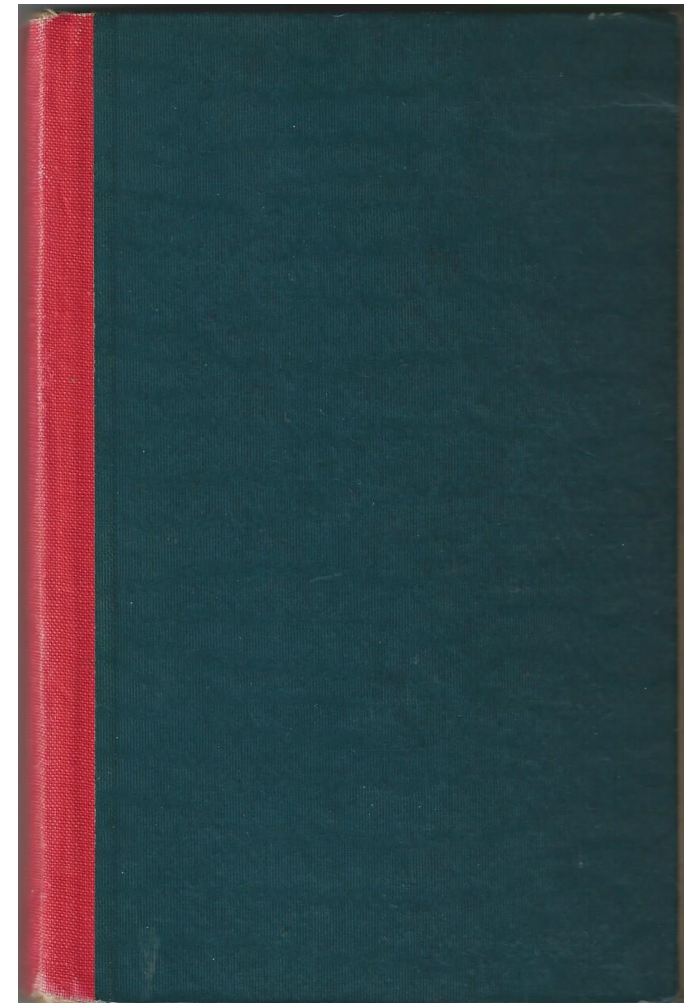




**Extract from vol. 11.  
Trip to the Alps 1976**







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2 hrs. (from 3 to 5 pm) So we were rather better getting away than we'd hoped. Walked up & got onto the glacier (eventually!) Walked up the glacier & onto the rock ledge at the start of the Frendo without difficulty. Followed the rock terrace up & then got onto the "easy slope" running along R/c. There were pretty well plastered with snow & in the corner out of the sun there was quite a bit of ice. Solving still we moved a bit & followed quite an easy line up for a few hundred feet rising gradually towards the start of a chimney/corridor system at the top of this section. Descended to him at the foot of this where there was an excellent live site - here and there the snow was much levelled. Pushed about 9 am. After we arrived

there. Had a brew/soup & cardinals & then got the live gear sorted. A really good ledge this as able to stretch out nicely, the being on snow it was a bit cold off the mat.

I was very worn but as much slept poorly. Went - Got moving about 5 am. with a brew & began packing live gear etc away. However we didn't really get started climbing much before 7 am when Roms led off up the chimneys - Another British pair Mark & Dave caught us up here after having made a very early start.

However we kept up with them quite nicely. With virtually all the ledges being covered with snow the climbing was quite interesting & fairly sustained push up what would normally be very ground. However made steady progress - at one point the mixed nature of the ground



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1st May. Rick, Graham & Al Hinks had done the French the previous day & taken a long time on it. Info. suggested W. Face of the Blatin might be worth doing - as not really too difficult with aid in place. Romie was extremely keen to do it.

Then - A good kip up 9ish. Romie suggested going up the Blatin in pairs & getting up to good high ledges. Enthusiasm like this couldn't be wasted! Got moving immediately by cooking a huge breakfast & started sorting gear out. P.A.'s & slings as per Britan + hammer a few pegs & crampers - Bin gear & food. I was hoping to do another route after this & particularly the browns of the Gneiss to end the bit. So had a little extra food. All the gear sorted & packed we set off to walk down to the Ligne abt 12ish. As we anticipated there was something of a que

However we seemed to be in luck a certainly the taffy people treated us very well - officially 3½ hr wait. By going singly on different fingers we got this down to 2½ hr. Also while sitting near the door waiting the attendant swapped our seats for 2 others - & cut our total wait down to only 1½ hr! We also got priority on entering the finger etc! Set off up towards the Blatin glacier. Followed a good path up the glacier & kept pretty central all the way up it (put on crampons on this & saved a lot of time). Had to turn a few huge rocks at a couple of places but there was no need to rope up. - Came into the rock well to the right of the scar as recommended & this was very easy. Roped up for the move onto the rock. & then got sorted out



with gear. The lower easy section from  
where we went in 3 150' pitches - all of which  
were pretty easy - a mass of IV rocks but  
mainly scrambling - moved down back to which  
brought us to a huge tension system under  
the main cliff of the W face & joined to  
the R. of the rock scar. The fine Brown  
was shown from below. Changed into P.A.'s  
on the ledge below & then went up to arrange  
belays etc. Ronnie set off up (scrambling  
here obvious. Looked really hard but quite  
a lot of gear in place. (fortunately!) Ronnie  
made pretty good progress & it was an  
enormous load. - pulled my pack up &  
stated on his. Found it pretty heavy  
& suggested I come up & gave him  
a hand. - I shouldn't have agreed to  
this at all! However set off up &  
made quite good progress up the lower  
section of the crack - tho' finding it

hard. The problem really began where it  
widened. Fortunately there were wedges to go  
for on this section & the slings which  
Ronnie had left in place. However  
pulled on one rope at one place  
to save time. Not the sort of work I am  
used to at all. 6"-12" angle & very hard.  
Unfortunately Ronnie's pack jammed when  
we attempted to haul it up & eventually  
the only thing to do was for Ronnie to descend  
to place slings - free the pack  
I hauled it up & then Ronnie came  
up consequently I was feeling a bit  
tired & time was getting late.

Suggested it might be faster if  
Ronnie led the next pitch - A bad  
mistake on my part as very awkward  
from above. Hauled one pack up again  
& my gun joined with the other.  
Where a bloody work up. I ought



to have insisted in it being hauled up!  
Any rate I used more energy on this pitch  
than on the whole of the climb. It was agony  
& had to have a very tight rope for  
much of it - badly cut my hands up  
on it as well. By the time I got  
to the top it was late, I was in a  
fifth degree & felt shattered. Getting down  
Dumped the pack & led up the  
next pitch pretty quickly - and a sling  
for aid & found it OK (V).  
Got on onto the big limestone ledges.  
Rennie came up in the dark with his  
pack (I hauled my own up).

Had a meal - soup brew sardines  
a per usual & then got the lime  
sacked out. A very still night &  
an another lime ledge. so slept atop  
of the lime sac in order to avoid  
condensation. Superb view of N.F. Peak

on the route. A perfect night as  
very clear. Weather looks really settled.  
Fri Got moving about 5.45. Brew  
Alpen & packed gear away. Very still.  
In shade of snow till 11ish. I decided  
to climb in P.A.'s & do free climbing.  
Rennie in bits & packs to do aid.  
I sac hauled my own pack. A much more  
satisfactory arrangement for me at least!  
Scrambled up to the start of the 1st V  
pitch. A climbing crack. A few feet  
of easier climbing lead to a steep  
wall with pegs in it. I climbed this  
free. It was very pleasant. Above was  
the big groove. This was quite  
sentimental vs. Nice balance climbing  
followed by excellent jamming. There  
was no stone at the top so took  
one in shingle while Rennie led  
the next 50' of aid. Which



Another English pair caught us up here. Mick & Mike

we both climbed with packs - As second  
using the <sup>the</sup> goaf & leave technique I  
(using the foot loops) found it rather strenuous. \* A good pitch

In the sun now at last - however  
it was hot & drained energy.

Easy ground led to the Lamin Vines  
where we could have walked off.

but decided to go up the next pitch to  
the Lantani ledge - the usual finishing  
point. I had some difficulties here

finding the right line & reversed down  
on one abortive attempt. Eventually found

it but failed to get up the very  
strenuous crack to the top of the block  
& timed this by going up a very steep  
& technical corner - even with a sling  
as a spike for aid. From here I

had to traverse R into the crack. Because  
of rope drag Rouse had to move his  
stava & I crossed to the top of the block

which was very thin & I placed a  
peg for the crossing. Pulled my sac  
up to here & led it off to collect  
some more green before continuing up the  
excellent jamming cracks above - actually  
quite easy to get onto easy ground which  
led to the Lantani ledge. (Zale  
a delay on this pitch) almost 3 pm now  
& decided not to do the Gnepon to Rouse's  
obvious relief! Charged into leads to  
my very great relief as with the  
heat in the sun my toes were hurting  
again & had a brew which  
was great. Melted some snow down  
as out of water & generally sunbathed  
in a relaxed atmosphere. Superb situation  
Collected papers & events. subbed off along  
the ledges & down the rocks on the L  
of the column. Caught up a couple  
of English parties descending this &  
descended down & onto the glacier