

PROCEEDINGS OF THE CLUB

THE CLUB IN ATHOLL AND RANNOCH.

“Cam’ ye by Atholl, lad wi’ the philabeg,
Doon by the Tummel and banks o’ the Garry.”

—*The Ettrick Shepherd.*

ON the afternoon of the 19th July, 1912, the following Members and Guests assembled on the platform of Blair Atholl Station:— Miss Angus, Dundee, with three guests; Dr. McIntyre, Messrs. Leslie Gray, W. McPherson, George McIntyre, A. Emslie Smith, and J. B. Gillies.

The weather was most promising, and the promise was entirely fulfilled as the 19th was the first of a short sequence of perfect days pitchforked by the clerk of the weather into the middle of one of the worst summers on record. The Club is usually lucky in the matter of weather for its Summer Meets, but its luck has never been more conspicuous than in the Meet of 1912.

We had an hour or two to spare before dinner, and we agreed that the time could not be better spent than in visiting the famous grounds of Blair Castle. We were very nearly disappointed, however, as a stalwart Highlander appeared at the gate, and informed us that it was close upon the hour at which the public were excluded, but Mr. Macpherson’s eloquence, and the information that we were members of the Cairngorm Club, and *ipso facto* persons of the highest respectability, softened the heart of this Celtic Cerberus, and he not only admitted us, but with the greatest courtesy and attention conducted us over the grounds, and showed us all the lions of the place. Perhaps the most interesting was a gun which had been held for several hours by a detachment of the Scottish Horse against an overwhelming force of Boers until the arrival of reinforcements. When the relieving force arrived, only one of the detachment was alive and unwounded; but the Boers had not succeeded in capturing the gun. We also saw the chapel in which the gallant Dundee rests after a short but crowded life. Peace to his



Photo by

George McIntyre.

BLACK BRIDGE, GLEN TILT—SUMMER MEET.



Photo by

Dr. Levack.

BRAERIACH FROM THE SUMMIT OF SGORAN DUBH.

ashes; whatever his faults may have been, he was a brave and capable soldier, and received his mortal wound while leading his men into battle.

Next morning all made an early start for the official climb the ascent of Ben-y-Gloe, 3671 feet. We drove up Glen Tilt, which for a Highland Glen is rather tame, though, geologically, it is extremely interesting. The writer sent a picture card of the entrance to the glen to a German friend, whose opinion of the scenery was that it did not look like the Highlands of Scotland, but resembled some of the valleys of Northern Germany. We were much enlivened during the long drive by the sallies of our Jehu, who was, as Dominie Sampson might have said, "very facetious, and very erudite in all that pertained unto the history of the locality." He pointed out a rock in the middle of the river Tilt, where one of the chieftains of the Clan Maclean had, in old times, daily sat in judgment, and had hanged a man each day, *pour encourager les autres*.

At Forest Lodge we alighted and walked to the entrance of Glen Alt Fheannach, where we turned to the right, and commenced the ascent of our Ben. The climb was somewhat arduous, as the day was warm though sunless, and there was little wind; but we were all in excellent condition, and we arrived at the summit at the appointed hour, and met our friends Mr. Garden and Mr. Rennie, who had come over from Braemar. There was no formal meeting of the Club, but Mr. McIntyre made a capital photograph of the group. We had a superb view of the Cairngorms and the Deeside hills. Ben Macdhui, Braeriach and Lochnagar all carried considerable patches of snow.

We made our descent by a steep grass slope into Glen Alt Coire Lagain. Here the Secretary's valise rolled down two or three hundred feet, and he worked off some of his superfluous energy in retrieving it. In the glen we found the weather rather sultry, and made several halts by the margins of refreshing streams. At our longest halt Mr. Emslie Smith sighted an adder, but it escaped into

the heather. Before arriving at the Atholl Arms we had a walk of four or five miles on the "the 'ard 'igh road," which was rather uncomfortable for the wearers of the "big hob-nailers," but we finished fresh and strong, and thoroughly enjoyed an excellent dinner.

We decided to climb Schiehallion, 3547 feet, next day, and the Secretary, who had ascended that mountain with the Club in the previous year, left for Loch Tay on his motor bicycle, after making all arrangements for our comfort.

Our drive in the morning was a long but beautiful one, through Struan, up Glen Erochy, round the shoulder of Torr Dubh, and up the hill to the vicinity of Loch Kinnardochy, from which point we ascended the mountain by the east ridge. The summit was quite clear of mist, a strong contrast to the conditions which obtained at the last Summer Meet. There was little sunshine, but hardly any wind, only a gentle breeze from the east. The distant prospect was somewhat spoiled by haze, but the view of the noble valley of Glen Mhor, and that of Loch Rannoch stretching for ten miles to the westward, in themselves made the climb what the late Mr. Baddeley would have called "distinctly remunerative."

We should have been glad to linger for hours on the summit, but time pressed, and it was a far cry back to the Atholl Arms.

We descended the North face of the mountain, and our walk to Tummel Bridge somewhat resembled an obstacle race, there being so many "waters, slaps and stiles" to cross; but we developed magnificent appetites, and thoroughly enjoyed our tea at the hotel. The drive to Blair Atholl in the cool of the evening was delightful, and we arrived at the Atholl Arms a little before midnight, having been out for nearly fourteen hours, and feeling "chust sublime" and "in caapital trum," "Brutain's hardy sons!"

Next day we climbed Ben Vrackie, 2757 feet, a hill of lower elevation than the other two but not less interesting. The rocks on the west side, by which we ascended are

exceedingly picturesque, and show strong evidence of glacial action. As we had more time to spare than on the two previous days, we remained on the top for about two hours. We had a fine view of our old friends the conical peaks of the Ben-y-Gloe group, and of "lone Ben Alder" far to the West, which carried more extensive snow-fields than even the Cairngorms. The time was pleasantly spent in mountaineering "gup" and much burning of tobacco. One of the guests gave an interesting and graphic account of his experiences while whale fishing in Baffin's Bay, and we were visited by a friendly sheep, which shared the vegetarian lunch of one of the party.

We descended *via* Moulin to Pitlochry, where the Aberdeen contingent entrained for the North. Two of the guests and the writer walked to Blair Atholl through the Pass of Killiecrankie, where—

"The bauld Pitcur fell in a fur',
And Claver'se gat a clankie Oh!"

Next morning back to Auld Reekie, and so ended three glorious summer days in the highlands of Perthshire.

J. R. LESLIE GRAY.

SOME NOTES ON THE GEOLOGY OF GLEN TILT.

GEOLOGICALLY Glen Tilt is of the greatest interest, as it is one of the best instances in Scotland of a valley being eroded in the line of a fault. It is probably surpassed in extent among Scottish valleys of that type only by the Great Glen, along the line of which the Caledonian Canal is constructed.

There are numerous seams of limestone in Glen Tilt, and, in several places, they have been changed into marble by the action of intrusive masses of granite. The Marble Lodge is built of this altered rock. In 1785 Hutton, one of the famous group of Scottish philosophers of the eighteenth century, of whom the late Mr. Gray Graham

wrote so charmingly, visited the glen along with his friend Clerk of Eldin, on the invitation of the Duke of Athole. At that time the science of geology was in its infancy, and the opinion generally held was that most of the rocks which we now know to be of igneous origin were depositions from an aqueous solution. The high priest of this theory was the then famous Professor Werner of Saxony, and it was stoutly opposed by Hutton and a few other Scottish geologists. Society in Edinburgh, without much real knowledge of the matter, took up the controversy most vigorously, and the battle between Huttonians and Wernerians became even more furious than the conflict between Whigs and Tories. On examining the granite rocks of Glen Tilt, Hutton at once saw that they must have been intruded in a molten state, as they had crystallized and indurated the limestone in a way that no aqueous solution could possibly have done, and his manifestations of joy at the discovery were so exuberant as to convince the ghillies who acted as his guides that he had found a vein of one of the precious metals.

The Glen Tilt fault nearly coincides with the line of division between the moine schists of the Highlands and the Perthshire quartzites, and in the neighbourhood Mr. Barrow of the Geological Survey has found remarkable instances of transition between these types of rock. The summit of Ben-y-Gloe consists entirely of great splintery blocks of quartzite, as does also the summit of Schiehallion.

J. R. L. G.