

## PROCEEDINGS OF THE CLUB.

### GENERAL MEETINGS.

THE 59th Annual General Meeting of the Club was held in the Business Women's Club, Aberdeen, on November 29, 1947. The President, Colonel E. B. Reid, O.B.E., was in the chair. The accounts for the year were read and approved, balances at credit being: Income Account, £6. 1s. 4d.; Life Members' Account, £94. 15s. 1d.; General Works Fund, £53. 15s. 10d.; Emergency Fund, £67. 0s. 10d. There were 285 members on the roll.

The 60th Annual General Meeting of the Club was held in the Business Women's Club, Aberdeen, on November 24, 1948. The President, Colonel E. B. Reid, O.B.E., was in the chair; 41 attended. Accounts were read and approved, balances at credit being: Income Account, £84. 5s. 4d.; Life Members' Account, £108. 0s. 1d.; General Works Fund, £40. 10s. 5d.; Emergency Fund, £60. 4s. 1d.; Luibeg Bridge Fund, £164. 10s. 0d. There were 226 Ordinary, 28 Life and 38 Junior Members on the roll.

Office-bearers were elected as under:—

*Honorary President.*—R. M. Williamson, LL.D.

*President.*—Colonel E. B. Reid, O.B.E.

*Vice-Presidents.*—William A. Ewen and Miss Ruth Jackson.

*Honorary Secretary and Treasurer.*—William Garden, 18 Golden Square, Aberdeen. Phone 7960-7961.

*Honorary Editor.*—William A. Ewen, 242 Mid Stocket Road, Aberdeen. Phone 1446.

*Honorary Librarian.*—Dr R. L. Mitchell, 75 Cranford Road, Aberdeen. Phone 35916.

*Honorary Meets Secretary.*—Edwin W. Smith, 6 Viewfield Avenue, Aberdeen. Phone 6067.

*Committee.*—G. A. Taylor, J. H. F. Crawford, A. E. Anton, G. A. Roberts, Dr W. T. Hendry, Dr Angus Thomson, I. M. Brooker, Miss Ada Adams, and Miss Ann F. W. Arthur.

*Honorary Secretary of Junior Section.*—G. Gordon Mathieson, 79 Osborne Place, Aberdeen. Phone 28405.

*Representatives to B.M.C.*—Mrs Millicent McArthur and Ian F. Roberts.

*Representative to the A.S.C.C.*—Hugh D. Welsh. *Deputy.*—E. W. Smith.

### ANNUAL DINNERS.

The 1947 Annual Dinner was held in the Caledonian Hotel, Aberdeen, on November 22. Colonel E. B. Reid, President, was in the Chair. The Club had as chief guest and speaker Professor L. R. Wager, F.R.S.,

whose illustrated talk on "High Mountains in East Greenland" was much appreciated. Representatives of the S.M.C., L.S.C.C., Grampian and Moray Clubs attended.

The 1948 Annual Dinner was held in the Caledonian Hotel on November 27, Colonel E. B. Reid presiding. The speaker on this occasion was Mr. Hamish Hamilton, S.M.C., who showed a series of magnificent Kodachrome views of the Scottish mountains. Approximately 120 members and guests attended.

#### MEETS AND EXCURSIONS, 1947.

THE War over, it was possible to revert to the established custom of spending New Year at the Invercauld Arms. A large number of members and guests took advantage of the restoration of the old facilities, undisturbed, at that date, by the shadow of the Catering Wages Act. Weather conditions left everything to be desired but the tail end of the Meet was favoured with one splendid day and the hills had a heavy covering of snow. On December 29, 1946, the early arrivals (the President, Misses Fettes, Munro, Reid, and Wilson, and R. Reid) walked up Glen Ey, intending to go over the tops to the Sheann Spittal Bridge, but lack of time and bad weather compelled the party to descend by the Baddoch. Next day, the party, re-inforced by MacLellan, Rose, and Miss Arthur, climbed Beinn Bhreac from Derry, returning by the Dubh Ghleann and Glen Quoich. Weather above 2,000 feet was again poor. Reports differ as to dates here, but the President assures me that this account is substantially accurate—for the time of year! It seems fairly certain then that the main activity of the 31st was ski-ing in the Baddoch area, all saving their energies, presumably, for the Hogmanay Dance arranged by the Invercauld. I am also assured that it was weather and not end-of-year festivities which prevented a large party from completing the ascent of Lochnagar from Callater on New Year's Day. That I still entertain some doubt on the point is due to the very intensity with which some maintain that the gale was the worst encountered for years; while the rain is reported as being on a scale unprecedented in the annals of the Club. No great harm is done in repeating that superlative here, even though I shall have to record a still heavier rainfall on at least two subsequent occasions! It is more reliably reported that, on the following day, the party stayed at home and played tiddley-winks. All who remained, however, went to Derry on the 3rd and enjoyed the best day of the period. They tell me that Ben Macdhui "was done"; but how done, or how well done, or who done it is not mentioned. One can, of course, effect a certain economy by using the words do, did, and done, but will correspondents please try not to overwork the poor little things?

The winter excursions in 1947 cannot be described as having been wholly successful; in a word, it was too wintry. On January 26,

two buses reached Spittal of Muick and, although the weather conditions on top were severe, the snow was in good condition. Not so the climbers, who spent so much time on their various ascents that the departure of one bus had to be delayed, to the irritation of the early arrivals. There is no easy solution to this time problem which has been only partially solved by that unholy institution, the 6.30 start. This still allows all too little time for a snow climb and may, perhaps, be regarded by the climbers as a very small concession. This view will not be shared, however, by those walkers who find the 6.30 departure too early and who, therefore, prefer to stay away. Some of these are extremely critical of the members of Committee who, while strongly advocating the 6.30 start, have but infrequently availed themselves of the opportunity offered!

By 16th February new snow had fallen to such depth as made it doubtful whether the buses would reach Glen Clunie Lodge. The Meets Secretary had again provided two buses for the occasion, but last minute cancellations made hay of Smithy's arrangements. As a result of this and of similar occurrences, members who wish to cancel a booking are now required to give seven days' notice. I might here take the opportunity of requesting members not to telephone the Meets Secretary much after 10.0 P.M. on the evening before an excursion. A few hours of undisturbed sleep enable him to meet members' criticisms of the bus accommodation, the price, the food, the weather, etc., with complete calm. A strong character the Meets Secretary—he has even abjured the use of tobacco!

It ought to be obvious by now that I have forgotten much of what happened at these two excursions, but I do recall that the February day was a day for ski and that only a few of those present were so equipped. The Càrn Tuirc side appeared to be carrying most snow, so most of the foot-sloggers betook themselves to the Cairnwell-Baddoch area, while one party, on ski, went over Morrone to Braemar.

It would be difficult, however, to forget March 9, 1947, when snow-blocked roads cut us off from Lochnagar. If we failed to reach the major objective, it was, none the less, a day of days—such a day as comes along once in a quinquennium, or thereby, and one can almost forgive Smithy for all the bad days he has picked for us in the past. The President, Messrs Smith, Mitchell, Phemister, Calvert, Wilson, and Bain and Misses Adams and Lawrence and two guests, went over Morven from Bleack to Ballater, while Welsh took a party of four to Geallaig. Harper, Macgregor (A.), McAndrew (guest), and Ewen selected Cairn Leuchan as the most promising ski slope accessible; conditions were ideal and the party made rapid and easy progress to the summit under an Alpine sun. As many are now realising, there is much to be said for ski in these conditions (but see observation on frequency of occurrence above!), although it does provide the Meets Secretary with one more problem to solve: how to accommodate 30 people, 30 rucksacks, and some 20 pairs of ski in one bus.



SOUTH RIDGE OF STOBINIAN  
(Ben Ledi in the distance)

*John Duncan*

Alas, the winter ended on March 22, and, although several square miles of soggy snow remained on the 23rd, it served only to cut us off from Beinn a' Bhùird. For the ski-ers it was anti-climax, deep despondency relieved only by the discovery of some deep holes which marked the passage of a large party on foot, bound for Culardoch! I heard little good said of that mountain except that, from it, one may descend easily and rapidly to the Inver Bar. Mitchell and a small party stormed Gleann an t-Slugain on foot and reached Carn na Drochaide before crying quits.

By Easter the snow was in good trim again but the overhead conditions were abominable. The Meet was held at Crianlarich, our first visit there for thirteen years and the official days are conveniently remembered as the day of the mist, the day of the flood, and the day of the gale. Some thirty attended, sufficient for the late diners to find the lounge fire as inaccessible as Ushba and the room corners nearly as cold. On occasion my thoughts turned to the desirability of limiting the number of entrants to the Club! But it was a pleasure to see so many of our "country" members present, there being half a dozen or more from London, Manchester, and other remote places across the Border. The President drew up a marvellous chart designed to show at a glance the whereabouts of any party at any given time. It shows, for example, that, on the first day, Mathieson (D.) and Crawford went to Ben Lui by train; with Crawford in the party, anything becomes possible! The others were content to climb Ben More and Stobinian on foot, where the snow was in splendid order if the visibility was poor. On the day of the flood no ascents were made as far as I can ascertain. One party got as far as Arrochar but found that water was as wet in Glen Loin as in Glen Falloch.

So, although Sunday dawned wild, pent up energies drove all afield into the gale. It drove two parties up Beinn Chaluum and acted as a useful brake for the descent. I would have called it an easy day for a lady had not two of them, dignity gone with the gale, arrived on the south top on all fours. Ice axes were required only as anchors. The parties arrived back to find various Press photographers exercising in front of the hotel. While the leading pair were preparing to do their sodden best to look like Finch and Bruce descending from the highest ever, it was conveyed to them that the subject of the photograph was a Russian trade delegation. The only real criticism I have to offer of the President's chart is that it fails to show whether the rest of the party, visiting An Caisteal, did so in ones and twos or en bloc! On Monday morning we descended to breakfast and the unusual spectacle of a large new loch upstream of the railway bridge. So the Meet ended, members departing in various directions in search of the sun.

Those who attended the excursion to Ben Avon on April 20 will hardly wish to be reminded of it. Permission to proceed to Delnadamp was much appreciated, as was the use of a cottage to change in at the end of the day. As far as Inchroly conditions were tolerable but once

on Ben Avon itself the weather did its worst. No party, I think, reached its objective and no one could have got any wetter except he had fallen into the Avon. The really unique feature of the day was the tea, quaintly and excellently served in the barn of the Glenkindie Arms.

For the May Holiday Meet the members were fortunate in obtaining the use of the S.M.C. Hut and the J.M.C.S. Hut at Steall. In addition, two were accommodated in Fort William, while a larger party were at Onich. Unfortunately, the weather was bad and in the short time available, little was accomplished. Over a dozen were at Steall and five of this party were within 100 feet of the summit of Binnein Mòr when the blizzard forced them to beat a retreat. The others went to Nevis, as, of course, did the C.I.C. Hut party, some of whom climbed No. 3 Gully. The Onich group appears to have done little more than walk up to Steall. Although it was May there was deep snow as far down as the Huts.

May 18 found us in Glenshee. If the weather was not good it was very much better than we were beginning to get used to. Most parties were in Glen Thaitneiche for Glas Thulachan, although some went as far as Càrn an Rìgh. A considerable amount of snow remained on the north side of the hills and, in the poor conditions, no one thought of Creag Dallaig. Hugh D. Welsh revealed that he was making a return visit to Glas Thulachan after a lapse of forty-one years.

On June 8 the party for Lochnagar numbered over thirty and two cars were used to supplement the bus accommodation. Several parties were in the corrie, one at least on the Broad Cairn round and one at Juanjorge but no new ascents were made, although an extra long day had been arranged.

The Midnight Excursion is also curiously popular, although it involves, as a rule, an incredibly long walk in unusually wintry conditions. Two buses were required to transport the party to Blair Atholl, from which we were to make our various ways back to Aberdeenshire. Beinn a' Ghlo was by far the most popular route but the summit remained persistently in cloud and navigation was difficult. All routes led eventually to the Linn of Dee, which all reached more or less on time. Protracted ablutions at the river-side, however, delayed one bus, with the result that breakfast was a rushed affair for the later arrivals.

The walk over the Fir Mounth on October 12, was attended by a small select band who enjoyed an interesting day on this, the best of the Mounth crossings. One of the finest mountain views on Deeside is that of Mount Keen seen from the Fir Mounth above Glen Tanner, itself beautiful with autumn colour at this date. Bennachie was on the card for November 9, but a number had to call off at the last moment to assist a Rescue Party on Lochnagar. The victim of the accident was able to walk home next morning and some of those present arrived back at Allt-na-giubhsaich wondering why it had not occurred to them to spend such a splendid day on the tops. On May 31, there was a half-day excursion over the Stock Mounth and on July 5, another trifle, Socach *via* Pittenderrich, or *vice-versa*; the result is much the same.

NEW YEAR MEET, 1948.

All told, thirty-six members and guests stayed at the Invercauld Arms, Braemar, for some part of the period, December 30, 1947 to January 5, 1948; two more were at Mayfield and three at Luibeg. The traditional procedure is to climb Beinn Iutharn Beag on the first day and, keeping the Dance in mind, Morrone on the second. Morrone, of course, is not much more than twice up Chapel Brae! But, if the others went scrim-shanking, Rudge, Champion, Mitchell, and Miss Adams showed them the way to salvation with a good climb on the Cioch of Beinn a' Bhùird. In the prevailing conditions a few of the pitches were moderately difficult.

On New Year's Day, nineteen set out for Lochnagar, Misses Fettes and Munro and Messrs Rose and Rudge pushing on to the top in very bad conditions. A gale was blowing at the summit but visibility improved; in the valleys a thaw had set in, clearing the lower slopes of the snow. The greater part of Loch Callater had also thawed during the day.

January 2, Rudge, Champion, Mitchell, Howitt, Sutherland, the McArthurs, and Miss Lawrence went snow climbing in Coire Sputan Dearg, two parties climbing the Stob more or less directly. Reid and the Howies climbed Ben Macdhuì by the Tailors' Burn; Hutcheon and Smith completed the round of the home peaks, starting with Càrn a' Mhaim; and Whitehouse, Mrs Chapman, Miss Arthur, and guest went to Derry Cairngorm. On the 3rd most parties were again at Derry, ten going to Beinn Mheadhoin, two to Macdhuì, and two to Devil's Point. Both the 2nd and the 3rd were good days and the 4th opened in still more promising fashion; but, by that time, many had left or were leaving. Whitehouse, Macdonald, Champion, and Mrs Chapman, however, had yet another day at Derry.

EXCURSIONS, 1948.

THE first snow climb on January 25 attracted three ladies and thirty-six men, many of them University students. All, or nearly all, were set for a big day, for the starting hour was 6.30, but Lochnagar quietly triumphed. We had a foretaste of the conditions when the first bus was vainly pushed by all its passengers just below the Linn and the trudge in the snow to Allt-na-giubhsaich shortened the day. One party made some progress in Raeburn's Gully but others had to be content with such objectives as the Meikle Pap, Cuidhe Cròm, and the head of Loch Muick. A hard and happy day, but those who brought ski had perhaps the best of it.

W. M. D.

The second snow excursion of the season was held on February 8. This time Glen Clunie was chosen and, at Achallater, a party of four (McIntyre and guest, A. McGregor, and Crawford) descended from the bus into a snowstorm which, however, proved to be transitory. This party proceeded up Glen Callater, where the going was good. On reaching the Lodge one member suggested that the party should proceed along the ice on the edge of the loch, where the going was easier. The others concurred and all went well until within about ten yards of the farther bank when the author of this plan was precipitated into about five feet of icy water. Icebreaker tactics were employed until firm ice was reached, when the victim was enabled to haul himself out and lie at full length on the ice, not unlike a piece of cod in the fishmonger's shop. The victim was then seized and stripped, a complete change being provided by the rest of the party. Continuing without further incident to Corrie Kander, the party split, McIntyre and guest ascending the Twisting Gully (No. 1), at the top of which they joined forces with a party of the Chief Office Bearers who had made the round of Glas Maol and Cairn of Claise. McGregor and Crawford ascended the wide gully where the snow conditions were excellent, and returned by Càrn Tuirc.

Mitchell, I. Roberts, and Miss Arthur visited the scene of the avalanche which had well nigh swept a party to destruction on Sgòr Mòr some weeks previously, returning via Càrn Aosda. Lorimer, Howie, McLellan, and guest proceeded to bag every Munro on the west side of the road and were proceeding in the direction of the main Cairngorm range itself when time of necessity altered their plans, involving a hasty retreat to the bus. Owing to the author's presence at the aquatic events at Loch Callater he was unable to obtain information regarding the movements of other parties, including those dark horses, Welsh and Duff.—J. H. F. C.

(The movements of the others just do not matter; unquestionably the event of the day was Crawford's bathymetrical investigations in Loch Callater, the first authentic sounding since Sir John Murray's Survey of the Scottish Lochs! The depth was not taken with precision, but apparently little was seen of Crawford above the surface—beyond a look of surprise. The affair would have been less amusing, of course, had there not been a complete outfit of dry clothes available or had the water been deeper. The time saved in cutting across a frozen loch is obviously not worth the risk.—Ed.)

On January 29, when we visited Lochnagar, conditions were well nigh perfect, indeed perfect, for the wisp of cloud that blew over the corrie edge about noon vanished as it came. A frost fog in the valleys left the snow-clad peaks hanging above a purple haze. Many were attracted to the White Mounth tops, which meant a longish trudge through heavy snow; but one was reluctant to leave the tops on such a day and the round was completed in the time available. Coire Boidheach was one vast unbroken snowfield and one regretted not having brought ski. Several parties accomplished a gully climb; the Spout and its



branch appeared congested at times but Mathieson and Brooker had Raeburn's to themselves. Mitchell, I. Roberts, and Miss Lawrence climbed the gully between the Little Buttress and Central.

Rather similar conditions were enjoyed on Beinn a' Bhùird on March 14, although the fog was more evident. Everybody, I think, reached the summit plateau of Beinn a' Bhùird somehow, one by a snow climb in the Dubh Lochan corrie. Two parties were as far as The Sneck and one included the main top of Ben Avon.

#### EASTER MEET, 1948.

Easter Meets tend, for some reason, to be more memorable than the annual New Year celebrations at Braemar, possibly, as the Editor has suggested, because of the monotony of the latter. Be that as it may, the Bridge of Orchy-Inveroran Meet of March 25 to 29, 1948, deserves to be remembered together with the Meet which produced the fabulous Quince tree of Tomich, or turning to more mundane matters, the catering of Fortingall. Perhaps catering had something to do with the pleasant recollections of this Meet. It was with ill-concealed pleasure that each morning the inhabitants of the farther hostelry would relate to their more poorly provided neighbours what culinary delights had regaled them after the toils of the day!

Transport provided rather a problem when the Meet was first planned, but our Meets Secretary conceived the idea of a club bus from Aberdeen. This Mr Duguid willingly provided, and transport both to and at the Meet proved both economical and adequate. An overflow at Tyndrum became possible, for the attendance exceeded the entire joint accommodation of the two appointed hotels.

Weather contributed to the success of the Meet, for the warm sun produced a few pairs of shorts whilst gloves were seldom seen—and that in March! On the other hand, snow climbing was at a discount and axes were often left at home—although this occasionally slowed down the descents, as there was sometimes inviting glissadeable snow which had to be avoided.

Good Friday was probably the best day of all, and the majority of the early arrivals were on Stob Ghabhar; the party including the President, Misses Fettes and Munro, Mrs McArthur, and Messrs McArthur, Duff, Crawford, Mutch, Cameron, Mathieson, and Mitchell. A few continued over Clach Leathad and Meall a' Bhùiridh. A party of ladies were on Beinn Dorain, Miss Daniel and Mrs Ross Mackenzie turning here whilst Mrs Taggart and Miss Davidson took in Beinn an Dòthaidh. Two parties were on Buachaille Etive Mòr; Anton, Ross Cameron, and Alexander on D Gully Buttress and Miss A. Arthur, Thomson, and MacLellan on Curved Ridge.

The following day most of the above were in Glencoe; Buachaille Etive Mòr being most popular, with the Anton party on the Crowberry.

Of the others, Baxter and Cameron went out to Stob Coir'an Albannaich and Meall nan Eun. Lorimer, Howie, and Miss Macdonald (guest) were on Stob a'Choire Odhar, Stob Gabhar, and Meall nan Eun.

The weather was somewhat cooler on Easter Sunday when a party on the Aonach Eagach found the wind strong enough to be unpleasant in places. Others were on Buachaille Etive Bheag, and Beinn Achaladair to name only hills so far unrecorded. Thereafter, the weather broke, and members who stayed on suffered drenchings each day, and did little of note beyond witnessing the intentional destruction of Ba Cottage.

R. L. M.

#### SUMMER EXCURSIONS, 1948.

The weather will, from now on, figure rather prominently in these reports—it was uniformly scandalous. On April 18, we went to Clova and found the mist down to the chimneys of Glen Doll Lodge, and rain forbye. If there was any noticeable improvement in the day, it came too late to be of any use. Taylor and Bennett Rae went looking for an eagle and would no doubt have been very surprised themselves had they found it. Most were content with the Bachnagairn round, on which the writer discovered them, sitting dejectedly eating their pieces. From time to time the President would discover a certain lightening of the gloom and a rise, of half an inch or so, in the lower level of the mist. On the strength of these improvements he persuaded one or two to follow him to Craig Maud. But most took the shortest route back to the bus.

Sixteen members attended the May Holiday excursion to Glencoe, travelling there and back by private bus. The S.M.C. Hut at Laggangarbh and the L.S.C.C. Hut at Black Rock were kindly put at the disposal of the visitors.

On Sunday, May 2, the President, with Telford and Cameron, climbed Bidean nam Bian, rescuing a crag-fast sheep en route. The party then proceeded by the burn between An t-Sròn and Stob Coire nan Lochan to the top of Bidean. It was a May Day in a thousand, with bright sun and good views in every direction. The Bidean ridge was then followed until it joins the Beinn Fhada ridge, along which the walk is easy, and the descent made into the valley of the Allt Coire Gabhail, about a mile from the main Glencoe road. At this reach the waters of the Gabhail run below ground level and it is a rough scramble among huge boulders, strewn about in the most chaotic fashion, to regain the main glen near the Meeting of the Three Waters.

Misses Hoggarth and Jackson, starting from Black Rock, climbed Meall a' Bhùiridh and proceeded north to Stob a' Ghlais Choire and then back over the four tops to Clachlet, descending to Ba Cottage.

Sutherland and Howitt, who were at Laggangarbh, climbed Buachaille Etive Mòr by Garrick's Shelf Route; Mitchell, I. Roberts, and Miss E. J. Lawrence climbed the North Buttress and descended by the

Curved Ridge, ascending the Crowberry Tower en route. Misses Adams, Alexander, Beaton, King, and Mrs. Topp traversed Buachaille from Glen Coupall to Glen Etive.

On Monday, after an overnight snowfall, most went to Kinlochleven by bus and returned by the old Military Road.

On May 16 a large party turned out for Derry Lodge, and the sun turned out too. There was tremendous activity in the Coire Sputan Dearg, where two parties climbed Anchor Gully, and around the Shelter Stone Crag, where several parties climbed the Forefinger Pinnacle. With a Grampian Club party also in the area there must have been some fifty people on the summit of Macdhuì at one time or another during the day. A McGregor was observed, a lone and remote figure, on Cairn Lochan, and two ski-ers were seen above Etchachan. The snowfields were not large for but little snow remained here or in Coire Sputan Dearg, although the Garbh Choire retained a real Alpine appearance.

The climbers were out in force on June 6, and all the more important rock climbs on Lochnagar were scheduled for execution within the time limit. Perhaps some of them were, although I doubt it. Mathieson and Roberts reached the Terrace on the old Tough-Brown route, where the conditions became quite impossible. They were intolerable even for walking.

Some thirty members and guests set out by bus on June 19 for Blair Atholl. We made a new route through Stonehaven while the driver said a few goodbyes. After that he made good time to Blair Atholl, where we had a very inadequate meal. At 7 P.M. the bus set off again, dropping people at various points along the road from Blair Castle to Dalnaspidal, while Train and Nicol scorned a lift and set off briskly in the opposite direction.

A large number of people climbed A'Bhuidheanach Bheag and Càrn na Caim, while others went for Beinn Dearg and the Minigaig Pass. One party found a stone shelter on a shoulder of Glas Mheall Mòr and five people spent a few extremely rocky hours in comparative shelter. Never has so much manoeuvring been done by so many in so confined a space with so little result. The Hon. Editor departed in a cloud of eiderdown from a ripped sleeping bag. Incidentally, one of that party was minus boots, gas cape, and food, but he toiled manfully throughout the night without complaint. The Presidential and geological party weren't quite sure where they got to but they went a long way and came to the conclusion that the map erred. The weather clerk was not too unkind. True, we navigated for hours in mist but the morning, when we did see it, was beautiful and the journey home was completed in perfect weather.

A. F. W. A.

On July 4 the party, smaller than usual, went to Glen Isla. Practically all went over Glas Maol but two went into the Canness Glen where they encountered an unfenced bull. Rather, should I say, they

declined the encounter, pursuing a course which always provided a couple of trees within easy sprinting distance, while the animal's eyes followed their movements with evident interest. From being intermittent the rain became continuous and heavy and remained so until three o'clock. Not one of our best days.

The Skye Meet was an experiment. Was it a success? To judge by the number attending, no. But it satisfied the two acid tests of any Meet—the members present enjoyed themselves and a fair amount of climbing was done. To catalogue arrivals, climbs, and departures would be tedious. Those who were there do not need them and they mean little to others. We do not intend to describe the various visits to the Cioch, the Pinnacle, Coruisk, and Bidein. Those who have been know their wonders. To the others I say, "Go there next year."

G. G. M.

(The above appears to be a subtle plea for the abolition of this *Journal*. Our more advanced thinkers apparently favour a briefer form of publication headed: "Places to Go To." Only some ten members went to Skye; yet, six weeks later, twelve members had a C.C. evening in Zermatt. There the weather was also bad, the Meets Secretary tells me—curious how the man follows the depressions around!—and none of the parties was able to go very high. The Meets Secretary contends that this is incorrect and that he was higher than I have ever been. That still isn't very high!—ED.)

The thunderstorm which marked the end of summer week broke over Deeside in the early morning of August 1. Little rain fell in the main Cairngorm group; the Lui showed hardly any rise but the Clunie rose six feet. A second storm, centred over Ben Avon, broke on the Club party just as it was well launched on the ascent. We are asked to believe that the descent was accomplished through a sea of blue fire and that several of the party were knocked down. "Winking blue devils on every fence post," one description ran; which makes it quite evident that Smithy's gremlins were having a field day! As for the rest, there is no evidence that the word knocked is used with any precision; fell or lay is probably more accurate. These excursions from Delnadamp are becoming quite interesting.

After that we deserved and got a good day on Glas Maol and Creag Leacach on September 19, when the visibility was so good that one member, with better eyesight than the others, discovered a greenhouse on Kinnoull Hill, or thereabouts. (This, of course, has been improved upon. Three members, of whom one was the late J. A. Parker, were sitting on the summit of Griomaval looking at St Kilda, 65 miles away, when another remarked on a white object on the sea horizon away beyond the Butt of Lewis. Parker turned a keen gaze in that direction and, without a moment's hesitation, identified it as Moby Dick!) The arrangements gave ample time to wander over the tops and to descend leisurely to Spittal of Glenshee.

The excursion to Lochnagar, arranged for October 17, was diverted to Loch Lee on account of the temporary closing of the Glen Muick road. The Mounth is a rather more monotonous grind than the Fir Mounth but none of the other crossings offers a vista to compare with the view from Craig Vallich, with the foreground, at this date, a rich display of autumn colour.

The Constitution of the Club, as we have all discovered at some time, has its weaknesses—not, of course, in point of English usage; Duff attended to that! The particular flaw which has appeared in that otherwise bright gem is the absence of definition of the position and status of dogs within the Club. The Dog has been present on so many of these excursions that he must now have collected almost as many Munros as a Junior Member. Until the list, properly attested, has been engraved on his collar, nothing, I suppose, can be done. But the idea of a Canine Associate Sub-section raises fascinating possibilities. (Still, I suppose the Meets Secretary would veto it, since it would fall to him to chart all the “No Dogs Allowed” notices!)

On November 19, Sunnyside of Ellangowan (Sunny for short) again accompanied the party, this time over Ben Rinnes from Dufftown to Aberlour. A proper dog's day! Raised two hares, followed several grouse scents, and sundry other unidentified odours, found a beautiful specimen of *Peltidea canina* on the north side of the rocks and covered twice the distance really necessary. Although there is a stretch of long heather at the start, this can be avoided and the ascent must, therefore, be rated an easy day for a Dachshund! Lacking a report from any other source I thought it only fitting that The Dog should have his say.

#### JUNIOR SECTION MEET AT STEALL, GLEN NEVIS.

THE Junior Section held a Meet at Steall, Glen Nevis, from March 31 to April 7, 1948. The party included Brooker, Lyall, McConnach, Mathieson (G.), Crawford, and MacGregor (J.). A calendar of operations follows:—

April 1.—Wet. An Garbhanach.

April 2.—Binnein Beg and Mòr.

April 3.—Crawford and MacGregor to Càrn Mòr Dearg.

Brooker, Lyall, McConnach, and Mathieson to Steall Gully. A randkluft 3 feet wide and 30 feet deep was found at the last pitch, which was streaming water and appeared to be severe. An attempt to by-pass the obstacle on the left wall was found difficult and the climb was continued on the left wall to the top.

April 4.—Tower Gully—snow like rice flour.

April 5.—Sgùrr a' Mhaim.

April 6.—Aonach Beg in bad weather.

Brooker, Crawford, and McConnach came home *via* Glen Feshie and Beinn a' Ghlo. Crawford's birthday was celebrated *en route* with fireworks. (Whether Coming-of-age or Jubilee is not stated in the account.—ED.)

G. G. M.

### NEW CLIMBS.

*Central Buttress, Lochnagar.*—Central Buttress has been climbed several times in winter on its easier left flank. Recently, however, attempts have been made to follow the summer route from the bottom but all were defeated by the time factor. The most successful attempt was that by Ross and Still, on February 29, 1948, when they reached the ridge from the left about half way up. The crest was then followed to the top in two hours. Ross again climbed the buttress, with Miss Fleming, on March 2, 1948. There was then a good deal of soft snow on the lower rocks but the summer route was followed throughout. Three hours.

*Parallel Gullies: "A," Lochnagar.*—The first winter ascent was made by Ross and Still on March 28, 1948. The snow was sufficiently hard to require step cutting and although easy at first (40°), it steepened latterly to 60°. The left branch was followed as far as the final steep cliffs where they traversed to the left for about 50 feet and finished the climb over snow covered rock and then over very steep hard snow. Time five and a half hours.

*Raeburn's Gully, Lochnagar.*—On Sunday, October 5, 1947, after three unsuccessful attempts at the Wall in Raeburn's Gully, I. F. and G. A. Roberts descended for about 150 feet and climbed straight up a shallow groove to join the Tough Brown Ridge. Commencing about 100 feet above the Mound the climb is over vegetated rock for about 100 feet to a short vertical chimney, awkward to start, and over a further 100 feet of similar unsatisfactory ground. The first good belay was found here. In 10 feet a platform and belay were gained, and after a further 20 feet the groove was crossed to a stretch of broken rock which led without much difficulty to the crest of the ridge.

In its last 100 feet or so, this route is identical with the old escape route from Raeburn's. The latter ran from below the Cave Pitch across the top of the new wall pitch and then commenced to climb obliquely to the crest of the ridge. The two routes are, therefore, converging towards each other. But climbing on this wall is rendered highly unpleasant by the amount of vegetation present.

*Douglas-Gibson Gully, Lochnagar.*—The second complete ascent of the gully was made by Ian Brooker and Gordon Mathieson on May 8, 1948. The top of the hard section lies about 200 feet below the plateau and was, at this time, completely free of snow. At this point a wide, shallow groove slants up to an overhang below Eagle Ridge and from the foot of the groove the gully bends round to the left. An ascending traverse was

made to the left along a broken, sloping terrace at the end of which a steep wall was climbed at its outer edge. About 12 feet higher up a small platform is reached; the floor of this is formed by a projecting boss which may be used as a belay, perhaps insecure. Above the platform rise two parallel, vertical grooves; the left hand one was climbed by jamming a foot in it but the ascent required delicate balance. Half way up the crack widens to a chimney and the angle eases. But getting from the lower to the upper part is very hard. This section (20 feet) is the hardest part; the whole pitch is exposed and the rock in the lower part of the groove none too sound. Beyond this comes a stretch of very loose rock at a moderate angle. A chokestone forms the final pitch, short and easy.

*Tough-Brown Traverse, Lochnagar.*—Ian Brooker and A. D. Lyall made a new variation from the Terrace on May 22, 1948. Instead of climbing up from the Terrace, they descended about 30 feet in the direction of Raeburn's Gully and crossed a small gully to reach a right-angled chimney of 40 feet. The chimney is at the side of a square tower; the rock is good but there are few holds and the position is exposed. The chimney leads out below the crest of the Tough-Brown Ridge above the Terrace. The crest is gained easily and, of course, much earlier than by the original route.

*Mitre Ridge Gullies, Beinn a' Bhùird.*—As recorded in the *Climbers' Club Journal* for 1942, both these gullies were climbed in July 1942. The account does not give details but comments that they are similar in character and fairly easy. Mr Malcolm Smith sends me an account of a climb in the West Gully, which he did with J. Tewnton on September 19, 1948. The party was not then aware of any previous ascent.

The gully lies hard under the wall of the Mitre Ridge and the start is up 20 feet of slab, followed quickly by an indefinite section over large boulders. The bed of the gully is followed by water-worn slabs rock to the foot of a dark chimney cut into the Mitre Ridge wall. The route goes up a crack in the wall to the right of this chimney and then up a continuation groove past a small chokestone. This groove leads to a stance with a good belay. Above this another chimney cuts deep into the Ridge wall and a rib formed by the right wall of the chimney and a depression in the slabs to the right was followed on good holds to a stance with a small belay. A final short pitch, again up a crack in the slabs past a loose block, led to the scree at the top of the gully. The gully is about 400 feet long and the climbing was mostly on sound rock. This party thought the climb difficult, which it probably is by all ordinary standards.

*Anchor Gully, Coire Sputan Dearg.*—A number of the gullies here have been climbed but the records are fragmentary. Anchor Gully, so called from the snow formation at the bottom, lies to the right of No. 2 Buttress. At least two parties climbed the gully, on snow, on the occasion of the Club Excursion, May 1948. In summer one or two small pitches show but only the second provides any difficulty and that moderate.

*No. 1 Buttress, Coire Sputan Dearg.*—A moderately difficult climb was made on this buttress by S. R. Tewnton, W. A. Russell, and J. Tewnton on May 2, 1948. The climb starts at the foot of the buttress, up a curving groove to the left, followed by a pull up on good holds over a small overhang to a belay 15 feet above. Easy scrambling leads in 50 feet to a good stance and belay at the foot of well broken slabs which are climbed for 50 feet to a stance and belay. A right traverse across the slabs leads to a short wall (6 feet), above which an open corner was climbed direct on good holds. This pitch would be about 40 feet in all. The climbing ceases here and a scramble of 200 feet leads to the plateau.

Another route, on the same buttress, was followed in June 1948, by R. Still and J. Semple who started from the left side, about 100 feet up the open gully to the left of the buttress. A steep 100-foot pitch led up to the crest of the ridge, where an escape to the right appeared. The party continued on the ridge, however, and climbed a 50-foot slab until obliged to follow a ledge to the left. They regained the ridge by a thin chimney, very exposed. The last 150 feet provided a pleasant scramble.

*Crystal Ridge, Coire Sputan Dearg.*—This fine ridge was discovered and climbed by R. Still and Miss E. J. Lawrence in September 1948. It lies immediately to the right of No. 1 Buttress, from which it is separated by a short gully. Still farther to the right lies No. 2 Buttress, so far unclimbed. The rocks on which Crystal Ridge lies form, in fact, a wing of No. 2 Buttress.

The climb commences with 110 feet of easy angle ridge, with an alternative start up an easy crack from the gully on the left, to the first notch in the ridge. The second pitch (100 feet) is the most difficult of the climb. The ridge is followed as closely as possible and, where the holds disappear, some are to be found on the slab on the right. Another notch in the ridge provides a good belay at the top of this pitch. The third pitch is about 70 feet and the angle eases off in the middle. A shelf at the top serves as a reasonable belay. The last pitch continues over the nose above the ledge and, after 90 feet, the angle eases and scrambling follows to the top. The climb is continuously difficult and exposed and the ridge is very well defined throughout its 370 feet.

A rock fall to the left of the ridge provided the pioneers with a number of Cairngorm crystals and these suggested the name for the ridge.

*Coire Etchachan.*—On May 16, 1948, I. F. Roberts and Miss E. J. Lawrence climbed the longest of the rock ribs or ridges on Beinn Mheadhoin. This was a short, moderate climb on nice rock.

*Hell's Lum, Ben Macdhui.*—This dark cleft can be seen very well from the top of Pinnacle Gully. It lies in the centre of the higher belt of cliff to the west of the Shelter Stone Crag and is mentioned in *C.C.J.* Vol. III, p. 123. Crawford and Ian Brooker visited the Lum on October 8, 1948, but failed to complete the ascent. (An attempt by Lorimer and party some years ago was also unsuccessful.) A number of big boulders block the foot of the gully and the party chose an obvious but



stiff route up the right wall for about 80 feet. The bed of the gully contained much loose rock. About 150 feet up progress was halted by a rock face, estimated at 60 feet and unclimbable. There was no way of avoiding the obstacle, over which a considerable quantity of water poured. The face might become possible from a snow take-off.

*Brochain Slabs, Braeriach.*—Although the first ascent was made in August 1944 (by G. O. Clarke and G. W. Ross), this climb has not so far been recorded, for the reason that Ross was not at first sure where he had been! A later account, written by Still, missed out a whole pitch but it is believed that the following record is now complete and coherent. The climb lies on the slabs just to the left of the Black Pinnacle, at which level the general trend is leftwards until it becomes possible to work back to the right again, more or less on the line of the original route from the Pinnacle to the plateau.

The start is a little to the left of the lowest rocks in the corrie and there is 300 feet of moderate climbing before the Slabs are reached. Here one is faced with a slab with several cracks running up it. The climb starts from the left hand edge of the platform above the moderate section and proceeds up to the right up one of the fissures. After a run of 80 feet a small stance is reached and the second brought up. The route continues upwards for about 15 feet when one is pushed leftwards by the wall on the right. It is possible, however, to do a hand traverse across a slab to a grassy platform. About 100 feet up lies another slab, split by two cracks. The right hand one was climbed and led to yet another grassy platform.

(At this point there is a chimney going down to the left which can be used to reach West Gully. One should be careful not to continue too far down along the original line; a short climb to the right must be made to reach an easy line of descent.

On the right a chimney leads to the saddle behind Black Pinnacle. See below.)

Proceeding upwards, the party was soon forced to traverse to the left for about 80 feet. Descending slightly, the party reached a lower slab and followed it to a pulpit stance. Continuing along the slab for another 15 feet, where it ended, the party turned right and carried on up a loose depression, taking to the rocks on the right about 50 feet below the plateau and finishing some 30 yards to the right of the summit cairn.

*N. W. Chimney, Black Pinnacle, Coire Bhrochain.*—On September 18, 1948, G. W. Ross and Miss J. Fleming followed the Bhrochain Slabs route as far as the chimney leading to the saddle behind the Black Pinnacle. There are four pitches, the first easy, the second moderate (with thread belay), and the third can be turned on the right wall. (Direct ascent may not be impossible.) The fourth, it is not possible to ascend directly but a very rough slab on the left can be climbed, the main difficulty being to gain a footing on the slab. Moderate.

From the top of the Pinnacle one can proceed along the original

route to the left (*i.e.*, to the upper part of the Bhrochain Slabs climb) and reach the plateau by the depression as described in the previous climb.

*Pinnacle Ridge, Amphitheatre Gully, Hunt Hill.*—On February 6, 1949, W. G. Rodger and G. A. Roberts, while visiting the Falls of Unich, noticed a wide, deeply cut gully cleaving the Eagle's Crag on Hunt Hill. The gully is divided in two by a long central rib. The left branch ends in a steep chimney but the right has an easy exit. The rib commences steeply, eases off in the central section and finishes with a steep wall. The start is over 50 feet of steep broken rock to a platform below an overhanging wall. The overhang can be avoided on the right over a wedged block. A vegetable slope then follows to another wall which can be passed on the left. Beyond this the ridge rises in a series of small pinnacles, four in all and all rather shattered. A grassy ridge led to the final wall which was festooned with ice. An escape was found across the gully on the right. About 600 feet. Moderate.

#### STAC POLLY.

*West Face.*—The route was directed to the very prominent pinnacle seen about one third of the way up the west bastion of Stac Polly, which is entirely composed of Torridonian Sandstone. The climb started at the outmost part of the convex surface (cairn) of the hill and at the outset it is all very much go-as-you-please. On reaching the neck of the pinnacle (by a through route in the fallen rock) a good view is obtained of the western and southern faces of the mountain. The pinnacle itself is 50 feet high but the ascent was found to be unjustifiable. On the south side of the buttress of which the pinnacle is a part a shoot is seen to run up close to the wall. The gradient is not severe but foot and hand hold are scanty. The top of the shoot, level with the top of the pinnacle, is formed by an overhanging slab. The route leads up on to the top of the buttress on the climber's left. (One should resist the temptation to use a loose stone lying out on the right as foot-hold.)

A traverse along a heathery ledge, which narrows at its left end, ensues and, after a short nose of weather-beaten rock, there is a choice of routes, on which the climbing is exposed and interesting. The route was directed towards the right hand member of three featureless gullies above. At its foot the climbing is up the typical Torridon sandstone nose to a spacious platform. From here a large slab, stuck vertically in a crack, is plainly visible and easy climbing brings it within reach. Immediately above the vertical slab, which wobbles in its crack but is perfectly safe, another slab is seen extending 20 feet up without vestige of foot or hand hold. This problem was solved by jamming two stones in a crack on the right of the slab, one at a height within reach of the right foot and the other, rather larger, as high as one can reach. Some strong pulling and hand traversing bring the leader up to a good stance.

The rest of the climb is a traverse out to the right and round a corner to what appears to be a cave. On reaching this feature one can squeeze through the farther end of it to reach the top only a few yards from the summit cairn.

Time—Two and a half hours. Grading—Difficult. Height—600 feet.

First Ascent—September 28, 1948. (Not new throughout.)

Party—A. D. Lyall, G. G. Mathieson, and D. S. McCannach.

A. D. L.

### MOUNTAIN RESCUE.

MEMBERS of the Mountain Rescue Service which was organized under the auspices of the Mountain Rescue Committee at the request of the Association of Scottish Climbing Clubs, to operate in the Lochnagar and Cairngorm area and comprising members of the Cairngorm and Etchachan Clubs, together with other local volunteers, have been out three-times since the last issue of the *Journal*. The first two calls were to Lochnagar in the autumn of 1947, one to a benightment on Eagle Ridge and the other to bring an injured climber out of Parallel Gully "A." Both tasks were carried out during the night following the incident and the parties concerned were off the cliffs before daybreak. The third call was to search for a girl reported missing on Beinn a' Bhùird in May 1948. The first party out from Aberdeen met her returning near the top of Glen Slugain. This is not the only instance in Scotland recently of parties being called out for simple benightment following loss of way on easy ground, and it is questionable whether immediate search is necessary in such cases—unless the weather conditions or other factors justify it. In an instance in Glencoe recently, a member of the search party was drowned while the person involved returned safely.

An avalanche on Sgòr Mòr, near Glen Clunie Lodge, which led to injury to four climbers was dealt with by members of their party without calling on other than medical assistance. The occurrence of this accident following the Clova incident reported in the last issue of the *Journal* emphasizes the care necessary on unconsolidated snow on the steeper slopes of these apparently easy hills.

These incidents have all had unwarranted and, as has now come to be expected, completely and, it would sometimes appear, deliberately erroneous reports in the more sensational of our daily and weekly papers. They are doubtless pursuing the policy of giving the public what they think they ought to read rather than the truth.

A notice for exhibition in hotels, hostels, police stations, and other appropriate points throughout the area has been prepared, stating that the Mountain Rescue Service may be called by notifying the police, and giving the location of first aid equipment.

Volunteers for service in search and rescue parties should send their names, addresses, and telephone numbers, if any, to Dr R. L. Mitchell, 75 Cranford Road, Aberdeen (Telephone No. 35916), who has been reappointed.

R. L. M.

**AVALANCHE IN RAEBURN'S GULLY.**

At the Club Excursion to Lochnagar on February 13, 1949, four members entered Raeburn's Gully about mid-day. Although the leading party (Hendry and Still) had thought that the snow which had fallen some days before would have put the gully out of condition, they found the snow in splendid order and decided to continue. Mathieson (G.) and Anton followed soon afterwards. The leading party climbed the ice pitch in one and a half hours (using a piton as a running belay), and had reached the top of this section about 2 P.M. At this point a small fall of snow from Pinnacle Gully No. 1 suggested a thaw on the upper part of the mountain and this was borne out by the condition of the snow now encountered. Retreat was contemplated but abandoned in favour of an almost immediately attainable escape on to the Tough-Brown Ridge. (This could have been accomplished in ten minutes and seemed, therefore, safer than retreat which was attended by the risk of the party being caught by a fall of snow while descending the ice pitch.) Accordingly, Hendry commenced to cut steps upwards but, soon afterwards, the cornice, which was about 200 feet above and not overhanging, sloughed off, and growing in size and momentum, was sufficient to sweep Hendry off although he had previously driven his axe well in. Still, who was well belayed, momentarily checked the fall but was dragged off when the rope belay ( $\frac{3}{8}$  inch nylon) broke his axe; both went down with the avalanche to fetch up on the scree fan of the gully within 3 feet of each other. Still was quite uninjured; Hendry was less fortunate but able to walk off the hill.

Anton, who was nearing the top of the ice pitch and who had clipped a Karabiner on to the piton inserted by the first party, was at once dislodged by the avalanche. Mathieson was safely out of harm's way in a cave with a good axe belay and he was able to bring Anton to a stop at the full extent of his rope (120 feet,  $1\frac{1}{4}$  inch nylon). Piton and Karabiner were found later on the rope; the 8 inch ice piton had broken. Anton had apparently suffered injury and was unable to climb down; Mathieson's hands suffered from friction of the rope. Anton's injuries were not so serious as was at first feared, but having been lowered to the bottom of the gully, he was then carried to Allt-na-guibhsaich.

It was fortunate that an R.A.F. Mountain Rescue team from Kinloss was in the area and their aid was enlisted; this splendidly efficient unit was wholly responsible for the rapid evacuation of the injured man. (Certain members of the Club who were on the spot also assisted in various ways.) The avalanche was presumably due to the rapid thaw which, unknown to the climbers, was in progress on the plateau. In the unusual circumstances, it does not appear that the climbers could have done anything to alter the course of events. The incident, however, emphasises, once again, that Scottish avalanches are dangerous, a fact not yet generally appreciated. The Press was not informed, not because

there was any mountaineering blunder to cover up but because the sensational treatment of such incidents by some newspapers not only brings undesirable publicity to the victims but also presents a distorted impression of mountaineering to the public.

W. A. E.

#### CRAMPONS TO LEND.

Mr William Malcolm has placed in the custody of the Honorary Editor a pair of crampons (8-point, in good condition) to be lent to any member visiting the Alps, Caucasus, Himalaya, etc., free of charge and without material security. Intending borrowers must call and collect; the Editor refuses to contemplate despatch by post!

#### BOOKS AND JOURNALS.

"A Camera in the Cairngorms," by W. A. Poucher. (Chapman and Hall, 1947; 21s.). This book is a photographic record of one brief spring visit to the area. Considered as such, it will be judged by those familiar with the Cairngorms as a remarkable achievement. It is not easy, in this country, due to our changeable climate, to secure good mountain photographs in a limited time and the difficulty is much increased in the Cairngorms where distances are so vast and where the landscape is, in general, rather devoid of dramatic view-points and striking mountain vistas. That the author should be able to select and present ninety three representative plates is a tribute to his enthusiasm and physical energy. But this is a comparatively expensive publication by a well known author and photographer, from whom readers might rightly expect a certain standard. The book, therefore, must be judged impartially and objectively; credit is not necessarily due for a certain triumph over a self imposed handicap, which, in fact, deprives the area of the detailed and selective treatment merited by it.

The various excursions are dealt with in texts which are commendably brief but direct and informative. The photographic quality is rather variable, some of the views, *e.g.*, that of the Lairig Ghru from Rothiemurchus, being most attractive but others are comparatively mediocre and, in many cases, lack of sharpness is very obvious, especially in some of the cliff photographs in which climbers expect good definition. This defect spoils the rather distorted picture of the Lochnagar cliff, Plate 8. Though the book could hardly be said to add anything to the many fine works dealing with the area nor to be of much direct use to climbers, especially those already familiar with the mountain mass, it does, nevertheless, present under one cover a useful and pleasing collection of views, not only of well known mountain aspects but also of minor and interesting features of the glens and foothills. A remarkable and

frank analysis of the photographic technique is given in three pages of notes dealing with every plate. From this it is seen that a Leica is used throughout. Strangely, for the class of work, a wide angle lens has been employed on twenty-one occasions, introducing, in some cases, noticeable distortion; a long focus lens has never been used. For all but four exposures a  $\times 5$  orange filter was fitted. It might have been an advantage to carry an additional and lighter filter. Though Mr Poucher does not emphasise his choice of a Leica, it may be as well to point out to aspiring photographers that a larger (and cheaper) camera does also have certain distinct advantages for mountain photography in black and white.

G. A. T.

“Mountaineering in Scotland,” by W. H. Murray. (Dent, 1947; 18s.) It is late in the day to be commenting on this book which many members will have already read and enjoyed. The book deals exclusively with climbing in Scotland and the emphasis is rather on the winter aspect. While the western hills figure largely in the text, the area covered is fairly wide and the matter is well arranged and nicely balanced. In the main, it is a vivid narrative of the author’s experiences on some of the hardest problems the Scottish mountains have to offer. But action is here skilfully blended with comments on the purpose and value of climbing and with a deep appreciation of mountain beauty. The author’s attitude to climbing is wholly admirable; while he endeavours to make converts to climbing he knows the value of hill walking, not only as a preliminary training but as an end in itself. Even those who do not aspire to more than this will find the book absorbing, and some may even try the experiment of a night walk over the tops, though they may draw the line at high camping in winter!

Although the author’s preference appears to be for the Glencoe and Nevis climbs, perhaps because they generally carry more ice in winter and, therefore, provide harder problems, he ranges over most of Scotland, except the north-west. Four chapters are devoted to summer climbing in Skye and one to Arran. Members will find two chapters of special interest—The First Ascent of Parallel Buttress, Lochnagar and Cairngorm Blizzard. Parallel Buttress is not one of the most striking features of the Lochnagar cliff; it is narrow and rather insignificant in contrast with its larger and more impressive neighbours. Its smooth black slabs—usually glistening wet—are rather repellent but these fell fairly easily and the difficulties were concentrated in one relatively short section on which pitons were used. The caption to the illustration accompanying this chapter is misleading; the buttress is not directly above the snow patch but well to the right of it; in fact, it is not in the picture, which shows the Shadow Buttresses.

Cairngorm Blizzard presents very vividly a five-hour journey from Devil’s Point to Braeriach in the teeth of a storm. In discussing the dangers and difficulties of proceeding in such conditions Mr Murray gives his reasons for continuing. But the truth surely is, as he himself

says in another context, "Who rides on the back of a tiger cannot get off!" Even with local knowledge it would be far from easy to hit off any of the easier ways down into Garbh Choire in a blizzard. At what point it becomes wise to retreat in the face of bad weather must always be a difficult decision and one can sympathise with Mr Murray's companion who suggested a return to Corroun with the wind behind them. It is possible that, as the author says, the Corroun might become a death-trap in a prolonged blizzard but there is surely no evidence to suggest that Baird and Barrie were weakened by their stay at Corroun. It was not, as Mr Murray implies, an enforced stay (three nights), and presumably they felt confident that they could reach Glen Einich over Braeriach, instead of returning, as they had come, by Lairig Ghru. The day was perfect but, in the late afternoon, a storm blew up from the south and raged for some hours with great severity even at 1,000 feet. Whatever the reason, the climbers were apparently still on the plateau when the storm broke and the disaster is sufficiently explained by the fact that the climbers were not wearing clothing adequate to withstand the effects of such a blizzard. A similar explanation accounts for the loss of Ferrier and Mackenzie on Cairngorm after spending "a comfortable night at the (Shelter) Stone." The case for or against taking refuge at either place cannot well be decided on these instances alone since neither party chose to return by the easiest route. It is worth noting also that in at least one of these cases (and probably in both) the wind was *behind* the climbers. That I have dwelt on these points is due simply to the fact that we have here the most difficult problem that the winter mountaineer in the Cairngorms has to face, and it is not just a matter of a sufficiency of clothes. Mr Murray does not, of course, underestimate the difficulties and the general picture here presented is very realistic indeed. It is this gift of vivid portrayal of a climbing situation or of a glimpse of mountain beauty that lifts this book above the average. So many climbers, when they come to write, walk upon wooden legs!

W. A. E.

"Mountains of Memory," by Arnold Lunn. (Hollis & Carter, 1948; 15s.) Information regarding mountains can be obtained either from the standard guide books or from the personal narratives which are to be found in most mountaineering libraries. A guide book has the advantage, if it is an advantage, of covering its prescribed area in detail, whilst the other roams, just as did the earliest writers of books of this type, such as Mummery or Stephen, from one mountain group to another. But if such books are read intelligently, with each mountain located and each route followed from an appropriate map or picture, then probably more is learned regarding the particular ascents being discussed. Personal experience, the trivial incident at the hut, the little point which is crowded out of the all embracing guide, all make books such as Lunn's "Mountains of Memory" worth reading by prospective climbers or skiers, as well, of course, as by those whose

own memories are stirred by the names of Concordia, Theodule, or Scheidegg. But for a book to be of lasting use for such a purpose, an index is a necessity, since the list of books to be consulted grows everlonger and this is in all other respects a valuable addition. R. L. M.

"The Mountains of Snowdonia," by H. R. C. Carr and G. A. Lister. (Crosby, Lockwood & Son Ltd., 1948; 15s.) This admirable book returns to fill a gap in many of our bookshelves. To many of the younger generation its existence was unsuspected. What enjoyment it adds to our climbing to meet in retrospect the famous climbers of the past, squirming and scratching up the same climbs we find strenuous to-day! To read about the days when all climbers knew each other by their christian names—when chronicles composed during the day were read on the floor of the smoking room at night—when Pen y Pass, Pen y Gwyrd, and Ogwen Cottage were thronged with sideboards and alpenstocks, and when Owen of Pen y Pass could turn out the smartest pair-and-brake in Wales (the only transport). There have been many changes in the last thirty years, as this book relates, and mountaineering is now truly the sport of the proletariat.

This book returns at a time when North Wales is again becoming, after a period of stagnation, perhaps the main centre of modern rock climbing technique in Britain and focuses attention on the effect environment has had upon it. Wales is coming back into the limelight by virtue of the great number of climbers who climb there. A new chapter by "Nully" Kretschmer brings the book up to the end of the late war. Modern transport has made Wales available to everybody in the Midlands and has made it the climbing ground of the London mountaineers. To-day there are a number of climbing huts and more are being opened.

In 1927 Fred Piggott led the first serious route on Clogwyn du'r Arddu, which to-day has eleven superb routes of severe or harder standard. They are long, up to 500 feet, and of such a serious nature as to require careful consideration before tackling. But to-day, as Kretschmer points out, the focus of attention has shifted to the Llanberis valley where are found, close to some of the earliest climbs, the hardest routes in Wales. The guide book to this valley, to be issued soon, contains 130 climbs, most of a hard standard.

The photos are good while the remaining chapters cover almost every aspect of Snowdonia. To the climber who intends visiting Wales this book is a "must," and to all others a pleasant bedside companion.

D. T.

"The Western Highlands": S.M.C. Guide; 3rd Edition, 1947; 10s. 6d.

"The Island of Skye": S.M.C. Guide; 2nd Edition, 1948; 12s. 6d.

We welcome the first two post-war S.M.C. Guides, which have now been published. The revision of these is in both cases slight, and their



object is obviously to satisfy new demands rather than to replace the editions already on older climbers' shelves. The Western Highlands Guide has the bibliography brought up to date and some of the recent climbs on Garbh Bheinn of Ardgour included, whilst the main change in the text of the Skye Guide is an enlarged appendix of new climbs. In both instances several new photographs are included, but in each the reviewer has noticed the separation of diagram and photograph previously printed face to face, a change the reason for which is difficult to see. The maps of the earlier editions are no longer included and in their place are end-plate sketches. That in the Skye Guide is rather unconventional both as regards orthography and cartography, unless it be that Alaisdair has indeed slipped into the Tearlach (*sic*)—Dubh Gap!

The standard of production is high and these volumes, which are excellent value in present conditions, serve to increase the impatience with which we await the Rock Climbing Guide to Glencoe and Ardgour, and the Southern Highlands Guide, two new publications which are promised in a few months' time.

R. L. M.

*Alpine Journal*, Vol. LVI, Nos. 274, 275, and 276. Our members will probably turn first to Prof. H. W. Turnbull's article, "My Friends the Mountains" in No. 274 to read more of the reminiscences which entertained us at our 1947 Annual Dinner. Many of the papers in this number in fact deal with historical topics, into this category falling the Valedictory Address of L. S. Amery, Lord Malcolm Douglas Hamilton's "Introduction to the Hills," "English Travellers in the Graians," by Michael Roberts, and articles on Mont Blanc and the Nushik La. A welcome change is A. M. Carr-Saunders's "An Alpine Artist: Francis Unwin," or "On Top of Egypt," the story of the fifth ascent of Shayib el-Banat—the "Old Man of the Girls"—in the twenty-one years since its first ascent.

"Six Months on the Abruzzi Apennines," by T. A. H. Peacock in No. 275, is another of the articles on climbing in out of the way spots for which we must thank the recent war. It is in fact remarkable how often climbers found themselves in just such areas. A timely article is that of Gerald Seligman on "Snowcraft and Avalanches," well illustrated by photographs and sketches of typical snow forms. In "Old Friends and New Huts," E. H. Peck takes us back to the Alps, in fact to the tops around Zermatt, describing the use of ski in this area in early summer. Other articles discuss Alaska and the Karakorams, whilst H. H. Hardy's "Humble Pie" ranges from Skye to Randa, Wasdale Head to Everest, before turning briefly to mountaineering books and films and the *gaffes* therein.

In No. 276, Lord Malcolm Douglas Hamilton describes the courses on mountaineering being run at Glen More Lodge. The policy of the C.C.P.R. is to encourage all facets of outdoor activities, not solely mountaineering, as the popular press would lead us to believe. These

courses would appear to be very successful: whether organized courses in mountaineering are really desirable is quite another matter. It is good to find something new from Eric Shipton, and "The Arch," an account of the search for a cleft mountain with an aperture 1,000 feet high and about 200 feet wide is an admirable account of the unexplored terrain in the Kashgar area. Bryan Donkin was in Czecho-Slovakia in 1947 and gives an excellent idea of a holiday in the Tatra. C. A. Elliot compares ascents of the Dent Blanche from the Col de Zinal in 1928 and 1947, whilst in addition to several other articles there are no fewer than 20 pages devoted to "In Memorial" notices in an excellent number which would appear to include more accounts of new expeditions than has recently been the case.

*Climber's Club Journal*, Vol. VIII, Nos. 2 and 3. 1947 and 1948. One lack which has long been apparent in our own and most other climbing journals has been the absence of imaginative humour, either in factual or fictional form. Thus Kemball-Cook's account in the 1947 number, of the Ascent of the Beispielspitz (our old friend from the Badminton "Mountaineering") is all the more welcome, with such delightful incidents as that of the fleas deserting the leading guide from the Kartoffelthal as he crosses the ice-glazed couloir. Articles of Scottish interest are those by J. Cortlandt-Simpson and Wilfrid Noyce, the former describing snow and ice climbing in the Glencoe and Nevis areas. New climbs in these areas are described in the notes, whilst among the illustrations is one of the first ascent of Suicide Wall.

The 1948 *Journal* marks the 50th anniversary of the foundation of the Club and we take this opportunity of sending our congratulations, wondering at the same time if it is to ourselves or to the S.M.C. that Geoffrey Winthrop Young refers as the first island Club? Amongst the general articles in this 180 page issue is a "Letter from Chamonix" by Richard Meyer, and "Alpine Skylines" by J. H. E. Jones.

R. L. M.

*Scottish Mountaineering Club Journal*, Vol. XXIV, No. 139, 1948. This number offers varied fare with articles on Rum and Harris (the latter by E. C. W. Rudge) and, in "Mountain Howffs" some suggestions by J. B. Nimlin for overcoming the Hut shortage. I recall reading, in the Shelter Stone Visitors' Book, Mr Nimlin's rather unfavourable comments on the Stone as a haven for the night; presumably those described offer none of the discomforts which he experienced at the Shelter Stone. The article is illustrated by a good photograph of a snow cave. There is an interesting short note on the formation of Wind Slab, and another brief account of a climb on Creag Herrich (Glen Isla). Both this issue and its predecessor reflect the great developments taking place in climbing in Scotland.

W. A. E.

*The M.A.M. Journal*, Vol. II, No. 1, 1947. The first number of this enlarged *Journal* (previously the Bulletin of the Midland Association of Mountaineers) contains a review of climbing areas in Scotland by J. H. B. Bell in which the author's opinion regarding the pre-eminence of Eagle Ridge, Lochnagar over other steep ridge climbs in Scotland must give some satisfaction to our members as we feel Lochnagar to be our home territory. Other interesting articles include the account of a beginner's ascent of Castor and an ascent of the north wall of the Langkofel.

*The Rucksack Club Journal*, Vol. XI, No. 1, 1948. An article on the new generation of climbers is illustrated by one of our own members on Lot's Groove and includes some remarks on the Tarbuck system of rope management. Three Alpine articles comprise the bulk of the general portion of this excellent *Journal* which also includes extensive sections dealing with Club affairs and new climbs. This Club, like several others, holds monthly meetings indoors throughout the year, and there seems every justification for our own programme of indoor meetings being considerably extended, judging by the variety of topics which the Rucksack Club find it possible to include.

*Yorkshire Ramblers' Club Journal*, Vol. VII, No. 24, 1947. Much of the activity of this Club is devoted to pot-holing, a sport almost unknown to us, although we fear that it may result in one ending the day in a state only too similar to that produced by too close acquaintance with one of our better peat bogs. The accounts of cave exploration in this *Journal*, however, make good reading, whilst other articles deal with South African and Swiss topics.

*Journal of the Mountain Club of South Africa*, No. 50, 1947.  
*Wierchy: Annual of the Polish Tatra Society*, Vol. XIII, 1948.  
We congratulate the Mountain Club of South Africa on the 50th issue of its *Journal* and the Polish Tatra Society on celebrating the 75th year of its existence. Both *Journals* are welcome additions to our library, which cannot hope to be of use to members unless exchanges with clubs in other countries are established and maintained.

*American Alpine Journal*. It is with pleasure that we report the resumption of the exchange of *Journals* between the American Alpine Club and ourselves. A substantial number of back numbers have been received and our set now lacks only Vol. II, No. 1 and Vol. III, No. 2. The four most recent numbers are characterised by a freshness and originality absent in many recent British Climbing *Journals*. No. 18, for instance, takes us over the Mountains of Iceland and Tolosa in the Argentine as well as discussing at length the Kinetic Theory of Mountain-Building. No. 19 is a special war number with accounts of mountain operations and of mountain equipment. The article in No. 20 on Dynamic Posture—an account of the relation of anatomy to climbing—

will no doubt interest at least our medical members. In No. 21 a son of the leader of the Swiss Expedition of 1930 writes on the chances of climbing Kangchenjunga, and there is an article on the formation of corries which must arouse interest, since we must thank corrie formation for the existence of most of the climbable rock in the Cairngorms. The notes and adequate reviews in all numbers are of great interest: so too are the Annals of the Club being published in serial form—their honorary members included our first two Honorary Presidents.

R. L. M.

“In the High Grampians,” by Richard Perry. (Lindsay Drummond, 1948; 15s.) This is a naturalist’s account of a two years’ stay at Drumguish in Glen Tromie, in the south-west corner of the Cairngorm area. Most of the observations cover the valleys and the lower tops, although the trail of the dotterel and the snow bunting led to the 4,000-foot plateau west of the Lairig Ghru. To the hill-walker the difficulties of covering the high tops are no doubt exaggerated, but this is no fault when writing for those lacking hill experience. The book does serve to remind the climber just how unobservant he is, for seldom does he notice even those birds or beasts whose identity he should have the ability to recognise as he passes through these to him dreary stretches which, in our area, separate the road and the rock.

The author’s main interest is ornithological: crested tit, crossbill, greenshank, dotterel, snow bunting, as well as commoner birds from goldcrest, siskin, redstart to swan, capercaillie or eagle, all find their place among the 92 different species mentioned—several of which are unfortunately no longer found in the area. Mammals, insects and plants are also dealt with, whilst space is found to mention items such as the Gaick accident and Landseer’s bothy.

The book is one which can be whole-heartedly recommended to our members, not only for the text but also for the illustrations, particularly those of Robert M. Adam and Eric Hosking.

R. L. M.