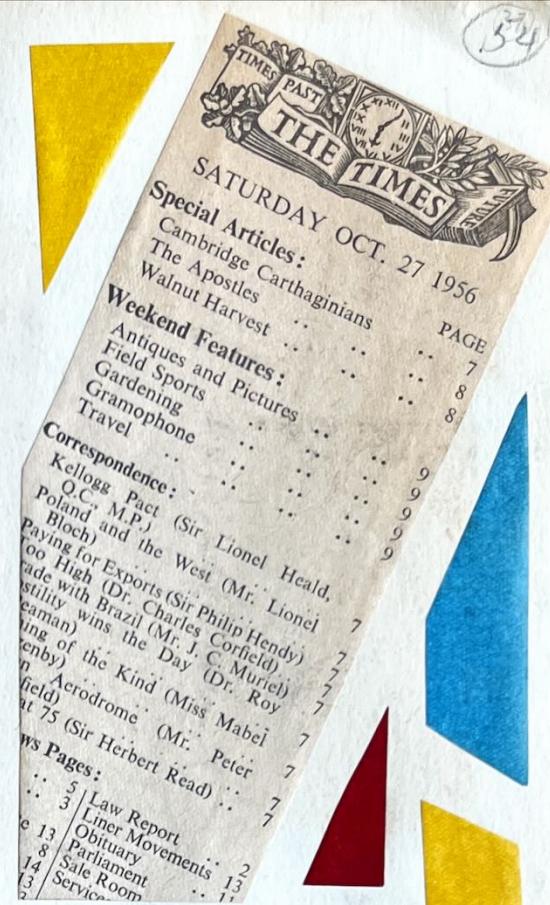
Four days later we would be standing on the very different Traversette pass some 60 kilometres farther south. Here the easy part of the climb came first. Towards the end where it crossed a large area of rock scree it became uneven and steep. Unlike Clapier, which at the pass gave the impression of a wide grey valley, Traversette is a narrow U-shaped ridge like the crescent moon, but a mere 15 yards across.

WHICH PASS?

The dispute over which pass Hannibal crossed hinges on four main factors. Obviously where you place "the island" governs where you look for the pass—broadly, north or south. But also from the ancient sources we know that on the French side the way through the valley must lie through a deep gorge past a flat rocky area on which Hannibal bivouacked for the night. Also on the Italian side Hannibal experienced difficulty because of the steepness of the descent.

So we dismissed those passes which could not satisfy these conditions, thus eliminating all but Col Clapier and Col de la Traversette. The third point derives from the account of Hannibal assembling his men (they possibly numbered 38,000) on the pass and exhorting them while overlooking the Po valley. From both passes this view stretches out in front, but only Col Clapier is large enough to assemble the army. Sir Gavin counters by asserting that probably only the leaders assembled, but neither Polybius nor Livy's words suggest this limited meaning.

Finally, as regards the pass, we know that in October when Hannibal crossed there was still some snow left from the previous winter which caused him further trouble with the animals. In Sir Gavin's theory this is a crucial point in favour of Col de la Traversette against Clapier, for he argues that at nearly 10,000ft. it is sufficiently colder than Clapier at 8,173ft. for this to be possible. But for



us this argument has lost much of its weight because on neither col did we find more than the odd drift, and also Polybius actually claims that snow "lies continuously both summer and winter near the top of the passes." This claim must imply one of two things—either Sir Gavin's evidence that the climates of the two eras are broadly similar is misleading, or that Polybius on this point is unreliable.

ACADEMIC COOLNESS

We found that the academic coolness of these arguments, and to a degree the climatic coldness of the elements, proved secondary to the climactic emotion of shivering on the promontory where Hannibal may have stood. We stuck our flag in the ground. We read aloud Hannibal's exhortation. Then we dropped down the steep ankle-straining path to the valley below.

Here we unexpectedly received a welcome to Italy that both contrasted and added to the thrill of following Hannibal. Inquiring the way from a few monks standing in front of a long set of buildings we were soon lost in a circle of song and happy friendship. Like the assembly of a crowd scene on a stage the few were joined by others and transformed into a choir with a balance and harmony as if long rehearsed, though actually spontaneous. This was continued after a supper they provided for us—though by now we had moved inside to the simple whitewashed hall.

Their singing can neither be described nor forgotten; each sang with every ounce he possessed, and it flowed to us with a gentleness yet pervading forcefulness, and an underlying rhythm. Their oneness was more striking: those unseen at the back gave as much as those at the front, and it was impossible to tell who was leading. The evening passed, beds were brought, and we slept the sleep, if not of the just, yet at least of those who had crossed the Alps on foot with 30lb. haversacks.

Someone (perhaps even someone who laughs when we have no elephants) will say: "Did you find his route?" We don't laugh, though perhaps with a whimsical smile and with a whisper of classical wisdom we reply: "Il n'y a pas de fin mais nous continuons à suivre la route."

(55) More over, a few days later the Statesman ~ "High class Newspaper" of Delhi and Calcutta reprinted the article . . .

THE STATESMAN TUESDAY NOVEMBER 6 1956

CAMBRIDGE CARTHAGINIANS

IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF HANNIBAL WITHOUT ELEPHANTS

From The Times, London

There were two results from the printing of the article by the Times . . .

Firstly we received the exulted sum of £13 and celebrated it by having a reunion in London, a dinner at the Royal Opera House Restaurant followed by "Othello"

ROYAL OPERA HOUSE

COVENT GARDEN



Saturday Evening, 1st December, 1956

The 71st performance at the Royal Opera House of

Otello

OPERA IN FOUR ACTS

Words by Arrigo Boïto
after the play by William Shakespeare

Music by Giuseppe Verdi

Scenery and costumes by Wakhevitch

CONDUCTOR - RAFAEL KUBELIK
PRODUCER - PETER POTTER

THE COVENT GARDEN OPERA CHORUS

Chorus Master — DOUGLAS ROBINSON

THE COVENT GARDEN ORCHESTRA

Leader - CHARLES TAYLOR

Secondly, there was a reply from Sir Gavin ~ !

HANNIBAL'S ROUTE

TO THE EDITOR OF THE TIMES
Sir.—I never imagined that I should have the honour of godfathering the "route d'Hannibal" which the French authorities have instituted in accordance with my views, nor of inspiring the Cambridge Carthaginians to repeat Hannibal's march. As they so rightly say, "the island" becomes the key-point to identify for the western end of the route, but when they assert that the arguments are philological rather than geographical I must raise my eyebrows. The geographical arguments are that "the island" is a triangular piece of land, very fertile, highly populated, seven days' march (three of Scipio's, four of Hannibal's) from the sea, south of St. Paul Trois-Châteaux, bordered by a river which a thousand years ago was called the Icaros. The philological

evidence is that this name represents the Skaras of a thousand years earlier still, and that the Greek word for "island" means land flooded by the Nile. Why despise philology?

Protagonists of the Clapier route have to accept as their "island" the land north of the Isère, not triangular, not fertile, not highly populated, twice as far away from the sea, north of St. Paul Trois-Châteaux, and bordered by a river which can only be made to agree with the classical texts by faking them. As for the eastern end of the route, if this year they found little snow on the Traversette that weakens still further the argument for the Clapier, for I have no less faith in Polybius than in natural science. I am, Sir, yours, &c.,

GAVIN DE BEER.
The Athenaeum, Pall Mall, S.W.1.
Oct. 27.

We never took the issue any further ~ but don't be deceived by our friend the Curator ~ at such a late stage in the game. As Dr McDonald wrote to Richard

"I would have replied (to this) only the next day, you recall, was the Suez crisis and thought it too serious to begin a 'silly season'. I feel Hannibal would have agreed!"

"Reflections" — the Joseph Lucas magazine willingly published an article.



IN HANNIBAL'S TRACKS

The account of an Alpine Expedition with a difference

by John Hoyte

Mr. Hoyte is a graduate apprentice with the company at Great King Street. In his spare time he is preparing a report for experts at Cambridge University on how Hannibal, the Carthaginian general, led an army, complete with elephants, over the Alps to challenge Ancient Rome. Mr. Hoyte spent three weeks hitch-hiking through the Alps studying Hannibal's possible routes.

IT was an interesting and amusing discovery made while planning our historic trip that General Hannibal's Chaplain-in-Chief was called Bogus. Some might try, we hope in jest, to apply this name to the Cambridge Hannibal Expedition of 1956; we trust, however, that this article will persuade them to use better judgement!

My sister Elizabeth and I and two friends from Magdalene College, Cambridge, found ourselves one sunny morning in August posed on the trolleyed steps of a Dakota at Croydon Airport. We waved Union Jack with elephant rampant, and tried to put on a faraway Himalayan look while the *Evening News* photographer took a snap. It was all rather like a dream—but then we were about to go over the rainbow anyway. In my pocket were twenty pounds kindly provided by Cambridge University, and by one side lay rucksacks which seemed terribly heavy in spite of the endless weeding out of unnecessary equipment. We had found it best to admit right from the start that any elephants would

have to be left behind, but this did not deprive me of a very interesting conversation on the subject with George Cansdale.

After landing at Zürich we spent an exciting ten days in Switzerland . . . no, not practising our rope technique or even sharpening ice axes but at least getting our walking legs, and when feeling more extravagant, dangling over wonderful fields of gentians on the occasional ski-lift. The diversity of the youth hostels was a study in itself for they varied from the "Black Hole of Zürich" to the exquisite little chalet near Gstaad where we were the only occupants. Can I ever forget the delicious apple crumble (my favourite pudding) that graced our table there—thanks to Elizabeth's cooking.

Wednesday, August 22nd, saw the expedition crossing the border into France, towards 'Hannibal Country' by the perhaps not so elegant but at least economical method of hitch-hiking. Late that night we reached the little, remote village of Bramens high up in the

The crags over the Col de la Traversette.



Lunch on the deck of an oil tanker on the Rhone, we spent a day and a half on the tanker.



Evening. Mount Viso (12,609 ft.) is in the background

page thirty-three

—and my old school magazine bore a similar article.

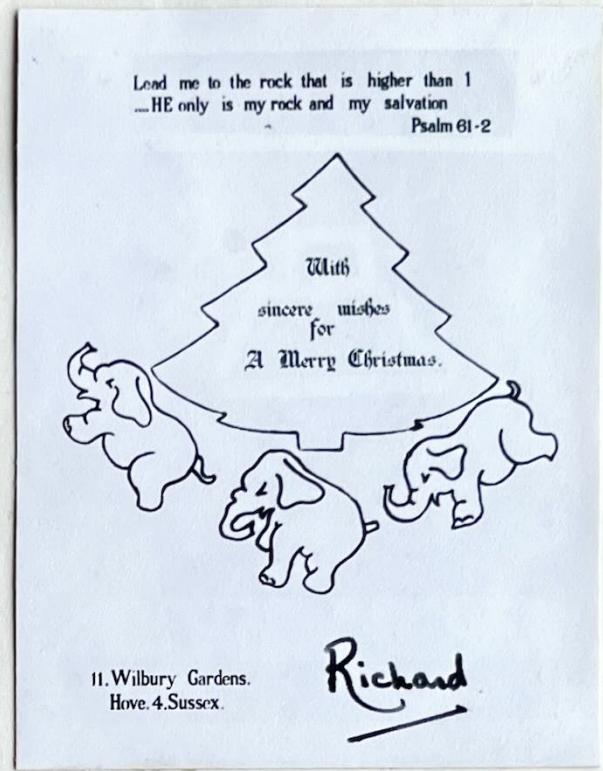


C.S.A. MAGAZINE

IN HANNIBAL'S TRACKS

The account of an Alpine Expedition with a difference !

(57) Richard's Christmas card that year not only incorporated a scene and elephants to connect it with the holiday but also, very beautifully, incorporated a spiritual application.



The cross & crags above the Col de la Traversette.



ALPINE FLOWERS



During the holiday we saw quite a variety of Alpine flower and Elizabeth kept a careful record of these for future holidays. Below I am going to show some that we found but am inserting an introductory note first to add to your interest ~ ~ ~

An alpine plant may be defined as one which grows high up in the mountains above the tree level limit. This limit varies in Switzerland from about 5,500 feet to 7,500 feet according to local conditions, such as protection or exposure to wind and the slope of the ground, whether north or south. It is a zone in which the hard struggle with the elements causes the last outposts of the mountain forests, the weather-beaten firs, larches and stone-pines - to assume a gnarled and stunted form. Above this zone lies the kingdom of the alpine plants which never cease to enchant us by the profusion, size and colour of their flowers. These too have a hard struggle for existence which can best be appreciated by considering the peculiar conditions under which they grow;

The TEMPERATURE on a fine summer day can be very hot but in bad weather, at night and in spring and in autumn it is very cold. Alpine plants must be able to endure these low temperatures and many of them have a protective hair covering. The seeds of some will not germinate unless they have first been frozen!

The PERIOD OF GROWTH is short, merely June to August. During this short alpine mountain summer the alpine plant must shoot up, grow, flower, ripen its fruits and disperse its seeds.

SOLAR RADIATION increases with altitude and is especially rich in ultra violet light rays. This quality of mountain sunshine (which tanned our skin so easily) causes the plants to grow more quickly than in the lowlands. Their flowers are often larger and more vividly coloured. Finally; THE SOIL is often scanty and in many places rather dry. The plants must use thriftily the little nutriment available.

59
Narcissi



Saxifraga Aizoon
Wassergrot



Aconitum
Lycocotonum
Wassergrot
19.8.56.



Yellow rockrose
Wassergrot. 19.8.56



Campanula
Schneebärli
Engelberg



Common
Hound's-tongue
Near Col de Clapier
23.8.56



Globeflower
Near Zurich
15.8.56.



Centauraea
montana
Engelberg
17.8.56.



Col de Clapier
24.8.56.
Veronica fruticosa



Hedysarum
obscurum
Engelberg
17.8.56



Spring gentian
~
Col de Clapier
26.8.56

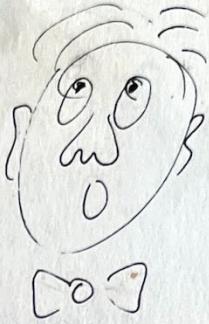
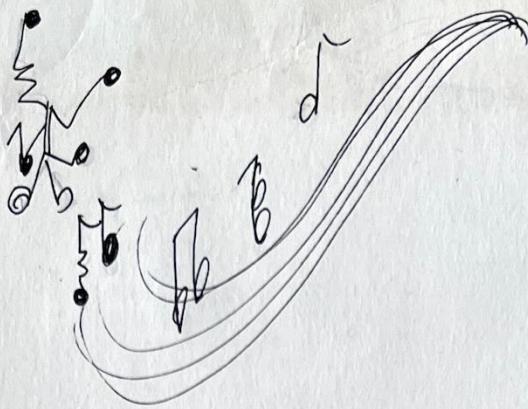


Crepis alnea
Engelberg
17.8.56

Alpine Clover
Engelberg. 17.8.56

SINGING

(60)



Negro Spirituals

Swing low - Sweet chant

I've got a robe.

Old Joe.

An old cow hand.

Water water water

Dinah

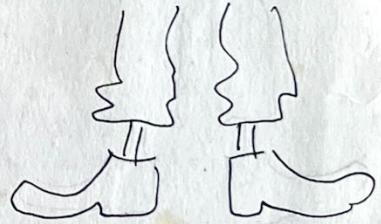
Oh Shenandoah

Rounds: Domine Nobis

Alhoneita.

Old Kentucky Home

Old man River



Means of Transport:

1/ Aeroplane

"/ motor bike

2/ Bus

12/ Trailer behind bike

3/ Car

13) Oil tanker (Avignon - Valence)

4/ Bicycle - with motor

5/ Hay cart

6/ Ski lift.

7/ Cable car

8/ Foot - now and then!

9/ Lorry (in America "Truck")

10/ row boat.

CAMBRIDGE HANNIBAL EXPEDITION

DINNER SAT. DEC 1956

To commemorate Hannibals crossing of the Alps 2174 years / month ago, to the remembrance of an unforgettable and delightful holiday spent in his tracks and to celebrate the printing of "Cambridge Carthaginians" by the Times on Saturday October 27. 1956.



at The Nag's Head
Covent Garden

Hors D'Oeuvres — Iced Melon
Smoked Salmon — Tomato Juice Cocktail
Fresh Grapefruit — Grenade de Tomate
— Consomme aux Herbes —

Cheese, Ham or Mushroom Omlettes.

Fried Fillet of Plaice Tartare — Trout Meuniere
Grilled Dover Sole — Grilled Lamb Chop
Grilled Gammon & Fried Egg — Grilled Pork Chop
Grilled Rump Steak Garni
Escalope of Veal Holstein
Fried Chicken Maryland or Florida. — Richard

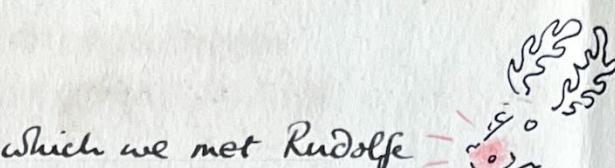
Peach, Pear & Pineapple Melba
Blackberry Flambe Cream.
Ice Gateau

Biscuits & Cheese
Gorgonzola
English Cheddar

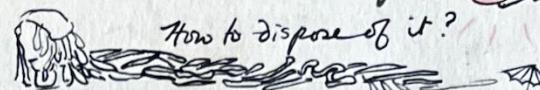
R.D. Jenk. — Double Gloucester
Merrishaw — Caerphilly
Wensleydale — Port Denvis
Cumbrian Blue — Danish Blue
Cottage Cheese — Cork Elizabeth

Sweet Memories ~ ~ ~

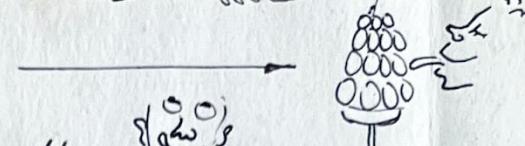
Zurich - the "Grace" through which we met Rudolfe



Engelberg - spaghetti



Interlaken - fantastic ice creams



Gstaad - Elizabeth's apple-crumble !!



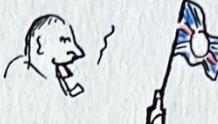
Montreux - the long walk to the kitchen & tomatoe of soup



Bramens - that terrible, expensive ! HAM .



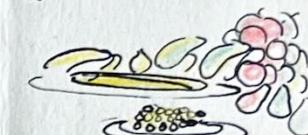
Le Planey - wine - and "Alphonette"



Col de Clapier - and its terrible dark sausages.



The Monastery - Green peppermint drink & OMELET !



Aiguille - transparent soup with little bits in it.

Echalp - washing up (and ghost stories)



Traversette - sardine sandwiches upset everywhere



The Rhône - melons melons melons !

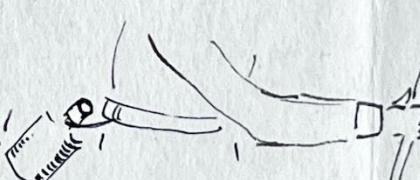


Valence - farewell chocolate ice creams



Also : ~ ~ ~ ~

Water - tied to Richard ! off on !!



Soggy continental cornflakes.



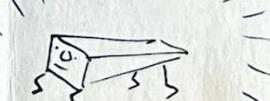
Bread - lots of knife resisting crust !



Jam - for Richard



Cheese - "Hi ! Jenkins - let loose the gorgonzola"



Good hunting - all !

How someone else crossed the Alps ~ ~ ~ with a real elephant !

Late in December - 56 I came across a most fascinating book by Richard Halliburton. ~ ~ ~ Do you see the name connection? Hannibal ~ ~ ~ Hallibal ~ ~ ~ Halibut (oil, for the journey) ~ ~ ~ Halliburton ~ ~ ~ Halliburton on an elephant ~ ~ ~ Halliburton !!

The as a young journalist had crossed the Alps ~ ~ between the wars on a real, live elephant - But let's hear about it in his own words ~ ~ ~

 The monks living in the St-Bernard Monastery at the summit of the eight-thousand-foot St-Bernard Pass across the Alps have been sheltering travellers of every nationality and every station for nearly a thousand years. But it is unlikely that any guest will be remembered longer than one named Elizabethe Dalrymple! Because Elizabethe Dalrymple was an elephant, the ^{only} elephant to cross the pass in over 2000 years. When this extraordinary visitor drew up before the hospice door, she was not alone. Riding on her shoulders was an amateur mahout who seemed none too sure of his seat, for he held on to his mount's enormous ears with both hands.

 The Prior of the monastery, when he recovered from his astonishment, invited this odd pair of travellers to come in and sign their names on the register. The elephant could get only part of one foot through the door. So the mahout had to dismount and sign for both, taking the elephant's dictation through the window. For the elephant; Name — "Elizabethe Dalrymple. But please add," said the elephant, "that everyone calls me Dally — my real name is too silly." Address — "Jardin d'Acclimatation, Bois de Boulogne, Paris". Profession — "Generally a lady of leisure, admired and loved by the entire population of Paris; but at present suffering servitude to an eccentric —

 The mahout looked up, and hesitated to use such an adjective to describe himself ~ ~ ~ "Go on," exclaimed Dally, "Write it down. I said eccentric American — who is riding me over the Alps, on the most hare-brained adventure I've ever experienced in all my twelve years. The American thinks he's the reincarnation of Hannibal — but (if you want an opinion) he looks and acts about as much as like Hannibal as I do." The mahout made a wry face of chagrin on hearing his elephant talk about him so disrespectfully. But the elephant wouldn't let him change one word. So he gave up remonstrating &



began to fill in his own registration blank: Name—"Richard Halliburton". Address—"Carthage" (The elephant snorted with disdain seeing the man write "Carthage". She knew his original home was Memphis, Tennessee.) Profession—"Generally a respectable writer of books on travel and adventure, but at present occupied with the caprices of a temperamental elephant."—here the author gave Elizabeth Dalrymple a very superior look—"which I'm riding over the Alps in the tracks of the elephants hidden in 218 B.C. by that terror of Rome, that greatest of Carthaginians, that most famous elephant conductor of history-Hannibal!"

— And so the narrative progressed—from the start when the hunt for an elephant suitable for such a ^{reached} trip all over Europe till the grand descent into Italy was made. A telegram had been sent to the Paris zoo "I still want Elizabeth Dalrymple for Alpine expedition. Can you start traffic-training immediately and have her ready in two weeks? If agreeable will return to Paris at once". Louis Harel, Dally's zoo trainer accompanied the party—and after loading a small motor truck to carry Dally's food, blankets, buckets and ~~their~~ own personal baggage and with much trouble getting L Loyd's to mount them the party set off by rail towards the Alps. Up and up they climbed as the summit pass grew closer. The second afternoon was spent reaching St Pierre, the last village before the summit. By now the entire country side was in a fever of excitement. All day the crowds of mountaineers following at Dally's heels had increased in number. Now at St Pierre they packed the villages single street and little square. They came running down the mountain-side, or up from the banks of the tumbling river, breathless and amazed. Some brought their hay rakes and scythes. Some carried their babies, holding them carefully out of reach of Dally's inquisitive snout. But generally a great wave of sympathy flowed from the mountain people to the elephant. Dally, despite her colossal size inspired immediate affection from almost everyone. Women called her pet names, caressed her thick hide, and bombarded her with sugar, peanuts and carrots. The children, almost beside themselves with joy over the visit of the marvellous beast swarmed about her and over her in dense and shrieking mobs. At every opportunity Richard lifted a child or two upon the elephant's back to sit tight behind him. And nothing the rest of their lives would ever be for them such a memorable adventure. Without planning it, the author found himself in possession of the magic power of the Pied Piper and only hoped for Dally's sake that they did not attract rats! How they eventually got across with many excitements & delightful incidents and in spite of as many difficulties you will have to find out for yourself as the story continues in Richards book "Seven League Boots"!

Zürich



taken on arrival by an American Minister (R.C.)

A very streamlined continental coach took us from the airport to the town centre and we made our way to the youth hostel to park our impediments. The rest of our first day off English soil ^{passed} in a glorious rush of sightseeing, shopping and boating on the nearby lake. This, as a hand, pointed us in a long shimmering gesture towards the dim, misty alps far beyond itself to the south. This as it were, was the Kathmandu of our journey to the high snow-capped giants waiting in the stormy winds beyond the beyond.



The hostel may well delight in the name "The Black Hole of Zürich". What a squash! The mens

dormitory was so crowded that David slept outside in among the bicycles. I found a few space square feet near the door and had quite a comfortable night but Richard had a more difficult time, lying - as one of a row of sardines - on a vast communal bed!





The pulpit from which Zwingli preached
Grossmünster Zurich. 15.8.56.

The telephone on the
chancel steps in the
Grossmünster (cathedral)
Zurich.

Why?

- we wonder!





Engelberg Youth Hostel turned out to be beyond our every dream and we found ourselves in the lap of luxury and surrounded by the most superb mountain scenery! As we sat enjoying a very welcome and substantial supper the magnificent Spannort Peaks were lit up with the sunset glow and gradually wrapped themselves in deep purple.

Thursday, August 16th.

~ was spent walking and climbing up the Engelberg valley

We found a very primitive mountain cable car and were taken, one at a time, up the mountain side, on giving the conventional signal of 3 taps on the cable with a stone!

At the top we found a

a little mountain farm, a few wandering cows - and superb views.

Elizabeth found some grass of parnassus and our first bunch of wild Swiss gentians.

I undertook a fast, gym & shoe'd climb - mostly on 35° rock slabs to try & reach the snowline. Didn't quite have time .. Back to Hostel for night.

Held a little service - hymns, chorus & a talk by Richard - "The Lord is MY shepherd" - for a party of school kids.





The valley beyond Engelberg



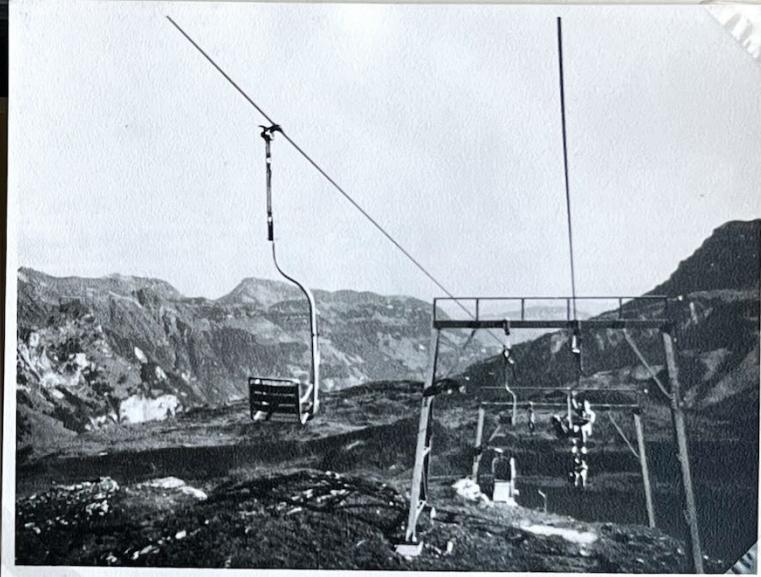
Lake Lucerne

Friday August 17



-the delight of skimming over
the tree tops, feeling the fresh-
ness of the early morning
breeze on the cheek, views
of blue, blue gentians, shining
up at us from the lush grass~
— "joy"!

The loveliest day yet - as re-
gards weather and views. Only
just caught the 7.30 a.m. moun-
tain railway from Engelberg.
Changed to cable car after
→ $\frac{1}{4}$ hour and were taken as far
as Trübsee (lakes hotel) at
5000ft. Finally, a ski lift
brought us to the summit of
the Joch Pass.

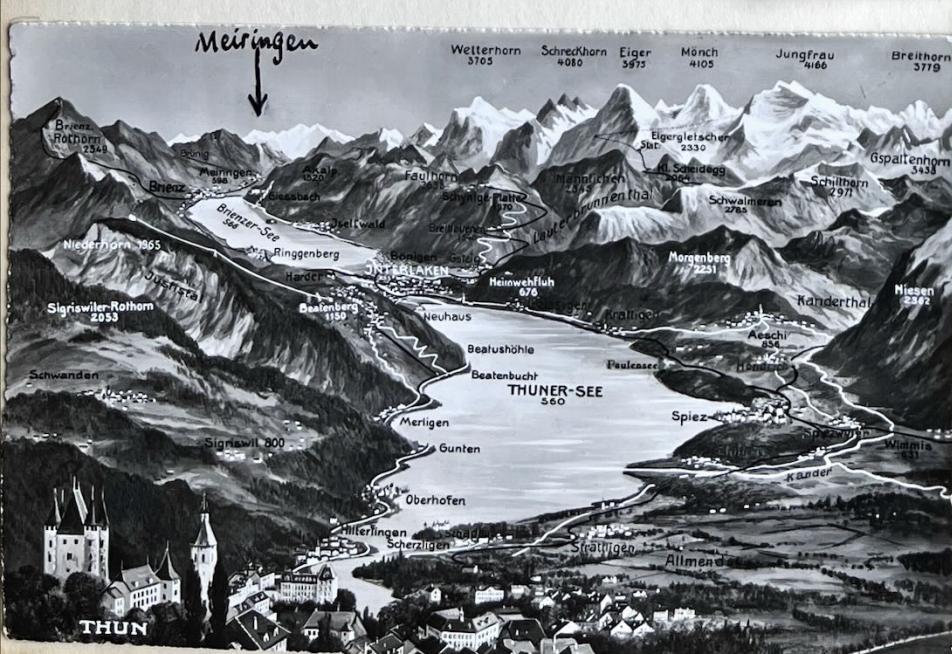


'At The Top' - From Jochpass - looking towards Meiringen.

At the top I painted while the others went on. The path was down hill all the way from now on and we reached the Engstlen Läger Hotel and the view from it by lunch time. Then down through the woods and beside a singing river. Elizabeth David had a bath, Richard read his Economist & I sketched!



The Wetterhorn
and
Jungfrau
range of
the
Bernese
Oberland.



Hotel Alpenblick, Wilderswil

The Italian workmen are aboard! At last, Meiringen and then Interlaken were reached & we enjoyed huge ice creams at Hotel Alpenblick before settling down at the youth hostel. What a squash!

Wednesday August 15th.

~ our first day on the road!
 We got off to an early start and reached Lucerne by lunch time. The first lift was given by the Director of Surveying for the whole of Switzerland. You would never have thought so if you had seen the jocund angle of his little blue beret and the happy-go-lucky state of his small car ~ but one never knows in this world!



we were off again ~~~~



~ along the azure blue of the Lake of Lucerne and under the brow of Pilatus to Stansstad. From here the road wound up & up towards Engelberg ~ every turn revealing more & more beauty.

Gross-Spannort
3202 m

Klein-Spannort
3149 m

Wichelplankstock
2976 m

Titlis
3239 m

Reissend Nollen
3012 m

Wendenstöcke
3044 m

Berner Alpen



Wednesday's route ---- from Stansstad to Engelberg (The Youth Hostel)

Thursday's route ---- up the Engelberg valley to snowline & then back to Youth Hostel for night

Friday's route ----- To Trübsee & Joch pass 2215 m.

Saturday August 18th.

Grand shopping expedition at Interlaken all morning - and then a two hour wait for a lift. Elizabeth utilises the time with learning her T.M.S. book and I with sketching, writing my diary, reading a very old St John's gospel and in prayer. Two Yank sailors took us to Spiez, an English family from Hong Kong to Wimmeis and a french printer (in West Plymouth) to Zweisemmen. Bought a literal mountain of food - to last us the weekend. A Volkswagen took us - not only to Gstaad - but up a dangerous mountain road to within five minutes walk of the hostel. Pouring with rain. Wonderful evening in hostel warden's home - eating special Swiss dishes, singing negro spirituals and listening to Margarite and her father yodelling.



It was late before we said goodnight and we pushed uphill, against wind & rain to the little hostel. We got there at last and found it the most delightful little "Heidi home" ever imaginable - It reminded me slightly of Fjellheim - in Norway - for the rooms were so cozy and intimate. One of the 3 bedrooms was over half occupied by a vast communal bed. David slept here!

I lay - snug in my sleeping bag - listening to the roaring of the wind and the rain pounding down onto the ancient roof. There was no need for Tolstoy to order me to be infinitely happy !

Sunday. August 19th



↑ tank

The scene, to which we woke up to discover next morning

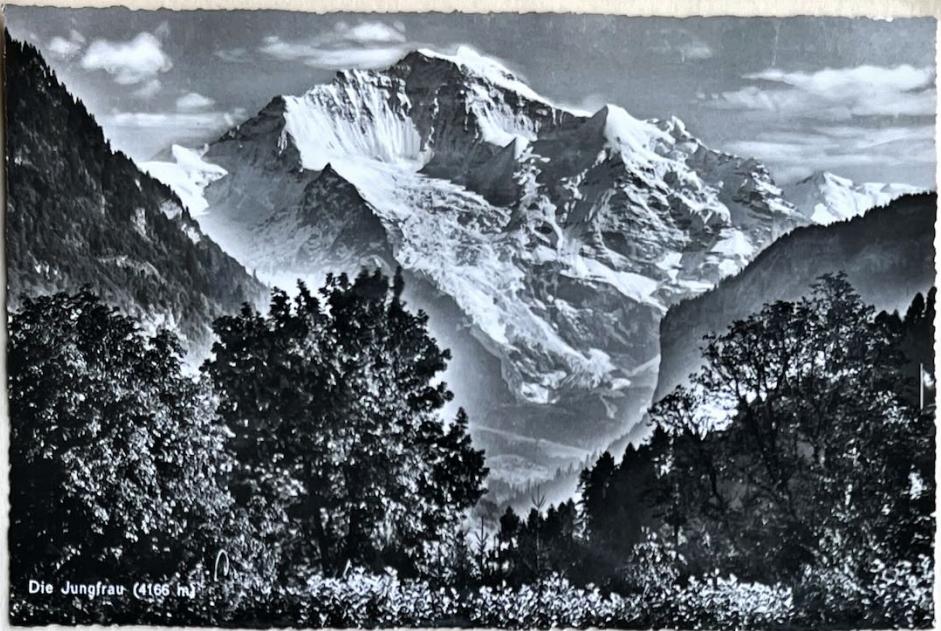
There is the tank in which Richard had his early morning bath. — & the hostel.

Richard got breakfast and led 'morning service' — being potential clergymen.

Sunday afternoon spent with Margarite, her sister and many friends — up at the Hotel Wasserngrat. (Do you remember Heidi — and boots on floor boards?) We all sat in the sun, with our elbows on the table soaking in the scene — Glorious views of mountain ranges for 270° range —



Richard playing Swiss skittles beside the hotel.



Monday. August 20th.

- a very rainy walk to Gstaad but things had gone so indescribably well so far we certainly could not complain! Memories such as this were enough to fill my mind. We had been going to bed the previous night - in our little mountain home, when the enchanting sound of yodelling came up the valley. It was Margarile, her mother and a friend coming back from the Wasserengrat "fête". We all rushed out to greet them - I with a toothbrush in hand - and in the moonlight tried an 8 - some reel and some rounds. In the English fashion we finished with Auld Lang Syne. I stood silent on the road, as David Elizabeth & Richard went back to the hut. The moon cast its delicate cloud shapes along the vast sweeps of lush purple pasture - and the yodelers slowly went their way home - on up the valley -. Their voices faded away and yet filled everywhere with sound. The valley sustained that melody; for, at that moment, I saw that they were made for each other - and married it to the first rustling of the wind in the eucalyptus. Enough, I had lived. I looked at my toothbrush, laughed and scurried into bed.

The road now led to Montreux - via the Col de Pillon. We all arrived safely and by late afternoon were looking over the Chateau de Chillon.



Montreux Youth Hostel is beautifully situated - down by the lake - and after supper I went for one of my 'prayer-praise' walks along the front. The night wind from the lake had a wonderful tang to it and the rivers-like palm trees waved gently at its behest. Far over the lake, lights of St Gingolph twinkled - marking where France began and Switzerland ended.

Tuesday . August 21st.

... had some interesting lifts to Geneva and met for lunch there. In the afternoon we saw the Palace of Nations. The most striking thing was the painting - by a Spanish artist - in the council chamber. I queued for an hour at the youth hostel hoping to get beds and exchanged hitch-hiking stories with others sitting on the stairs. But, after a lot of shouting & screaming by the wardens - and banging of doors, we found we could not get in! ... so got fixed up at the YMCA.



The Château de Chillon
and the Dents du Midi



Montreux
~ Lac Léman ~
and the Dents du Midi