

CENTRAL ALPS WEST



The
Rough-Stuff
Fellowship

ABOUT THESE GUIDES

For these guides the Alps have been divided into six regions:-

Western (South)	From the Mediterranean to the Grenoble-Briançon-Susa road.
Western (North)	From the Grenoble-Briançon-Susa road to (excluding) the Franco-Swiss frontier and the Aosta valley.
Central (West)	From (including) the Franco-Swiss frontier and the Aosta valley to the Lucerne-Gothard-Lugano road.
Central (East)	From the Lucerne-Gothard-Lugano road to (including) the Austro-Swiss frontier and the Adige valley.
Eastern (North)	Austria including the Italian frontier.
Eastern (South)	Dolomites.

Road passes have been given a number identical to that in (or about to be added to) the road pass guides of the O.C.D., marked on the key maps, and listed without description.

Roughstuff routes are abbreviated to one, two or three letters on the key maps; the abbreviations are unique throughout the Alps. These routes are also listed, but in addition are described in more or less detail. Section A contains well documented routes; Section B contains those less well documented, or those where a few words are sufficient for an easy crossing, together with a few obvious links about which nothing is known apart from their appearance on the large-scale maps (1:50,000 or 1:100,000).

The roughstuff routes are also given the following two ratings:

(1) VAD = very approximate difficulty -

- E Easy, anything from a short rideable rough section between metallised roads to fairly long paths needing a certain amount of wheeling.
- M Moderate, sometimes hard work, possibly occasional lifting.
- D Difficult, often hard work, sometimes involving short carries.
- S Severe, much carrying, sometimes double carrying (bike then luggage).
- VS Very severe, like severe but more so; scrambling may be involved as well.

(11) Stars - these give a rather subjective idea of how rewarding a pass is, depending mainly on scenery (as seen in fine weather), but also on its advantages as a link between valleys, and on value for effort.

Times given in these guides do not allow for stops. They are often based on few experiences and the editor would like to hear of other times taken.

JANUARY 1989

ALPS C. ROUGHSTUFF GUIDES INTRO

'Rideable' - please bear in mind that no two people will always agree on the dividing line with 'unrideable' - particularly with the advent of mountain bikes

Abbreviations etc. For points of the compass, initial letters are used, e.g. SW, N.

An asterisk before a route in Section B means that no report has been received on that route.

E, M, D, S, VS Grades of difficulty as above.

m metres

M216 (etc.) Michelin map no.216 in 1:200,000 series.

r/s roughstuff.

ROUGHSTUFF IN THE ALPS - SOME TIPS

GENERAL. The average high route in the Alps is much shorter and much steeper, and often of better surface, than the longer Scottish routes; compare Lairig Ghru 13 miles r/s with the mileages quoted in these guides. (These mileages do not include rough but rideable approach tracks.)

FEASIBILITY OF ROUTES. Snow can be a problem on many Alpine routes. As a very rough guide, routes up to 2000m should be possible in fine weather by early June, those up to 2400m by early July and those over 2700m by August. This applies to average summers. North- and east-facing slopes hold snow much later than those exposed to the sun. Choose a fine day if possible, and do not attempt any of the higher routes soon after a fresh snowfall. Beware of rivers rising after heavy rain. Any route over about 2000m may prove dangerous if attempted in bad weather. Beginners are advised to start with one or two easy or moderate routes.

EQUIPMENT. A small rucksack, which can take heavy items on one's back, when wheeling or carrying, is a great help. This can be slung over the saddle-bag when riding; or you can buy a rucksack which rolls up small enough to be carried in a pocket. Footwear - strong well-soled shoes or light boots are recommended. Training shoes have also been found adequate on many routes; you may get your feet wet, but they soon dry out. Instep crampons have recently been reported to be useful for crossing snow with a bike. These are 2 in. long, weigh little, cost about £5 and can be worn with training shoes or light boots. For extensive snow on a bright day, goggles may be found useful. For whistles etc., see below.

INTERNATIONAL ALPINE DISTRESS SIGNAL. Use a whistle, torch or flashes of sun on a mirror. Alternatively, shout or wave bright clothing; six regular flashes/notes in a minute, repeated at intervals of one minute. The reply is three signals per minute. To attract a helicopter, stand still, both arms raised above your head; to show you do not need help, stand with one arm up and one down, both at 45 degrees to the horizontal.

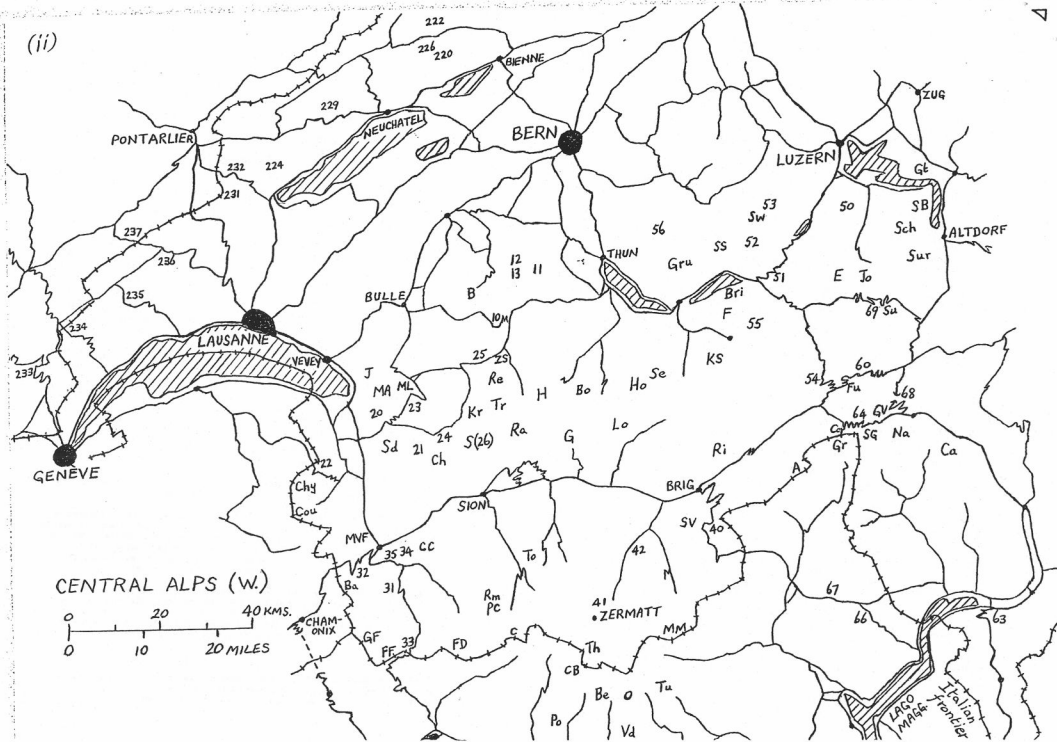
OTHER INFORMATION. Local weather forecasts can often be obtained at tourist information offices; in Switzerland you can also dial 162 on a telephone. If you wish to cover high routes not covered by this guide, you may find useful information in the Alpine Club guides edited by R.G. Collob and published by West Col Publications; try your local library.

UPDATING OF THIS ROUGHSTUFF GUIDE Comments, amendments etc. (if possible with exact dates), will be welcomed by the editor:

E.D.Clements, 79 Pewley Way, Guildford, Surrey, GU1 3QB.

JANUARY 1989

(ii)



CENTRAL ALPS (WEST)

LIST OF PASSES

This guide covers the area from (including) the SW Swiss frontier and the Aosta valley to the Lusern - Gotthard - Lugano road, N2 or E9. The columns headed * show the number of stars.

ROAD PASSES

10 Jaun	25 Saanenmüser	41 Zermatt	56 Schallenberg
11 Selibühl	26 or S Sanetsch	42 Grächen	60 Furka
12 Schwarzenbühl	31 Champey	50 Acherli	63 Monte Ceneri
13 Ottenleubad	32 La Porclaz	51 Brünig	64 Nufenen
20 Les Agites	33 Gd St Bernard	52 Gloubenberg	66 Piano di Sale
21 La Croix	34 Pas du Lin	53 Gloubenberg	67 S. Maria Maggiore
22 Pas de Morgins	35 Les Planches	54 Grimsel	68 Gotthard
23 Les Mosses	40 Sionplan	55 Grosse Scheidegg	69 Susten
24 Le Pillon			

SECTION A

N OF RHONE VALLEY

	VAD * Page
B Ballisaz	E 1 1
J Jaman	E 1 1
Ch Pas de Cheville	D 2 2
S Sanetsch	M 3 2
Ra Rawil	D 4 3
G Genni	M 4 3
F Faulhorn traverse	D 5 4
Jo Joch	S 2 5

S OF RHONE VALLEY

	VAD * Page
GF Gd Col Ferret	M 4 5
FF Penêtre de Ferret	M 3 6
FD Penêtre de Durand	S 4 6
Th Theodul	S 5 7
CB Cise Bianche	S 4 7
Be Bettaforca	M 3 8
O Olen	D 4 8
Tu Turlo	S 3 9
MM Monte Moro	S 4 9
To Torent	H 3 10
Na Naret	M 3 10
Cor Corno	E 2 11
SG San Giacomo	D 3 11

SECTION B

N OF RHONE VALLEY

	VAD * Page
Sd Soud	E 1 12
MA (20) Montbovon-Aigle	E 7 1 12/1 map
ML Les Moulins - La Léchette	E 1 12/1 map
ZS Zweismen - Saanenmüser	E 1 12
Kr Krinnen	M 1 12
Tr Trütsberg	D 2 12
Re Reulisen	M 1 12
H Hahnenmoos	E 1 12
Bo Boderchrinde	VS 2 12
Ho Hochtli	VS 2 12
Sf Seftinenfurke	S 3 12
Lo Lötchen	S 3 12
Ri Riederalp area	E 3 12

	VAD * Page
MVF Martigny/Vernayaz-Pinhaut	E 1 15
Ba Balme	M 3 15
CC Croix de Coeur	E 2 15
C Collon	VS 5 15
PC Pas de Chèvres	S 3 15
Rm Riedmatten	S 3 15
Po Portola	D 1 16
Vd Valdobbia	D 2 16
SV Sionplan Pass - Visperterminen	M 2 16
A Albrun	S 2 17
Gr Gries	M 3 17
GV St Gotthard Pass - Villa	M 1 17
Ca Campolungo	S 2 17

CENTRAL ALPS (WEST)

(iii)

LIST OF PASSES (CONT.)

SECTION B (CONT.)

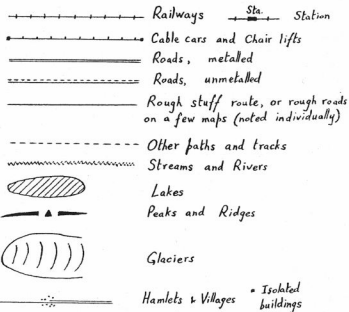
N OF RHONE VALLEY

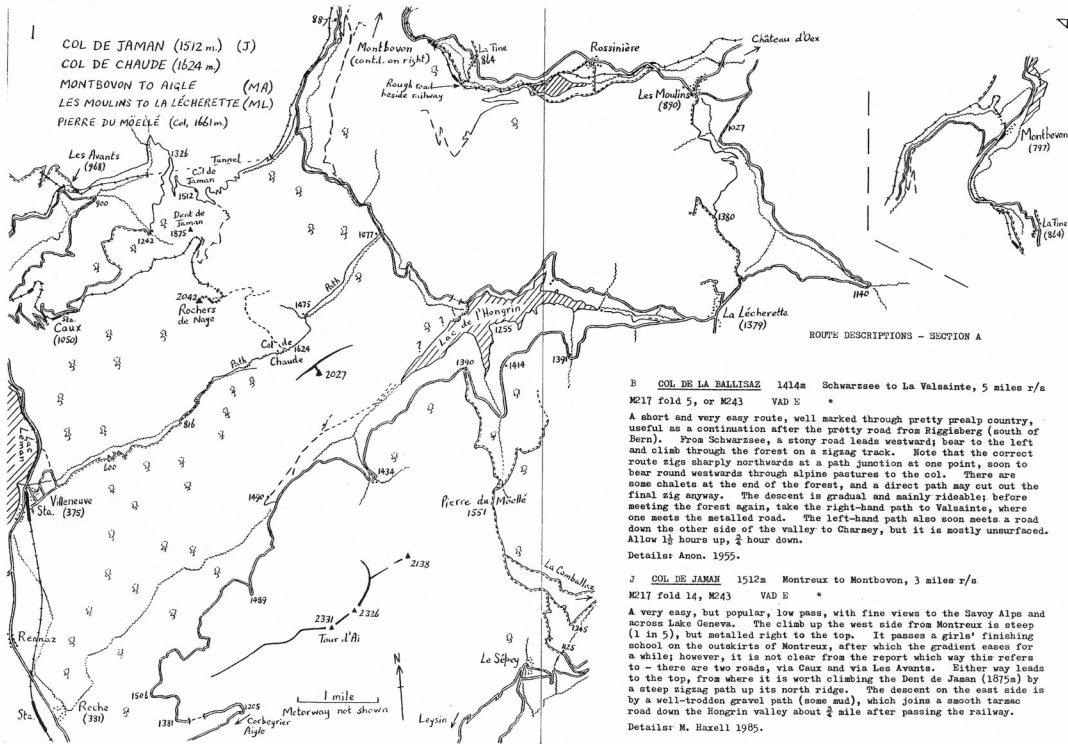
	VAD * Page
KS Kleine Scheidegg	E 3 13
Eri Briensersee	E 1 13
Oru Grünenberg	E 2 13
SS Sörenberg-Schngnau	E 1 13
Swg Seewenegg	E 1 13
Fu Furka old road	M 2 14
Du Susten old road	E 2 13
E Engstlenlager	E 2 14
Sar Surenen	S 1 14
Sch Schöneegg	S 1 14
SB Seelisberg - Bauen	E 1 14
Gt Gütterli	E 2 14

KEY TO SKETCH MAPS.

Cardinal points of the compass are always parallel to sides of sketch with North uppermost unless a North point is included (eg. Theodule Pass).

Heights of peaks and points on the rough stuff routes are given in metres.





ROUTE DESCRIPTIONS - SECTION A

B COL DE LA BALLISAZ 1414m Schwarzsee to La Valsainte, 5 miles r/s
M217 fold 5, or M243 VAD E *

A short and very easy route, well marked through pretty prealp country, useful as a continuation after the pretty road from Riggsberg (south of Bern). From Schwarzsee, a stony road leads westward; bear to the left and climb through the forest on a zigzag track. Note that the correct route zigzags sharply northwards at a path junction at one point, soon to bear round westwards through alpine pastures to the col. There are some chalets at the end of the forest, and a direct path may cut out the final zig anyway. The descent is gradual and mainly rideable; before meeting the forest again, take the right-hand path to Valsainte, where one meets the metalled road. The left-hand path also soon meets a road down the other side of the valley to Charmey, but it is mostly unsurfaced. Allow $1\frac{1}{2}$ hours up, $\frac{1}{2}$ hour down.

Detailer: Anon. 1955.

J COL DE JAMAN 1512m Montreux to Montbovon, 3 miles r/s
M217 fold 14, M243 VAD E *

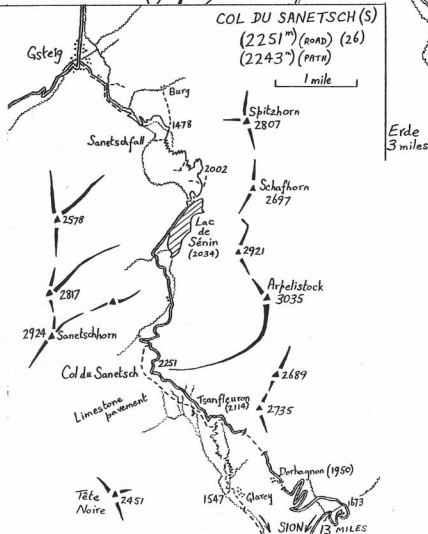
A very easy, but popular, low pass, with fine views to the Savoy Alps and across Lake Geneva. The climb up the west side from Montreux is steep (1 in 5), but metalled right to the top. It passes a girls' finishing school on the outskirts of Montreux, after which the gradient eases for a while; however, it is not clear from the report which way this refers to - there are two roads, via Caux and via Les Avantès. Either way leads to the top, from where it is worth climbing the Dent de Jaman (1875m) by a steep zigzag path up its north ridge. The descent on the east side is by a well-trodden gravel path (some mud), which joins a smooth tarmac road down the Hongrin valley about $\frac{1}{2}$ mile after passing the railway.

Detailer: M. Hazell 1985.

CHEVILLE (2038 m)



COL DU SANETSCH (S) (2251^m) (ROAD) (26) (2243^m) (PATH)



Ch PAS DE CHEVILLE 2038m Erde to Gryon and Bex, 6 miles r/s
M217 fold 15 or M243, SE corner VAD D **

A fine, varied pass, hard going on the east side, very easy on the west. There is a marvellous cliff-hanger of a road from Erde to Derborence, with a couple of tunnels. At Godey, 1½ miles before Derborence, there is a small shop; also a restaurant by the lake at Derborence, a lake created by a huge rock avalanche from Les Diablerets. Right by the restaurant, a sign points up a steep narrow path towards farm buildings. This is quite a struggle, as is also the next stretch through the woods to Les Penes. There follows half a mile of much easier going along the south bank of a stream to some shepherds' huts at the foot of a cirque of steep slopes.

The way here is north across the stream and up a steep grassy slope, indicated by a large arrow (in 1957), not westwards up the obvious path in front. This tough slope leads to a cleft in the cliff which is a bit tricky, and a few short carries are needed; maybe it is easier in descent. Try to cross in dry weather, and avoid if there is snow about. Above the cleft, the going becomes easier as one approaches the col, which is right underneath the huge southern cliffs of Les Diablerets.

The descent of the west side is extremely easy. A gravel track descends gradually to Anzeindaz (restaurant). From there to Solalex (restaurant) is by a steep and loose jeep road, used by a six-wheel-drive taxi; thence to Barboleusaz is by gravel road. At Barboleusaz one joins the metalled road down to Gryon and Bex.

Allow at least 3 hours from Derborence to the col; 2 hours down to Gryon; in reverse 3 hours up from Gryon, 2 down to Derborence.

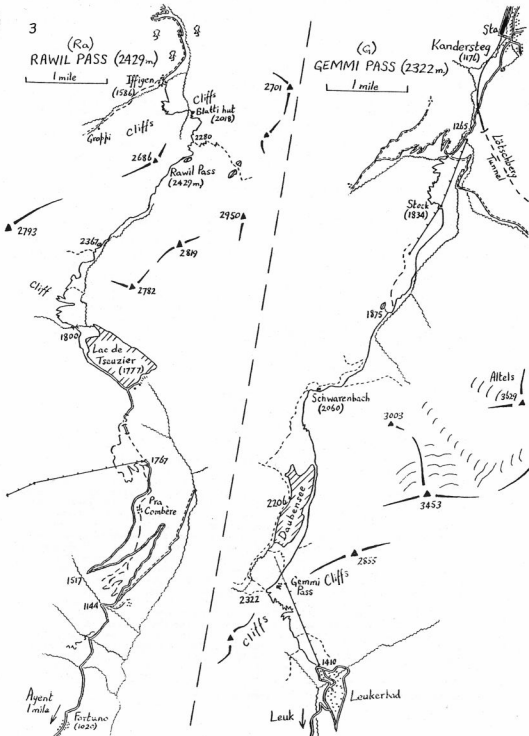
Details: M. Haxell 1985, G. Newey 1982, E. D. Clements 1957.

S COL DU SANETSCH 2243m Gsteig to Sion or Conthey
M217 fold 15; M243 SE corner VAD M ***

This is a very fine route, best taken from N to S. From the centre of Gsteig, a narrow metalled road leaves the main road at a signpost, and goes SE for a mile, to become a jeepable track up through the woods. An hour's climb brings one to a sign 'Sanetschstrasse 1½ hrs, Sanetschpass 3 hrs'. Nearby, a short path leads west to the Sanetschfall, worth the short diversion. The main path crosses the stream a second time, and the surface deteriorates a lot, with many loose stones; higher up one appears to be climbing into a ring of cliffs, from which there is no exit. Follow the yellow paint marks, though the track is unmistakable anyway. A stream comes down the cliffs at one point, necessitating a short carry where it crosses the path. Soon after this one meets an unmetalled road, which leads in a few hundred yards to the dam, at 2034m. (No difficulty at the ring of cliffs; the path is always wide.)

From the other end of the dam a good tarmac road leads to the top of the pass, and a magnificent panorama of the peaks of the Valais on a fine day. All the highest peaks of Switzerland, except those of the Oberland, are visible. A little way down the south side is an extensive limestone pavement, a must for botanists, etc. If one follows the road down, there is a very dark tunnel at one point on the south side, followed by another shorter one. According to the Michelin map these can be by-passed by taking the original path past Tsanfleuron and Glarey. This was in good condition in 1963, before the construction of the road, but may now have fallen into disrepair (?), as it is very steep. If making for the Pas de Cheville, Erde, etc. without descending to the Pont du Diable and the Rhone valley. This would save a 1,000 ft climb.

Details: F. Wright 23.8.85, E. D. Clements 1957 & 1963.



Ra RAWIL PASS 2429m Iffigen to Ayent, 8 miles r/s
 M217 fold 16, M243 SE edge VAD D ****

There is a narrow road up from Lenk to Iffigen, partly metalled. At Iffigen (hotel), a signpost points the way, not up the main valley, but due south up a fairly wide boulder-strewn path through the pines. The general angle of the hillside is hardly less steep than that of the S side of the Gemmi, but there is less bare rock, and more trees and grass, than on the Gemmi.

The cliff section is about 800 ft high, but the path is narrower and rougher than that on the Gemmi cliff. At one point one passes close to a waterfall, then under dripping rocks; the temptation to run should be resisted. At the top of the cliff stands the Blatti hut (2018m), after which the gradient eases slightly, but the climb to the Rawilsee (2349m) is still rough and very steep for a considerable distance. Soon after passing the lake, the top is reached. Views are disappointing, as a nearby ridge cuts off any distant views of the Valais peaks.

For about two miles the path descends very gradually, but the surface is boulder-strewn, a succession of dried-up river beds. Then quite suddenly the path begins to descend in earnest, and after about $\frac{1}{2}$ mile passes through a small steep tunnel (note, when ascending, to turn left on emerging, as the right-hand fork leads only to a farm). The descent continues down a sort of cliff, a very steep but quite good zigzag track, with a surface of loose stones; by now one gets the fine views of the Valais peaks across the Rhone valley. There is another farm at the bottom, where a reservoir has been built. A good track along the west side takes one to the Tseuzier dam, from which a metalled road with three tunnels descends to Ayent and eventually the Rhone valley.

Avoid the route if there is any likelihood of snow about. Allow 6 or 7 hours either way between Iffigen and the Tseuzier dam.

Details: F. Wright 29.7.86, Stephens 1972.

G GEMMI PASS 2316m Leukerbad to Kandersteg, 5 miles r/s
 M217 folds 16, 17 VAD M ****

The Gemmi is probably the most spectacular of all Swiss passes, justly popular. At Leukerbad the road ends, and a good path heads straight for an almost vertical cliff, 2000 ft high. The path ascends this cliff, and is a remarkable piece of mile-track engineering. There are numerous zigzags, and often the path is cut out of the cliff itself. It is rather like a spiral staircase; sometimes one bit of path almost overhangs the path below. Wheeling is possible throughout, but obviously one needs a good head for heights! More recently some parts, especially higher up, have been concreted. The gradient is mostly 1 in 3 or 1 in 4. The path is reasonably safe, and there are occasional bits of wooden handrail in the more dangerous spots, useless however for preventing a slip. For this reason do not attempt the pass if there is any likelihood of snow about, and preferably not even when the path is likely to be wet. During the climb, the marvellous panorama of the Valais peaks steadily widens. There is a large hotel at the top, and usually many tourists, as a cable car also ascends the cliff from Leukerbad.

A good wide path, nearly always rideable, and of easy gradients, leads from the top, past the shallow Daubensee, for about 6 miles, till a fantastic view opens up to the east. 1500 ft below is the Osterental, with a grand array of peaks at its head. Here also is the top of a cable car coming up from Eggen, above Kandersteg. Here the path immediately begins a headlong 2000 ft descent with many zigzags. The surface is very good, so some of this descent can be ridden, with extreme caution! It is mostly 1 in 4. Allow 5-6 hours for the route, either way.

Details: E. D. Clements 1958, G. Newey 1966 & 1980, etc.

M217 fold 8 VAD D *****

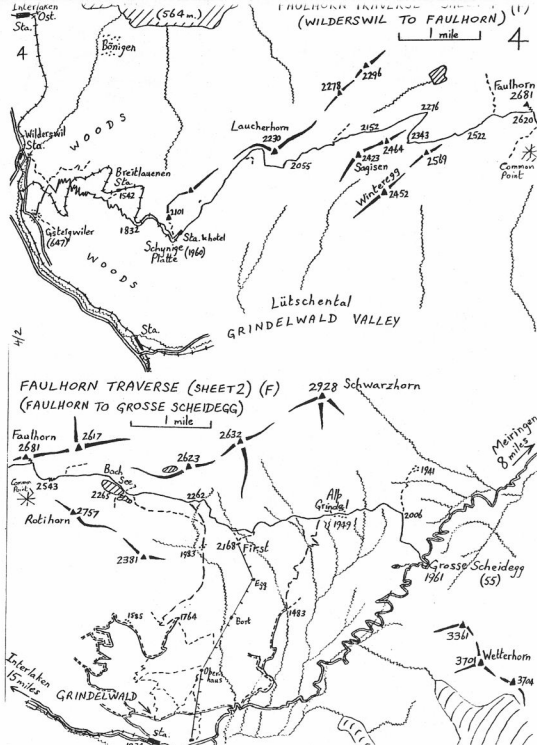
From the hotel, ride down to the station and take the path straight ahead; fairly soon it becomes very boulder-strewn for a long mile (in 1957), but the marvellous view is always there. Contouring the Lauchhorn, the path improves, and climbs again to a slight col, switching to the right to the SW. The ridge is fairly level to the view. Rounding another corner, the path turns sharply back to the SW, climbing up a rough rocky trough to another col on the ridge (tiny café here in 1957 selling drinks). Here the path turns eastwards again up a short steep rocky 'ladder', which will probably entail a double carry. It is the only awkward bit on the whole route, but there is no danger. The view is very fine to the Paulhorn as one gains a broad view of the valley. The SW slope of about 2000' is about 1000' on the path, up some wide, easy zigzags. There is a little hotel restaurant on top, touristy, as it is one of the finest viewpoints in the Alps.

A wide and very popular path, a bit rough and boulder-strewn at times, leads down to the Bachee, from where a very good, mostly rideable path leads to First, the upper station of the cable railway from Grindelwald to First. For tourists, the path becomes indistinct as it descends steep down to the top, where it can lead to the top of it on tours round from Alp Grindel to the top of the Grosse Scheidegg. For some distance near Alp Grindel the path is muddy and corrugated by cows, which makes riding impossible and wheeling difficult. It improves again as it leads towards the Grosse Scheidegg (hotel restaurant, popular with climbers).

There is a road now (1985) over the Grosse Scheidegg, metalled throughout except for some of the lower stretches on the Meiringen side, which are still hard-packed dirt road. There is a fine gorge and waterfall just above Rosenlaui to the SE, and the backward views hereabouts to the Wetterhorn are very fine.

If needed, a good direct track to Innertkirchen leaves the road at one of the hairpins, going via Geissholz to meet the main road above the hairpins just west of Innertkirchen. These hairpins on the main road avoid the Aar Gorge, which is well worth the walk, nice and cool on a hot day! It is not known whether bicycles are allowed through the gorge.

Details: E. D. Clements 1957, 1960.



OR ENGSTLENLAGER
1 mile

(E)



5

If one enjoys freewheeling and doesn't mind some initial effort, tackle the pass this way. From Engelberg there are two ways up to the Trübsee: a well kept path to the east of the cable railway, very steep up the final zigzags below the cables, and a longer, easier path leaving the road to Unter Trübsee at Unter Trübsee. The latter makes for the wind and the sun. These two ways are equally good for the ski lift pass, both very steep. In 1953 the one below the ski-lift was easier; the other, a little to the east, crosses an awkward screw slope low down. Do not attempt this climb if there is likely to be snow higher up. Of course it may be possible to take one's bike up the ski-lift? Good views from the top, especially of Tills, but any long views are obscured by the clouds. The way down is equally rideable; there is a metalled road now from Engelnsdalen down the Gentel, and the path to it is also very good. Touristy areas.

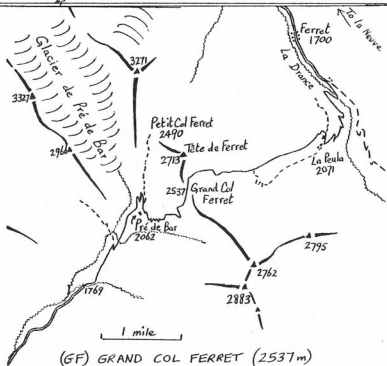
5/2

This very fine route connecting the Swiss and Italian Val Ferret is part of: the "Tour du Mont Blanc", and a justly popular rough-stuff route. The metalled road up the Swiss Val Ferret ends a kilometre beyond Ferret. Two tracks continue: straight on up the main valley leads to the Fenêtre de Ferret (q.v.); right, over the bridge over La Drance stream, the other track signposts up to La Peula, a summer steading for cattle, which used to be the Swiss customs post. This is the Col Ferret route. Above La Peula the hillsides has been worn by the cattle into many parallel ruts contouring the grassy hillside. This hard going lasts for perhaps half a mile, after which the gradient eases. The ruts lessen. The grassy hillsides continues all the way to the top, with occasional ruts where the cattle have been. A magnificent view of the Mont Blanc range has opened up, and the half-mile extra walk to the Tête de Ferret, 2713m, improves it still further. Two miles away to the NW is Mont Dolent, where France, Italy and Switzerland all meet, while to the west the many great peaks line up, culminating in Mont Blanc itself.

any great peak line up, but the descent from the col is rather steeper, about 1 in 3, but should not present any difficulty. After dropping about 1500 feet, one comes to another summer steading, Prê de Bar, which used to be the Italian customs post. From here a rough jeep road, partly rideable, descends steeply to the floor of the Italian Val Ferret, through which runs a stalled road to Courmayeur, and the descent to Prê de Bar is a problem on the road; the steep descent is not too difficult, but snow does not linger here.

Allow about 5 hours for the crossings 3 up, 2 down, either way. No carrying necessary.

Details: P. Wright 24.8.85, E. D. Clements 1955, etc.



(GF) GRAND COL FERRET (2537m)

FF FENÊTRE DE FERRET 2697m Ferret to Gd St Bernard road, 6 miles r/s
 M219 fold 2, or M244 fold 11 VAD M ***

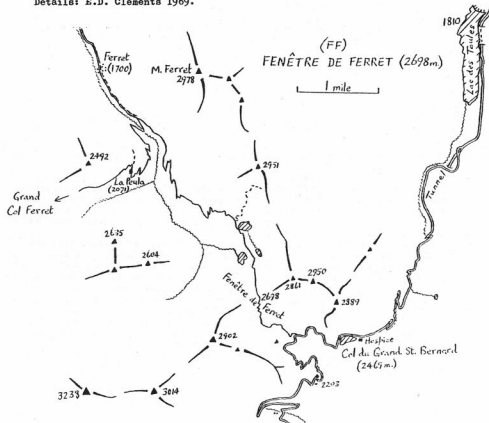
The metalled road ends a little beyond Ferret; keep straight on up the main valley for a long mile. At the second standing on the left, Plan de la Chaux, the path zigzags steeply up the hillside in an ESE direction, across innumerable contouring cowpaths, which make for hard going, especially at first. This rather rough and stony 1500 ft climb brings one to the first of the three Lacs de Fenêtre. Pass the west edge of this, easier going now, then between the other two and up the final pull to the col. Still fairly easy going down to the Grand St Bernard road, which is met one mile west of its top.

If going from this Italian side, look for red marks and arrows on rocks near a farmhouse by the main road. Coming up the road, a conspicuous overhanging rock tower (Tour des Fous) comes into view; the path goes just to the right of a smaller rock tower just beyond this, not up the scree slope between them. Keep to the right of a stream, and ignore a better path which goes off due west past the rock tower. Keep going NW for the col.

Despite the high altitude, snow should not present too much of a problem from July onwards. The upper approaches are not as steep as those of many other cols, and the steep section above Plan de la Chaux faces SW, thereby losing its snow relatively quickly. There are very fine views of the Mont Blanc range during the ascent of the Swiss side.

Allow about 5 hours from Ferret to the Grand St Bernard road; 4 hours should be ample if the col is taken in the other direction. Little or no carrying necessary, but rideable only between Ferret and Plan de la Chaux.

Details: E.D. Clements 1969.



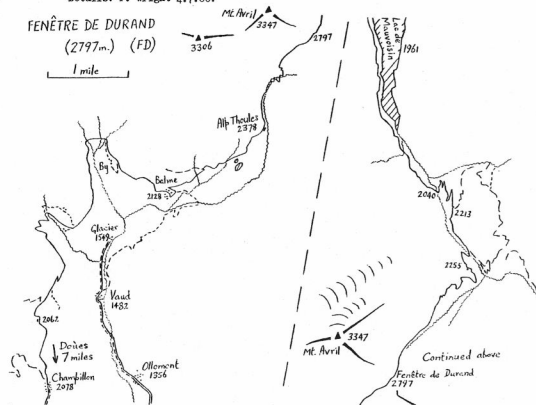
FD FENÊTRE DE DURAND 2797m Mauvoisin to Ollomont/Aoste, 14 miles r/s
 M219 fold 2 VAD S ****

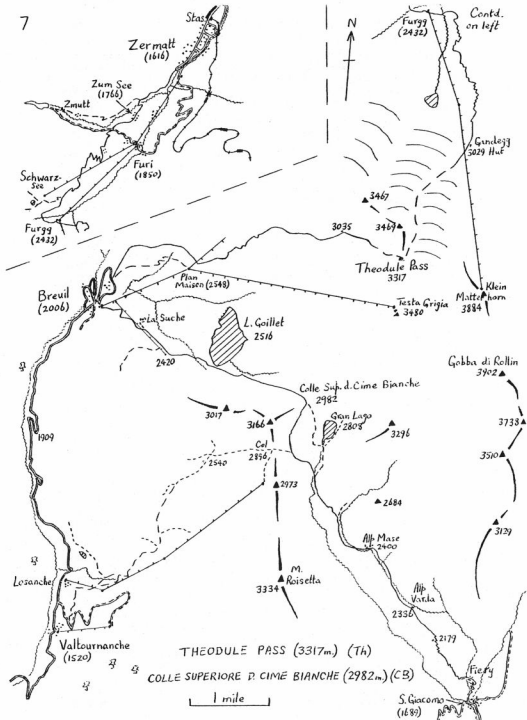
A long, hard pass, with very fine scenery; a good alternative to the Great St Bernard road, especially for those who are familiar with the Grand Col Ferret or the Fenêtre de Ferret. Road to Mauvoisin dam (hotel), then a good track along west side of lake. At 2041m, the track crosses the stream and zigzags up the hillside (unrideable), then descends to the stream again. At the lowest point turn right off the main track (signpost to 'Tour des Combins') to cross the stream by a smaller track over a bridge, then climb the hillside to two stone buildings (one ruinous, one new), where the track ends. Only a path now, uphill, but it is easy to follow. Much snow on the higher parts (4 July), so it is advisable to do this pass in August. Small instep crampons and snow goggles proved invaluable in early July. At the top there is a plaque in memory of Italy's first post-war president, Luigi Einaudi, who fled over this pass in Sept. 1943 from Mussolini's troops.

Just below the top on the south side there was a steep and rather difficult snow slope, and lower down one comes onto an unsurfaced road, which it may be best to follow, as the direct descent to the roadhead of the Val d'Ollomont is steep and pathless, through trees and shrubs, unless you are lucky and strike a track. This unsurfaced road, which is not shown on Michelin, circles the head of the Val d'Ollomont high above the valley and according to some older maps leads to Doues, from where one branch descends to near Roisan and another heads west to Allaine and thence the Great St Bernard road.

Allow 6-7 hours from dam to top, 2-2½ from top to unsurfaced road.

Details: F. Wright 4.7.86.





Th THEODULE PASS 3317m Zermatt to Breuil, 12 miles r/s
M219 rold 4 VAD S *****

Probably the highest feasible Alpine r/s pass, and very fine indeed, with magnificent views on a good day. During the descent to Breuil, one passes a mere two miles from the summit of the Matterhorn. To start, go up the main street of Zermatt and keep straight on, up then down to a bridge. Do not cross it; continue past another bridge. A mile from the centre of Zermatt, fork left, following the sign to the Ganderj hut; you go over a third bridge and then uphill to Zum See. It is a very long slog from Zum See to the hut (one climbs the equivalent of Ben Nevis from sea level); the path is rough in places, but always easy to follow. It is advisable not to attempt the route before late July or August, and to be equipped with snow goggles and footwear suitable for snow (instep crampons have been found useful). Soon after the Ganderj hut is passed, one comes to the top of a ridge of boulders, the moraine of the glacier. The glacier itself is wide and smooth, and its surface has been fashioned into ski pistes by machines on caterpillar tracks. This, and the gentle slope, makes it easy to push the bike up, though one does sink in a bit. At the top there is a rifugio (small hotel) run by the Italian Alpine Club. There is no glacier on the Italian side, just snow down to 3000m, which was easier going than the boulders visible nearby. Lower down there is a bulldozed track, steepening as one gets nearer to Breuil.

Allow 7 hours from Zermatt to the Ganderj hut, 3 more from there to the top, and a further 4 down to Breuil. This means a very early start from somewhere above Zermatt, or a night at the Ganderj hut or, possibly (no details), at the rifugio at the top. On the way down to Breuil there are some buildings, which you may find deserted and so available for bivouacking, at about 3000m, and lower down, at Plan Maison, a place which looks like a hotel.

Details: P. Wright 31.7.86, A. J. Howarth 1956.

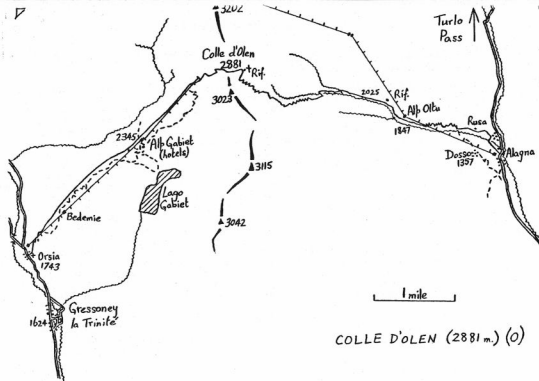
Colle Superiore delle Cime Bianche 2982m Cervinia to St Jacques Done 31 July VAD: N side E, S side D Good views, I'd say three or four stars

The N side is a good jeep track, the S side is a footpath. Good views of the Matterhorn and nearby hills as you go up, and of the hills to the S from the top. The route would be much harder if taken from S to N.

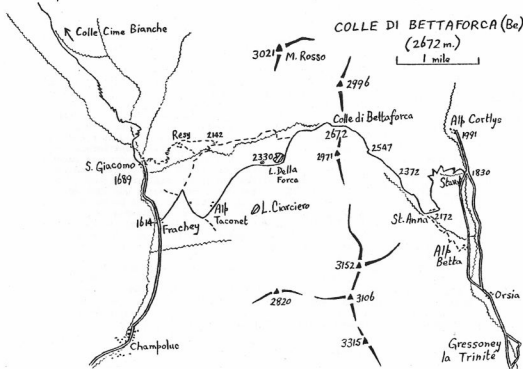
Start at Cervinia from near the funivia terminus (where the cable car goes up to Plan Maison and beyond); signposts for Routes 22 and 23 Lago Goillet and Colle delle Cime Bianche. Refuge at 2800m (food). At the top the track turns left to follow the line of a ski-lift. Leave the track here and follow yellow arrows across a low ridge of scree, till you see the path, which from then on is easy to follow.

There are two stages in the descent. The first, which lasts till about 2300m, consists of easy level stretches interrupted by steep hard ones. On the steep stretches some carrying is necessary. A stone building, probably good for a bivouac, is passed at just over 2400m. At 2300m you get your first proper sight of the Val d'Ayas, and the second stage begins. This is almost uniformly stony and awkward, mostly quite steep and often inundated by streams. Much carrying necessary. The Alpe Ventina at 2179m was a good bivouac in 1988.

The difficulties are over at Piery (hotel, small chapel). Here it is probably best to turn left, go past the Casa Alpina, cross the river and take the un-surfaced road, which gives an easy descent to St Jacques. Times: Cervinia to pass, $\frac{3}{4}$ hours; pass to Piery, $\frac{1}{2}$ hour; on to St Jacques, $\frac{1}{2}$ hour.



COLLE D'OLEN (2881 m.) (O)



COLLE DI BETTAFORCA (Be)
(2672 m.)

Be COLLE DI BETTAFORCA 2672m Chaspoluc to Gressoney-La-Trinité, 6 miles r/s
M219 fold 4 VAD M ***

An easy route, with a jeep track all the way; no carrying necessary. From Frachey, $\frac{1}{2}$ miles up the main valley from Chaspoluc, a tarred road leads uphill, but soon gives way to a jeep track. After about $\frac{1}{2}$ hour turn right at an unmarked fork, pass under the wires of a ski lift and cross some open land on which there are ski-lift buildings (marked Sciovie Mandria 1 & 2) and an old farm building (good bivouac). Soon after, at another unmarked fork, go left, uphill, to a farm, Alp Taconet; higher up there is another cowshed (there was one at Taconet, full of cows) - another possible bivouac? Pass under the ski-lift again, and later go straight on at another fork (the right-hand fork leads to the Lago Ciavercio). After a short descent past a small lake, follow the jeep track to and over the top. Probably rideable in places down to Staval, which is 2 miles up the valley from Gressoney.

Allow $4\frac{1}{2}$ hours up, $\frac{1}{2}$ down.

Details: F. Wright 18.8.87.

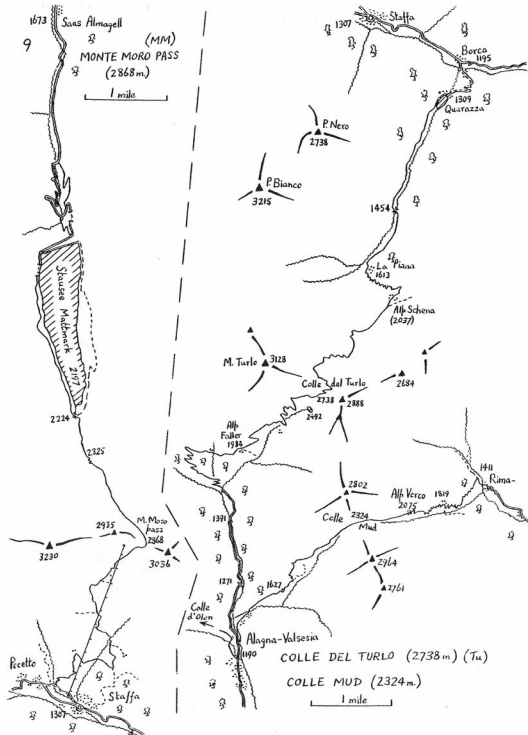
O COLLE D'OLEN 2881m Gressoney-La-Trinité to Alagna Val Sesia, 10 miles r/s
M219 fold 4 VAD D ****

From Orsia, a short mile up the valley road from Gressoney-La-Trinité, follow the yellow sign and take a narrow mile-track which goes round a small chapel. This track is partly paved, and has a good surface. It is marked with a red figure 6 on a white background. After a while it turns into a grassy path across open pastures, and leads one to a station on the cable-car line called Bedenie. Here you can either take the steep jeep track or keep on the mule-track; the latter becomes rather rough (carrying needed) and joins the jeep track again anyway. About 2½ hours up from Orsia one reaches Alp Gabiet, the terminus of the cable-car line; there are two rifugi (small hotels) here, several other buildings and possibilities for bivouacking.

Above the Albergo del Ponte (one of the hotels), follow a steep jeep track for $\frac{1}{2}$ mile; here the mule-track, marked with red 6's, forks right, but it is stony, hard going and not always easy to find. It is much better to keep to the jeep track, running up close to the chair lift. The two ways link up again before the chair-lift terminus, $\frac{1}{2}$ hours from Alp Gabiet. Above the terminus there is no jeep track, just the path, an easy 40 minutes to the top. Four ibex seen high up from the top in 1987. No snow either side, mid-August. The recommended way down in 1987 was the level path to the left from the pass, to the two rifugi (one closed, the other had a good view to the N and E of Monte Rosa, etc.). The path goes on down from them, marked red and yellow, with sometimes a black 5. The descent is long and tiring, often requiring carrying (but not double carrying). One comes to a malga, then a rifugio, then a cable-car station at Alp Oliva. Here the worst is over. There is a grassy track for about $\frac{1}{2}$ mile, then a reasonable dirt road, which becomes a steep tarred road not far above Alagna.

Allow 5-5½ hours for ascent from Orsia, 4-4½ for descent.

Details: F. Wright 19.8.87.



Tu COLLE DEL TURLO 2738m Alagna Val Sesia to Macugnaga, 12 miles r/s
 M219 folds 4 and 5 VAD S ***

A long and very tiring route, lacking the really spectacular views from the Colle d'Olen. The S side is very much easier than the N side.

From Alagna a tarmac road goes on up the valley to a car park at 1500m. Continue on a wide track for about 200 yards, and turn right up a narrow path marked with red and yellow paint marks and the figure 7A. The path leaves the valley track about 20 yards before a wooden bridge; it is easy to miss the sign. The rather rough and rocky ascent through the woods soon improves to become a long but surprisingly easy ascent, mostly of good surface, past Alp Faller and Alp Graffenboden. Higher up the slope is steeper, but the surface is still mostly good, requiring only an occasional short carry. This old road was built about 1930 (there are inscriptions at the top and on the N side referring to the 6th and 8th year of the Mussolini era), and resembles a mini Hadrian's Wall zig-zagging over the mountains; there is a fear of getting lost, at least until after Alp Schena, well down the N side. Rock seat and rock table on top. There are over 50 zig-sags in the first 1000 feet of descent, perhaps 150 on the whole of the N side. Fairly easy going as far as Alp Schena, where the well constructed 'walled road' ends. Then a poor path continues, soon turning W-wards down to the valley. This path has many awkwardly projecting rocks, and much carrying and lifting is needed. Double carrying may be necessary if ascending (it is not necessary in the downhill direction). The path descends in zig-sags down a steep slope covered with bushes and trees, and reaches level ground at the valley bottom (La Pianal). For a short distance the going is easier, but the path then becomes rocky, difficult and tiring all the way down to the beginning of a dirt road, at some deserted houses (point 1358). Even this dirt road is not easily, if at all, rideable; the alternative is a stepped track to reach the main road at Borna or Isella, for Macugnaga, further up the valley.

Times: allow 5½ hours for the ascent from the car park, 7½ for the descent to Borna.

Details: F. Wright 20-1.8.87; E. D. Clements early Sept. 1969.

13M MONTE MORO 2868m Macugnaga to Saas Grund, 6 miles r/s

M219 fold 5 VAD S ****

A beautiful but very hard route - especially hard if taken S-N, because the S side is nearly twice as high as the N. Good views of the E face of Monte Rosa. Unless lightly loaded, expect much double carrying higher up.

From the main square (post office, etc.) in Macugnaga, follow a street which leads up-valley past the funivia terramas. Pass between a church (the Chiesa Vecchia) on your right and a large line tree (used as a meeting place since 1200, according to the notice) on your left. Just before a wooden bridge over a stream turn right up a metre-wide constructed mule-track (signpost: Moro Pass). This peters out after about ½ mile, and you follow quite a good path to the first station on the funivia (1700m). The map shows a path heading E from here, but our correspondent was advised to take a path, marked by red and yellow paint marks, which led up the hillside, almost without zigzags; this starts rough and steep and becomes rougher. Above a certain height (? 2400m) there is really no path, just paint marks on the rocks. Accommodation for the night is available just below the top on the Italian side, either at the top end of the funivia or at a rifugio. They were seen near top in 1958.

The highest part of the route is over large boulders (follow the paint marks), past a metal statue of the Madonna on the ridge itself. One quite large snowfield was encountered on the N side, at about 2750m, in early August. Much rock and boulders on the N side too, but you reach continuous grassy slopes at about 2300m. Rough road from S end of Mattmarksee.

Times: from Macugnaga to refuge, 7 hours; from refuge to Mattmarksee, 5 hours.

Details: F. Wright 8-9.8.88.

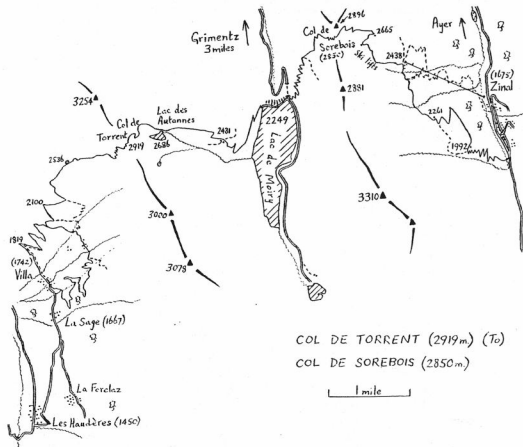
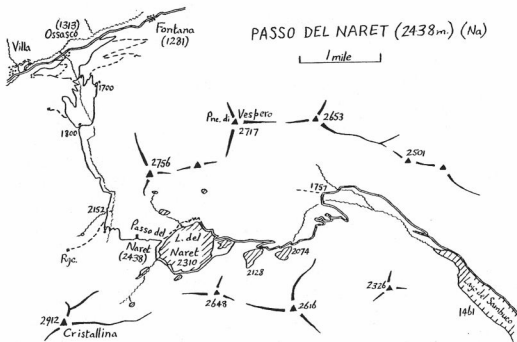
Na Passo di Naret 2437m Fusio to Fontana Done 5 August

M217 fold 20 VAD M ***

The tarmac road from Fusio goes up to the Lago di Naret, to the N end of one of the two dams which hold in the lake. From here go left along the dam, and follow the road around the lake as far as you can. Then take a level path, still skirting the lake, to join the path which climbs to the left, away from the lake, up to the pass (a short climb, 130m vertically).

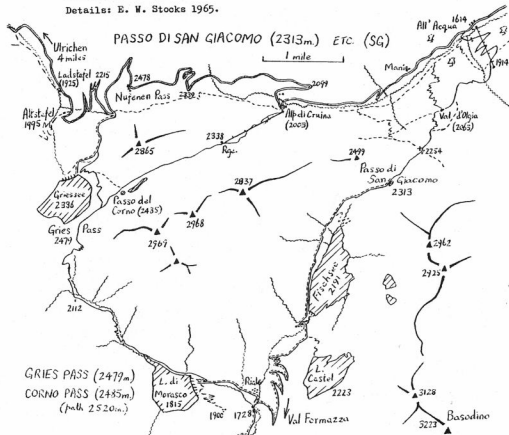
Just over the pass is a refuge, apparently deserted but in good condition. The path bears left here, is easy for 200 yards and then crosses a patch of scree. Some 400 yards after the scree turn right down a distinct and quite easy path, which leads past a cowshed to the path which comes up from the Val Bedretto to the Capanna Cristallina. Turn right down this path, which is not difficult and brings you to the top of an unsurfaced road about 400 yards above the Alpe Cristallina (farm buildings). At this Alpe turn right down the unsurfaced road; at the next signpost, 1/2 hour on, keep to the road (signpost Ossasco) rather than the path (signpost Airolo); and at a road junction (Bosco di Ossasco, 1536m) turn right (signpost Fontana).

Times: Lago di Naret (end of first dam) to pass, 1 1/2 hours; pass to Alpe Cristallina, 2 hours; Alpe Cristallina to Nufenen road, 1 1/2 hours (less if you ride it)



Details: E. W. Stocks 1965.

Details: E. D. Clements 1956, etc.





12

N of the Rhone valley

Sa Col de Soud Villars to La Porcelas M217 folds 14 & 15 See OCD guide. E *

MA (20) Monthovon to Aigle M217 fold 14 The Lac d'Hongrin reservoir has been built since this route was done. It may be possible to cross the dam and pick up the path shown on Michelin. Recent information required, please. E? *

ML Les Moulins to La Léchère M217 fold 15 A footpath avoiding most of the N side of the Col des Mosses. (1950s) E *

ZS Zweizimmen to Sannen~~Ser~~ M217 folds 16 & 15, top Metalled road along SE side of river to Oeschette, then a rather undulating cart track following the railway line. (1982) E *

Kr Krinnen 1660m Gsteig to Luenen M217 fold 15 Very boggy throughout and uninteresting - not worth trying. H *

Tr Trüttliberg Pass 2038m Luenen to Lenk M217 folds 15 & 16 A rewarding but hard route; path easy to follow, but mostly rough and stony, with long muddy and boggy stretch. Mostly unrideable. D **

Re Reulien Pass 1715m Gstaad to Grodeli M217 folds 15 & 16 Between the same valleys as Trüttliberg; easier and shorter, but path not always easy to find. H *

H Hahnenmoos Pass 1957m Lenk to Adelboden M217 fold 16 Very easy; metalled road throughout except between Hühler and the summit, which is mostly rideable in the downhill direction anyway. E *

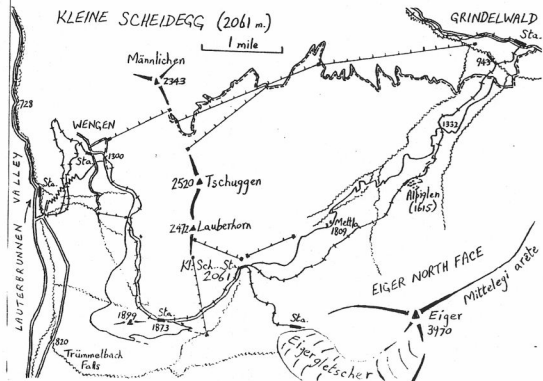
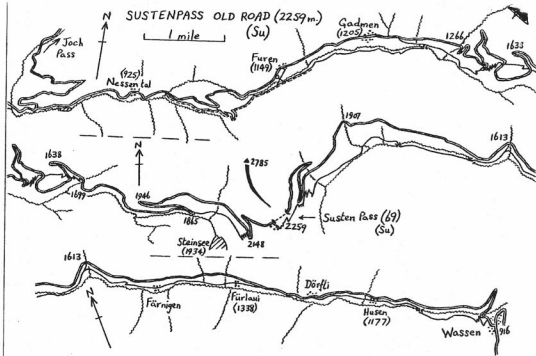
Bo *Bonderchrinde 2384m Adelboden to Kandersteg M217 folds 16 & 17 No details; probably very hard, with steep slopes either side of the col, and a 500 ft cliff lower down the Kandersteg side. VS **

Ho Hohltürli 2781m Kandersteg to Grösenalp M217 fold 17 Extremely hard, with 1000 ft of scree on W side, and nearly 2000 ft of scree on the E. VS **

Se Sefinenfurke 2612m Grösenalp to Stechelberg M217 fold 17 Again there are steep slopes both sides of the top, but the pass has been crossed recently, travelling light. See RJJ Kov./Dec. 1983 (vol. 28, no. 6). S ***

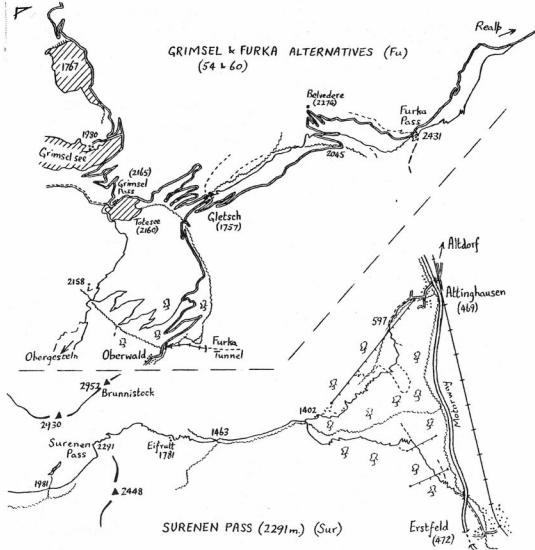
Lo Lötschen Pass 2690m Kandersteg to Ferden (Lötschental) M217 fold 17 Long and very hard indeed. It might be feasible travelling light and returning by train from Goppenstein (or vice versa). Much carrying, especially on the very steep and rocky climb to Gfallalp, around the icefall, and again across the summit plateau and down a long scree gully at the top of the S side. Superb scenery. VS ***

Ri Riederalp area (NE of Brig) M217 fold 18 There is a long, high-level, often rideable path from Riederalp to Bettwärlach and beyond; also narrower paths around the Riederhorn, and through the Aletschwald. Fine views either across the Rhone valley to the Pennine Alps, or of the Aletsch glacier, the longest in Europe. The snag is that it is a 4000 ft climb out of the Rhone valley to get onto these paths. E ***

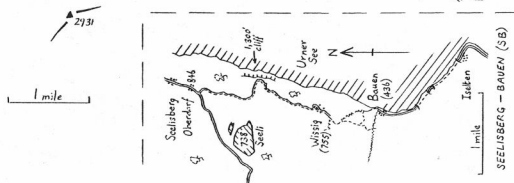


GRIMSEL & FURKA ALTERNATIVES (Fu)

(54 & 60)



SUREN PASS (2291m.) (Sur)



CENTRAL ALPS (W) - SECTION B

Fu Furka Pass (old road or path) 2431m Gletsch to Realp N217 fold 19 There is an old path over the pass, boggy soon after leaving Gletsch, and cut by several rock falls on the E side. (1963) M **

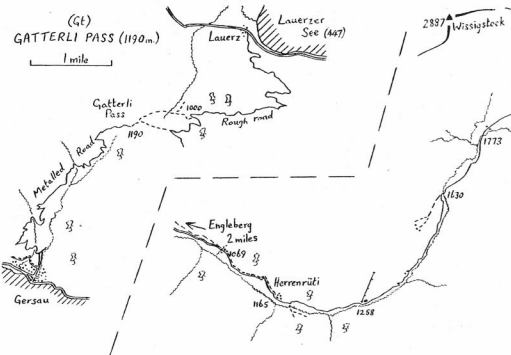
E. Engstlenlager 2010m Engstlenalp to Melchtal N217 fold 9 Very good path to Melchsee Frutt, then very steep road (average 1 in 9) down to the Melchtal. E **

Sur Suren Pass 2291m Engelberg to Altdorf N217 folds 9 & 10 A long hard pass, not too bad on the W side, but with two or three very long, rough and steep descents on the E side. Path easy to follow. S *

Sch Schönegg Pass 1924m Engelberg valley to Isenthal N217 folds 9 & 10 A few miles NW of the Suren, between the same main valleys. Almost as hard and long as the Suren, hardly worth the effort. S *

SB Seelisberg to Bauen (SE side of Lake Lucerne) N217 fold 10, top Michelin shows a rough road from Seelisberg to Wisig, which is 1000 ft above Bauen. In 1956 the two were connected by an interminable stepped path with many zig-zags. Recent information required, please. E *

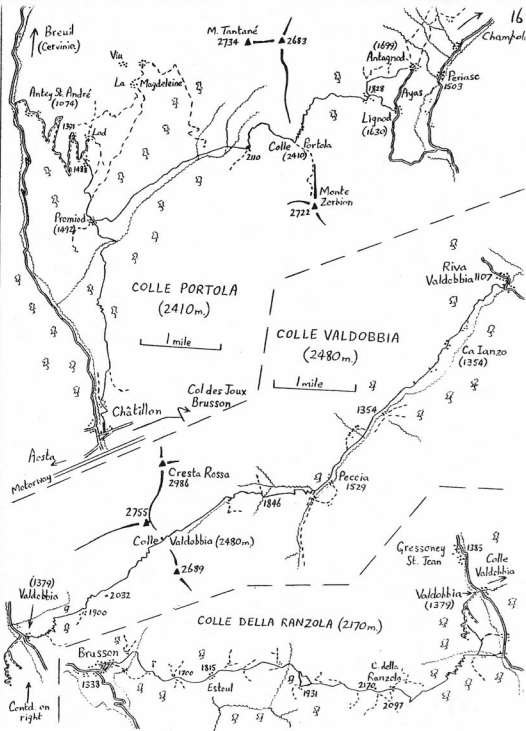
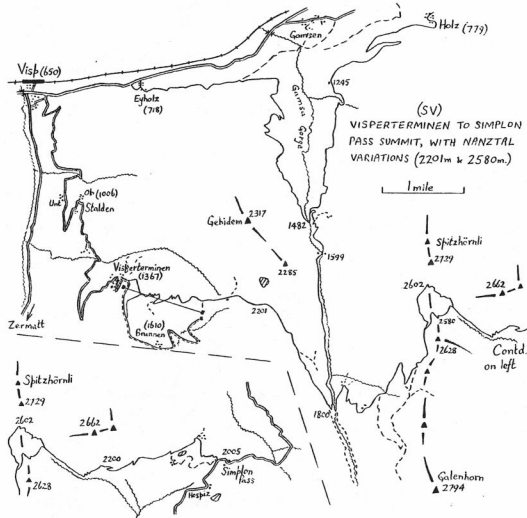
Gt Gatterli Pass 1192m Lauers to Gersau N217 fold 10, top Forest track to top, metalled down S side; good views to S. E **

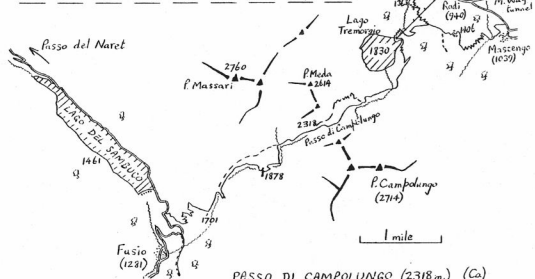
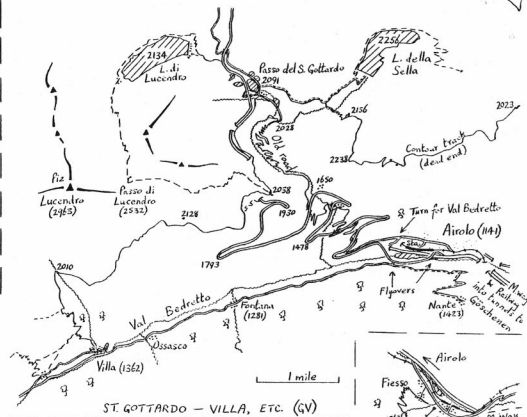
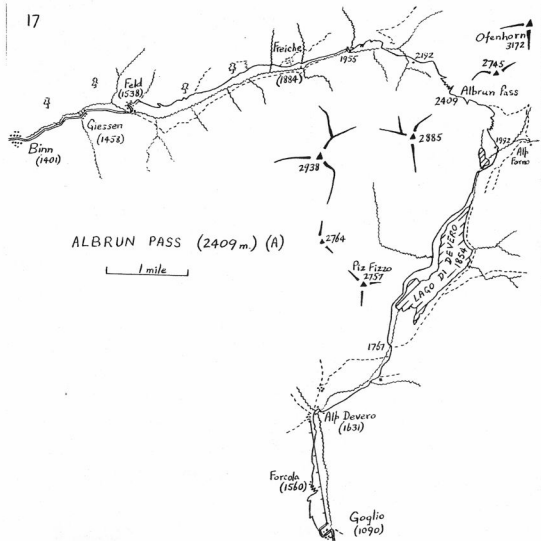


Fo Colle Portola 2410m Antagnod to Antey St André N219 folds 3 & 4
E side very steep and boulder-strewn near top; W side grassy. D * 4

Vd Colle Valdobbia 2480m Riva Valdobbia to Gressoney St Jean N219 fold 4
E side fairly easy except for a steep rough section about midway; W side steep and rough for almost the whole way. Poor reward scenically compared to Colle d'Olen. D **

SV *Simplon pass to Visperterminen 2602m & 2201m N217 folds 18 & 17 Two passes with a dip to 1800m where the route crosses the Nanstal. No details, but probably nothing worse than a short scree slope on the E side of the higher pass. M? **





GV St Gotthard pass to Villa M217 fold 20, top An old military road contouring high above the Val Bedretto, with steep path down to Villa. It is not known whether the building of the new St Gotthard road has affected the NE end of the route. M *

A Albrun Pass 2409m Binn to Goglio M217 fold 19 Long and hard but rewarding. The path is sometimes difficult to find; carrying necessary in places. S **

Or Orien Pass 2462m Ulrichen to Pormasza M217 fold 19 Easy on Swiss side; a rideable track leads from Mufenen road to the Orien-see, then a rough path around E side of lake to top. Steep and rough descent into Italy, with fine scenery, then rideable track along valley floor to Lago di Karasco, improving to dam, then metalled. See Cycloclimbing, nos. 21 and 39. M ***

Ca *Passo di Campolungo 2318m Rodi-Piasco or Prato to Fusio M217 fold 20 or M218 fold 11 No details; apparently well used path, but long steep ascent through woods from the Valle Leventina, and several other steep sections. S? **