

NEW CLIMBS

BEINN A' BHUIRD: GARBH CHOIRE

Squareface Buttress.—330 feet (V.D.). T. W. Patey and J. M. Taylor, July 1953. On the west wall (hidden from below) of the prominent crag high up between the Sneck and the Mitre Ridge. This wall, apparently a steep, holdless slab, is in fact remarkably rough with many small holds, and provides a delightful climb which has been repeated at least twice. From foot of Back Bay Gully on right of buttress, climb 110 feet to large platform, then 30 feet up crest to stance below overhang. Move horizontally 30 feet to right on small holds, beyond first obvious groove, until possible to move up and back to left to platform on crest (90 feet). Now steeply up to right to short horizontal crack (awkward move) with running belay, then 6 feet to fissure, climbed for 12 feet by jamming, shelf to right and delicate upward traverse to top.

Mitre Ridge (cf. S.M.C. "Cairngorms Guide," p. 243). W. D. Brooker and T. W. Patey, April 2, 1953. First ascent in winter conditions. Four and a half hours. Climb plastered with snow, with some ice. Initial slab passed on right. First chimney, heavily iced, turned by wide crack on right, with return traverse. First wall (10 feet) on crest required combined tactics. At first tower the party crossed slab to left and climbed 20 foot open chimney (crux). Pitch to neck behind tower less difficult but longer. A 30 foot traverse of a slab led to ascent of second tower, followed by impressive snow-mantled arête to the summit.

Mitre Ridge: East Wall.—500 feet (at least Severe). T. W. Patey and A. G. Nicol, March 31, 1954. On the left of the east face of Mitre Ridge an obvious 500 foot shallow gully (South-east Gully) leads straight up to the finish of the ridge. The route follows this gully for 200 feet, then graduates right to join the ordinary route at the top of the second tower (start of level section of ridge). A fine winter route, under any conditions at least severe, but possibly not good climbing in summer. Initial 80 foot pitch on snow ice, then easier slopes to second pitch. A sudden thaw at this point forced the party to leave the gully for a direct ascent of the right wall. To right over indefinite ground to foot of ice couloir. (A chimney to col between first and second towers looked too hard and was passed.) The couloir gave 60 feet of severe ice to a belay just beyond an awkward tilt. Twenty feet higher a break in the right wall led to an exposed nose. Beyond this a 12 foot descent revealed a wide 20 foot chimney, not iced but severe. Above, broken ground to top of second tower and ordinary route. Three hours.

Back Bay Gully (cf. C.C.J., 16, 288). T. W. Patey, J. M. Taylor, G. B. Leslie and A. G. Nicol, March 31, 1954. First ascent in winter conditions. Forty-five minutes. No pitches but steepening to 70° below the cornice. Exit on the left.

BEINN A' BHUIRD: COIRE NA CICHE

The Trident.—300 feet (V.D.). A. Thom and Miss E. Gordon; F. Malcolm and Miss S. Anderson, June 28, 1953. On the most southern end of the cliffs; cairn. Climb rib set against wall to sloping platform tapering to right, to wall

(8 feet, crux) climbed with piton safeguard by combined tactics in stocking soles. A slab is now climbed for 20 feet, then left traverse to flake belay. Directly up from belay, using pressure holds, to vertical wall: traverse to right to 30 feet slab of easy angle then 75 feet over tumbled blocks.

This climb has been repeated in nails, without combined tactics—still V.D.

BEINN A' BHUIRD: COIRE AN DUBH LOCHAIN

Polypody Groove (cf. S.M.C. "Cairngorms Guide," p. 240). J. Hay, March 28, 1954. First ascent in winter conditions. Three and a half hours. Lower portion filled with old hard snow. Above the ledge the route followed a series of snow-covered ledges to an ice pitch (30 feet) leading to a snow patch on the left of the summer route. The top 100 feet of May Day route was not climbed because of a thick covering of brittle ice, an exit being made on snow to the left of the cornice. Excellent snow conditions.

Tarsier Variation: May Day Route (cf. S.M.C. "Cairngorms Guide," p. 240). 270 feet (D.). J. Hay and A. Paterson, May 23, 1954. Start along a narrow depression on the crest of May Day rib, to the left of which the original route runs. In 150 feet, a small belay at the foot of the slanting shelf on the right wall of the rib is reached. The next portion on the wall requires a run out of 120 feet, the shelf being followed to a short slab, tackled on the right, and thence along to a 10 foot chimney. The climb finishes on the easier upper buttress. Fresh snow covered many of the holds on the first ascent.

BRAERIACH: GARBH CHOIRE MOR

She-Devil's Buttress.—400 feet (V.D.). K. Winram and M. Smith, May 24, 1953. This buttress forms the right retaining wall of Great Gully. Start at foot of long tail of slab-ribs forming low wall. Easy but delightful for 150 feet to steep main section at spearhead of rock set under the lower of two vicious-looking high-angled slabs. At the top of spearhead climb left-hand crack on lower slab till it peters out on the smooth face over Great Gully. A delicate long stride to left followed by an upward move to easier rock leads to a crack between the two slabs. This crack leads to a magnificent eyrie with table top block belay. The wall behind is vertical and very difficult. At first good footholds, but sketchy handholds. Trend to left into a groove where difficulties ease, with belay in 30 feet. Then to open corner on left, over Great Gully, and wet slab back to crest and easy rock.

Egyptian Fantasy.—350 feet (D.). K. Winram and C. Petrie; G. R. Greig and M. Smith, June 14, 1953. Sphinx is bounded on left by a narrow gully climbed by A. Tewnton in 1940. To left of this gully is a tapering buttress divided by a huge slabby right-angled recess. The left side is composed of ribs and shallow grooves. The route lies on a sheet of slab on the right, with a curving crest. Start slightly to right of recess, straight up for 40 feet, then right traverse and exposed upward move to crest over gully. Easy to platform of piled blocks below vertical wall at head of recess. Choice of routes to top of wall. Either a severe exposed move out to left with long stride followed by crack, or little chimney on gully wall. Then steep moderate rib for 80 feet to plateau.

BRAERIACH: COIRE BROCHAIN

Azalea Rib.—250 feet (D.). K. Winram, C. Petrie and M. Smith, June 28, 1953. Small buttress forming left wall of West Gully. Route follows line of least resistance, up lowest rocks to right on smooth slabs to platform and belay. Then left traverse and high step to shelf on right side of buttress, narrowing to difficult mossy corner. Double back up grassy gully to nick in ridge, then on slabs on left of buttress to final very steep wall. Short descent to left and narrow chokestone chimney.

LOCHNAGAR

Black Spout Pinnacle, Route II.—(H.S.). T. W. Patey and J. M. Taylor, February 28, 1953. Not a winter ascent. From extreme left end of large grassy expanse above entrance to the Left-hand Branch a long narrow chimney provides a 100 foot pitch to short ridge on the upper cliff (cf. *S.M.C.J.*, 23, 32). Descent of 20 feet on other side at top of long crack leading 300 feet down to the Springboard. Traverse 50 feet to steep groove, severe exposure with running belay, over a steep smooth slab with barely adequate holds on wall above, with some ice on the holds. Stocking soles. An ascent of 20 feet in the groove led to a good platform from which Route I was joined in 60 feet and which marked the end of serious difficulties.

Eagle Ridge. T. W. Patey and T. D. Bourdillon (A.C.), December 5, 1953. Second direct winter ascent, in difficult conditions with heavy powder snow (cf. *C.C.J.*, 16, 281).

Shadow Chimney (cf. *C.C.J.*, 16, 281). F. Malcolm and D. Ritchie, November 22, 1952. First ascent under winter conditions. Seven hours.

The winter ascent of the Stack, described elsewhere in this number, was made on November 29, 1952, by J. M. Taylor, G. B. Leslie and T. L. Fallowfield. A description of the first ascent will be found in the preceding number (*C.C.J.*, 16, 285).

CREAG AN DUBH LOCH

Bower Buttress.—350 feet (V.D.). L. Lovat and T. W. Patey; W. D. Brooker and C. D. Thomson, April 17, 1954. Route on upper cliffs lies on face which forms left wall of the Hanging Garden. It follows the left of two lines of weakness and is close to the prominent edge of this wall. After a succession of short pitches, at mid height the left end of a lofty terrace paved with granite rock plaques is reached. Along this and right up a short wall to a grassy ledge. Hidden chimney leads to easier ground and choice of routes. Adequate belays and fine situations, but somewhat vegetated.

CAENLOCHAN GLEN: CRAIG HERRICH

Photogenic Rib.—600 feet (D.). A. G. N. Flew and G. McAndrew, May 18, 1952. Half climbing, half scrambling, rather artificial. Start 45 feet right of original route (*S.M.C.* "Cairngorms Guide," p. 63), up slabs to grassy rake

sloping to left. Traverse along ledge to right to arête which names climb. From upper end, scrambling and two further selected arêtes lead to original route. This route proved rather lengthy for a club excursion.

MAOILE LUNNDAIDH, MONAR: CREAG TOLL A' CHOIN

Mica Ridge.—300 feet (D.) Adam Watson and A. Watson, sen., May 15, 1954. From floor of corrie a steep continuous cliff with much vegetation is on left. The climb is first definite ridge to right of this wall. Snow led to lowest rocks, then upward traverse over grassy ledges to vertical wall and lone groove leading to exposed corner on right. Left up short wall, along crest, up groove and wall to knife-edge. A snow comb and 12 foot cornice completed the climb. Good belays on clean mica schist on steeper sections.

Adam Watson reports on the possibilities of further climbs in the Strathfarrar area as follows: Most of the cliffs were examined with binoculars. Nearly all are broken and there is much vegetation. The "almost unbroken precipitous face" of Sgurr na Muice (S.M.C. "Western Highlands Guide," p. 105) is of this nature. The face of Sgurr na Fearstaig, farther north, appeared steeper and cleaner. On the cliffs of Toll a' Choin there are probably no faces really free of vegetation.

There would appear to be some confusion regarding the naming of Maoile Lunndaidh. On O.S. sheet 36 and in the "Western Highlands Guide" the mountain is so named, Toll a' Choin being the eastern corrie; but in Munro's Tables, Creag Toll a' Choin is the mountain with Maoile Lunndaidh one of its tops.

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The name, She-Devil's Buttress, was suggested, reports Mr Malcolm Smith, by Richard Parry's reference to the Garbh Coire of Braeriach as the Hollow of the She-Devil ("In the High Grampians," p. 123). This in its turn was presumably inspired by Pit an Deamhain (*vide* Seton Gordon, "The Cairngorm Hills of Scotland," p. 70).

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Mr A. G. Duthie draws attention to the translation which he gives for Beinn Nuis, namely The Hill of the Fawns, which differs greatly from The Face Mountain, the rendering given in the S.M.C. Islands Guide. Mr Duthie's authority is local usage, based on information obtained in Arran.