

## BEN LAWERS.

BY JAMES MCCOSS.

May the mid-day sun and the evening stars  
Guide your lone path across Ben Lawers.

THE district around Fortingall, which includes Glen Lyon, is one of remarkable beauty; the proximity of Loch Tay lends a great charm to the landscape. The hills are finely grouped and are close to the roadway, so that, with the aid of a car, they can be reached with the minimum of energy.

The bulky Ben Lawers, with its height of 3,984 feet, claims sovereignty over all the hills of the Loch Tay district, and indeed over all Perthshire. It is also one of the highest hills in Scotland, there being only other nine which exceed it in height.

The Lawers group, composing nine summits, is situated in the triangle, Loch Tay, Glen Lyon, and Lochan na Lairige. Creag an Fhithich is a rock prominence on the ridge between Ben Lawers and An Stuc, while Sron Dharmurchdi is the culminating point of the south-running ridge of Meall Corranaich: with these two exceptions the summits are separate and distinct peaks.

BEN LAWERS, Beinn Latha-Ur (the mountain of the new day or dawn). The position of the summit cairn is  $2\frac{3}{4}$  miles north-west of Lawers Inn, and it is famous as commanding one of the finest views in Scotland, extending from the Cairngorms to the Lothians and from the Atlantic to the North Sea.

It is a mountain of denudation, and the crumbling schists of which it is composed seem to be very favourable to the growth of many of our rarer plants. The botanist will find a good list of plants and mosses that are to be found on the Lawers range in the *C.C.J.*, Vol. 2, p. 195. The lower slopes are clothed with coarse bent grass, springing from a spongy carpet of brownish-green moss.

The easiest route to the top of Lawers from Killin starts



*Easter, 1931.*

COIRE AN LOCHAN A' CHAIT—BEN LAWERS.

*James McCoss.*

1. Creag an Fhithich.
2. Ravens' Gully.
3. Bealach Dubh.

from the Lochan na Lairige road, then up the cart track on the west side of the Burn of Edramucky, which leads into Coire Odhar, and passes Leacann Ghlas (grey, steep, shelvy ground) on the right. The high ground is best attained between Meall Corranaich and Beinn Ghlas. The time from the road to Beinn Ghlas is  $1\frac{1}{2}$  hours, and to Lawers another half hour.

The best route from Lawers Inn starts up the north-east side of the stream that flows down to the main road near the school. This line is followed till the ridge running east from Lawers is reached at 3,000 feet. This ridge takes one comfortably to the summit even in mist.

A fine high-level route from the north starts at Slatich in Glen Lyon, passing between (V) CREAG RORO and (U) COIRE MHAIDHEIN (the tedious corrie), then over the nameless top, 2,866 feet. This route gives a fine ridge walk and culminates in Meall Garbh.

Ben Lawers is a very fine hill at Easter-time, and if one climbs from Lawers Inn to 2,300 feet on the broad shoulder to the east of Lawers, time  $1\frac{1}{2}$  hours, the snow-clad summits of Meall Gruaidh, Meall Garbh and An Stuc are exposed to view. Their sharp, rugged sides, all scarred with ice and snow, form a striking picture of grandeur, as they soar above the frozen Lochan a' Chait.

From the corrie a variety of routes is opened up to the climber. The following climbs were accomplished at Easter.

Ascent of CAT GULLY of An Stuc. This gully was climbed on April 5, 1931, by Miss McCoss, McCoss, Orkney, and A. Scott. It starts at a height of about 800 feet above Lochan a' Chait, from the left of the main gully which runs up to Bealach An Stuc-Garbh. It gave a nice climb of 500 feet, the snow angle being about 55 degrees, and finished on the summit of An Stuc.

Ascent of RAVENS' GULLY of Creag an Fhithich. This climb starts in the high corrie below Bealach Dubh and runs up the north side of Creag an Fhithich. Its height is 400 feet, and there is a steep pitch 20 feet high about half-way up, which may be rock and more difficult in the

summer. The gully was climbed on April 5, 1931, by Miss Bruce, Miss Macfarlane, and Symmers.

The time from Lawers Inn over the main summits at Easter, fairly easy going, is: Ben Lawers, 2h. 45m., Creag an Fhithich, 20m., Bealach Dubh, 10m., An Stuc, 1h. 10m., Bealach An Stuc-Garbh, 45m., Meall Garbh, 1h., Meall Gruaidh, 1h. 30m. This round of Lawers covers  $9\frac{1}{2}$  miles, the climbing height is 4,977 feet, and the total time required is nine hours.

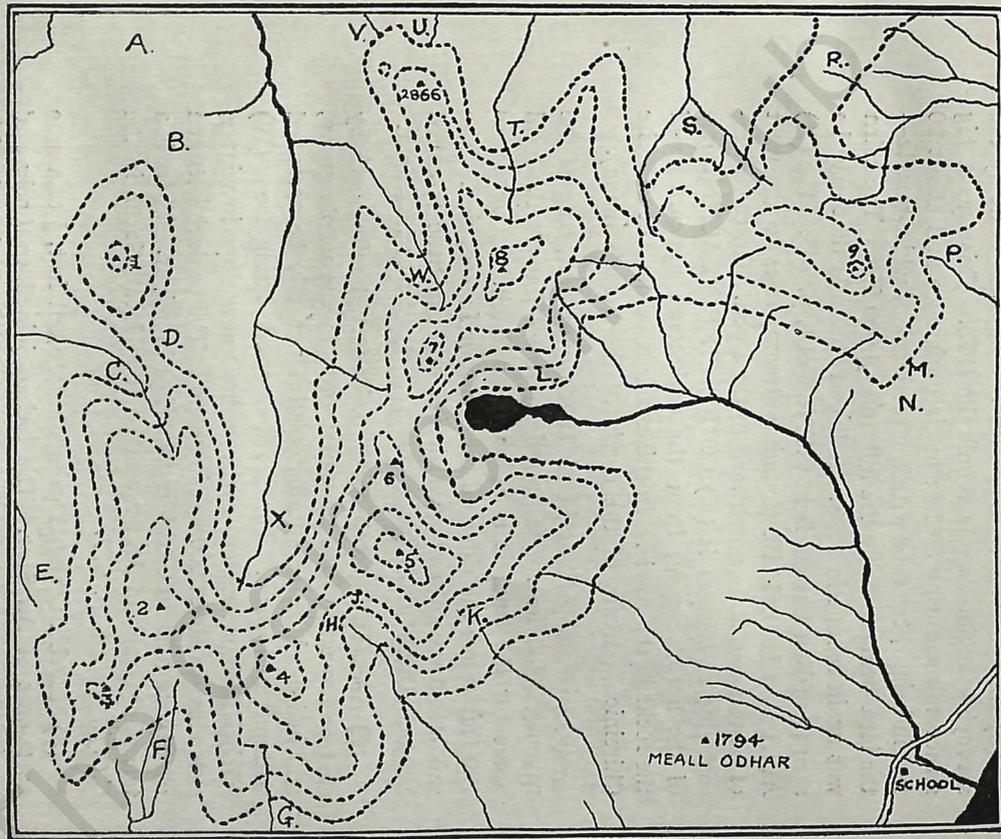
The sketch map gives the contour lines, starting at 2,500 feet and every 250 feet upward. The scale is one inch to one mile.

(1) MEALL A' CHOIRE LEITH (*mel-a-horrie-lea*, hill of the grey corrie), 3,033 feet,  $1\frac{7}{8}$  miles north of Meall Corranaich. The bealach connecting these two summits is 2,550 feet in height. (D) COIRE LAITH (*currie-lea*, grey corrie) and (C) COIRE GORM (green corrie) are on the east and west sides respectively of this saddle. (A) SRON EICH (spur of the horses) is the ridge to the north, and (B) COIRE BAN (white corrie) is the rocky corrie to the north-east. (E) GLEANN DA-EIG (glen of the double point) is on the western side.

(2) MEALL CORRANAICH (hill of the corrie of the brackens), 3,530 feet,  $1\frac{1}{4}$  miles west of Lawers. The time to it from Lochan na Lairige (small loch of the pass) is  $1\frac{1}{2}$  hours. The height of the saddle connecting it with Beinn Ghlas is 3,050 feet. (F) COIRE ODHAR (*currie ower*, the dun-coloured corrie) is south of Meall Corranaich, and the Burn of Edramucky rises in it.

(3) SRON DHA-MURCHDI, 3,040 feet,  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile south-south-west of Meall Corranaich.

(4) BEINN GHLAS (grey hill), 3,657 feet, 1 mile south-west of Lawers. (G) COIRE A' CHONNAIDH (corrie of the fuel) is below it on the south. The ridge between Beinn Ghlas and Lawers falls to 3,300 feet. Below this ridge at the source of the Allt an Tuim Bhric (the stream of the speckled knoll) is a rock called (H) CREAG NAN



THE SUMMITS, CORRIES, AND BEALACHS OF BEN LAWERS.

GABHAR (crag of the goats), and a little further north-east towards Lawers is another outcrop of rock called (J) CREAG LOISGTE (*loisk*, burnt-looking crag).

(5) BEN LAWERS, 3,984 feet. The cairn built by the surveying engineers was rebuilt in 1878. This was a big structure measuring 50 feet in circumference and about 20 feet in height, crowned with a large block of white quartz—the idea being to bring the hill up to 4,000 feet. The cairn was again rebuilt in 1898. A list of the hills that may be seen from Ben Lawers is in *C.C.J.*, Vol 1, p. 165. The (X) ALLT A' CHOBHAIR (foaming stream) rises to the west of Lawers and flows northward to the Lyon. On the south-east side of Lawers is (K) COIRE CIREINEACH (corrie of the horse's mane) from the cockscomb appearance of the rocks in the corrie. In this corrie rises the Allt a Choire Chireinich (stream of the corrie of the horse's mane).

(6) CREAG AN FHITHICH (*creag-an-hich*, crag of the ravens), 3,430 feet. Half a mile north of Lawers the local name for the summit is Spicean nan Each. It only rises 130 feet above the ridge on the south or Lawers side. The saddle between Creag an Fhithich and An Stuc is called Bealach Dubh (dark pass) and it is 3,042 feet in height.

(7) AN STUC (steep rock), 3,643 feet, 1 mile north by east of Lawers. It is the finest peak in the whole group, and in icy winter conditions could not readily be ascended without an ice-axe. The north-east side rising from (W) FIN GLEN (clear glen) carries a fine snow slope in winter, extending to about 900 feet in height. The bealach between An Stuc and Meall Garbh is 3,252 feet in height. There is a fine photograph of An Stuc taken from Meall Garbh in the *C.C.J.*, Vol. 4, p. 277.

(8) MEALL GARBH (rough hill), 3,661 feet,  $\frac{5}{8}$  of a mile north-east of An Stuc. The lochan joined to Lochan a' Chait is known as Lochan nan Uan (small loch of the lamb). About 400 feet above it on the slopes of Meall Garbh is a steep, slabby piece of rock called (L) CREAG A' BHUIC (crag of the buck). To the north of Meall Garbh is (T)



*Easter, 1937.*

*S. C. H. Smith.*

AN STUC—BEN LAWERS.

1. Summit.
2. Cat Gully.
3. Bealach An Stuc-Garbh.

COIRE ROIC (corrie of feasting) and the Allt Coire Roic. Lairig Innein (rocky pass), 2,802 feet, is the name of the lowest part of the ridge connecting Meall Garbh with Meall Gruaidh. To the north of this bealach is (S) COIRE NAM BUIDHEAG (corrie of the yellow point) and the source of the Inverinain Burn (stream at the junction of the point).

(9) MEALL GRUAIDH (*mel-grew*, hill of the cheek or slab), 3,280 feet,  $1\frac{7}{8}$  miles east of Meall Garbh. There are two rocks about  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a mile south-south-east of the summit. The north outcrop is called (M) SRON MHOR (*sron-vor*, big spur) and the other a little further south is named (N) SRON BHEAG (*sron-veg*, small spur). (P) COIRE PHEADAIR (corrie of fate) is east of Meall Gruaidh. One may descend from Meall Gruaidh by Gleann Da-ghob (double-forked glen) to Chesthill in Glen Lyon. There is a pass connecting Gleann Da-ghob with the Inverinain Burn called (R) BEALACH CREAG A' BHANNAICH (pass of the bannoch-looking crag), 2,650 feet.