Special attention is directed to the Corno del Nibbio (Kite Horn). This 80m high tower is just 5 minutes from the road. On the E face of it, close together are some very nice classic routes. The most famous is the Comici (ED); on the same face there are a couple of artificial climbs too. The place is usually quite crowded; in fact, the overhanging face is a perfect playground, especially when the weather is bad.

Apart from the Sasso Cavallo ones, the longest routes are at the Corno Medale. This is a 350m wall above Lecco town and few minutes from the road. The rock is usually perfect and most of the routes have running belays in place. Special care has been taken by the local section of the CAI in equipping the abseiling points.

The Grigna is on the way that leads you to the more famous Bernina, Disgrazia and Badile groups. It is particularly convenient therefore for anyone visiting this part of the Alps or who has been driven away from these by bad weather.

Reference

Scalata nelle Grigne C. Cima (Ed. Tamari Bologna 1975).

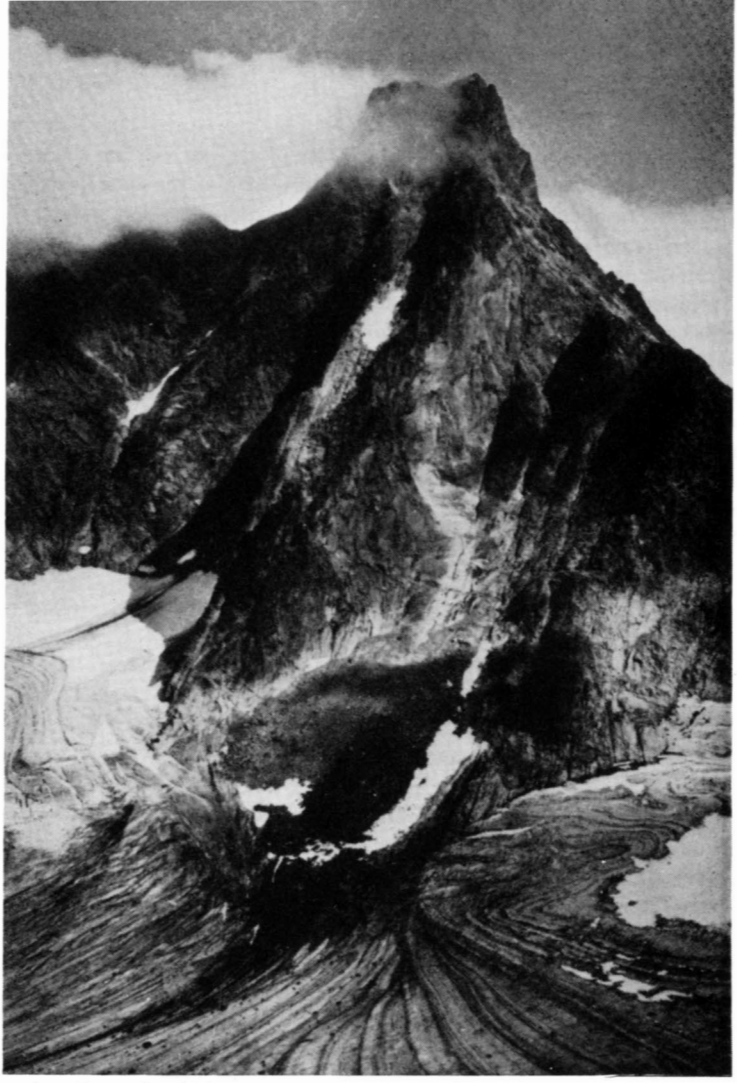
Norwegian centenary

Jocelin and Geoffrey Winthrop Young

On the 21 July 1876 Cecil Slingsby completed the first ascent alone of Store Skagastolstind while Emanuel Mohn and Knut Lykken stood below on Mohn's Skar and cheered him on in their nail-less boots. The centenary celebrations were clearly going to be worthy of the occasion, knowing the Norwegians, so we started preparing in 1956. On the 21 July of that year, the President of the Tindeklub led me up over the Slingsbybrae and the original route. Conditions were superb and the sun shone all day and nearly all night. At Mohn's Skar I unroped and climbed up to the right towards Mesle Skag, as W.C.S. had done and looked back at the tower of Skag to see if I could solve the problem of the rock-fall he said must have taken place since the first ascent (see *Norway* p 207). From here the ridge looks formidably steep and forbidding and the only obvious fault lies away to the left where a chimney is visible. W.C.S. must have been in some haste, as it was after 6 in the evening and they had a long trip back to Vormelid before them. I have no doubt that he saw the chimney and raced back down to the Skar and did not think of trying the ridge itself. This would have made the climb more difficult than it need have been and he would have returned by the same route following his cairns.

On the 20 July 1976 Turtagro was seething with activity as we passed through on our way up to the hut. Here we found the Tindeklub in force and Odell in full form. All the proper formalities were followed and below in Turtagro Slingsby's mountain papers and the summit stone of Skag, on a stately pedestal, waited for presentation to the Tindeklub after the event.

The weather was not promising and the top did not clear and there was evidence of snow squalls far down the rocks of Dyrhaugstind opposite. To carry on the family tradition we decided to have a rope of one grandson and 2 great-grandsons of Slingsby: Philip Gordon was to lead, while my son Geoffrey was to come on the



45 Store Skagastolstind (Photo: Basil Goodfellow—AC Collection)

rope between us, for the first time in his life, at the age of 15. I give his lively account of the occasion:

Diary of Geoffrey Winthrop Young, 21 July, 1976:

At 8 o'clock we set out. At first in single file. My rucksack is light, two sandwiches, snow goggles and a helmet in it. I carry one of Philip's ropes—feel rather bogus. Over boulders and snow, just leg work. The snow is not clean, slightly red. Odell, who is a geologist, is going to investigate this. He is not going up the peak as he is over 80. We get on to the glacier. There is a general silence: talking is strenuous: thinking is not. The glacier has a remarkable surface, it looks like frozen apple charlotte. Skag is hidden in the clouds. The going is not boring but monotonous. This changes; we reach a stretch of smooth ice 30m long. It gets very slippery. I try to see what the others do, but even the Himalayan mountaineers seem not much more sure of themselves than I am. Then we get back on to snow again and cross a

crevasse on a wide bridge of snow. We reach Bandet, where there is a tiny stone hut. Here we greet a great-grandson of Knut Lykken, who was one of the Norwegians on the first ascent. Philip, J and I rest before starting up the W ridge. Here the real climb begins, though we don't rope yet. The going was good with large rock holds but partly covered with ice. There was light mist and occasional spells of snow. The gusts of wind were so strong at times, that I thought I could lean against them. However looking down the sides of the ridge I gave up this idea. So on we went, Philip in front, I following like a good boy, and J a bit behind, understandably enough, after all. Soon we roped up. The climbing was difficult. We worked our way up over two long slabs. Philip goes up fast, I—with the rope round my waist and thinking of the blood of my forefathers running through my veins—wait and follow slowly. Now I am frightened. Later, on far more difficult pitches, that feeling has almost gone. Mountain climbing is a question of habit; falling off is not.

The difficulties increase as Philip has not taken the normal route. We have lost sight of all the others except Jenkins and Sondheimer, who are from the AC. Otherwise only wind and cold as our companions. I have no gloves; during a particularly difficult pitch, my hands almost freeze. I put my helmet on, it is white, maybe I am too. Then we come to the final pyramid, the climb is on very steep rock. This is what I have been afraid of. Philip disappears round a corner. He calls and I follow. I cannot see the route he has taken, carefully I find my own way. Strangely enough I feel no fear. When all your senses are concentrated on one object, there is no room for fear. Philip has waited on a little platform sticking out at right angles to the rock; I sit down and immediately feel scared. I press myself against the rock, not to have to look down. The next pitch is worse. There is a step I just cannot make. Philip is above and I can hear but not see him. Slowly I cling and push myself up. With a deep breath of relief I reach the belay. Comfortably I lean against the wall and rest. Soon J reaches the bad step below me. I hear him say something about the 'bloody rock' and Philip telling him his son had made the same remark. I laugh. Suddenly stones come down. We press ourselves against the rock. But J is still out on the slab with no helmet on, he cannot use his arms to protect himself. I see some shoot past his head. Thank goodness he is not hit.

After this incident we reach Heftyes Rende; the most difficult part of all: a chimney of about 7 to 8m. Philip went up fast. Our guardian angel had provided a fine blue fixed rope. Even then it was not easy, though Philip held me and I went up hand over hand, with a great effort. On the next pitch the President of the Tindeklub held me and, as I came up to him as fast as I could, he presented me with my first mountain compliment: 'He climbs like a monkey'.

About a rope's length after the monkey compliment and after 5 hours on the rope, we reached the top. We leant against the summit rock and ate our sandwiches, some in silence some chatting, while two Norwegians allowed a bottle of cold tea to make the round. I wanted to enjoy the view, but all we could see was grey cloud. The necessary photos were taken.

There is not much to be said about our descent. Below the chimney Philip met some friends coming up and returned to lead them to the summit. J and I waited for him in a real blizzard. For the rest of the way down we followed the normal route; this was easier than the ascent. My legs were hurting quite a bit. Half an hour short of the hut I had to rest. Since I was very hungry indeed, I finished the food, crumbs, cheese and all. After that I felt very fit again and ran most of the way down from the hut to Turtagro.