

The Sunday outing to the Monadhliaths was popular and enjoyed good weather—until about 4 P.M., when a snowstorm started, and several inches were lying in Glen Banchor as the bus returned to Newtonmore. Fortunately the storm was fairly local, and the journey to Aberdeen was made in better time than seemed probable. Some members question the justification for such long-distance day excursions, but the support they receive is often better than for the more local trips.

The midsummer excursion to Bridge of Orchy found the hills enveloped in mist, but the night-time navigation over Beinn a' Chreachain, Beinn Achaladair, Beinn an Dothaidh, and Beinn Mhanach was generally satisfactory—more than can be said for the attempts to find the col leading to Beinn Dorain after daylight! However, all the party were up to time for a good breakfast at the Royal Hotel, Tyndrum.

The hills around Spittal of Muick were busy on September 4, 1955, for the final excursion of this report, for our colleagues of the Moray Mountaineering Club were also there. After the long dry spell rocks were in good condition, and although the time limit kept members off the more difficult climbs, they were able to watch, for instance, the first ascent of the Black Spout Pinnacle from its base.

FARTHER AFIELD

MILLICENT and Hamish McArthur and Margaret Munro were in Jugoslavia and the San Martino area of the Dolomites in August 1954. After some days lazing in the sun and lotus-eating in Venice and on the island of Rab off the Dalmatian coast, they summoned up enough energy to head north to the Julian Alps. From Zlatarog on Lake Bohinj they crossed this range, climbing Triglav (2,863 m.), the highest peak in Jugoslavia, and staying in the Vodnikova Koca and Dom Planica huts. These huts were very good, and generally food and hotels were cheap, the people most friendly, and the language impossible. Some knowledge of German is a great advantage, as the Jugoslavs find English as difficult as we find Serbo-Croat.

Unfortunately the weather broke badly, so after some days of thick mist and heavy rain they fled west to San Martino di Castrozza in the hope of better conditions. Ascents were made of the Rosetta, Cimon della Pala, Dente del Cimon, and Pala di San Martino. The last was made more exciting by a blizzard which started as the party began the descent, leaving vivid memories of a hair-raising abseil on an iced rope.

Gordon McAndrew was in the Hohe Tauern with an Austrian Alpine Club party in July 1954. The climbing was restricted by heavy snowfalls. From the Warnsdorfer Hut the Sonntagkopf was attempted in a snowstorm, then the Krimmler Torl was crossed to the Kursinger Hut. After three days' snow the weather allowed ascents of the Schwarzes Hornl, the Gross Venediger, and Kleine Venediger in deep new snow by the ordinary route, the Keeskogel, and a traverse of the Grosser Geiger by the north-east face and north ridge with descent by the ordinary west ridge.

The Editor went first, late in July 1954, to Fafler Alp in the Lotschental, where, with a Swiss geologist friend, who was equipped with a guide and a porter to carry the specimens, the ridges of the Petersgrat gave good scrambling for a few days.



July 1954

GROSS VENEDIGER FROM NORTH

G. M. McAndrew

Then a conveniently placed granite outcrop near the summit justified the snow walk up Ebnefuh in a full gale. The weather did not relent thereafter, and at St Niklaus with Toni Biner he was glad of the comforts of the Pension Monte Rosa, where an after-dinner session with Josef Knubel and Franz Biner, listening to tales of earlier days, helped to mitigate the disappointments of repulses at the Bordier and Rothorn Huts. At the latter an evening which continued till after midnight, so unpromising was the weather, with Alfred Zurcher and the two young Lochmatters continued the feast of reminiscence.

The weather in 1955 behaved even more atrociously as far as your Editor was concerned. With Margaret Munro it was no more than cloudy over the Monte Moro, from Macugnaga to Alagna was quite the wettest day he has experienced, and over the Col d'Olen was still cold and bleak. So to Breuil, with its miserable modern edifices, and up to Testa Grigia where 6 inches of fresh snow softened the plod to Zermatt. Harry Whitehouse joined the party, which thereafter was valley-bound with rain or snow every day, except for one venture towards the Topali Hut which only produced a sore head—but that is another story!

STILL FARTHER AFIELD

IN 1955 Hamish and Millicent McArthur made a journey through the Lahul Himalaya in northern India just south of the Kashmir frontier and near the borders of Tibet. They were accompanied by Frank and Babs Solari, who are known to many Cairngorm Club members, and were joined in India by Capt. Kailash Goswami and his wife Tara. The party engaged two Sherpas, Ourkien and Numbe, and two local porters, four horsemen, and twenty mules and horses. They left Manali (6,000 feet) in the Kulu valley on July 14, 1955, crossed the Rhotang Pass (13,000 feet), and descended to the valley of the Chandra River (at this point about 10,500 feet). The party then went four days' march up the Chandra to the Kunzam La (15,000 feet) and camped for several days in a meadow a short distance below the pass on its eastern side. From there the highest of the peaks to the south of the pass was climbed. Its height is about 18,000 feet, and this was probably the first ascent. It was found to be an easy climb, apart from the effect of altitude on an unacclimatised party. Leaving this camp they descended again to the Chandra River and crossed with some difficulty to its west bank—the rivers are so rapid that it is never easy, and often impossible, to ford them. A base camp was established at about 14,000 feet, and from there a large glacier system comparable in size with the Aletsch glacier in Switzerland was explored and roughly surveyed. This glacier is shown vaguely and incorrectly on the Survey of India map, and it does not appear to have been visited previously. Two first ascents were made in this area—one a mountain of about 19,000 feet, which is not shown on the map, and the other the highest mountain in the immediate neighbourhood, the unnamed point shown as 20,430 feet on the Survey of India map sheet 52H. The lower mountain was climbed from the advanced base camp at about 15,000 feet and the higher from a camp in an icefall at about 17,600 feet. When the party started on the return journey it was found that the Chandra River had risen and could not be crossed, and a detour had to be made over the Bara Lacha La (16,000 feet) and down the Bhaga River. This detour added about

60 miles to the return journey and caused difficulties later with the Indian authorities, since it involved entering a prohibited area for which the party had no permit, but it led partly through inhabited country and this added interest to the return journey. The remote village of Kyelang seemed warm and fertile—indeed almost Italian—compared with the barren country that had been left behind. The party returned to Manali over the Rhotang Pass on August 16. Although the journey was made during the monsoon, the first range of mountains stopped the clouds and little rain was met beyond the Rhotang Pass, and the weather could hardly have been better. The Sherpas and the other men worked splendidly, the party's health was excellent, and the whole trip was enjoyed by all who took part in it.

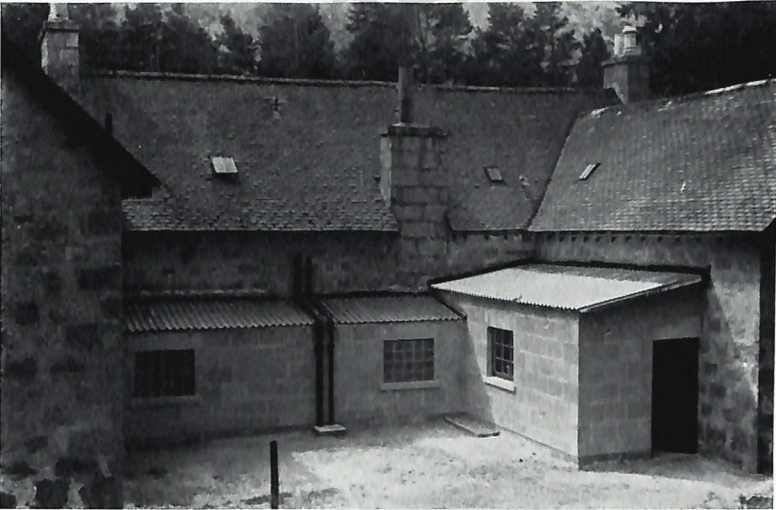
We hear that other members have been in Arctic Norway, Africa, the Rockies, and the Falkland Islands during 1955 and hope that accounts of their travels will be forthcoming!

RECONSTRUCTION AT DERRY

FIVE years have slipped past since the Editor last decreed that the Club's building operations be put on record. It should not for one moment be imagined that these have been years of stagnation; rather it has been a period of consolidation. With insistent and almost monotonous regularity the call has gone out for volunteers for work parties, and many unspectacular but valuable improvements and repairs have been carried out at our two climbing huts. However, it had been felt for some time that a rather major repair must be faced at Derry Lodge, where the back corridor and scullery, always a menace for anyone over 5 feet tall, had become rather crumbly and definitely draughty. The serious obstacle was the cost of having such a job carried out by contract. The decision was therefore taken to attempt the work by voluntary labour and, furthermore, to carry out a complete reconstruction with improved headroom and accommodation.

Detailed plans were duly made, and July 2, 1955, was fixed as the date of commencement. Several workers arrived on the evening of the 1st and immediately attacked the old structure. We were again treated to a spirited exhibition of the Thomson demolition technique, so effective at Corrour Bothy and so unnerving to those who visualise being left to restore the more delicate parts of the contiguous fabric such as drains, water-pipes, lath and plaster, etc. By 11 P.M. the corridor and several of the aforementioned ancillaries were virtually non-existent. Incessant rain on the following day did not hold up completion of demolition and preparation of foundations, though rather dejectedly we resigned ourselves to our usual building weather and made preparations by shoring up and leaving temporarily in place the roof of the scullery. Little did Sheila Murray and Ethel Scott, who generously volunteered to act as "kitchie deems" and performed very acceptably, realise how fine a margin separated them from extinction. As it turned out, the work was more nearly held up by scorching heat, the weather for the remainder of the period being incredibly good.

The Still-McAndrew and Prentis-Chalmers building units now swung into operation, very professionally laying foundations and erecting the walls for which Tee-Beam cavity blocks were used. If any junior member survives to see these walls demolished—which God forbid—he is very welcome to my best pipe-spanner



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RECONSTRUCTION AT DERRY

G. A. Taylor

dropped down the cavity. Glass brick windows were built into the corridor to avoid the use of timber, minimise the risk of breakage, and provide insulation. The effect has been favourably commented on. A normal window, but of enlarged size, was used for the scullery. It was alleged that investive at times surpassed the imaginative standard previously noted on our construction sites. On one such occasion two of our very senior workers struggled, sweated, and cursed for a full half-hour loading an unusually large foundation stone on to a barrow for disposal; one of our juvenile associates, dozing nearby as usual up to this point, rushed forward with the impetuosity of the adolescent, grabbed the handles, and only succeeded in tipping over the barrow and its cargo.

At times the emphasis veered to the other extreme, as when I picked up a piece of timber which I had directed to be shaped to specified dimensions I was rather shaken and, in the circumstances, temporarily puzzled to find beautifully lettered on it "Gulielmus Ewen fecit Georgius Taylor imperavit MCMLV."

The floor of the new corridor is of pre-cast concrete slabs supported above and insulated from the ground. The roofs are constructed of timber rafters, purlins, and sarking covered with roofing felt, and finally aluminium roofing sections are bolted on. Insulation boarding nailed to the rafters forms a ceiling. Other work carried out included: painting of nearly the whole exterior of the Lodge; renewal of a substantial portion of flooring in the small kitchen; renewal of all copper cold-water pipes from the scullery to the bathroom in larger bore alkathene; overhaul and renewal of numerous plumbing fixtures; some interior painting; installation of gutters, down-pipes, and drains on the east and south of the Lodge; repairing of lounge carpet; cleaning up of the area at the back of Lodge; and building a masonry dwarf wall along the foot of the slope.

Work continued not quite from dawn but certainly to dusk every day, and it is pleasant to record that substantially everything, except refinements, was completed in the fortnight—no mean achievement when it is recalled that the work party included no tradesmen. It was even possible to throw in a few games of bridge and a few walks from midnight onwards.

The Club is very much indebted to the following, who spent on the job times varying from a fortnight to a day or a few days. Without their magnificent efforts the work could certainly not have been carried out under several times the present cost.

Members.—Misses Adams, Arthur, Cruickshank, Murray, and Scott. Messrs Bain, Baird, Bothwell, Cameron, Duff, Ewen, Harper, McAndrew, McDougall, Malcolm, Prentis, Still, Taylor, and Thomson.

Non-members.—Messrs Cannon, Chalmers, Broomfield, Scott, G. and I. Ewen, and Peterkin.

G. A. T.

MOUNT EVEREST FOUNDATION

THE substantial fund which has been accumulated from the proceeds of the lecture, film, and book rights of the successful Everest expedition will be used to make grants to encourage exploration in the mountain regions of the world, and will be administered by the Mount Everest Foundation, a trust established by the Alpine Club and the Royal Geographical Society.

Grants, which will not normally be more than a limited contribution to the expenses, will be made to expeditions of mountaineers or scientists qualified to embark on the proposed exploration or research, which should be competently planned. A proportion of the grants will be to less experienced parties with a well qualified leader, others to parties none of whom has had previous opportunity of visiting the area of exploration.

“The Foundation intend to support mountaineering where this involves the exploration of new or little known mountain regions and will, equally, support parties whose objectives are scientific where their proposed research is in mountain country. Preference will be given to amateurs in the wide sense.”

Mr J. M. Wordie is Chairman and Sir Edwin S. Herbert Vice-Chairman of the Foundation, which also includes Lord Nathan, General Sir James Marshall-Cornwall, Major-General F. Llewellyn Brown, Mr Eric Shipton, Mr B. R. Goodfellow, Lieut.-Col. H. W. Tobin, Mr Leonard Brooks, Mr H. N. Fairfield, and Commander A. R. Glen. Interested parties should apply to the Hon. Secretary, Mr A. D. B. Side, c/o The Alpine Club, 74 South Audley Street, London, W.1, outlining plan, date, area, and object of the proposed expedition, at least three months before the date of departure from Britain.

ANIMALS AND ACCURACY

NOT to be outdone by the exploits of the kitten on the Matterhorn, an Irish setter from Gressoney (deposited in the Aosta valley!) has, reports *The Times*, followed an unguided ascent to the Cabane Margherita on the Signal Kuppe last year by a late spring traverse of the Col de Lys to Zermatt, a totally unjustifiable exploit for an unaccompanied climber. Unfortunately two unwarranted claims accompany the report: one that the Margherita is the highest hut in the world, when there are, or have been, huts up to 7,000 feet higher in the Andes; the other that 15,000 feet is probably a high altitude climbing record for domestic animals—or are the Himalayan beasts of burden not domestic animals?

A local paper, in a garbled version of the same exploit, combined the expeditions and made this year's route to Zermatt lead over Monte Rosa. May we ever hope to have reasonable journalistic treatment of mountaineering subjects?

BOTH FEET IN

THE agency message reporting from Katmandu the success of the L.S.C.C. party in the Jugal Himal claimed that the ladies were members of the S.M.C. Several (but not all) Scottish papers which should have known better printed the report without correction. On the following day the *Scotsman*, in a valiant attempt to put matters right, only gave occasion for further apologies by describing them as three Scotsmen before explaining that they belong not to the S.M.C. but the L.S.C.C. We are sure that there is a moral regarding the advantages of mixed clubs somewhere! And, belatedly, our most sincere congratulations to the three ladies, who are well known to many of our members.

THE CULT OF THE RUBBER STAMP

It may be worth while warning members that difficulties on the Italian frontier, which we hoped might have departed with the Fascists, still continue. Even a recognised frontier crossing, such as the Monte Moro, is apparently only manned on the whim of the local officers, and one is liable to be packed off on the two-hour journey to Domodossola to have the five-second operation of stamping the passport completed. There is apparently no ink in Macugnaga. The contrast with the enlightened policy towards climbers in frontier districts of the northern neighbours is marked.

THE MOUNTAINS OF BRITAIN

It is reliably reported that a perspicacious old lady of Upper Deeside recently described a C.C. quartette, Taylor, Thomson, Bain, and the writer (who remains anonymous!) as "four elderly gentlemen on ski." I have failed so far to persuade my thoroughly shaken friends that some small, but estimable, mountains lie yet within our reach, but a powerful new instrument has been put into my hands, a privately printed volume: "A Selection of some 900 British and Irish Mountain Tops," by William McKnight Docharty of the S.M.C. In a foreword, briefly biographical and explanatory, the author writes: "The grandeur, grace, or technical problems of a hill do not necessarily increase with height, nor does it follow the character or interest of the ridges are enhanced, or a view improved, the higher we go. In fact . . . only since I began visiting these lower hills have I seen, appreciated, and enjoyed the full majesty of the mightier ones of 'Munro's Tables.'"

There follows the Lists, with O.S. Map and Grid references, remarks, etc.; and there is a full Index. The book is magnificently illustrated with nine panoramic photographs, spreading out to five pages, taken mostly in the north-west region. I repeat—they are magnificent and should be studied with the O.S. map, or maps, spread out in front of you.

The Club is indebted to Mr Docharty for this handsome gift, now available to members in the Club Library.