



Sept. 16, 1928.

W. A. Ewen.

RAEBURN'S GULLY, LOCHNAGAR.

No 2. comes over the Chokestone, above the Cave Pitch.

FIRST DESCENT OF RAEBURN'S GULLY.

BY ERIC MAXWELL.

ON September 12, 1930, I paid my second visit to Lochnagar, walking up from Loch Callater. The summit plateau was hidden in a thick mist, but as there was hope of the corrie being clear, we made our way from Cac Carn Mor to the cliff edge and descended a gully, which turned out to be the Left Hand Branch of the Black Spout. The condition of the rocks made impossible the descent of the only pitch by the crack on the true right and, the through route being too small for the members of this party, a doubled rope was used. Later in the day other members of the Grampian Club were able to use both the crack and the through route for ascending. At the junction with the Black Spout we met Miss Bruce, Symmers, and Ewen, from whom we were glad to learn the whereabouts of the various climbs. We decided to tackle Raeburn's Gully and, roped in the order—E. Maxwell, W. A. Gallie, and F. Ripley, started from the screes. The first pitch was chiefly noticeable because of the roundness of the holds and the wetness of the rocks. Above it, whilst climbing the very wet bed of the Gully, we were confronted by what looked like a tremendous pitch but which resolved itself into small practicable climbs. The lower part of the first pitch was climbed on the left wall, a very wet ascent, and the upper part by a small ledge on the right. As much water was pouring over the top of the double cave pitch, it was decided to take to the left wall. Much care was needed on the grass ledges which lead up to the upper part of the Tough-Brown Ridge, but the pitch was safely negotiated and the plateau reached by the rocks at the top of this ridge. Unluckily no note was made of the time taken.

A year later, on September 13, 1931, with three fellow-members of the Grampian Club, I descended Raeburn's Gully. Roping on the plateau we started in the order—E. Maxwell, Miss E. Robertson, Miss V. P. Roy, and J. E. Forrest. The climbing at first was fairly easy, though

great care was necessitated by the rottenness of the rock and the presence of loose stones—difficulties encountered throughout the whole of the gully. Progress became slower when water and moss appeared, but no serious difficulty was encountered until the top of the Double Cave Pitch was reached, the sundry small pitches above it being passed on one side or the other. The fact that none of us had ascended this pitch made it a matter for careful investigation—fortunately the stream had here disappeared under the rocks. The problem was solved by altering the order of the party and lowering Roy into the upper cave. The method of negotiation being then clear, Robertson and Maxwell followed and Forrest was belayed down by means of a threaded rope through the Chokestone. During the descent of the lower cave on the true left, the only unpleasant incident occurred. A large stone, sent hurtling down by a wandering hiker, very nearly laid the party out.

We were now at the point to which the writer had ascended the previous year, when the climb was completed by the left-hand variation. The boulder at the top of the next pitch was passed by means of the small ledge on the true right, and the rest of the pitch by a rather holdless and very wet descent on the left, with a little back and foot work. The rest of the bed of the Gully was very wet and unreliable. Roy descended the last pitch to the scree and returned to join the rest of the party in a traverse to the right, over the Mound, to the foot of the Black Spout. The total time for the descent was about three hours.

The ascent was made by the Left-Hand Branch of the Black Spout, half the party being able to use the through route, the other half climbing the crack on the right.



Sept. 16, 1928.

A. Paterson.

RAEBURN'S GULLY, LOCHNAGAR: THE FINAL PITCH.
Camera has been tilted upward.