

NOTES

HUTS, HOSTELS and BUNKHOUSES

A proposal was made at the 1990 Annual General Meeting that the Club should explore the possibility of acquiring a second hut 'somewhere in the west'.

After considerable deliberation, the Committee has decided not to pursue the matter further in the meantime.

Reasons for this decision included cost, usage and the logistics of servicing and maintaining a property remote from Aberdeen.

A further reason was the knowledge that there were many other Club huts, bunkhouses and Youth Hostels located on the west coast which were available for the use of our own Club members.

To bring this knowledge to the notice of all members, the Committee decided to publish the following list, which is not necessarily exhaustive, of accommodation which is available.

HUTS, BUNKHOUSES & HOSTELS

Walk Inn	B.H. (0659) 74482	Wanlockhead
The Old Stable	E. Kilbride M.C.	Arrochar
Glen Croe	8 Miles High Club (0592) 714354	Arrochar
Jeremy Inglis	I.H. (0631) 65065/63064	Oban
Inverardran Cottage	Ochils M.C. (0259) 62793	Crianlarich
Pine Trees	B.H. (08384) 243	Tyndrum
The Way Inn	B.H. no S.C. (08384) 208/209	Bridge of Orchy
Clashgour	Glasgow Univ. M.C.	Nr. Forest Lodge
MacDougall's Cottage	Clachaig M.C. (041 954) 7314	Auch
Inbhirfhaolain	Grampian Club (0382) 78786	Glen Etive
The Smiddy	Forventure (041 959) 9965	Glen Etive
Black Rock	L.S.C.C.	Glencoe
Kingshouse Hotel	B.H. (08556) 259	Glencoe
Lagangarbh	S.M.C. (0389) 31917	Glencoe
Clachaig Inn	B.H. (08552) 252	Glencoe
Kyle M.C. Memorial Hut	Kyle M.C.	Glencoe
Leacantuin Farm	B.H. (08552) 256	Glencoe
West Highland Lodge	B.H. (08554) 471/396	Kinlochleven
Alex. Macintyre Mem. Hut	(0324) 554452	Onich
B.M.C./M.C. of S.		
Manse Barn	Lomond M.C. (041 946) 0401	Onich
Inchree Hostel	I.H. (08553) 287	Onich
Steall	Lochaber J.M.C.S. (0397) 703512	G. Nevis
Ben Nevis	B.H. (0397) 2240	G. Nevis
Achriabhach	I.H.	G. Nevis
C.I.C. Hut	S.M.C.	Ben Nevis
Grey Corries Lodge	I.H. (03981) 236	Roy Bridge
Fasgadh	I.H.	Fersit
Jocks Spot	Edinburgh J.M.C.S. (0383) 732232	Laggan

Raeburn Morgans Den.	S.M.C. (0505) 842004 B.H. (039785) 236	Laggan Corrou Station
Batavaime Balgies Dunnoly House	Edinburgh M.C. B.H. (08876) 221 B.H. (0887) 20298	Glen Lochay Glen Lyon Aberfeldy
Insh Hall Kincaraig Bunkhouse Badenoch Christian Centre Mill Cottage (Bell Mem.) Glenfeshie Milehouse Craigower Lodge	I.H. (05404) 272 (05402) 733/(05404) 207 p.m. (05404) 373 M.C. of S. (0540) 661779 I.H. (05404) 323 L.S.C.C. (031 667) 3331 O.C. (05403) 319	Kincaraig Kincaraig Kincaraig Kincaraig Glenfeshie Feshiebridge Newtonmore
Badaguish Centre Old Schoolhouse Ardenbeg	(0479) 86285 O.C. (047985) 246 B.H. (0479) 2824	Newtonmore Dulnain Bridge Grantown on Spey
Braemar Outdoor Centre Muir of Inverey Allt na Guibhsaich	I.H. (03397) 41242 Cairngorm Club (0224) 583830 P.E. Dept, Univ. Aberdeen	Braemar Nr. Braemar Glen Muick
The Round House Carn Dearg Hut Milton of Clova	I.H. no S.C. (057582) 238 Carn Dearg M.C. (05755) 222 B.H. & Bothy Ogilvy Arms Hotel (05755) 222	Glen Isla Glen Clova Glen Clova
Jennys Glen Avon Hotel Ballindalloch Station Hostel	Bothy/I.H. (09756) 51446 B.H. (08074) 218 (05404) 272	Strathdon Tomintoul Ballindalloch
Intl. Travellers House	(Book at Lock Inn Pub)	Fort Augustus
Stratherrick Hostel Inverness Student Hostel	(046375) 314 (0463) 236556	Torness, by Dores Inverness
Inverie Doune Barrisdale Tomdoun Hotel Garrygualach	I.H. (0687) 2343 (GPO), 2331 (Est. Off) B.H. (0687) 2667 I.H. B.H. (08092) 218 B.H. (08092) 230	Knoydart Knoydart Knoydart Tomdoun Tomdoun
Glen Lichd House Morvich Outdoor Centre	Edin. Univ. M.C. (031 667) 747	Morvich Morvich
Gerry Howkins Inver Croft Ling Hut Kinlochewe	I.H. (05206) 232 Jacobites (031 650) 5270/6495 S.M.C. (0463) 791240 B.H. (044584) 253	Achnashellach Achnasheen Achnasheen Kinlochewe
Sail Mhor Croft The Smiddy	I.H. (085483) 224 Edinburgh J.M.C.S. (0854) 2354	Dundonnell Dundonnell

Badachro.	B.H.(winter only)	(044583) 291	Gairloch
Achiltibuie	B.H.	(085482) 215	Achiltibuie
Elphin	O.C.		
Glen Brittle	B.M.C./M.C. of S.	(03573) 533	G. Brittle
Coruisk		Glasgow J.M.C.S. (0343) 820932	Coruisk
Sligachan Hotel	B.H.	(047852) 204	Sligachan
Croft	B.H.	(047842) 254	Portnalong
Uiginish Lodge	I.H.	(047022) 445	Dunvegan
Raasay House	I.H.	(047862) 266	Raasay

B.H.	Bunkhouse	O.C.	Outdoor Centre
I.H.	Independent Hostel	S.C.	Self Catering

S.Y.H.A. provide hostel accommodation in many areas; contact the district office: 11 Ashvale Place, Aberdeen. (0224) 588156.

Mountain Bothies Association maintain bothies throughout Scotland, General Secretary, Simon Strachan, 10 Clydeford Drive, Uddingston, G71 7DJ.

Club Huts – Bookings for these are often only accepted through our club secretary.

CLUB MUNROISTS

1991 marks the centenary of the publication of Munro's Tables, the list of mountains over 3000 feet in Scotland. Sir Hugh T. Munro was one of the original members of the Scottish Mountaineering Club. What would he make of today's tremendous interest in reaching the summit of each of his listed peaks? Our Club secretary knows of forty four members who have succeeded and they are listed below.

John Adams
 William Alexander
 William Barlow
 Dorothy Batchelor
 Peter W. Bellarby
 Ian D. Bryce
 Fiona Cameron
 Anne F. G. Cordiner
 G. Ray. Craig
 Neil Cromar
 Arthur C. Dickie
 Isabella Fraser
 Kenneth W. Fraser
 David F. Geddes
 John M. C. Gibson
 Peter Gray
 Donald Hawksworth
 John Hetherington
 Geraldine Howie
 Robin Y. Howie
 John E. Inglis

Anne Pinches
 Ian M. Lowit
 Ronald G. Mahaffy
 Andrew W. Martin
 Edwin Martin
 Alastair P. Matthewson
 Ian J. B. Murray
 Sheila Murray
 Gordon M. McAndrew
 Susan Mackenzie
 Margaret MacLennan
 Frances Macrae-Gibson
 Duncan Macrae-Gibson
 Ruth Payne
 Guy J. Scott
 Robert I. G. Scott
 Ian C. Spence
 Hugh E. R. Spencer
 Ian T. Stephen
 Fraser Stronach
 Kenneth J. Thomson
 Lydia Thomson
 Morag Watson

SKI MOUNTAINEERING

Just as the increased popularity of Munro-bagging resulted in this formerly "clandestine" branch of mountaineering achieving respectability with the publication of a Scottish Mountaineering Club guide, so the SMC has recognised the present status of ski mountaineering in Scotland with a comprehensive guidebook giving route descriptions for over 170 hills and mountains. As the introduction to the guide notes, in the past some mountaineers in Scotland thought the use of skis in mountaineering "a not quite respectable part of the sport ---- being associated in their minds with the less demanding pleasures of downhill skiing".

In fact, the first Scottish skiers were climbers like Naismith, the founder of the SMC, and such a notable climber as Harold Raeburn who, in describing the art of the standing glissade, concluded, "glissading naturally leads us to its highest development – skiing". Several of the early Cairngorm Club members used skis. By 1907 the Club Journal had the first of occasional "Skiing Notes" which included an account of a trip on Morven where, alas, the snow was too hard for skiing uphill so skis were carried to the cairn then the party had a "glorious run right down to the Lary burn. The run was so splendid that two of us re-ascended about 800 feet to enjoy the return flight". I. M. McLaren, who was a member of the first party to climb the six Cairngorm tops in a single day in 1908, was a pioneer skier and gives an account of an ascent of Ben Macdhuì via Carn Crom and Derry Cairngorm leaving Inverey at 6.30 a.m. and returning at 10 p.m. after "a most enjoyable tea at Derry Lodge". By 1920 Colonel H. J. Butchart, another of the six tops party, was giving Club members skiing lessons. Then, during the second world war there was the first and probably the only winter "overnighter" when a party set off from Ballochbuie at 1 a.m. by moonlight, skied round Lochnagar then planted their skis and climbed to the summit by the Black Spout before returning on ski to Braemar.

After the war, ex-army skis and ex-army ski boots became available and, probably enveloped in ex-army gas capes, some of us would climb with skis on shoulder from Derry Lodge to the likes of Beinn Bhreac and descend with many a tumble to Glen Derry. Those were the days of corrugated shoulders; skins for climbing were rarely seen, partly because of their unreliability and also the cost. Most climbers who skied were self-taught and it showed. There was no real ski instruction unless you went to the Alps and, for most climbers, that was a goal for the summer only.

Now the position is so different. The standard of downhill skiing in Scotland is high. Manufacturers have responded to the needs of the ski mountaineer with excellent equipment. Modern techniques and equipment are described with great clarity in the book "*Ski Mountaineering*" by Peter Cliff, the well-known climber and international guide from Speyside. Although much of the book deals with the greater challenges when skiing in the Alps and world-wide, there is much of interest for the Scottish tourer including an interesting piece of skiing ability versus mountaineering ability. Briefly, a good mountaineer who is a poor skier will have a much rougher time than a skier with limited climbing experience. Peter Cliff knows and describes the uncertainty and hazards of Scottish ski mountaineering. All enthusiasts have tales of battles with the wind, the problems of navigation, the whiteouts which disorientate and bring the sensation of being stationary when you are still sliding. But then, there are also those memorable days when the wind drops, the sun shines, the snow is perfect and the horizon is filled with glistening peaks and snowfields. The days when the excellent photographs in both these books were taken!

There has always been controversy on the respective merits of Alpine or Nordic equipment for ski mountaineering in Scotland, a debate which may puzzle the uninitiated. To summarise: Nordic, often called cross-country skis are longer, narrower and lighter and attach to the boot at the toe only. Alpine skis are shorter, broader and more robust. The bindings are complex and can be clipped down at the heel for the descent giving more

stability. The boots are heavier and less flexible than those used with Nordic skis but lighter than the normal downhill boot. While some long tours have been done in the Cairngorms and elsewhere in Scotland with Nordic skis, given the right conditions, and some exponents are extremely skilled, most skiers find them very difficult to control especially on ice or steep slopes. I certainly prefer Alpine equipment for the variable conditions so frequent in Scotland. Control is much greater, especially in high winds, while harscheisen (ski crampons) can be fitted on Alpine bindings for climbing steep or icy slopes. My advice to any climber taking up ski mountaineering is to first take downhill ski lessons on dry ski and snow slopes. The stage should soon be reached when you can come down an intermediate slope under control doing linked turns and can then proceed to some touring. Nordic ski technique, with its graceful telemark turn, is a refinement you may wish to take up later. But remember, if the ski bug really bites you'll end up with three sets of equipment – Alpine, Nordic and Downhill!

For those who may be tempted, I will try and give the flavour of the delights of a ski tour on a good day latish in the season. On Good Friday this year three of us set off before 8 a.m. on the Monega Pass from Glen Clunie, skis strapped to our packs. We were soon at the snow line and put on skis and skins (nowadays skins are glue backed, peel-off strips of synthetic material and very reliable). There had been a hard frost and the snow was icy so harscheisen were also required for a time. Then came one of the pleasures of the day; the steady upward plod, single file, short even steps, silence apart from the crunch on the snow – meditation time. It was now sunny with just a breeze and soon the first of the downhill skiers could be seen below Glas Maol. We carried on over the shoulder of Glas Maol to easier slopes up Cairn of Claise. Then, the reward, skins off and a glorious sweeping run on easy, firm, untouched snow in the direction of Tolmount. Skins on, up and over Tolmount with another splendid descent down to Jock's Road. A gentle climb to Fafermie where the northwards view of the main Cairngorms was magnificent, down broad slopes towards Cairn Taggart, a short climb over the bealach and down the coire towards the Feindallacher burn for a typical Scottish finish, the snow now softer, the strip we were following getting narrower, the snow bridges more frequent and frailer until at last there was nothing but heather. Skis on pack, we marched through Ballochbuie enjoying the views of Beinn a' Bhuird and Ben Avon still shimmering in the evening sun, down to Invercauld Bridge. It was almost six o'clock, a good time to finish when you've achieved "a drouth ye couldna buy". We agreed – that was a great day.

("Ski Mountaineering in Scotland": Edited by Donald Bennet and Bill Wallace: Published by the Scottish Mountaineering Trust.

"Ski Mountaineering" by Peter Cliff: Published by Unwin Hyman.)

Eric Johnston

CLUB CLIMBING EVENT

CENTRAL BUTTRESS LOCHNAGAR 13TH JANUARY 1991

To rise at 0530 hours on a Sunday morning in winter may not be everyone's idea of fun. I kept telling myself that my planned day's activities were to make the effort well worth it and so resisted the temptation to roll over and go back to sleep.

Today was my debut. I had hit the big time and was bound for Lochnagar with Stuart Stronach and Nigel Eastmond to climb the Central Buttress. I had been practising rock climbing and rope techniques over the summer months at the cliffs of Cove and on the climbing wall at the Beach Leisure Centre. I had also completed my winter skills course last winter and was anxious to put these skills to work. The conditions were right for ice

climbing and I was as ready as I would ever be.

I was fortunate in that I had two instructors. The group was to be larger but a few cancellations had left me as the sole trainee. This was a confidence boost as my instructors had a better opportunity to watch over me.

We arrived at Lochnagar car park on 0730 and began the long walk in to the corrie. It was about 0930 when we reached Central Buttress and we had time for a bite to eat before tackling the climb. As we were preparing our equipment I became aware of a few rumblings in my stomach (nervous? not me – I was probably still hungry!)

We planned to climb the Buttress in six stages (pitches). The first we climbed solo (without roping up together) as it was really not that steep. We each had two ice axes and with the aid of crampons we just walked up the ice to a position where we could rope up. I couldn't help thinking 'so far so good' as I followed my two leaders up the slope and was aware of the feeling of exhilaration as the biting wind began to freeze my beard (If my mum could see me now!).

When we were all settled at the start of the second pitch we roped ourselves together and I secured myself as a belay. Now for the tricky bit. Nigel led this pitch and as his second, I remained belayed securely to a huge boulder and watched his progress whilst Stuart was soloing the pitch nearby. My eyes were riveted on Nigel as he worked his way up the grade carefully picking his way upward among the exposed rock.

At a suitable position, Nigel attached himself securely and called for me to follow. I began my ascent slowly with some trepidation. My heart beating loudly in my chest I picked my way up the gradient looking for firm ice to drive my axes into. As the ice had begun to thaw there were many rocks exposed and getting a firm hold was not that easy. The security that the rope afforded was comforting and gave me the confidence that I needed. It was not long before I reached Nigel and we prepared for the next pitch.

The third pitch was even more difficult but by this time I was beginning to get the hang of it. The same procedure was followed and apart from one awkward section half way up it presented no problems.

The fourth pitch was to be our greatest challenge. It was not long, however near the top we had to climb around an exposed buttress. This was a bit daunting as there was no shelter from the wind and the floor of the corrie was about 700 feet below. Once again Nigel led and as he disappeared around the corner of the buttress, I began to feel very much alone with only the rope tied around me for company. After what seemed an eternity I heard Nigel shout for me to follow so I released myself from the belay and ventured forth.

As I rounded the buttress I felt the blast of the icy wind tugging at me trying to persuade me to go with it down into the corrie below. Needless to say I resisted this temptation and concentrated on the task at hand. Provided one didn't look down and pretended that the sun was out, it was a bit like one of the climbs at the cliffs of Cove. With this cheering thought I persevered until I joined my colleagues at the top of the pitch.

From here on it was not necessary to be roped together as the final two stages were not too steep. The conditions were also very good here with a hard crust of icy snow and no exposed rock. We set off side by side scaling the grade like three metallic tree frogs. On reaching the top we paused briefly to rest before tackling the final pitch.

As we neared the top of the final section, I was aware of a very stiff pair of calf muscles from remaining perched on the front points of my crampons. But the overwhelming sense of satisfaction and relief on reaching the top soon made me forget about them. After a short break for self-congratulations, we tied up our equipment and packed for the relatively easy walk down.

My first experience of ice climbing had been a success. We had climbed the left face of Central Buttress which is a height of 1,000 feet. It is a grade 2 Ice climb and not a bad one to start with. My trainers had both been very patient and helpful. It is not often that one gets the sort of personalised attention I received. I am greatly looking forward to the next opportunity to go ice climbing, but with the warmer months approaching it may be quite a

while. In the meantime, I intend to go to the cliffs at Cove over the summer to keep up my training. I can thoroughly recommend this activity to any of the club members who may be thinking of trying it. The Tuesday evenings at Cove are a pleasant way of getting some mid-week exercise as well as preparing you for bigger things in the hills.

Gary Bidwell

MOUNT TARANAKI AT EASTER

"The whole of this day we have enjoyed noble views of this splendid mountain, the monarch of Taranaki. It is about 8000 ft high, and rises at once out of the plain, without other hills to break its apparent height. Its base is surrounded by almost impassable forest..." So reads the report of Bishop Selwyn in 1842.

Long before 1842, Maori legends told the story of Taranaki, the second highest mountain in New Zealand's North Island. Once upon a time, Pihanga, a beautiful maiden in the central North Island mountain range was wooed by four warrior mountains. They decided to fight for her hand and their passion melted the rock in their bowels and smoke and steam billowed in preparation for battle. They sent forth fire and molten rock till Tongariro won Pihanga as his wife. The other mountains, unable to bear the huge mana of Tongariro, departed by night. Putauaki fled 160 km to the north and is now called Mt Edgecumbe. Tuahara dawdled painfully and sadly and by dawn had only reached the northern shore of Lake Taupo. Taranaki left gouging the trench of the Wanganui river.

Taranaki, named Egmont by Captain Cook, stands alone, overshadowing his elderly and comparatively insignificant neighbours: Pouakai and Kaitake. Together they are a three step demonstration of earth's growth and ageing, building and erosion. Taranaki is the most recent of a series of ruptures spreading across the country and last exploded in 1755.

We left Hastings at 6am on Good Friday and travelled in the Heretaunga Tramping Club's luxury truck for 7 hours to North Egmont. The 29 strong group shattered into small groups, all with slightly different ideas, but all hoping to top the mount sometime during the long weekend. The main debate as always, was the weather!

I joined a group of twelve who decided to carry full rucksacks around to the public shelter at East Egmont. The intention was certainly to camp but my vision of a bus shelter vanished as swiftly as the mist on the mountain: a luxurious ski shelter with running water, flushing toilets, an electric light and an unlocked door. Eleven slept inside disturbed only by snores. I slept outside in the shelter of the eaves, disturbed only by a scavenging possum, until I shifted the dustbin out of earshot.

The mount was viewed each night in clear moonlight. It stood eerie but inviting. It looked less appealing at 7am when my women companions began to back out from the day's expedition; the gradient grew steeper and my 30kg rucksack grew heavier. The day's walk began to look more daunting. The alternative route taken by the majority was to the beautiful Dawson Falls and back to North Egmont through the picturesque kamahi rain forest.

Determination sent me jogging across the few hundred yards of short tussock and herbfields to begin the ascent. We had been advised to pass straight through the ski field and onto the shingle. This we did and soon found solid rock and cliffs and, again on instructions, clambered our way to the north of the "policeman" (1832m). The east ridge is famed for its bluffs for all other ascents are scree of scoria which feature imaginatively named pillars of rock. Some places were awkward to negotiate and we were forced to slither and scramble over rock faces, the ascent growing progressively steeper. At about 1900m the cloud enveloped us for the remainder of the climb. Only once were we momentarily enchanted by transient views of Fantham's Peak with the famous sight of the flat Taranaki dairy pastures below us.



Mount Taranaki, North Island, New Zealand

The Shark's Tooth – the lower edge of the crater – rose out of the mist without warning. We were so intent on looking at our feet and for the next hand hold that our eyes were not lifted until there were no more rocks to hold. The crater below us was packed with dirty ice from which we could hear distant voices. We slithered down an icy chimney, the width of which was slightly narrower than my rucksack. I was faced at the end of the tunnel with a substantial drop and a few random holds. If I did not wriggle with some energy I would remain wedged; if I struggled and shot out with more velocity than desired I might fly past the hand holds. With Richard Fisher humour someone said: "Look at Kay's face; oh look like that again while I take a photo!" The look of true fear is not able to be reproduced.

I negotiated my way to the ice field which was crowded with day trippers from North Egmont, from various clubs including our own. The picnickers on the top made careful tiptoeing a necessity. The summit in three hours forty minutes. We descended through the loose rock onto the huge scoria screes and with gathering speed were soon out of the mist. At one point I counted thirty one people in about 400 yards. Taranaki is a popular spot at Easter and NZ loses its sparsely populated image.

Not ready to return to civilization a companion and myself branched off alone to Holly Hut to the NW, skirting the impressive Humphries' Castle and the Dieffenbach's Cliffs. We joined the Round the Mountain Track, a well built path through waist high leatherwood, koromiko and mountain five finger.

Holly Hut was filled with teenage Auckland yobbos and we camped in relative peace outside, waking to the sound of falling rain once the sound of falling benches, people and bottles had ended. We were blessed with beautiful sunshine for breakfast but the rain soon returned. With little enthusiasm we walked the one hour trip to Bell's Falls. Rain frequently falls on the NZ West coast and Taranaki is no exception so there are many waterfalls surrounded by a profusion of ferns and other native plants. All was draped in a poetic mantle of mist and spray. Less natural were the hundreds of wooded steps which formed the path but the reason for this became evident later in the day.

On returning from our detour we crossed the Ahukawakawa swamp on duck boards and climbed yet more steps onto the top of the Pouakai ranges. Egmont's ascendancy over the country has effects which are not always visual. With the characteristics of an island separated by height and climate, many species of plant and insect life are not found and conversely some common forms of life are seen which are not found elsewhere in NZ. We left the bush and sub-alpine scrub and tramped across damp tussock to Tatangi and onto Henry's Peak. Sufficiently removed from the popular routes, no path preservation work had been done, with horrifying consequences.

Centuries of rain and melting snow have patterned Mount Taranaki and Pouakai with radiating furrows cut through volcanic rock. The water and the single track of boot prints through the leatherwood has resulted in a boot wide furrow of 1-2 feet in depth. We couldn't walk in it and the bush prevented us walking on either side so we staggered and hopped from side to side or astride the eroded channel. Our short ascent was consequently surprisingly long and muddy. The descent was the same back into deep bush and a forest of rimu and kamahi, totara, kaikawaka and mahoe.

At 6 pm we came to a clearing – Kaiawai hut and were confronted with the beautiful Egmont in twilight. Cameras clicked. We spent a comfortable night in the hut debating the risk of giardia in New Zealand waters. Unfortunately it is most certainly present though few people take precautions.

Easter Monday dawned a glorious pink. The debated day to climb the mountain was definitely early Monday morning. We chose a bush walk back, down the lovely Waiwhakaihō River and up the Ngatoro stream path. It was beautiful bush with cabbage trees, crown ferns and ponga. One of the tallest trees is the rimu. The rata vine starts its life as a seed lodged in the forked rimu branches. Aerial roots are sent down to the ground until eventually the rata vine grows above the rimu, robbing it of light and causing its death. Abundant rain supports the growth of the thick perching plants e.g. asplinarina and kahikahi.

There is sufficient eeriness to conjure up any number of legends about mysterious beings and the setting would suit the most grotesque goblin. Moss grows thick on twisted limbs and at our feet a solitary orchid grew amongst the fallen leaves.

We returned to civilization at midday – happy explorers, but, for myself with weary legs and glad to shed my rucksack.

Kay Ward

