

IN MEMORIAM

THE ALPINE CLUB OBITUARY:	<i>Year of Election</i>
Newton, H. E.	1908
Bennett, C. F.	1909
Bird, L. W.	1914
Thomas, Eustace	1923
Huntington, J. F. (resigned 1940; re-elected 1944)	1928
Side, A. D. B.	1937
Smith, K. C.	1945
Ghiglione, Piero	1953
Kerr, A. C.	1953

PIERO GHIGLIONE

1883-1960

It is difficult to do justice to such a remarkable character as Piero Ghiglione. Born in 1883, he was conveniently situated in Torino to do much climbing and ski-ing, and he developed such an interest that, being able to retire from business comparatively rich at an early age, he devoted himself whole-heartedly to mountaineering. It was his abiding passion, and all else became subsidiary to it; so much so, that an Italian friend once said to me 'Il est fou des montagnes.'

It is probably no exaggeration to say that he ascended more mountains than any climber, alive or dead, and these in every corner of the world. His book, *Le mie scalate nei cinque continenti* does not by any means include all his achievements and he wrote half a dozen other books and innumerable articles as well. To list all his climbs is beyond the scope of this note, and even a booklet produced by his admirers towards the end of his life gives only an incomplete picture of his astonishing achievements. The Alps at his doorstep formed a convenient practice ground, and what he lacked in technical mountaineering proficiency he made up for in boundless enthusiasm.

He climbed in Norway for six seasons, and in 1913 went to the Caucasus (Kasbek); in 1932, North America; in 1933, Scotland, Wettersteingebirge, Karwendel; in 1934, the Pyrenees and South America (Aconcagua), and, also in 1934, the Himalaya, his first visit there, where, at the age of 51, he did reconnaissance climbs on Sia Kangri and Baltoro Kangri among others, an astonishing year; in 1937, Kilimanjaro; in 1938, South Africa, New Zealand, Australia,

Formosa, Japan, Sumatra; in 1939, South America, again, in Ecuador, Bolivia, Venezuela, Patagonia and Andes del Santiago; in 1940, Albania; and so on.

He was a ski-mountaineering instructor to the Italian Army in the First World War when Italy was our ally; and he did not fight against us in the Second World War. Piero was absolutely non-political and kept going throughout the Fascist period without ever becoming involved. To facilitate his foreign mountaineering expeditions, he became attached to a newspaper and thus was able to get abroad while his compatriots were cooped up in Italy. He was absolutely sincere in his unwavering love of the mountains, restless to a degree, and seldom settled for any length of time at his villa in Courmayeur or his flats in Torino and, later, Milano. When well over 70 he made several first ascents in the Andes and never lost his zest for exploration and even for repetitive climbing. He visited Scotland, the Lake District and Wales, eager to try severe rock climbs, and in the last year of his life took part in an exploring expedition to Greenland.

The present writer will always remember his great kindness to one whom, left on his own, he introduced to the leading Italian climbers of that time—and there were tigers in those days. It is ironical he should be killed, at the age of 77, in a motor car driven by a friend, but it was perhaps a fitting end for such an indomitable man.

G. G. MACPHEE.

JOHN WINGATE RUNDALL

1898–1960

THE late Colonel Rundall was elected to the Alpine Club in December 1928, C. G. Bruce being his proposer and E. L. Strutt his seconder. His qualification was mainly based on excursions in the Himalaya between 1923 and 1926. With H. D. Minchinton (see *A. J.* 39. 303) he had done a good deal of rock scrambling round Dharmsala and he prepared for the Himalayan Club a small guide (not officially published) to the Kangra mountains. In 1928, with Captain Birnie, he spent a month climbing round Arolla.

He was at the time of his election a Captain in the 1st K.G.O. Gurkha Rifles, but was later on attached duty for two years with the 3rd Assam Rifles, at Kohima. It is regrettable that so little is known of his activities and interests.

T. S. BLAKENEY.

JOHN FRANCIS HUNTINGTON

1893-1960

J. F. HUNTINGTON died on October 6, 1960, and was first elected to the A.C. in February 1928, resigning in 1940, but being re-elected in April 1944. His first Alpine season was in 1922; the Valais, and particularly Zermatt, was his favourite area, and among his climbing companions may be mentioned Haskett-Smith, Scott Tucker and C. G. Markbreiter.

He was educated at Marlborough and Exeter College, Oxford. In the First World War he served in France, Salonica and Egypt. In 1919 he joined the Inland Revenue, where he was mainly concerned with Death Duties. A man of wide culture, with a most retentive memory for what he had read, he was a witty conversationalist in a circle of close friends. By nature, however, he was self-effacing, but his influence on his acquaintances has been fully recognised (see, for example, the notices in *The Times* of October 11 and 14, 1960). He made a considerable reputation as the translator of the works of the French political philosopher, Bertrand de Jouvenel, and the latter, in a noteworthy tribute in *The Times Literary Supplement* of October 21, acknowledges his indebtedness to Huntington.

He was a devoted member of the Reform Club, of which he had been Chairman twice; where he lived for the last years of his life; and where he died.

T. S. BLAKENEY.

CARL WILHELM RÜBENSON

1885-1960

WITH C. W. Rübenson a remarkable and most charming personality has passed away, a day short of his 75th year of age.

He seemed in his youth to have been somewhat in doubt about the profession he should choose for his future life. He commenced studying architecture, but being endowed with an exceptionally strong adventurous disposition, and possession of some means, he broke off these studies at an early stage, to satisfy his ambitious desire to scale some lofty Himalayan summit, no matter which, as long as it would be higher than any reached by men before. With this as his aim, he sailed for India with a friend of about the same age, 21 years, in the autumn of 1906, neither of them then with more than quite elementary mountaineering experience behind them.

Arrived at Darjeeling, they decided on Kabru, but finding the season too advanced for an assault on the mountain that year, made a six weeks' reconnaissance of the route through Sikkim leading to the Rathong Glacier, from where they decided to try the ascent earlier in the season the following year. While waiting for this opportunity to come, the two friends did some quite extensive travelling in the Far East.

On September 17, 1907, a fresh start was made from Darjeeling, this time accompanied by an adequate number of coolies and by a Scotchman, familiar with their language, whom they had been lucky enough to engage as an interpreter.

After travelling along the route they had picked out the previous year, they established their base-camp on the shore of a little lake they were surprised to find at the foot of Kabru, at an altitude of about 16,000 ft. Their second camp was at 18,000 ft. and a third one at 19,500 ft. At this latter five nights were spent, while preparing a route up through some treacherous ice-falls on the glacier. This done, they established their next camp after some rather difficult climbing, at 21,000 ft., and remained there for two nights with temperatures down to 20° Centigrade below zero.

Their following camp was established on the snowfield clearly seen from Darjeeling, at the height of 22,000 ft., from where Rübenson and his companion, Monrad Aas, climbed to a point on the ridge between the Dome and the North-east summit of Kabru. After that, they had a small tent brought up and pitched at 22,600 ft., in which the two of them, with two of their most efficient 'boys', spent the night of October 19/20, intent on completing the ascent of the mountain the following day.

The morning of October 20 came with a perfectly clear sky, but with such a strong wind and with such a terrible cold (29° Centigrade below zero), that they decided to postpone their start till well after the sun had reached their tent. It was therefore not till 8.30 a.m. that they were off, accompanied for a short distance by one of their 'boys' who had declared his willingness to come with them, but who returned to the tent almost at once. Rübenson and Monrad Aas found the snow hard and safe, requiring but little step-cutting in spite of the steepness of the slope, so made slow but steady progress, both feeling perfectly fit.

Their original plan had been to climb to the saddle between the two summits and from there make the ascent of the nearest one, but this plan had to be abandoned, for the wind grew fiercer and the cold more intense, the higher they came up, forcing them to try to make a direct ascent of the South-east summit instead, where they would be better protected from the wind. Here, in turn, a series of technical difficulties

had to be overcome, ice on the slabs having to be cleared for hand- and foot-holds, delaying them so much that when they finally reached a point, 23,900 ft. high by their aneroid, the sun was already setting. In these circumstances, and although the actual summit was then only a few feet above them, they reluctantly had to beat a retreat.

The descent to their tent at 22,600 ft. most of which was made by light of the moon only, was quite dramatic, for in a step on a steep ice-slope, Rübenson—who was coming down last—had the misfortune to slip, falling a full length of the rope before he was almost miraculously stopped by Monrad Aas, who had himself been on the move when the accident happened and who therefore was quite unprepared for the jerk he received. They finally reached their tent, however, where it was unfortunately found that Monrad Aas had two of his toes frost-bitten, making the descent to the base-camp a difficult and painful one for him, and from where he had to be carried all the way down to hospital at Darjeeling.

On this expedition, which attracted much attention at the time, particularly for the fact that as much as a fortnight had been spent continuously at altitudes of from 19,500 up to 23,900 ft., Rübenson read a paper to the members of the Alpine Club at a Meeting held on June 2, 1908, being afterwards heartily congratulated by the then President of the Club, Mr. Hermann Woolley, and by Dr. Longstaff, Mr. Mumm, Mr. Slingsby and Dr. Collie.

In the spring of 1910, Rübenson and Ferdinand Schjelderup were in London trying to obtain permission to carry out a mountaineering expedition to Nepal, but this was denied them. Both were, later, Wm. Cecil Slingsby's guests at his home in Yorkshire, where this great friend of all enterprising young mountaineers, gave them such a vivid description of Stedtind in North Norway and of his and Hastings vain assault on that formidable obelisk a year or two earlier, that the two friends decided, with Slingsby's blessing, to make an attempt at it that very summer. Suffice here to say that Rübenson and Schjelderup accompanied by Alf B. Bryn, accomplished the first ascent of this peak on July 30, 1910, with Rübenson as first on the rope, in honour of his 25th birthday that day. The same summer the same party made the first ascents also of Svolveergjeita and of Rørhoptind.

The summer of 1912, Rübenson and Schjelderup were again in the north of Norway, this time accompanied by Slingsby, when a first ascent of Strandatind from the south was made by the two former, and a first ascent of the same mountain from the north, a few days later, with Slingsby.

Rübenson, who had in the meantime got married, was from now engaged in business for a decade or so, first in Calcutta, later in Hamburg and finally in Habana. While in India, he had spent a month's

holiday with his wife in Kashmir, when he managed to include two first ascents, one of Potbury Peak of 16,100 ft. and one of Snowy Peak of 17,890 ft. This holiday excursion resulted in a book published in Oslo a few years later: *With Tent and Houseboat in Kashmir*, a masterpiece of description of scenery and life in that part of the world, which turned out such a literary success that it led to a change of his entire life. He became a highly admired 'freelance' journalist, mainly connected with the leading Norwegian daily *Aftenposten* and with *Farmand*, The Trade Journal of Norway. In addition he wrote a number of small volumes of most charming poetry, privately published, by which he gained a quite unique popularity. Wherever he came, he was a most welcome guest, particularly at the meetings of Norsk Tindeklub, of which he had been one of the founders and of which he had been made an Honorary Member.

During the last few years of his life, his heart gave him trouble, preventing him, much to his regret, from going to London to express personally his appreciation of the honour bestowed on him by having been appointed an Honorary Member of the Alpine Club, an honour of which he was immensely proud.

EILERT SUNDT.

DEAN ABBOTT SMITH

1909-1960

D. A. SMITH was born on December 24, 1909, and died on July 27, 1960, at Guildford, whilst on leave from the Sudan, where he was Dean of the Faculty of Medicine and Professor of Physiology at the University of Khartoum.

He was educated at Uppingham and Sidney Sussex College, Cambridge, where he gained first-class honours in physiology. He continued his medical training at St. Mary's Hospital, London, where he qualified in 1933. He held several resident posts there, including that of resident anaesthetist, but in 1935 he joined the Hong Kong Medical Service, and quickly made his mark, both by his work on anaesthesia and by his studies in malnutrition.

The latter interest was to prove of immense value when he, with his wife and many others, became prisoners of the Japanese after the invasion of Hong Kong in 1941. A Japanese shell severely injured his left elbow and he was left with a permanently damaged arm; he also contracted beriberi. But his interest in malnutrition bore fruit in the internment camps and he played a great rôle as a camp nutrition

officer from 1942 to 1945, his services being recognised by the award of the O.B.E. in 1946.

Dr. Dean Smith left the Colonial Medical Service after the war and worked for a time at the London School of Hygiene on nutritional problems, producing in 1951 for the Medical Research Council a standard work on *Deficiency Diseases in Japanese Prison Camps*. In 1952 he was appointed first Professor of Physiology at Khartoum.

His eight years in the Sudan proved, perhaps, the finest period in his life. Completely unselfish and with a modesty that tended to minimise his scientific achievements, full of vitality and devoted to the students' welfare, he built up a first-rate medical school and his death will be not only a serious loss to the University of Khartoum but a very personal loss to innumerable doctors and students he had helped, in all parts of the Sudan. In vacations, Dean Smith, with his wife and small daughter, would range over large areas of the Sudan in a Land Rover, visiting the remotest of villages, where he was much in demand as a doctor, and studying general problems of health and hygiene on the spot. A competent mechanic, he could deal with any breakdown in his vehicle; a remarkable shot, he could live on the country without difficulty.

As a mountaineer, Dean Smith's record was a brief one. He commenced climbing in 1925 and was out every year thereafter up to 1930. On a qualification which included the principal peaks round Zermatt, Grindelwald and Chamonix, he was elected to the A.C. on May 5, 1931, at an unusually early age. He had little opportunity for climbing after he went to Hong Kong and his war wound prevented him from undertaking serious climbs in later years. He was a keen yachtsman and won many cups for sailing at Hong Kong.

In *The Times* (August 11), the *British Medical Journal* (August 13) and *The Lancet* (August 20) notable tributes are paid to Dean Smith: in the Alpine Club, force of circumstances prevented him from being a familiar figure, but we are glad to join with others in regretting the loss of a man who led a life of dedication and who will be sorely missed. To his wife and daughter we express our sympathy in their bereavement.

T. S. BLAKENEY.

KENNETH CHARLES SMITH

1907-1961

KENNETH SMITH died from a heart attack on the ski slopes at St. Moritz on January 6, 1961, whilst ski-ing with his youngest daughter on her fifteenth birthday.

He was aged 54. From Harrow he went on to Trinity College, Cambridge, where he captained the Cambridge University Ski Team. He was Secretary of the Ski Club of Great Britain from 1939 to 1946, Vice-President from 1951 to 1953 and Honorary Treasurer from 1953 until his death. He was Honorary Secretary of the Alpine Ski Club from 1937 to 1958 and President in 1957-8.

He was elected to the Alpine Club in 1945 on the strength of much good rock climbing in the British Isles and a lot of ski mountaineering, which was his real passion; he was a popular member of the Club, was on the Committee from 1954 to 1957 and did a great deal of most useful work for the A.C. Centenary celebrations.

He organised the first two ski mountaineering parties for the Ski Club of Great Britain at the Berliner Hut before the War and was to have taken a gift from the Ski Club to the guide Franz Steindl to commemorate the twenty-fifth anniversary of the courses.

He joined the R.A.F.(V.R.) early in the War and attained the rank of Wing Commander on Air Staff Intelligence and became joint head of a section dealing with the German Order of Battle.

On demobilisation he joined the printing firm of Truslove & Bray, but resigned from it when it was taken over.

I climbed with him last on Craig-yr-Ysfa in 1940 on a week-end snatched from the War; he was a good and safe rock climber and would have no doubt done a lot more climbing but for the War. He loved mountains and he will be remembered by all those who profited from the ski mountaineering courses which he largely organised and led. He was a charming and congenial companion with a quiet and ready wit, and his almost diffident manner concealed an ability which became more apparent the longer one knew him.

His early death will be a great loss to the mountaineering and ski-ing worlds, where his great capacity for organisation would have been of great service for many years.

He is survived by his wife (Nancye Barry) and three daughters, to whom the Club's sympathy is extended.

IRVINE G. AITCHISON.

SIR JOHN HUNT writes:

It was typical of Ken Smith that the outstanding service he gave to Youth through the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme began with a spontaneous offer to help, which he made to me during lunch at the Ski Club in 1957. For two years, while the Scheme was developing as an entirely new venture in youth work and on meagre funds, Ken was a tower of strength in my London office, taking much of the administration on his shoulders.

Later, he asked to help us in the field and became Honorary Award

Liaison Officer in his own county of Surrey, where he quickly established happy relationships with the education authorities and the voluntary bodies.

I shall treasure the memory of some days spent with Ken in North Wales last summer, when he was supervising a course for leaders studying the Expedition Section of the Scheme at the C.C.P.R. Mountain Centre in North Wales. It was typical of his thoughtfulness that a colour photograph which he took of my daughter and myself during this course, while we were training for an expedition to North-east Greenland, should have reached me after his death.

Ken Smith will be remembered with deep affection, not only by many skiers, but by numerous friends in Youth Service.

EUSTACE THOMAS

1869-1960

EUSTACE THOMAS died on October 11, 1960, in his ninety-second year and many of us have lost a dear friend.

One of a large family, he spent his boyhood in London where his father was a Collector of Taxes. A brother possessed a penny-farthing bicycle which Eustace sometimes borrowed. He was educated at the City of London School and was a contemporary of Owen Glynn Jones at Finsbury Technical College. With his brother Bertram, he walked daily from his home in Battersea to Finsbury and back. After taking his degree, he stayed on as a demonstrator and Lord Kelvin once congratulated him on the way he had conducted his experiments.

He came to Manchester in 1900 to join his brother, Bertram, who had recently started as an electrical engineer and contractor. For twelve years he lived at Trafford Hall, now a vanished part of Manchester. His main relaxation was golf, at which he acquired unusual competence, if one may judge from his collection of trophies. He became interested in road-walking and, after joining the Rucksack Club in 1909, turned to Derbyshire for his training. It was a fellow member, Alderman (now Sir William) Walker, who introduced him to the special qualities of the Pennine moors, a fact often gratefully acknowledged. Thereafter, road-walking was soon forgotten and the mountains claimed him. In the immediate post-war years the Rucksack Club was enjoying one of its heydays and there was a strong walking group in which he became a natural leader in the search for arduous outlets for high spirits and energy. Apart from the exacting Pennine

routes, one may quote as examples of excursions the traverse of the Welsh 3,000-footers; and the Scottish 4,000-footers. For the latter it was then (but is no longer) necessary to use a motor-car to cover the gap between Ben Nevis and the Cairngorms. His greatest feat of this period was his breaking of the Fell Record in the Lake District. This formidable walk starts and ends at Keswick and the object is to include as many peaks as may be possible in the course of twenty-four hours. The existing record was held by Dr. Arthur Wakefield after his round in 1906. Eustace made his first attempt in 1919, failed, and carefully analysed the causes of his failure. He tried again the following year and this time was successful in equalling Wakefield's performance, but feeling that he could do still better, made a further attempt in 1922 and extended the record to sixty-six and a half miles with 25,500 ft. of ascent. After walking for twenty-four hours and so disposing of the record he continued for another four and a half hours and reached a grand total of seventy-nine miles and 30,000 ft. though the record remained at the previously mentioned figure. He was then 53.¹

Though he had spent many holidays in the Alps, his first important season was 1923, the year in which he joined the Club. With Joseph Knubel and Alexander Lager he made an impressive series of expeditions during a strenuous five weeks. Amongst them was a traverse of the Jungfrau and Mönch, with the Eiger almost added, though eventually it had to be abandoned and the Gross Fiescherhorn climbed in its place before the descent to the Concordia in bad weather after a seventeen-hour day. Towards the end of that holiday they traversed the Zinal Rothorn from the Trift Hotel and down to the Mountet Hut, climbed the Dent Blanche by the Viereselsgrat and descended to the Schönbühl, and climbed the Matterhorn by the Zmutt ridge and down by the Hörnli to Zermatt, in three successive days. The pattern was being formed.

The idea of climbing all the peaks of 4,000 m. and over seems first to have arisen from a suggestion made by Joseph Knubel during their 1924 season. Here again was a plan on a grand scale and one very close to Eustace's heart. He adopted a list that had been compiled by Captain Farrar, made a few additions of his own and completed the first list of eighty-three summits in 1928, being the first Englishman to have done so.² He climbed always with Joseph Knubel and with him ascended thirty other peaks in that period. But the four-thousanders were not quite finished; mischievous friends would

¹ References to the Fell Record will be found in Clark and Pyatt's *Mountaineering in Britain*, pp. 216 sqq.

² He described his climbs in a paper to the Alpine Club, March 5, 1929 (*A. J.* 1. 49) and further details are in *A. J.* 40. 387-90. See also the *Rucksack Club Journal* for 1929 and 1933.

keep on finding others that had to be done and in the meantime a new route had been made crossing five points on the ridge leading to Mont Blanc du Tacul and known as the Aiguilles du Diable. They presented serious rock problems at an unusually high altitude, and an attempt on them could not be made till 1932. Knubel was engaged elsewhere, but Alexander Taugwalder was free and joined Thomas for the season, which started with an apparently new route on the Moine. They found the guide Georges Cachat disengaged at the Montenvers, roped him in and set off for the Torino hut, from which they traversed the Aiguilles du Diable and finished at the Requin hut eighteen and a half hours later.

The remainder of that holiday is worth recording. It included ascents of the Aiguilles Ravanel and Mummery, the Mer de Glace face of the Grépon, finishing by the Knubel crack and also by the unusual route of the Dunod chimney. Then a dash to the Dolomites and the climbing of the Rosengartenspitze, the traverse of the three Vajolet Towers, the Fünffingerspitz by the Schmitt Kamin, the South wall of the Marmolata (in two hours fifty minutes), the Third Sella Tower, and finally the North face of the Langkofel by what was evidently an unorthodox route. His experience on British rock had not been wasted.

His interests were not confined to mountaineering. During the 1930's he took up gliding and gained the triple award for height, duration and distance of flight. He bought a small single-seater aeroplane but, finding its range too limited, purchased another, this time a Percival Vega-Gull, seating four, with which he made many excursions. In 1939 he celebrated his seventieth year by taking it with a co-pilot to Egypt and had many difficulties on the return journey owing to the imminence of war. This was his last flight as a pilot, with the exception of a brief interlude eighteen years later when he took over the controls of a chartered aircraft when flying over Sydney harbour. His plane was commandeered by the authorities at the outbreak of war: he responded by buying them a Spitfire.

Eustace was a loved member of the Rucksack Club, of which he became President in 1924. He always responded generously to calls on his skill, time and purse, and the work of the Mountain Rescue Committee would have been much retarded if he had not applied himself so vigorously to providing the stretcher that bears his name. With extending handles and sledge runners it embraced new features that did much to reduce the labour of the rescue teams and the pain and discomfort of the patient. His stretchers were supplied to our rescue posts and adopted by the R.A.F.; the basic design remains unaltered after twenty-five years of exacting service.

He had the great gift of making friends and retaining their affection. He loved to entertain them and there can be few mountaineers who have

visited Manchester and not enjoyed his hospitality. In his outlook on life he was an Elizabethan and never lost his love of adventure. In his later years he spent his holidays in travelling round the world, joining sea and air passages in interesting and unusual ways and in all made four such journeys. His achievements were remarkable and accomplished with such modesty that their significance was not always apparent at the time. His influence on mountaineering was considerable and by his refusal to accept conventional limits and overcoming them by study and discipline he produced important results. Great rewards were to follow the adoption of this method in the renaissance of British mountaineering in the post-war years.

A. S. PIGOTT.