

**PALL MALL GAZETTE
LONDON, ENGLAND
11 JULY 1899**

**THE DANGERS OF BEACHY HEAD.
To the Editor of the Pall Mall Gazette.**

Sir,—In the interview of your representative with Mr. Aleister Crowley, of the Scottish Mountaineer Club, the latter said that Beachy Head "offers the most difficult and dangerous bit of climbing in the British Islands." He added: "There is a quite unfounded superstition that Beachy Head has never been climbed from the sea."

I can confirm this from personal experience. A great many years ago I went up that way myself, with two children. Usually, no doubt, the climbing is done by descent, which is held to be the less perilous one. My own somewhat rash ascent was brought about by a boy's assertion that he knew of an easy way up from the sea.

Unfortunately, when we had scrambled up to a certain height, we found it far from easy. The broken chalk continually yielded, and we had to claw it and the tufts of grass as best we could, with great discomfort. It was impossible to go down again, and terribly difficult to go up. The danger became such that I put my little daughter before me, so that, if she were to lose her hold, her fall might be broken, at least, by her coming down upon me. The boy climbed sideways. Clearly, we had missed the "easy way." When we reached the grass ledge or traverse there seemed to be hope of a more facile ascent; but soon the peril began again.

At last, with hands and legs badly scratched, we came out, through the so-called Devil's Chimney, at the top of Beachy Head. The coastguard who saw us exclaimed, "Great God!" (or words to that effect); "where-ever do you come from? Nobody has ever come up this way!" This may have been an error of his. I learned afterwards that in olden times smugglers had now and then climbed up through the Devil's Chimney.

I cannot say that, during this dangerous scrambling, I was overmuch alarmed, except so far as my daughter's safety was concerned. In the following night, however, between walking and being half asleep, everything around me seemed to appear to be giddily undulating. Yet it was not the perpendicular loose

chalk, with its breakneck chances, but the pleasant grass ledge which danced, wavelike, before my dreaming eyes, producing a sensation of dizziness and swimming of the head.

Upon the whole, I should not advise the ascent of Beachy Head from the sea, much as I am fond of that foreland through yearly visits—Yours truly.

Karl Blind.

Hampstead, July 9.