his metaphysical development had passed from rebellion into a period of spiritual confusion until finally he was able to celebrate an awareness and acceptance of all things. It was left to the rest of us to accept his passing.

Going back to 18 January, after a month's contemplation I now know why it was so important that he at least crossed my path, and why I was so sad at the news of his passing. How sad that it should be now, just as I was beginning to penetrate his shell and discover a wealth of human subtleties behind. How much easier it was with Dougal to step out into the frontier regions of the mountain world and play the 'winning game'.

The mountains remain the same. Nuptse, North Side remains the same cold, snowed-up face; K2 and all the others are still there. But now I shall not find them the medium they might have been, the means to explore me and him. That is what they surely are—a medium—for as Dougal wrote, they are also a place to find the limits of your own mental and physical endurance. But for him they were so much more. It was so obvious that he never really had to make the point that he simply enjoyed being amongst the wild places of the earth—walking, ski-ing, crag-climbing—mountaineering at any level just to be there. That, after all, is mainly why he chose to live amongst them.

Who will now remind me, in distant times, of Everest's snowy summit ridge that perfect autumn night, or of McKinley's icy wind-swept face? What have I left except coloured slides concentrating my thoughts into a stereotype, as my fickle memory fails and flashes of the past become less and less? But forever, I know, I'll always recall his happy smiling face lit up in the setting sun on the top of Everest.

And others too will have their own memories—people in Scotland and the rest of Britain, in Switzerland and North America. Dougal was a good and loyal friend, and they gave him the same loyalty in exchange. He remains a good memory in many heads.

Climbers' playgrounds – Europe

25 Climbing in the Franconian Jura in South Germany

Rudolf Buchner
(Translation: E. N. Bowman)

The Franconian Jura, with more than 3000 routes on approximately 700 rock faces, is one of the most fascinating climbing regions in the West German central mountain system. It forms a continuation of the Schwäbische Alb and extends N from the Nördlinger Ries and the Bavarian Danube Valley as far as the Staffelberg in the Main Valley.

It comprises 6 climbing centres which are as follows: the Weismainalb between Bamberg and Kulmbach; the Wiesentalb between Forchheim and Bayreuth; the Trubachalb near Gräfenberg; the Pegnitzalb between Hersbruch and Pegnitz; the Laaberalb between Neumarkt/Oberpfalz and Regensburg and the Altmühlalb between Eichstätt and Kelheim.

The rocks are composed of compact limestone and dolomite (White Jura) and attain a height of approximately 20 to 40m, but at the same time heights of from 40

to 60m are not uncommon. Faces of up to 70–80m occur in several areas, such as the Matterhornwand in the Wiesent Valley, the Prunner Schlossfels, the Kastlwand, the Schellneckwand and the Bischoffsbucht faces in the Altmühl Valley and also at the break-through point of the Danube. In this area is situated the Römerwand, 100m high, which is the highest cliff in the Franconian Jura.

There are relatively few climbs of II, III and IV grades and the majority of the climbs in the Franconian Jura are of V and VI grades. The rock formation is such that quite apart from pitches of free climbing, there are a number of passages requiring the use of pitons.

The first climbs were probably achieved in the Bronze Age for purely ceremonial reasons. During the Middle Ages and at the time of the Thirty Years' War, ascents were made for strategic purposes. The first purely sporting climb took place in 1798. The first comprehensive exploration of the region was carried out in about 1890 and until about 1914 consisted almost exclusively of the ascent of detached rocks with the attaining of the summit as the object of the exercise. With the advent of piton techniques between 1920 and 1940, came the sporting or athletic period where the objective was the climb itself rather than reaching the summit. Most of the modern classic ascents of the faces in this region were made at this time.

A further extensive exploration between 1950 and 1970 produced a large crop of new climbs including many bold and technically difficult *direttissima*. With the advent of the absolutely safe cemented-in pitons as more or less obligatory, free climbing has once more come into its own and approximately 15 of the latest climbs surpass grade VI+ of the UIAA scale. The direct consequence of this led to the introduction of grades VII and VIII in the Franconian Jura in 1977!

In the neighbouring mountain ranges of Steinwald and the Fichtelgebirge there are about 300 climbs to be made on granite pillars of up to 40m in height.

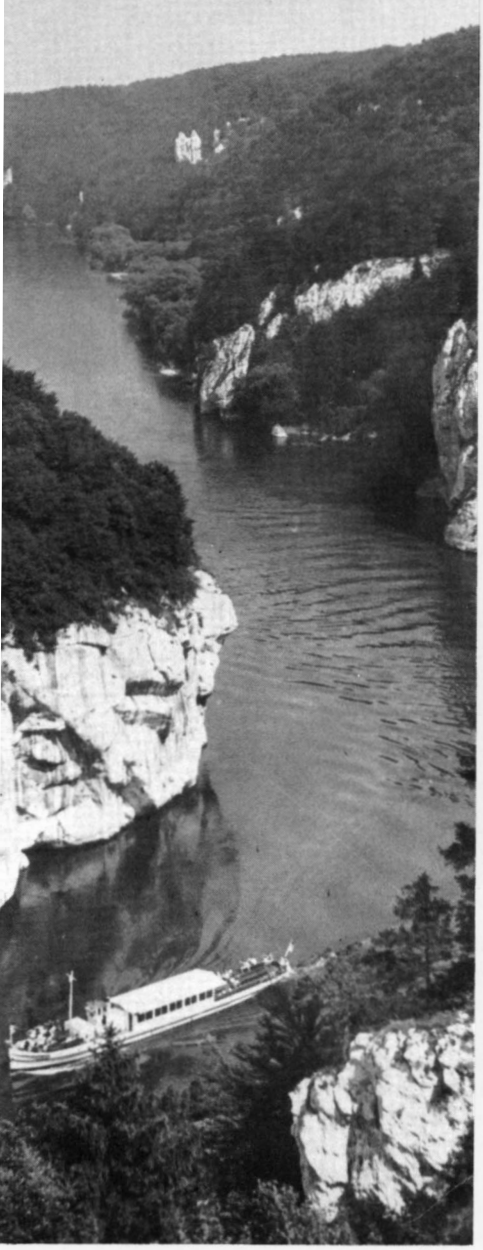
It can be seen from these notes that the Franconian Jura and adjoining areas not only provide much enjoyable climbing but present an outstanding practice ground for future ascents in the European Alps.

Climbing guides appeared in 1931, 1949, 1952, 1964 and 1973, entitled: *Kletterführer für den Frankenjura mit Fichtelgebirge und Steinwald* by Oskar Bühler, 49 Peter Henlein Strasse, 85 Nuremberg, West Germany.

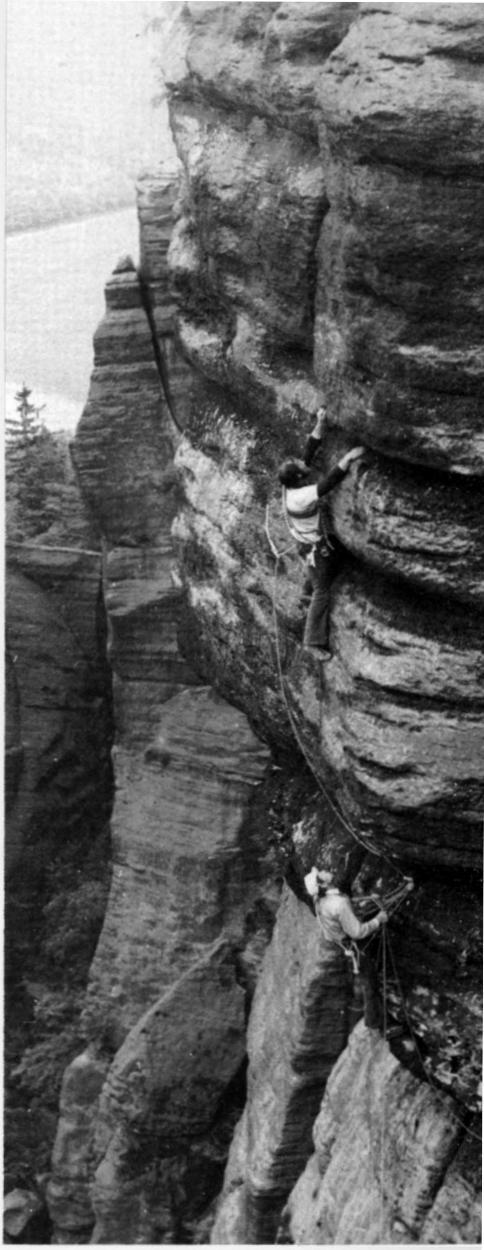
26 Climbing in the Elbsandsteingebirge (East Germany) (Saxon or Saxon–Bohemian Switzerland)

Dietrich Hasse
(Translation: E. N. Bowman)

This area lies just to the S of Dresden, in the frontier zone of Germany and Bohemia (Czechoslovakia), and is the home of 'Saxon Mountaineering'. Its extent is about 40km from N to S and 25km from E to W, and its predominant solid rock formation emanates from the deposits of sand in a sea of the Cretaceous period (Mesozoic). The relatively primitive landscape is typified by rugged rock formations, extensive forests and low density areas of population. There are about 1000 individual crags of upwards of 100m in height, comprising several thousand routes with grades of difficulty ranging from Ia to VIIe (I to VI, then VIIa to VIIe, making 11 grades in all).

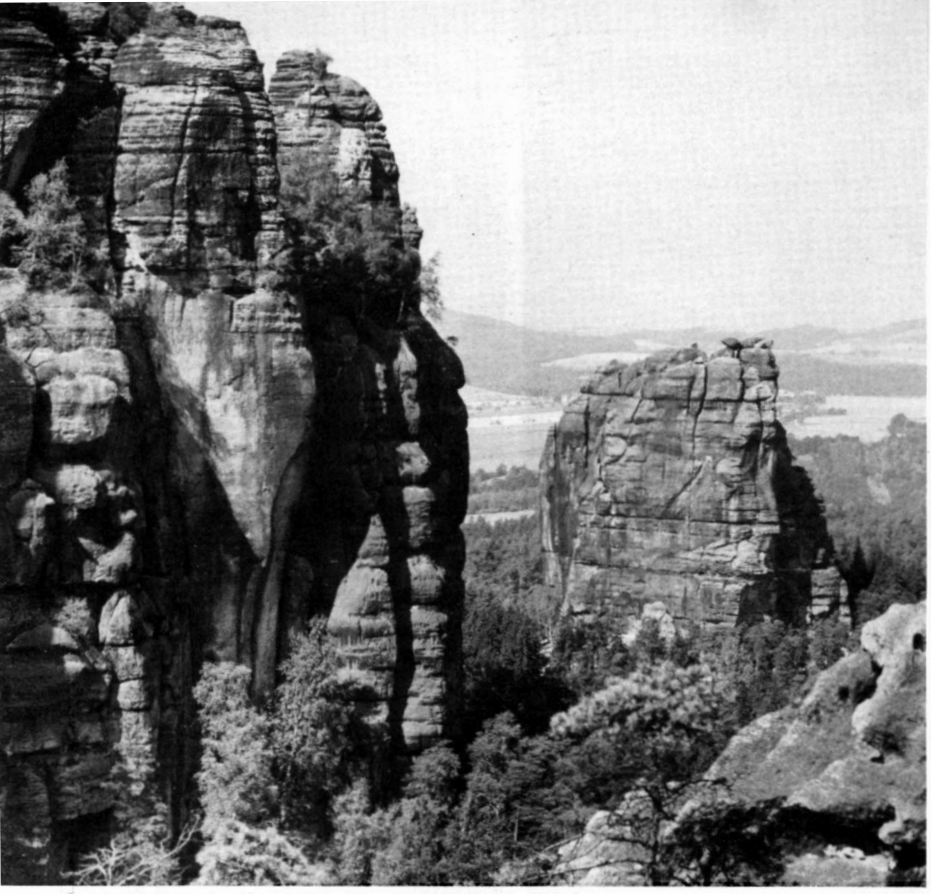


53 Franconian Jura—the Danube Gorge (Photo: R. Buchner)



54 Elbsandsteingebirge—Glatter Turm (This and next photo: R. Seifert)

Saxon mountaineering means climbing without the use of any form of artificial aids such as cutting steps or notches, use of pitons, slings, pulling on the doubled rope (Seilzug) and roped traverses etc. Only naturally weathered rocks are employed as hand and footholds and the summit is reached exclusively by technical skill and strength including the use of a human pyramid where the supported climber had to cling to the rock with all his strength. The sole belays considered



55 *Elbsandsteingebirge—Hoher Torstein (L) and Falkenstein (R)*

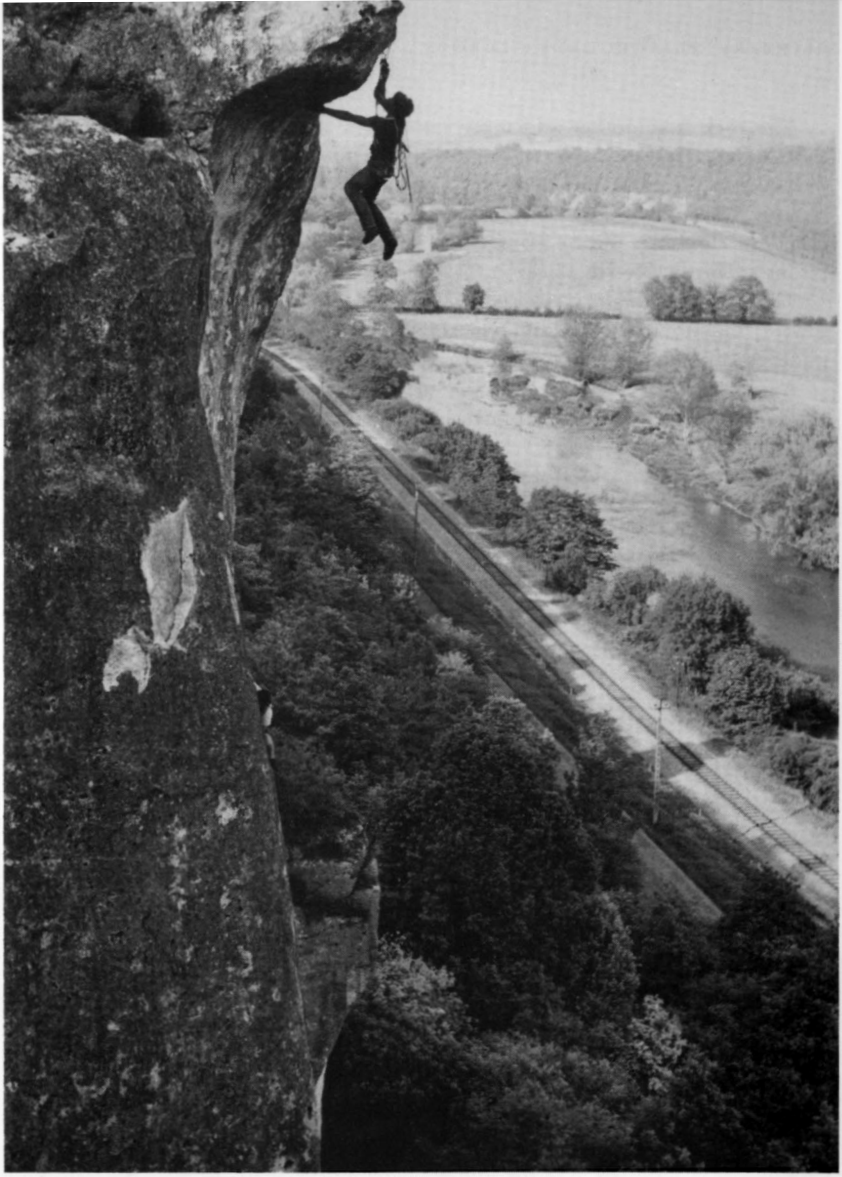
suitable are a minimum number of ring pitons which have been cemented into the rock on the first ascents. The safety sling is a Saxon invention.

Sandstone climbing involves intricate crack climbing of a width varying from a finger's breadth to that of a piece of cord, friction climbing on smooth holdless slabs and of course every type of face climbing including the occasional daring leap.

The first recorded ascent of a summit in the Elbe Sandstone region is reckoned to be that of the Falkenstein in 1864 and the ascent of the Mönchstein by E. Ufer and H. Frick in 1874, harbingers of Saxon mountaineering instituted by Rudolf Fehrmann before the First World War. Climbers like Oscar Schuster, Rudolf Fehrmann, Fritz Wiessner, Peter Diener, Lothar Brandler and others, all started in the Elbe Sandstone region. According to knowledgeable European and American climbing experts, the present-day performances of Saxon mountaineers have evolved the most difficult routes in existence. The climbing techniques of a Herbert Richter and a Bernd Arnold are regarded as unsurpassed.

Guide-books: *Kletterführer Elbesandsteingebirge* (two volumes edited by Kietmar Heinicke, Sportverlag, East Berlin, 1965). There are several topographical maps of the area, with scales ranging from 1:10,000 to 1:30,000.

Anyone from Great Britain wishing to travel to the Elbe Sandstone Mountains in East Germany would be well advised to plan a long time ahead and get in touch with a reliable travel agent. It would pay to get into communication with a climber residing in the area or with a local mountaineering club.



56 Surgy—Le Bec du Cane (This and next photo: Maurice Millet)

27 The rocks at Surgy (Nièvre, France)

Guy Richard

(Translation: Edward Pyatt)

Situated in the valley of the Yonne, very close to Clamecy, 18km upstream from the celebrated practice rocks of Saussois, the rocks at Surgy have only lately become popular. In fact their setting amidst greenery (the cliff is surrounded by big trees), their east-facing aspect (which means shade on warm summer days) and the particular nature of the limestone rock make this a practice ground remarkably complementary to that at Saussois.

The rock is smoother and more monolithic than at Saussois, but the holds, though less frequent, are more definite. The climbing of very airy slabs is particularly pleasant. But there are also many chimneys and clefts, such as the famous 'Fissure de Surgy', a local speciality which has defeated some of the great names of climbing. But be assured—at Surgy the belaying is excellent and all the pitons are firmly fixed in place.

The cliff, 35m high, is divided up in places by ravines into promontories and towers; thus the deeds of different roped parties lend themselves to spectacular photography from a wide variety of viewpoints.

Away from the big routes, some small towers and a small crag have been equipped for the instruction of novices. They provide a wide range of climbs from 10 to 25m.

Details of the 80 routes of this cliff are given in the guidebook *Escalades à Surgy* by Gilbert Pellé and Guy Richard (CAF Sections Orléanais and Nivernais).

The climbing scene abroad. 1

Free climbing – some ideas for a more rigorous conception[1]

Jean-Claude Droyer
(Translation: H. Pursey)

I A question of definition

It is common to see climbers on our rock faces using a rope anchored to a piton and karabiner for resting or for reaching a foothold on routes which are regarded, and so listed in the guidebook, as for 'free climbing'. For some this has become habitual, no longer even questioned, and their progress on these 'free' routes is a series of more or less rapid movements, interrupted by periods anchored to a piton, which has thus become a kind of lifebuoy.

Now, one should understand that this cannot really be considered as 'free climbing', as examination of the following definition clearly shows: 'the free climb is that in which the climber uses for his progress only the natural roughness of the rock'. It follows that artificial aids such as pitons, wedges, rope slings and the like must be used only as safety precautions.

The 'point of aid' It is therefore necessary to introduce a concept, the importance of which has not yet been fully grasped by Continental climbers—that of the 'point of aid'; this is any element (essentially artificial) connected to the rock and used for progress or resting. Examples: a karabiner as a hold, a finger (or foot) on a piton, the tension of the rope on a traverse are 'points of aid'. A climb where such artifices

[1] The original text appeared in *Paris-Chamonix 'La Montagne'*, May 1977. It deals with the ethics of the provision of permanent points of aid on routes on the major French outcrops.