

THE  
**Cairngorm Club Journal.**

EDITED BY

EDWARD W. WATT.

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The Editor will be glad to consider any articles, notes and photographs submitted to him and, in particular, he hopes that members of the Club will send records, however brief, of any interesting excursions which they make, so that the "Journal" may constitute an adequate record of the activities of the Club.

13 Forest Road,  
Aberdeen.





*July, 1928*

THE FOREST PRIMEVAL.

*J. A. Parker*

A GLADE IN THE FOREST IN HORSETHIEF CREEK, PURCELL MTS., BRITISH COLUMBIA.

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Cairngorm Club Journal.

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A VISIT TO THE MOUNTAINS OF BRITISH  
COLUMBIA.

BY JAMES A. PARKER.

BRITISH COLUMBIA ! To the mountaineer there is magic in the name, and it was with a keen sense of anticipation that I boarded the Vancouver steamer at Victoria on the 12th May, 1928. The steamer was one of the C.P.R. fleet and took about four and three-quarter hours to the trip, a journey which appeared to be all too short. For hours the steamer found its way up the lagoon-like straits which lie between Vancouver Island and the group of small islands which fringe its eastern shore and which reminded me strongly, on a bigger scale, of the islands of Loch Lomond and Loch Maree. Finally the steamer slipped into a narrow and tortuous passage between two of the islands and emerged on to the more open waters of the Strait of Georgia, across which, in the far distance, the City of Vancouver could be seen on the horizon at the foot of the imposing mountains of the Coast Range. The sail was most beautiful ; but after all it was only a foretaste of the much more beautiful one that I was to take three weeks later right up the coast to Skagway in Alaska. My purpose here however is to give some account of what I was able to do in the mountains of British Columbia.



I had introductions to the leading members of the Alpine Club of Canada in Vancouver, and the kindness of the reception that they gave me exceeded all my expectations. They cordially invited me to attend their Dominion Day outing for the ascent of Mount Baker, Wash., 10,827 ft. and also to attend their Summer Camp at Horsethief Creek in the seldom visited Purcell Mountains. To mark time till these two fixtures matured I spent a fortnight at Cameron Lake on Vancouver Island, took the wonderfully beautiful and impressive steamer sail up the West Coast to Skagway in Alaska, and spent over a week near Mount Robson.

This mountain is the highest of the Canadian Rockies and is 12,977 ft. in height. It stands about 6 miles north of the Yellowhead section of the Canadian National Railways. To reach it I went, on June 18, to Mt. Robson Station, which is about 35 miles west of the Great Divide, and there I was met by a cowboy driving a two horse buggy. I was at first rather in awe of the cowboy, in case he carried a gun; but my fears instantly disappeared when he spoke to me—which he did with a strong Glasgow accent. As I was endeavouring to speak with an Aberdeen accent we were a well-matched pair. And so he drove me off in the buggy much to the admiration, and I hope envy, of the passengers on the Observation Car of the Continental Limited. A short and somewhat precipitous drive down a very steep winding road took us to the Mt. Robson Ranch which is run by Mr. and Mrs. Roy Hargreaves, and where I was received with the greatest kindness. Roy's first question to me was, "What do you propose to do? Shoot bears or what?" I told him that my modest plan was to walk up to Berg Lake Cabin, which is a log cabin about 15 miles off on the north shore of that lake and right opposite the steep north-west face of Mount Robson. Roy's reply was laconic and was, "I reckon you can't do that unless you are a first-class swimmer and even





*June, 1928*

MOUNT ROBSON.  
LOOKING SOUTH ACROSS BERG LAKE.

*J. A. Parker*



then it would be dangerous as there are several bad fords. You will require to take a horse and ride."

So next forenoon I was mounted on a white horse called "Chief" and set out on the 15 miles ride to the Cabin. Rather ambitious on my part as I had not ridden a horse since 1923 and I speedily found out that riding in Canada is slightly different from doing so in the Pyrenees. The trail, which was in bad condition, led up the valley of the Grand Fork River to Lake Kinney (3,259 ft.) and thence up the Valley of a Thousand Falls to Berg Lake (5,500 ft.) at the far end of which stood the log cabin. Apart from my want of experience in the gentle art of horsemanship the ride was most delightful, the scenery being very fine indeed. The feature of course was the magnificent appearance of Mount Robson which towered overhead on our right. I say "our" because the "outfit" consisted of Dick Hargreaves, who was guide, Esther the cook who proved herself to be a most efficient person, myself, and a pack horse. Ker, the cowboy, was to follow later by himself. As a matter of fact we were opening the Cabin for the season.

I spent four or five very delightful days at Berg Lake walking, riding, and climbing; but I felt the want of a climbing companion very much. With Dick I had a try at Mount Mumm, 9740 ft., which is quite a simple climb but we were turned by bad weather when only about 250 feet below the summit. Mount Robson is very difficult and can only be climbed when a certain ice passage is in suitable condition, and this does not occur every season. The face of the mountain overlooking the lake presents a riven face of rock, snow, and ice 7,500 feet in height, and for majesty and beauty compares favourably with the Italian face of Mount Blanc. The mountain is not climbed by this face.

From Robson I returned to Vancouver and from there was motored by Colonel Forster, of the A.C.C.,



to Glacier Inn at the entrance to the Mount Baker National Forest, U.S.A., on the 30th June. And on the same afternoon, and evening, we "hiked" up a ten mile trail to the Mount Baker Cabin of the Bellingham Climbing Club which had been placed at the disposal of the A.C.C. It was a pretty long "hike," involving an ascent of something like 3,500 ft., and as we had started far too late a few members of the party that I had started with were benighted and only reached the cabin about an hour after midnight. Certainly not a good preparation for the big climb up Mount Baker. The cabin was badly overcrowded as there were about 45 people present.

For the ascent of Mount Baker we got away the next morning about five o'clock, and after climbing up moraines and easy glacier for about 2,500 feet in thick wet mist we got above the clouds into blazing sunshine. The route followed the easy and slightly crevassed Coleman glacier to a dip on the south-west ridge of the mountain. This ridge we followed upwards for about five hundred feet and then by traversing across a steep and none too safe-looking snow slope we reached the summit. Little was to be seen except the upper surface of the cloud layer beneath us which stretched in every direction as far as the eye could reach. One or two peaks, such as Shuksan, stood up above the clouds. It was a magnificent view; but as a stranger I would have liked to have seen more of the country.

The descent was made by the same route, and in the late afternoon we dipped into the mist and on getting back to the hut were told that it had been raining there most of the day. The expedition took about 13 hours, the height climbed having been about 6,500 feet. There seems to be a very big snowfall on these western mountains and I was surprised to find so much snow and ice on Mount Baker as on Mount Mumm we did not touch snow till near 9,000 feet. At Mount Baker we were on snow from 6,000 feet



up. Before returning to Vancouver I spent three nights at Mount Baker Lodge, which is a large palatial establishment at a height of about 4,500 ft. on the north-east flank of Mount Baker. There is a first-class motoring road to it from Bellingham.

My next fixture was to go to the Summer Camp of the Alpine Club of Canada during the last fortnight in July, and as a first stage I went by rail to Banff where the Club House was the rallying point. The Camp was pitched near the head of Horsethief Creek in the Purcell Mountains. To reach it we were sent forward from Banff in small detachments by charabanc to Wilmer, near Windermere, in the upper Columbia Valley, a distance of about 95 miles, and thence by light car up the rough road leading westwards to road end in the Horsethief Creek Valley, a further distance of about 21 miles.

This all took the best part of a day, and on arrival we found that a fairly comfortable base camp had been established and at which we spent the first night. The last part of the day's trip in the case of my party had been pretty miserable as we had had four punctures to our "char," which vehicle we finally had to desert, and then in the relief light car we smashed its transmission box and had to walk the last mile into the Base Camp. All of course done to the accompaniment of heavy rain notwithstanding the fact that the region is supposed to be one of the dry areas in British Columbia. But this was the last of the rain and we had nothing but brilliant sunshine for the rest of the fortnight.

The A.C.C. does things mighty well. The Base Camp held about thirty people and was looked after by a professional cook. Half-way up the valley there was an intermediate "fly" camp consisting of a few tents for those who fell by the way, and where a boy provided hot tea and sandwiches, etc., as required. And then at the end of the trail was the Main Camp which was placed on the north side of the creek and



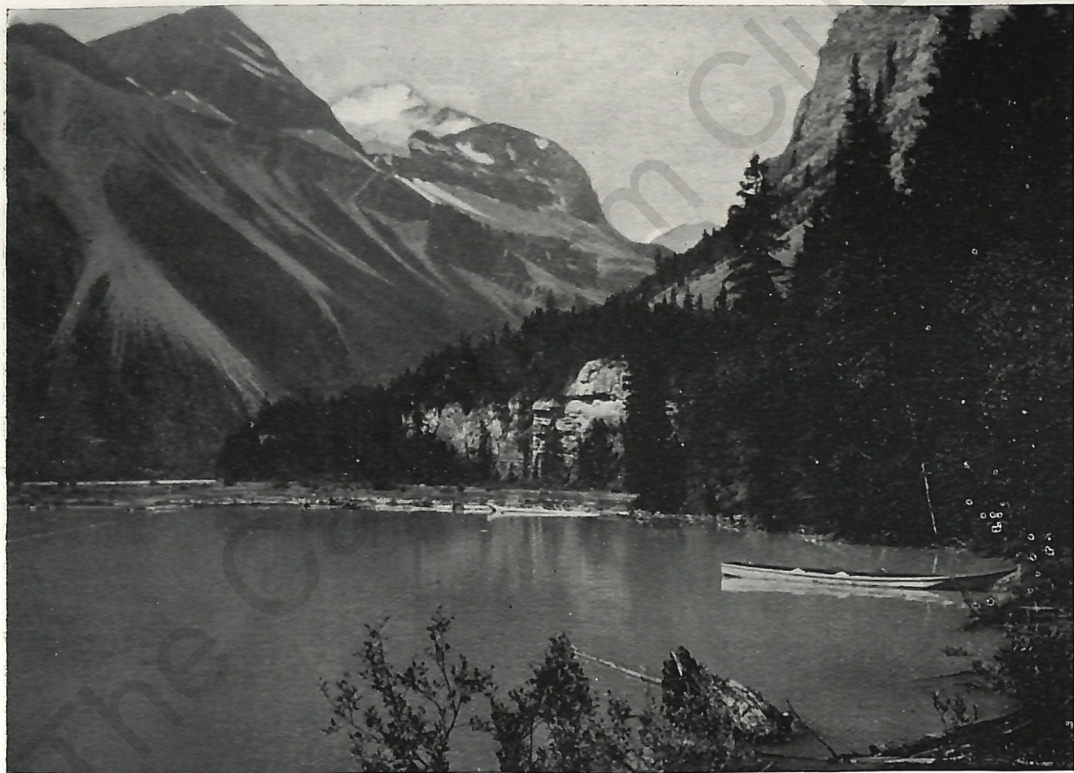
at a height about 5,700 feet above sea level. It consisted of about forty bell tents, a large dining tent, and the kitchen tent. There were two professional cooks. The camp arrangements were excellent and the food very good.

The Horsethief Creek Valley is very beautiful and runs west from the Columbia Valley into the heart of the Purcell Mountains, a distance of about 40 miles or so to the snout of the Starbird Glacier at the head of the valley. The district is primeval, and there seemed to be no human habitation west of Wilmer at the entrance to the valley. The sixteen mile trail from the Base Camp was in very good condition, having been repaired by the Government in view of our visit and that of the Trail Riders, who were to follow us and use our camps. The mountains at the head of the valley run from 10,000 ft. to 11,500 ft. in height, the principal summits being The Dome, Mount Thompson, and Mount Bruce. A side valley called Farnham Creek branched off to the south from the main valley at the intermediate camp, and a fly camp had been established in it for those who wished to climb the peaks there.

For climbing purposes, the district compares with the Tirol, with of course the important exception that it is entirely uninhabited. Some of the peaks had not been climbed before our visit. The favourite walk for an off day was from the Main Camp up a side creek to the Lake of the Hanging Glaciers, a very delightful excursion by a good trail. Personally I spent eleven days in the Camp and climbed The Dome and Mount Thompson. The former was an easy climb; but Thompson was decidedly interesting, beginning with a long walk up the central moraine of the Starbird Glacier to the foot of the mountain and then up it by steep rocks and glaciers to the final peak. The ascent of the latter was up a rather steep and narrow rock ridge which was very exposed at one or two places.

The climbing arrangements at the Camp were in the hands of the Climbing Committee. Each evening the





June, 1928

*J. A. Parker*

LAKE KINNEY, B.C.

LOOKING NORTH-WEST. MT. WHITEHORN ON LEFT AND SLOPES OF MT. ROBSON ON RIGHT.



Committee decided what climbs were to be done the following day and how many could go and who were to act as guides. Sheets were then posted up in the dining tent and those who wished to go put their names on the appropriate sheet. The Committee later on decided who were to go. Next morning the starters were wakened at four o'clock and after breakfast the roll was called at five and the parties were allowed to move off. No parties were allowed to leave the Camp unless the Secretary had been advised as to their probable movements.

There were about 120 people in camp altogether, about one half of them being women. And we were a very cheery bunch of people. They were all very kind to me and made me a guest of the Club for the Camp as representing the Alpine Club of England. Since then I have however become a member of the Canadian Club.

The journey back to Banff was without incident and after that, on my way home, I did no more climbing of any note with the exception of the ascent of Mount Washburn, 10,346 ft., in the Yellowstone Park. This was however pretty strenuous consisting of a 13 mile hike there by a beautiful trail through the forest, and a seemingly much longer hike back over a hard road to the big Camp at Canyon. No one is supposed to go hiking in the Yellowstone Park, the proper thing is to go by motor charabanc and play the part of a rubber-necked tourist—as I did afterwards with complete success.



## A NEW APPROACH TO THE CAIRNGORMS.

BY WILLIAM GARDEN.

I HAVE no doubt that, in this year of grace, 1929, every mountaineer on reading the title of this paper will say to himself "Impossible! Have not the Cairngorms been attacked, and conquered, from every point of the compass?" I have, however, been unable to find that the expedition, of which I am now to attempt an account, has ever been done before or since, but I may say at once that that was not the reason which induced us to do it.

We have only to take the most casual glance at an ordinary School Map of Scotland to observe that the County of Banff may quite well be described as a long tongue of land, the root of which starts on the north east coast, and the tip of which extends to the summit of Ben Macdhui. That part of the County where the Water of Caiplich has its source, and subsequently flows north-eastwards under the name of the Water of Ailnack to join the Avon, and thereafter the rapid-running Spey, is a land almost entirely unknown to the pedestrian to-day, and the reason is not far to seek, for, prior to the advent of the motor-car, it was probably one of the most inaccessible and out-of-the-way parts of Scotland. But the order of things has changed; and, by means of a car, one can explore this lonely and unfrequented district in a day from Aberdeen, though it has to be admitted it is an eighteen hour day, and a fairly strenuous one at that.





*May, 1929*

THE GORGE OF THE AILNACK.  
LOOKING NORTH AND SHOWING THE CASTLE.

*J. A. Parker*



My friends Parker and the brothers Robb made up the party, along with an experienced driver to take the car from Tomintoul to Derry Lodge to pick us up there in the evening. An early start was essential, so we left Aberdeen at 6 prompt on the morning of Sunday, 10th August, 1919. The Robbs' "Sunbeam" is a trusted friend, for by means of it had we not already made two very successful one-day forced marches from town—one to Beinn a' Ghlo, and another through the Larig Ghru? Once again, on its wings, we sped up Strath Don, and over the Lecht, passing through woodlands and by hill-sides, all canopied by a blue known only to, and appreciated by, the early riser on a perfect summer's morn. Tomintoul was reached at 9; and by arrangement a substantial breakfast was got through with avidity at the Richmond Arms. For reasons, not altogether unselfish, we wished our driver friend a safe journey across the ups and downs he had to face before reaching the Dee valley; and at 9.45 we descended into Strath Avon by the Inchroy road. We crossed the Avon by a fine iron bridge just before its junction with the Ailnack, and we then proceeded to walk along the true left bank of that stream, over pleasant haugh-lands, to the farm of Delnabo. We had all heard of the Ailnack gorge, but our expectations were certainly quite surpassed. As we walked westwards the scene was one of extreme beauty. About a mile and a half south-west of Delnabo, the stream has cut its way by an extraordinary process of erosion through a very deep ravine between the steep slopes of Carn Meadhonach, on the north, and Druim na h-Easgainn, on the south. So steep is the north slope that we were at times forced high up above the Ailnack in order to make progress, but we fortunately struck a rather ill-defined path leading to a small tarn, named Lochan Uaine, which made the task less troublesome than it would otherwise have been, for here the heather is deep and the slope very steep, which made the going laborious. By this time the sun was



making himself felt on those southern slopes, and the tempting pools in the Ailnack, far beneath, raised visions of a bathe, but it was out of the question, for there was a long day's walk ahead.

It should be explained that the Ailnack, from this point, passes through a series of gates or gorges, and that probably the finest of these is the southmost one, which is formed by the slopes of the Geal Chàrn on the west side and Càrn na Ruabraich on the east. There is a large belt of limestone in the neighbourhood, which is occasionally interrupted by the Old Red Sandstone outlier, which appears again in the Ailnack gorge, where its intercalation and folding with the black schists is beautifully exposed.

Having passed through the southmost gorge, we find ourselves standing on the steep southern slopes of the Geal Chàrn (2,484 ft.), just beyond the point marked "The Castle" on the 1 in. map, which is a well-defined pinnacle, standing out from the west face of the gorge, and which is well seen on the photograph illustrating this article. Geologists tell us that here there is one of the most striking instances of stream capture in the Cairngorms, and that the Caiplich once flowed on eastwards down the valley of the Loin to join the Avon near Inchrory, until the Ailnack captured it, and diverted its waters to the north. The situation is an extraordinarily interesting one, as the river, in changing its course, turns almost three quarters of a circle. Here we are suddenly ushered on to the edge of an enormous plateau of open land, extending from the Nethy watershed on the north, right to the Avon valley on the south. This great plateau is probably at an average level of not less than 2,000 feet, and extends in a series of billowy, undulating moor-lands on all sides as far as the eye can reach, and would in bad weather be a very severe test of good steering, even to an experienced hand with a good compass. In fact, it resembles a boundless ocean of hollows and humps, and, once down among these, the only guides



to direction are the very far distant tops of the eastern Cairngorms. But to-day what a spectacle awaits us! Away to the S.W. stands Ben Bynack, broadside on, and not assuming his well-known cone shape, as seen from the familiar view-points around Nethy Bridge. Behind him, and to the left, the slopes of A'Chòinneach, and again beyond, the majestic grandeur of the eastern face of Cairn Gorm, with the deep depression where lies the dark Loch Avon. Still further to the left, the massive Macdhuì, on whose slopes the familiar white patches are loath to depart, reminding us of superiority in height and of many joyous days spent on his wintry sides. But what of the novelty of the vision to the south? Here we have almost unrecognisable views across the Avon valley of Ben Avon and Beinn a' Bhuid. So unusual and unexpected were these views that, even to old stagers like ourselves, they almost made us say "What hills are those?" Here we had a "reversed" view of the ever-familiar "Sneck," and of Parker's famous Stob an t-Sluichd, standing out in all its ruggedness on the north slope of Beinn a' Bhuid, and evidently well deserving of all the climbing possibilities which he has claimed for it. We are indeed in a new and wonderful country, which reminded me much of the foot-hills to the east of the Rockies.

From this vantage ground, however, it was obvious that we must get down, and cross to the right bank of the river, which here bends westward. Here there was a slight difference of opinion as to the best route to Dagrù, our next objective, and one member of the party elected to walk up the grassy banks of the river to the Feith Buidhe and thence on to the beginning of the Dagrù ridge. The other three, who were evidently fond of heather stepping, climbed up the heather bank on the south side of the river and ultimately reached the summit of Carn na Feannaige, from which coign of vantage communication was established with the other section of the party, now



1½ miles distant, after having been out of sight from each other for the best part of an hour.

The re-union was celebrated by a luncheon, after which it was a pleasant two miles' walk to the top of Dagrug (2,770 ft.), which is the lower or N.E. top of Creag Mhor (2,932 ft.). On the main top there are some very fine pot holes worn into the granite rocks. And we halted for some little time to examine them and also to admire the view. From here the great Barns of Bynack stand out most prominently, and a splendid prospect is to be had of the whole of the steep south side of Cairn Gorm and Beinn Mheadhoin, with the silver thread of the Feith Buidhe tumbling down over its rocky slabs into the far end of Loch Avon. An easy and restful descent brought us now to the Avon, and as we drank of its soft clear water we thought of what Aberdeen had been deprived through unfortunate partisanship, and inability to look far enough into the future.

The Avon crossed, the well-known Larig an Laoigh route is joined, about which it would be superfluous to say anything to the readers of the *Cairngorm Club Journal*. Be it enough to say that we were not sorry when the last supreme effort of the day was completed by surmounting the grind up from the Dubh Lochan, and when familiar scenes, and countless happy memories associated with them, came before us, as we journeyed down the long trail of the Glen of Derry. The evening sun was now casting lengthening shadows on the hill-sides, the fleecy clouds were assuming a roseate tinge, as they floated peacefully over a sea of exquisite turquoise blue, and now we are among the tall gaunt forms of the pines—old and gnarled—we know so well, standing out—solemn sentinels—to remind us, as if we needed reminding, that we were now approaching the home of our old friend, Donald Fraser—long since passed over—who ever used to hail us with a word of cheer, and that however cheerless either the elements, or ourselves might happen to be. We were at Derry



Lodge of course, and it was just 7.45. The "Sunbeam," a gladsome sight, was there all safe and sound. A rapid partial change and we were all on board, and very shortly afterwards we were seated at a very square meal, c/o Maggie Gruer, Thistle Cottage, Inverey. The records do not state when the party left Inverey, but, if I mistake not, it would not have been much before 9.45, and I do know that we reached the Granite City just before "Victoria" chimed midnight. A great day—twenty-one miles on foot, and I leave the motor enthusiasts to work out the rest.



## THE MOOR OF RANNOCH.

BY ALEXANDER INKSON McCONNOCHIE, F.Z.S.

Serene the sky o'er Rannoch's wide-spread moor—  
Would that its glorious stretch were never dour !  
Purple its heath, its lochs like silver shone,  
And lily pools were fair to gaze upon.  
Behold that flock of sheep with joyful lambs  
That romp and leap and play as feed their dams !  
An eagle hunting for his hungry young —  
One moment, soaring, in the air he hung,  
Then swooped unerring on a hapless lamb,  
Straying some distance from its resting dam.  
High in the air the robber bears his prey  
And to the distant eyry wings his way.  
Bewildered ewes unceasing outcry make,  
Their lambs, not silent, follow in their wake.

\* \* \* \* \*

Nature benign allows few griefs to last,  
Forgetfulness in mercy rules the past.

THIS moor, in the counties of Argyll and Perth, is a great national asset, the largest "lungs" of the Highlands, having an area of about four hundred square miles. It has never been cultivated and never will be ; it does not admit of cultivation. It is such a "waste and solitary place" as longed for by the poet who sought solitude in "a lonely moor without a beaten way." There are certainly both paths and roads of sorts, but none of them continuous ; indeed most of the former are apt to lead the stranger astray.



True, there is now one great road through it, but it is a railway with no station in the moor. Indeed, of old the Moor of Rannoch was considered "the wilderness of all Scotland," but modern generations appreciate it to the full. It is good for both the flockmaster and the sportsman; the angler delights to visit its numerous lochs and lochans; the naturalist has long realised its charms; and the mountaineer seeks its bounding heights. The following advertisement will be found in the *Edinburgh Evening Courant* of July 15, 1786: "Preservation of Game. The Earl of Breadalbane being desirous to preserve the game upon his estates in Perthshire and Argyllshire, hopes that no gentleman will shoot there without liberty. Poachers and unqualified persons will be prosecuted." The county boundary is purely arbitrary, having no reference to any outstanding features. I discussed the subject with the Marquis of Breadalbane, but he was quite unable to throw any light on it.

Roughly, the western boundary is the High Tops of the Black Mount, the eastern Loch Rannoch; its altitude above sea level may be put at about a thousand feet—here and there the surface is broken by slight eminences. The principal lochs are Tulla, Ba, Laidon (Lydoch) and Rannoch; on the north-western shore of the first is Forest Lodge, the principal shooting-box of Black Mount deer forest. Lilies are a great feature of the lochans; poets have contrasted the beauty and purity of the cloud-berry with the blackness of its peaty bed—so one may compare the equally beautiful water-lily with the muddy lochans where it flourishes. The moor may be said to be the birthplace of three considerable streams—the Ba, which ultimately emerges from Loch Rannoch as the river Tummel; the Etive, which reaches the Atlantic by Loch Etive; and the Orchy, which, starting as the Water of Tulla, ends as the river Awe in Loch Etive after flowing for a short distance through Loch Awe. Thus the Argyll portion of the moor is drained by two streams flowing in a



westerly direction, and another between them running easterly.

Both colour and life are in abundance in this most picturesque of moors ; an old writer said of the highway on the Black Mount side : " no road in Britain probably passes through more magnificent scenery." Vegetation is luxuriant, and grasses in their varying hues add to the splendour of the general colouring. Above all there is the heather, which in bloom surpasses anything else in richness of colour ; the perfume of the sun-kissed bog myrtle is almost overpowering. There are numerous evidences of the former densely wooded appearance of the moor—tree roots uniformly spread over the surface, even at an altitude of 1,700 feet. Indeed in times not so very far back the surrounding districts were supplied with " fir candles " from the moor for lighting purposes. Remains of the ancient Caledonian Forest are frequently to be found, but none more plainly than in the Moor of Rannoch, particularly in Crannach Wood in the valley of the Tulla. Macullach forgets these tree roots when he recounts the obstacles he had to contend with when he tackled the moor over a century ago on horseback : " A ride this was not, by any figure of speech ; I cannot even call it a walk, for half the space was traversed by jumping over bogs, and holes, and ditches, and pits, which were generally as wide as to demand much serious attention. I may fairly say that I jumped half the way to Loch Rannoch." Stevenson sent a troop of cavalry through the moor, but evidently he wrote, on this occasion, without knowledge.

Crannach Wood is cut in two by the railway, the more important section being that between the line and the Water of Tulla. Recently an expert examined one of its ancient firs on which he counted two hundred and fifty rings, by no means a solitary specimen of its age. It is to be feared that in a generation or two this wood may be completely laid low, and that only birches will flourish. It has to contend with hurricans,



lightning and railway fires, not to mention time itself ; the passing locomotives have an evil reputation locally. Some of the birches have an interest all their own, the older bearing a certain resemblance to ancient olive trees. Many of the firs have very short trunks, being almost all branches. Seedlings can never come to anything ; deer and sheep, the wood being quite open, are mainly responsible for the veterans having no worthy successors. The mountain eagle is no stranger in the vicinity of the wood ; the hoodie nests on the trees ; the oyster-catcher breeds along the burn. The green-plover, the goosander, the owl and sparrow-hawk are also to be seen ; the most numerous birds, however, apart from crows, are blackgame. Red deer also may frequently be observed. Now and again peeps may be had of the towering mountains close by ; the High Tops lose nothing in altitude. It has been suggested, I know not on what grounds, that the Argyll portion of the Moor of Rannoch was of old known as Crannach Moor. *Dulce est desipere in loco* ; give me a sunny afternoon and Crannach Wood.

Loch Ba is seen to the best advantage from the road northwards from the Bridge of Orchy. It is studded with islets, the largest of which is Eilean Molach, where there is a small heronry ; on my last visit one of the birds was so alarmed that it disgorged a fairly large trout. Near by is an islet where of old eagles had an eyry ; they still nest at no great distance, as does the peregrine falcon. No moor loch is better known to naturalists and anglers than Loch Ba. One day I was there dragon flies seemed to be holding holiday, and ducks made excursions from loch to loch. Cormorants were fishing, hares hurrying off, curlews and ravens not silent—there was room for all, “limitless the mountain plain.” I have been assured that the eggs of the cormorant are very fine eating, indeed a *bonne bouche* ; in eating them one does a public service, for salmon fishery proprietors put a price on their heads. In a swan’s nest there was an addled egg ; in a duck’s



the clutch called for particular attention—one duckling had gained its freedom, others were forcing their way into the open, two eggs were intact. There was life all around, but of mankind only my stalker-guide and myself. A glorious day of brilliant sunshine ; the view of Ben Doran, rendered famous by that great Gaelic poet, Duncan Ban Macintyre, was one to be remembered. Mist was playing in its corries ; there were patches of snow in Coireach Ba (the ancient name of the Black Mount forest) and Loch Laidon shone like burnished silver. Coireach Ba is the sanctuary of the forest ; later I was fortunate in being allowed two opportunities of a close acquaintance with it. At its head are the highest mountains of the Black Mount, familiarly known as the High Tops ; the prospect towards and beyond Glen Etive is remarkable, while in the opposite direction is the best view of the great expanse of the Moor of Rannoch.

How delighted one is to come on the nest of a curlew, with its pointed eggs of varying sizes and markings ! The wariness of this bird is indicated by several Gaelic proverbs : “ he is a good hunter who kills a curlew ” ; another is, “ to kill seven curlews the work of a life-time ”. I happened on a young curlew which lay low in a small water-course and allowed itself to be handled, but when released it made its long legs its friends. Its wings appeared to be useless, yet from the size of the bird one would have expected it to be able to fly a little. A timid little thing is the water-hen, which was the next bird that came into view. As it scuttled away and disappeared in a ditch I was glad to have even a momentary interview with it.

Another glorious day I spent in revisiting some of the lily-covered lochans and at Gortan. I lingered enraptured by their prodigal display ; rarely indeed does one see such profusion. I did not know which to admire more, the delicate beauty of the flowers or the wonderful gracefulness of the leaves. A dozen or more of such halts told on time ; I had reluctantly to



pass by many an inviting scene, more or less content with a mere glance. I recalled, not to their advantage, the formal lily ponds in Hampton Court Palace gardens. The abundance too of moss-crop (cotton-grass) was very striking, as did the unusually numerous tufts on the stalks ; little wonder that stags resort there in their trying time. Gortan is a shepherd's cottage where the vile cart road from Bridge of Orchy ends. The shepherd was engaged at his peats and welcomed me with the remark, " You've been having a walk, sir ". " Yes, a bit ". " Ah, there's no place like the Moor o' Rannoch ; lots o' room there for walking." The conversation was continued in his spacious porch, where a table and chair with scones and milk were served by the good-wife. I had observed numerous fleeces in my stroll, all that was left of sheep which had succumbed from various causes.

The London and North Eastern Railway, as indicated, crosses the moor from Bridge of Orchy station to Rannoch station, with a passing place at Gortan. Some imagined that the deer would fight shy of this innovation of their resorts ; on the contrary, they even took to feeding between the railway fences, with the result that several of them have been run over. An attempt was made by the Commissioners of Forfeited Estates to improve part of the moor which belonged to Robertson of Struan where it was invitingly level. About midway between Gortan and Rannoch station the attention of passengers is arrested by prominent boards with the words, " Soldiers' Trenches ". A detachment of soldiers, stationed at Rannoch barracks after the battle of Culloden, were set digging " with the view of making arable land of the desert and covering it with corn. But it was a dismal failure ". The Commissioners relinquished their design after several seasons, there being no " fall " for the water. Notwithstanding this authoritative statement it is still asserted that " any one who studies the trenches can see that they were made for military purposes, with a square in



the centre for the commander and his baggage". There is also a lingering tradition that the trenches were dug to stop threatened attacks on the Perthshire side of the moor by cattle raiders from Argyll. Over a mile to the north-east is a so-called rocking stone. It is thirteen feet in height and looks as though the wind would blow it down.

I have spent several exciting winter days after hinds in the moor ; the adventures of one of them will suffice. That day was enlivened by the appearance of several roe ; beautiful creatures they were, but we left them alone. Hoodies were numerous as were white hares, but we were not interested in such small deer. We passed two cunningly set traps for hoodies ; in one was a dead hoodie, in the other the victim was alive. There had recently been a double tragedy there ; while the fox-hunters were out a fox was seen moving cautiously forward, the attraction being a hoodie in distress in a trap. Reynard was about to give it the *coup de grace* when he himself succumbed to a shot. Another hoodie rose from a burn ; it had been at a dead white hare brought down by the burn and stranded. We spied deer a long way off ; they were moving upwards despite the weather, and not till they had reached an altitude of over 2,000 feet did they settle down. There assuredly was a chance for us not to be lost if we were prepared to suffer some personal discomfort ; the river, which was swollen with melted snow, had to be forded, and numerous intervening knolls, with soft snow, two feet deep, had to be negotiated. In due time two shots rang out and two beasts fell within thirty yards of each other. After the gralloch, we dragged a fine pair of hinds a few hundred feet down the ben into such a situation as the ponyman could do the rest. The carcasses were so adorned that foxes and hoodies would fight shy of touching them, at least for a day. Then the stalker having taken, in the manner of his kind, the latitude and longitude of their position for the information of the ponyman, we smartly



descended about a thousand feet. As it happened the day was still comparatively young, with more than one thrill to make it memorable. We stalked a small parcel of hinds for nearly an hour ere a fair chance came for firing a shot. . . . I recall, with a certain satisfaction, the observation of a celebrated sportsman that one ought never to kill nor miss every beast that comes in the way. We had been warned to be on the outlook for a stag that had been wounded the previous season, and escaped ; so far he had eluded the brothers of mercy. By a stratagem (which I need scarcely say was not mine) we came to close quarters with him just before the light completely failed. Our plan entailed wading across the swollen Orchy, but that was regarded, in the circumstances, as no inconvenience. The poor brute had evidently had a bad time, so we rejoiced at our success, though of course the larder did not receive the carcase, nor was the head a trophy fit for a sportsman's hall.

Several of my earlier excursions were made to the moor over forty years ago when Dalwhinnie was the most convenient station. That involved of course the long walk down the west shore of Loch Ericht, but that loch is one of the grandest sights in the Highlands. One can of course drive six miles of the distance to Benalder Forest Lodge ; and there are times when boat can be taken, motor or oar, from end to end. The walk, or voyage, can be broken at Alder Bay, but now the stalker's cottage there, sublime in its solitude, has no occupant. In the time of my old friend, Joseph McCook, at the Bay, one was assured of a hospitable reception and a pleasant hour or two (sometimes, if one were fortunate) even a bedroom, none the less comfortable that its walls were papered with copies of the *Illustrated London News* ; at times, when there was a crowd, the Alder burn, just in front of the cottage, served for bath and wash-hand stand. Even trout too for breakfast, which Joseph had just lured from the loch, and a dance on the tiny lawn in the



evening, with the bagpipes for music. Joseph and his wife have now pitched their tent at Newtonmore ; there are many of us who wish them well. Among the attractions of Alder Bay are Prince Charlie's cave ; an old iron hand-mill for grinding oats ; a fragment of a thin flat tombstone with some words in Latin, and the date 1515 ; not to mention a little mound from which in former times the sun was worshipped. My introduction there was made in 1885 ; we were a party of three, one being a Skyeman. We received a most extraordinary welcome from a young collie, so noisy and demonstrative that we could not at first understand it. The Skyeman tried it with a few words in Gaelic, and the result was even more astounding, for the animal now wept for joy and almost went into a fit. The explanation was that the dog was home-sick ; he had evidently concluded that we had come to take him " home " again. We were told he had " never asked to get away before ". In case it may be imagined that I am wandering from my subject, I have to point out that the right bank of Alder burn is in Rannoch. The last counsel of Joseph was to give a wide berth to some Highland cattle we might see as we walked down by the river Ericht. I had the misfortune to put my foot on a young chick of a grouse—the first time such an accident had ever occurred in all my hill wanderings. It reminds me of a remark made by the late Sir Arthur Grant of Monymusk, when I was with him on Cairn William, on the occasion of a Cairngorm Club excursion, when one of the members nearly put his foot on a nest with ten eggs. " Take care ", said Sir Arthur, " that's value for five guineas ". We spent the night at Cul a' Mhuilinn, near the head of Loch Rannoch, whence we set out on the long walk across the moor to Kingshouse Inn.

Our first halt was at a shepherd's cottage where we were told that at a certain season not a single person would pass for " fortnights ". The cottage was rather a wretched affair ; the open chimney freely



admitted the elements, giving as much light as the diminutive broken window (it must surely have been built in window-tax days) ; a slim door almost ready to open both ways ; and one end of the building devoted to cows and poultry. We found a perambulating teacher paying a professional visit, teaching English to children whose mother tongue was Gaelic. This teacher quickly recognised that one of us was a Celtic scholar, but as he ventured to use a too familiar Gaelic expression from an inferior to a superior he was promptly reprov'd by our host. The shepherd had overtaken us in the moor, and as he was on his way home we had the advantage of his company, as well as the guidance of one of his boys till we came in sight of the then Iron Lodge of Blackcorries forest. We left after an acceptable little lunch of scones and milk, daintily served by the daughter of the house. This cottage is now a ruin.

The following day we ascended Buchaille Etive Mor (3,345 ft.) from Kingshouse. There are two deep ravines on the side of this outstanding mountain towards the Inn which will be found very interesting, especially to botanists. One of these ravines, which narrows into a cleft, is exceedingly deep, and in the upper part is only a few feet in breadth with a stream tumbling and rushing in it, making a succession of cascades. Among the ferns observed may be mentioned beech, oak, parsley and spleenwort. The prospect from the summit, Stob Dearg, is very fine, sea-water lochs on the west coast being seen, as well as inland lochs, with a magnificent view of mountains in the Western Islands. In the evening we drove down Glen Coe on the way home.

Many years afterwards I made my way from Mamore to Glen Coe *via* Kinlochleven and the Devil's Staircase to Kingshouse, not so directly as I might have done. Pennant made the same journey in 1769, after breakfast on most "excellent minced stag, the only form I thought that animal good in". He goes on thus in



his account: "The mountains soar to a far greater height than before . . . torrents roar amidst the loose stones . . . ascend the Black Mountain on a steep road which continues about three miles, almost to the summit . . . on the other side the descent is scarce a mile, but it is very rapid down to a zig-zag way"; that short mile is the Devil's Staircase. I climbed up from Kinlochleven by the broad line of pipes to the sluices which control the water supply of the aluminium works. There was snow on the ground, and snow was also falling when I had reached the sluices; there the officer in charge almost pleaded with me to descend again to Kinlochleven, but being armed with compass, aneroid and map I determined to continue my journey. Only a peep was permitted of the lower end of the huge reservoir, some seven miles long, which stores the motive power at Kinlochleven, but I succeeded in finding the top of the celebrated Staircase, and made the descent with little difficulty. But the beautiful name of the upper part of this route, Mam Grianan, the sunny mount, was utterly belied on this occasion. As it happened, I had an introduction to a house at the Glen Coe end where I was so entertained that I was induced to remain till darkness set in. But what mattered that? I had only to follow a direct wide road to my inn. Once started however snow fell so densely that even the road was hardly visible, yet I held on with perfect confidence. But the Kingshouse seemed unduly long in appearing and I heard a considerable noise on my right which I felt must be the rush of the river Etive. I at last realised that I had unconsciously inclined to the left where the Blackcorries road leaves the main road, so rather than turn back I held on for the lodge which I knew had become rather a pretentious building, but to which, I flattered myself, I would be welcomed. I was right. Next morning I retraced my steps to Kingshouse, but had I not made myself more familiar with the Moor of Rannoch where others had spent a night without any cover? Not a few tourists



and others have been lost for hours, several even for a night in the moor. On Friday, May 19, 1848, a shepherd's girl, under four, wandered from her home and failed to return at the expected time. That evening and the following morning there were great falls of rain, but the father at once went in search. Saturday, Sunday and Monday passed without any result to an organised search. As the shepherd was moving about aimlessly on the Tuesday evening, a mile and a half from his own door, he heard a very feeble cry ; there was his child in such a weak condition that grave fears were felt for her recovery ; she died recently at the age of eighty. Her home was the "cottage, now a ruin," described in a preceding page.

Twice afterwards I had occasion to be at Kings-house Inn, but succeeded without making any blunder, thanks to the weather. I came direct from Alder Bay across the moor without any incident worthy of note to Glen Etive, coming to final rest at Alltachaoruinn, a small shooting-box of the Black Mount. I had been invited to see a white red stag which had been observed in that beat, so I set out the following morning with Donald as guide. We had a long day before we had the pleasure of coming on our quarry. He was not altogether white, but nevertheless was well worth my long journey. I had also the very interesting experience of the sudden appearance of a large flock of ptarmigan flying at best speed, evidently pursued by an eagle. The king of birds was not far behind, but all disappeared over a ridge. I never had seen ptarmigan in such numbers flying so fast ; it was a sight to be long remembered. On the other occasion I was in the same neighbourhood after being present at a heather-burning in the moor towards the end of which we came on a peregrine falcon's eyry with two young birds.

Our success with the location of the white stag recalls an interesting incident of the year 1622 when James VI. and I. heard of a white hind having been seen in the



Black Mount. The king determined to have her transferred to Windsor, and so despatched two men to capture her with local assistance. They looked about for months, both on moor and mountain, frequently bogged in the former with not a few falls among the rocks of the latter, but, alas, no white hind was to be seen. History thereafter is dumb on the subject of white deer till 1850 when the king of Denmark sent four white hinds to the Marquis of Breadalbane. Nine years later a sporting connection was made with Belgium when the Count of Flanders was entertained to a deer drive ; six stags fell to the royal Count's rifle.

On one occasion I took train from Tulloch to Rannoch, from which latter station I decided to go westward with Loch Laidon on my right. I wandered at will, with no fixed purpose, no time table except that the west had to be reached by nightfall. There is a subtle pleasure in zig-zaging as fancy suggests ; then " the wind on the heath, Brother " is enjoyed to the full. It was my day ; the sun shone as it were to order, varied with refreshing breezes. Hinds with their fawns were to be seen splashing through the water on their way to Crannach Wood. Ben Achallader stood forth most invitingly, at its foot is the steading of the great sheep farm of Achallader, thousands of sheep being grazed on the moor. Close by are the ruins of Achallader Castle where of old the Fletchers bore sway, adjoining is a small disused burial ground. The castle is a building of some historical interest ; in 1691 the Earl of Breadalbane conferred there with the Highland chieftains on the subject of the " pacification " of the North, a conference, alas, which had a most tragic end in the massacre of Glen Coe. My great day had reached its evening and Ben Achallader was reserved for next morning. Mist played among the High Tops ; patches of snow bore testimony to protracted winters in these parts. Over all was a light that charmed me as I made for my " lodge in that vast wilderness."



The ascent of Ben Achallader from below looks a steep, short climb, but, as is the manner of hills, it stretches out as one tackles it. At a height of about 2,200 feet I could not help admiring a burn as it burst forth from rocks ; turning round there were the High Tops in full view—a prospect of mountains and lochs not easily surpassed. Another 200 feet up the ascent became perceptibly steeper ; at about 3,000 feet it might well be described as both very steep and stoney. Near this height a fatal accident happened on March 22nd, 1925, when a member of a party of three, who had proceeded alone from about an altitude of 2,000 feet, had slipped down a snow slope and been fatally injured by projecting rocks. His body was not found till three weeks later. The top is rather flat, sloping to long Glen Lyon and the south ; haze westward and northward obscured the view. There are two cairns on the summit, the one not visible from the other. But the great Moor of Rannoch is seen from south to north and west to east resplendent with heather, its hundred lochans responsive to the sun. Concerning Ben Achallader and its neighbours it was written in 1776 that “ the country people consider them as enchanted. Before the storm begins to rage, they emit a hollow sound, which forebodes it. The shepherd knows it well, and instantly shelters his flock.”



THE SCOTTISH "THREES" (Contd.) AND  
AFTER.

BY JAMES A. PARKER.

It is difficult to keep up-to-date in these times, and on my return home, in October, 1928, from my trip round the World I was informed that during my absence a new three thousand feet mountain had been discovered in Scotland, and that therefore the article by me in the last volume of the *Journal* was quite out of date, and that my claim to have climbed all the Scottish "Threes" was not in accordance with the actual facts.

The new hill, which is not a volcano, is called Beinn Tarsuinn, and it stands on the north shore of Lochan Fada, near, that is to say a long way from, Kinlochewe. Its height is believed to be about 3,080 feet, being an increase of 110 feet to its former height. Of course there was only one thing to do and that was to go and climb the hill as early as possible, and this was successfully done on March 24, 1929, in the presence of witnesses, viz. R. T. Sellar and Gordon Wilson. So that made my 277th and, I hope, final Scottish Three Thousander.

By this time I had also climbed all the three thousand feet mountains in England and Ireland so that it was my very natural ambition to pay some attention to those in Wales. Good weather being essential, I took advantage of the settled weather after Easter and went to Bangor in North Wales on April 12, and from it



and from Pen-y-Pass Inn climbed all the Welsh "Threes" comfortably in a week, the last being Tryfan (3,010 ft.), a very fine little rock peak, climbed on April 19. Snowdonia is a delightful district, and after the great task was finished, I enjoyed myself by climbing three of the peaks again; but this was not a very strenuous undertaking as Pen-y-Pass Inn is 1,169 feet above sea level.

So that, barring fresh discoveries in Scotland, concludes the ascent of all the three thousand feet mountains in the British Islands. Three hundred in all, viz. 277 in Scotland, four in England, twelve in Wales, and seven in Ireland. Q.E.F.



## JAMES DOWNIE, GUIDE.

BY JOHN MACPHERSON, J.P.

JAMES DOWNIE, mountain guide, died suddenly on March, 1929. Born in April, 1850, he was the youngest son of the late John Downie and his wife, Catherine Grant. From the beginning of the 19th century, Braemar has been a great resort for mountaineers, but, with the advent of the Royal Family at Balmoral, a fresh impetus was given to the tourist traffic, and guides, with sure-footed ponies for hill-climbing, were in great request. At that period the principal guides in the district were the late George McHardy, Croftmuicken and the late Charles Stewart, Comely Bank. When the former was getting over in years, about 1860, the late John Downie took up the business, and when he in turn began to get frail, about 1870, he gave over the work to his son James, he himself devoting his time to canvassing in the village for orders for his son. Though born too late to have the privilege of guiding Queen Victoria in her mountain excursions during the fifties of last century, James became an expert guide, and no one knew better than he the way to the higher mountains and through the various mountain passes leading north, west and south from Upper Deeside. There are few noble families in Scotland or England some of whose members he has not guided through the Cairngorms during his lifetime, and many stirring episodes he was able to relate in his latter years of his experiences in his many expeditions to the mountains. As lately as last Summer, though in his 79th year, he guided a party to the top of Lochnagar. He never married, though he greatly enjoyed the society of ladies.





JAMES DOWNIE, GUIDE.



DOWNIE, AT HIS COTTAGE, TOMINTOUL, BRAEMAR.



## CAIRNGORM CLUB LIBRARY.

CATALOGUE AS AT FEBRUARY 22, 1929.

THE Club possesses the nucleus of a library which is at present in the Secretary's office. The President and Mr. William Garden have very kindly offered to provide a book-case, and, through the kindness of the Secretary, members will have access to this at times to be arranged. It is hoped that members of the Club will do what they can to add to the value of the library by contributing suitable books and maps. So far only a beginning has been made. The possibilities are great. A well-stocked library will be a great asset to the Club. Local mountaineering literature and maps are of special interest, but any works on mountaineering subjects will be most welcome. We are greatly indebted to the President for compiling the following catalogue of the library as at February 22.

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Ordnance Survey Map of Scotland—

Half Inch, Sheets Nos. 12 and 14.

One Inch, Sheets Nos. 53, 63, 64, 67, 70, 72, 73, 74, 74, 75, 75, 76, 77, 77, 85, and 96.

One Inch Map Aberdeen to Lumsden.

— — Ellon to Fraserburgh.

— — Huntly to Banff.

— — Stonehaven to Tarfside.

— — The Cairngorms.

Quarter Inch Map. Sheets Nos. 7, 8, 9, 12.



See p. 178

## AN OUTRAGED MONARCH.

BY E. BRAND.

IN reading Mr. James Duncan's interesting article, "The Inner Circle of the Cairngorms," in the last issue of the *Club Journal*, I came across the remark that it had always been a regret to Mr. Duncan that he had never seen an eagle near enough to see his beak. This reminded me of an occasion when I not only got near enough an eagle to see his beak but also to feel it!

I may say that the sport of bird-ringing is a hobby of mine, although my knowledge of birds and their ways is very far from being as extensive as I would like it to be. It may be noticed that I have termed bird-ringing a "sport." I do so advisedly; for, if one tackles the big birds, there exists every element of sport in the proceeding.

On this particular August afternoon I had had an utterly blank day. I had "ranged and searched a thousand nooks" on the Broad Cairn, from about 9 o'clock that morning, and had arrived at lunch time without having got near a single bird. Seated upon a boulder on the plateau, where the path from Glen Muick ends, I was eating a sandwich in a very disgruntled frame of mind. Suddenly I heard a familiar yelp, and, looking up, I beheld a golden eagle soaring high above me. "What about him!" thought I. At that moment he turned sharply and made for the summit. I abandoned my lunch, and, rising, made



for the summit also, keeping him in view as well as I could. It was a most amusing scramble to the summit. I had of course to keep my eyes upon "the thing above," namely the eagle, with the result that my feet, left to their own devices, often slipped, and two or three times I seated myself involuntarily and most uncomfortably upon some particularly knobby boulders! Eventually I reached the summit, however, to observe my "objective" seated in all his majesty upon a flat-topped rock, some twenty feet below me, gazing meditatively down towards Glen Doll. He appeared to me to have dined and to have settled there in the sun for his afternoon siesta. That was the idea! I would creep towards him, wait until he was asleep, then seize him and place a ring upon his leg. Down I went flat and proceeded to wriggle gently down through the heather and boulders in approved stalker's fashion. The gentleman began to tidy himself up, and preen his feathers. I paused in my gyrations to admire the gorgeous bird as he sat and tidied up the long-flight feathers of his wings, with one great wing outstretched, the sunlight glinting on the golden brown feathers of his handsome head. And Shelley's words came into my mind—

As on the jag of a mountain crag,  
Which an earthquake rocks and swings,  
An eagle alit one moment may sit  
In the light of its golden wings.

Only I hoped he would sit longer than one moment. Slowly and painfully I wriggled on till I got within range. I carefully raised myself, keeping well behind his back, raised my arms to seize him and . . . A sudden and most terrific sneeze rent the air. Away soared his majesty up into the blue sky. I used an expressive, though somewhat unparliamentary expression, and turned to behold two men coming up towards me from Glen Doll! They were merely climbing the hill. One of them had inadvertently sneezed, and I



think they thought me distinctly daft when I expounded to them the havoc that sneeze had wrought!

But I had little time to talk, for his majesty the eagle, considerably upset and displeased at this startling disturbance, was making a straight line for the Dhu Loch, yelping an indignant protest as he flew. On I pegged round the shoulder and down the face towards the loch. This got me on to the more difficult side of the hill, and care had perforce to be taken, for I did not particularly desire to make a forced descent by way of the slabs, ending in a highly uncomfortable stotting act down the crags. Accordingly, I paid for the moment more attention to my feet than to his majesty, with the result that I nearly lost sight of him. Luckily, as I came down to where the line of the old drove track ascends from the Dhu Loch, I again spotted him speeding for Lochnagar. Once again I put on speed, heading in the same direction.

I need not recount all the details of my hurried descent—my quite unexpected cold bath when I was let down by a treacherous stone as I forded the burn, nor how my garments, "heavy with their drip," impeded my progress. Suffice it to say that, as I struck the course of the Glas Allt on Lochnagar, I had the luck to spy the eagle, poised once more upon a low rock, making another attempt to conclude his toilet. Down I went flat, and had the pleasure of studying him while he performed his dressing operations. After these were completed, he gave himself a final shake to settle all his feathers into place again. At the same moment my arms came round and caught him. Then the fun began! I had of course incurred the royal displeasure, not to say anger, and this his majesty expressed in no uncertain fashion! He swore, he hit out at me with his powerful beak, while he tore my nether garments with his big claws, in the hope, I am sure, that he would reach the leg below. Yet with it all he somehow kept his kingly dignity. He was still a monarch, if a sorely outraged one. I would



not have minded so much if he had not tried to go for my eyes with his beak. But he aimed straight for them and, consequently, I was compelled to keep my head as well averted as I could. This meant that I had to ring his leg by faith, more than by sight, an almost impossible task! Finally I got the ring on, and then it refused to fix; the clip of the ring being a poor one. Ultimately I had to close it with pliers, the while he tore large tufts of my hair out by the roots—a most painful proceeding! “All’s well that ends well.” As soon as possible I let him go. Very cleverly as I released him he at once spread his wings and with a mighty flap or two rose up above me. He circled two or three times over my head, as if to make sure he was complete after such an outrage. Then swiftly turning right, he flew rapidly away over Loch Muick, far above the impudent human being who had dared to take liberties with the king of the birds.



## THE CAVE ON BOD AN DIABHAIL.

Where is this sight?

What is it ye would see?

If aught of woe or wonder, cease your search.

*Hamlet Act V., Sc. II*

IT was on the tenth of October, 1926, that we searched for the cave, and already the winter's snow was down to 2,500 feet, giving the Cairngorms the appearance of ice-topped cakes. We were a party of five, the writer, Piscator, the Lecturer, Auto, and our skipper, whom we will call 300. The latter member of the party had been down in the south of England and we had kept the search back until his return so that he might be one of the first party to be received by his Satanic Majesty in the cave. The cave had been spotted through a (glass) on the third of May by 300 when coming down Glen Geusachan after his descent from Monadh Mor. From the information given by him the cave was apparently situated about the height of 2,900 feet on the Geusachan face, close to Glen Dee. At the White Bridge we left \*Phyllis behind, and 300 being a very exact man indeed, noted the time as 10h. 30m. 30s. We went up the path on the west side of the Dee, and there was some excitement and conversation regarding the cave. It had probably never been visited since the days of Fionn, except perhaps by the wild cat or the eagle. It might even

\* A motor car.



be haunted, and the thought of meeting the Big Grey Man, or the namesake of the rocky spur, face to face, high up on the cliff gave us some little concern.

Time was passing all too quickly for 300, who is a great walker. He seemed to want to reach some point at a certain time, and he gradually left the others behind. "Lat 'im gang," came the ejaculation from Piscator as he noted the speed of our leader up the river side. We crossed many a sappy hollow in our passage up-stream, and the route was particularly wet between the Allt Garbh and Caochan Riobidh, the latter stream, white-crested, came tumbling down between the rocks of Bhrotain.

We arrived at the Geusachan water at 12h. 30m. (at least 300 did) and we splashed through it. Our feet were extremely cold with the icy water, and we squeezed the water out of our stockings and received great comfort. On the other hand, the temperature of the water did not seem to trouble Piscator, who is accustomed to stand in water practising the "gentle art."

We looked up the screes and saw 300 sitting waiting for us, so we wasted no time in getting up to him. He told us the height was now 2,300 feet, and that it was 1 o'clock, and we would rope up here. The writer was put to lead by 300, not that he had any special qualification for the job, but because he showed signs of possibly first finding the cave, and it was perfectly obvious that the owner of Phyllis wished to reserve this honour for himself. The writer's attention of course would be occupied in finding the route.

Almost immediately we got into the snow, which was soft at first, but soon became frozen, and frost-flowers gathered on our wet boots. Above us rose many jagged towers, and the upward spectacle was very fine.\*

\* See S.M.C. Guide Book, p. 156.



No particular difficulty was experienced throughout the climb, but the frozen condition of the turf and the exceedingly exposed position made the greatest caution necessary. The climb finished with a snow slope exactly at the cairn, after a 1,000 feet of climbing.

Below us, now in shadow lay Pol Iasg at the junction of the streams, and Clais á Mhadaidh at the foot of Carn á Mhaim. It was now 3 o'clock and very cold as the wind was blowing from a' Bhuidheannaich and the Slicket, so we galloped down Coire Odhar which carried snow to the foot.

On our homeward journey down Glen Dee we saw the footsteps of the evening slowly climbing up the hills, and the afterglow dyed the snow-covered summits of the Cairngorms a brilliant pink which was really magnificent, and the planets Jupiter and Saturn were lamps in the southern sky.

It was dark by the time we returned to the White Bridge, and 300 being there first had Phyllis' headlights turned on to guide the slower members of the search.

"We have not found the cave," the writer remarked to 300, and he quietly but firmly said, "*No!* I think the mouth of it had been probably filled with snow." I can hear you say, dear reader, "I believe you but thousands wouldn't."



## NATIONAL PARKS.

THE National Park Movement is being very widely debated at present. The important meeting which was held at Glasgow on June 4, under the auspices of the Association for the Preservation of Rural Scotland, resulted in an important discussion on the proposal to establish a National Forest Reserve, and, as Sir Iain Colquhoun remarked, it was clear that the locality in most people's minds is the Cairngorms.

It was remitted to the executive of the Association to appoint a Committee which will undertake the preliminary work of investigating the whole question and report. A general committee will then be formed to carry the scheme further, and eventually the formation of a Scottish National Trust, to hold the National Reserve, will be considered. Thus the whole question is being kept prominently before the public. Various points are leading to keen debate. How far should the selected area be "popularized" by opening it up with motor roads and rest-houses? What steps should be taken to preserve it in its natural condition with its flora and fauna? Under what conditions should camping be allowed? These and many other questions are being asked, and it is well that they should be freely discussed.

At the Glasgow meeting we note that Sir Iain Colquhoun, asking for the opinions of delegates as to whether motor coach roads should be allowed in the reserve area, said it was no use making scathing remarks about charabanc crowds. They were very



decent. They had practically the whole of Scotland to go to, and he did not think they would have any grievance if they were excluded from a small area.

Mr. John Bartholomew said a national reserve would be useless if there was not fairly easy access to it. They could not rule out the motor coach. Motor coach traffic might be permitted up to a point, but controlled.

Mr. Mortimer Batten put forward the suggestion that a Scottish National Reserve should be divided into three sections. One would be reserved for beasts and animals, and no camping or loitering would be allowed. The second would be used for the benefit of the thousands of people who could not afford to take houses or go into quarters in the country, but who had a great love of nature. These people would be able to take their children into a great reservation of the kind proposed, and spend cheap, happy holidays. The moral effect on the nation of such a holiday existence for many of its people would be very great. In the third section ordinary camping and caravanning would be permitted, so that the people, instead of going on a tour to the National Reserve and merely going in to see it, could be on the spot for a period of time.

In England a number of interesting proposals for the establishment of National Parks have recently been put forward. Lord Bledisloe suggests the Forest of Dean, Dovedale, has been proposed, and an appeal is also being made for the preservation of Longshaw Moor, Sheffield, "The preservation of this glorious piece of moorland," it is contended, "is no matter of merely local interest," and, "Sheffield, having done its own part, has a right now to call for the help of all who care for the unspoilt beauty of England. There are not many bits of it more worth preserving than Longshaw Moor." A National Park in Snowdonia is another suggestion. In advocating this scheme, Dr. Vaughan Cornish says, "The area to which my project refers is centred on the Pass of Llanberis and comprises five mountain masses, Moel Hebog, Snow-



don proper, the Glyders, Carnedds, and Siabod with Cynicht. Its length from south-west to north-east is 28, its central breadth 14 miles, most of the area lying in Caernarvonshire, but with a small part in Merioneth."

While these schemes are being mooted, it is most satisfactory to note that some practical results are being obtained in the Lake District through the generosity of public-spirited donors. Mr. and Mrs. E. D. Simon have presented to the National Trust Cockley Beck Farm at the head of the Duddon Valley. Cockley Beck lies at the foot of Hardknott Pass, and the land attached to it runs the whole length of Wrynose Bottom (including the Lancashire side of Wrynose Pass) to the Three Shire Stones, and takes in the summit of Carrs (2,500 ft.). Dale Head Farm, which adjoins Cockley Beck Farm, has also been presented to the Trust by an anonymous donor.

Professor G. M. Trevelyan has purchased and presented to the Trust 400 acres of land in the head of the Langdale Valley, which runs up underneath the famous Langdale Pikes towards the Stake Pass and Crinkle Crag. Another small but valuable addition to the properties of the National Trust in the Lake District has also just been made. The promontory known as Bee Holme on Windermere Lake—which for nine months of the year is an island, and the other three months a peninsula—has been purchased by Mr. F. J. Hayes, of High Wray, near Hawkshead, and presented to the Trust.

The holdings of the National Trust in the Lake District now include:—The Borrans Field, Ambleside, the site of an old Roman fort on the shore of Windermere; Gowbarrow Fell and Aira Force, and land near Stybarrow Crag, Ullswater; Queen Adelaide's Hill, Windermere; White Moss Intake, Grasmere; the whole of the area of Scafell above the 2,000 ft. contour line; the summit of Scafell Pikes; the Fell and Rock Climbing Club Memorial—an area of about 3,000 acres above the 1,500 ft. contour line, containing



the summits of Great Gable, Green Gable, Kirk Fell, Great End, Glaramara, &c. ; Brandelow Estate, Keswick ; Castle Crag, Borrowdale, Crow Park, Cockshott Wood, and Castle Head, Keswick ; Kelsick Scar, Ambleside ; Druids' Circle, Keswick ; Friar's Crag and Lord's Island, Derwentwater ; Grange Fell and Borrowdale Birches, Derwentwater ; Manesty, Keswick ; Peace Howe, a view-point near Grange-in-Borrowdale ; Ruskin Monument on Friar's Crag ; the Glebe Lands, Bowness, and the Old Bridge House, Ambleside ; and the painting by Mr. Frank Bramley, R.A., "The Grasmere Rushbearing," in the parish hall at Grasmere.



## LORD HALDANE AS MOUNTAINEER.

### SEVENTY-THREE MILES IN TWENTY-THREE HOURS.

IN the opening chapter of his *Autobiography*, Lord Haldane has some interesting references to mountaineering which, through the courtesy of Miss Haldane and the publishers, we are permitted to quote.

“As we grew up,” wrote Lord Haldane, “we developed considerable capacities for physical exertion. We became energetic walkers. I have more than once started from Cloan on foot to walk to the top of Ben Lawers, a mountain four thousand feet high in the Grampians, opposite to our home in the Ochils. I recall once starting at two in the morning with my younger brothers and walking to the top of the Ben and back, seventy-three miles within twenty-three hours. When we got to the foot of the great hill we found a rival party, who had slept the night in an inn, aspiring to do the climb in record time, but our wind was better than theirs, owing to our having been walking over hill and dale all night, and we easily left them behind. These same younger brothers, a little later, walked from Ballater to Cloan, again over the intervening Grampians, doing a walk of one hundred and one miles in thirty hours and fifty minutes, without over-fatigue. In after life, when I was at the Bar, I was able, without being in training, to walk from Brighton to London easily in between thirteen and fourteen hours. Later on in life, when I was War Minister, I remember going down to Lewes, there to inspect the troops commanded by the General of the Division. The motor which was to have taken us to our destination after the inspection did not turn up, and the General asked me rather timidly if I felt equal to walking a little of the way along the Brighton to London road. I smiled and proceeded to set the pace.

“In the glens around Cloan we had some experience in stiff climbing. Afterwards, when I went to the University of Göttingen,



I accompanied the Professor of Geology and a party of students on an expedition through the Hartz Mountains to search for fossils. We came opposite to a steep and high cliff, and the Professor said that if we could only do what was impracticable, get at some rock which appeared on the face near the top, we should probably find some striking specimens. I said nothing but put my hammer in my pocket and suddenly proceeded to scale the cliff. The Germans were not, in these days, as athletic as they afterwards became. There was an agonized abjuration to me to come down. But I got to near the top, and with my hammer extracted from the surface of the rock a likely looking lump. When I got down again, after a not really difficult climb, this was examined and from it was extracted a rather valuable specimen of fossil. I was reproached for the supposed risk to which I had subjected the party as well as myself. But the fossil was extracted and cleaned and placed in the University Museum under the title 'Petrefactum Nomine Haldane.'



## PROCEEDINGS OF THE CLUB.

### NEW YEAR MEET, 1929—BRAEMAR.

THE New Year Meet was held at Braemar from Dec. 28, 1928, to Jan. 2, 1929, with headquarters at the Invercauld Arms Hotel. Hard frost prevailed during the whole time, and there were heavy falls of snow on the nights of the 28th and 29th which made going very heavy on the lower slopes; but, on the other hand, gave the ski-ers of the party the opportunity of exercising their skill even on the slopes near the hotel.

The following members were present:—J. A. Parker (President), N. Bruce, H. J. Butchart, D. P. S. Douglas, H. C. Dugan, J. L. Duncan, G. Geddes, H. Q. Irvine, W. Malcolm, J. M. Middleton, R. T. Sellar, G. R. Symmers, A. Taylor, A. M. Wilson, G. Wilson; and as guests—H. M. Bell, D. Burnett, J. Scrimgeour, J. W. Scrimgeour, and G. P. Thomson—total of twenty.

The weather conditions were, on the whole, not unfavourable throughout the duration of the Meet; but, of course, the very finest day with twenty-seven degrees of frost and a cloudless sky was reserved for Wednesday, Jan. 3, the morning of which saw the last of the party leave for home. The following notes record briefly the doings of the various parties:

*Friday, December 28.* Sellar, who had arrived the previous evening, motored to near the Invercauld bridge and found his way by way of the Garbh Allt to the top of the Stui; but proceeded no further as the weather conditions were getting very unfavourable. Butchart, who arrived by the early bus, skated in the forenoon, and in the afternoon climbed Morrone to make a reconnaissance as to ski-ing conditions on the hills but saw little as visibility was poor.

The President and N. Bruce arrived in the afternoon.

*Saturday, December 29.* N. Bruce and Sellar climbed Morrone in thick mist while the President and Butchart ski-ed about four miles up the Glen Clunie Road.





*December, 1928*

LUI BEG AND BEN MACDHUI.

*R. T. Sellar*



*Sunday, December 30.* The President, Burnett, Dugan, Duncan, Irvine and Malcolm motored to the bridge over the Garbh Allt and climbed Lochnagar by way of the Black Shiel Burn and the saddle behind Meall Coire na Saobhaidhe. The conditions were very bad with soft snow throughout and thick mist and slight drift above the 2,000 feet level. The summit was found without difficulty and on examination the Indicator was found to be in first class condition. The descent was made by the same route and the car reached 6 $\frac{3}{4}$  hours from the start. Few halts were made on account of the adverse conditions.

Butchart, Douglas, Geddes, Sellar, and A. M. Wilson motored up the Cairnwell Road to a point about one mile beyond Glen Clunie Lodge and then walked up to the summit of the pass. Butchart disported himself on ski on the slopes by the roadside while the others climbed the Cairnwell.

Bruce, Symmers and G. Wilson set out for Beinn a'Bhuird by way of the Slugain. The going was very heavy, especially on the south west slopes of Carn Fiaclach, and beyond this the wind and drift were so severe that the party decided to turn when a height of about 3,400 feet had been reached.

*Monday, December 31.* The President, Douglas, Geddes and Sellar motored to Derry Lodge and climbed Carn a'Mhaim from the summit of which they had magnificent views of Cairn Toul and Braeriach. A few short glissades were had on the return journey.

Butchart, Irvine and Thomson climbed Morrone on ski and explored the ridge southwards in the direction of Creag a' Mhadaidh, returning by the same route with reports of unfavourable snow conditions.

N. Bruce, Duncan, Malcolm, the Scrimgeours, Symmers and G. Wilson motored to Glen Clunie Lodge and climbed Sgor Mor and An Socach and had some glissading on the descent from the latter into Glen Baddoch.

This was a perfect day and the glorious weather conditions were enjoyed by all parties.

*Tuesday, January 1.* The President, Bell, Burnett, Malcolm, Middleton, the Scrimgeours, Taylor, G. Wilson and Dugan motored to Derry Lodge and walked up the Lui Beg to the foot of the Sron Riach where Dugan, who was on photography bent, returned to Derry Lodge, while the others continued up the ridge and reached the summit of Ben Macdhui in 3 $\frac{1}{2}$  hours steady going from Derry Lodge. The snow was very soft, but dry, as far as the foot of the ridge, but afterwards was in very fine condition with bits of ice in places. Thick mist was entered at about 3,000 feet and very careful staff work was necessary to find the summit cairn from the top



of the Stob Coire an Sput Dearg, and vice versa. View there was none and the cairn and the Indicator were thickly coated with ice crystals. The Indicator was partially cleared and was found to be in perfect condition. The party returned by the same route and reached Derry Lodge 6½ hours after they had left it in the morning.

N. Bruce and Symmers climbed some rocks on Creag Choinnich and afterwards, on the face opposite Invercauld House, found a "nice gully" containing two cave pitches and a good traverse on to a buttress.

Butchart, Irvine and Thomson motored to the Linn of Corriemulzie and climbed Carn Mor on ski. Returning early to the Hotel they had then some good practice on the "nursery slopes" nearby.

G. WILSON.

#### EASTER MEET, 1929—SPITAL OF GLENSHEE.

THE Easter Meet was held at Spital of Glenshee from March 28 to April 1. The following members arrived on Thursday, March 28:—J. A. Parker (President), Dr. Sellar, James Donald, James Bothwell, J. W. Levack, E. Birnie Reid, James Duncan. Also R. S. Walker and James Stewart were present as guests.

*Friday, March 29.* The whole party motored to Glenlochsie Lodge, and with the help of the light railway, used by the owner to convey his shooting parties for about two miles up the glen, and the kindness of Mr. Brunton, the manager, who drove the party up those two miles of glen, all the members, led by the President, ascended up the north side of the Clais Mhor Burn to the top of Glas Thulachan. From the top one party, consisting of the President, E. Birnie Reid and J. W. Levack descended the north slope of the hill to Loch nan Eun and from there climbed to the top of Beinn Iutharn Bheag returning to Glenlochsie Lodge by Glen Thaitneich. Another party, consisting of J. Duncan, R. S. Walker, and James Stewart, accompanied the President's party as far as the loch. From there they dropped into Glen Ey and then climbed to the top of Beinn Iutharn Mhor by the North Shoulder. The homeward journey was accomplished via Loch nan Eun and Glen Thaitneich and Glenlochsie Lodge. A third party, consisting of Dr. Sellar, James Donald and James Bothwell, descended from the top of Glas Thulachan into Gleann Mhor and from there made the ascent of Carn an Righ, returning again to Gleann Mhor and making the homeward journey via Loch nan Eun and Glen Thaitneich to Glenlochsie Lodge. The day was gloriously fine and the views from the tops of the mountains excellent.

On Friday evening Roy Symmers and N. Bruce arrived at the



Spital Hotel. They had been motored to the Glasallt Shiel and from there, starting at 7.30 a.m., had walked across Broad Cairn, Tolmount, Cairn na Glasha, Glas Maol, Creag Leacach, and arrived at the hotel about 5 p.m. Included in their itinerary was a sleep of two hours on the top of Glas Maol.

Dr. David Levack arrived at the hotel on Friday night.

*Saturday, March 30.* On Friday night a wager was undertaken between two members that one party, going via Glenlochsie, would reach the east top of Beinn a' Ghlo before another party motoring via Pitlochry and Blair Atholl to the foot of Carn Liath, and ascending from there over the top of Carn Liath, the west top of Beinn a' Ghlo on to the east top. The party which went via Glenlochsie arrived at the top an hour before the party which went by Blair Atholl. The party which ventured on the long walk via Glenlochsie, Glen Fernait and Loch Loch comprised Roy Symmers, Bothwell, Duncan and Donald. The other party who ascended Cairn Liath and the western top of Beinn a' Ghlo consisted of E. Birnie Reid, J. W. Levack, Dr. Sellar, Dr. D. Levack and Miller Morrison (guest), who attended the meet for Saturday. The weather was again beautifully fine, although a haze hung over the distant hills rather obscuring the view.

The President and N. Bruce motored to the foot of Mount Blair which they ascended. After accomplishing this they drove to Tulchan Lodge and walked up Canness Glen.

*Sunday, March 31.* On Sunday the weather turned much colder, a strong wind blowing from the north. However, this did not daunt a large number of the members who put in quite a strenuous day.

Roy Symmers and N. Bruce set tracks for the top of Glas Thulachan against a heavy north wind. From the top of this mountain they ascended to the top of Mam na Cairn, and then on to the tops of Beinn Iutharn Mhor and Beinn Iutharn Bheag, returning via Glen Thaitneich. On the way home they made the ascent of the pinnacle of Carn Bhinnein.

Bothwell and Walker ascended Creag Leacach via Carn Aighe. From there they walked over the top of Glas Maol to the top of the Cairnwell Pass. Then they climbed the Cairnwell Hill traversing the ridge of Car nan Sac to the top of Carn a'Gheoidh and Carn Bhinnein and home again by Glas Thaitneich. The President accompanied this party as far as the top of Carn Aighe and then returned to the hotel by the Cairnwell road.

Dr. Sellar, E. Birnie Reid and J. Duncan made an easy day of it by motoring to Tulchan Lodge, walking by Bessie's Cairn to the top of Chenloch Glen, returning the way they went.

J. M'Coss, C. P. Robb and M. J. Robb arrived at the hotel from



Kirkmichael and accompanied Symmers and N. Bruce to the top of Glas Thulachan, returning to the hotel via Glenlochsie.

Most of the party left for home on Sunday night and those who stayed until Monday were unable to do anything that day owing to the wintry conditions which set in. There was a heavy fall of soft snow during the night and the hills were all covered with snow which a strong north wind was causing to drift on the top of the hills.

All the members expressed themselves as highly delighted with the Meet, and thanks are due to Mr. A. Grant, the proprietor of the Spital of Glenshee Hotel, for the excellent way he catered for and looked after the comfort of the members of the Club.

J. A. S.

#### LOCH LEE TO CLOVA.

ON a fine Sunday morning, April 14, two members of the Club left Inchgrundle on Loch Lee at 11.40 a.m. and followed the path up stream through the trees to the first tributary coming down from the left. Here the path turns up the tributary for a short distance, and crosses it just above a small waterfall at about 1,260 ft. and about twenty minutes from Inchgrundle. The track soon becoming indistinct, a general south-west course was taken and the ridge gained somewhat to the left of a rocky outcrop overlooking the valley, and the rather flat ridge was followed over a good deal of soft ground, with peat bogs, to E. Cairn, 2,518 ft. Time 1.5 p.m.

From E. Cairn to Muckle Cairn (2,699 ft.), on a course almost due west, the ground was good with a path in places. From Muckle Cairn a good track was soon found which dipped into a hollow, and then rounded the west side of White Hill (2,787 ft.) close to the summit and passed close below a large pile of stones in which shelters had been built. From here a westerly course was taken, a prominent stone man on the 2,601 hill above the Craigs of Lock Wharral forming a useful guide, and further to the west the ruins of Logan Shieling on the side of Green Hill (2,837 ft.) were made for. The path from the Shieling was followed but was found to lead too far to the north and had to be left and a way made across peaty ground back to the crags above Loch Brandy. The best route from the Shieling would probably be to go directly west over the Green Hill till the loch is seen. A track can be found on the south-west shoulder of the hill which can be followed till the track from Clova to Loch Brandy is picked up at the south end of the loch. The total time taken from Inchgrundle to Clova Hotel was  $4\frac{1}{2}$  hours or, excluding halts of more than five minutes' duration, 3 hrs. 40 mins. The route is not too easy to follow owing to the flat, indefinite ridges and uniform height of the neighbouring hills





*May, 1929*

BEN LAWERS FROM MEALL GARBH.

*W. Malcolm*



but Lochnagar was at times a useful check on direction. Had there not been considerable fields of snow on the northern slopes of the hills, it is probable that the track could have been followed more closely.

The climbers were indebted to a friend who motored them from Montrose to Loch Lee and afterwards took them back from Clova.

A. T. & W. M.

THE BEN LAWERS GROUP—SPRING HOLIDAY  
WEEK-END.

ON Saturday, May 4, A. Taylor and W. Malcolm left Aberdeen by the 1 p.m. train and arrived at Aberfeldy about 5 o'clock. After tea they boarded the Fearnan bus at 6.30, reached Fearnan about 7.30, and walked the remaining four miles to their destination at Lawers Hotel.

On Sunday they left the hotel at 9 a.m. and, climbing past trees to the right of Meall Odhar, reached the cairn (3,984 ft.) on Ben Lawers in dense mist at 11.45. Descending to the north, An Stuc was climbed and the summit (3,643 ft.) reached at 1.25 p.m. The steep descent from An Stuc to the next col was very treacherous owing to the frozen turf and loose snow, and occupied forty-five minutes. Meall Garbh cairn (3,661 ft.) was reached at 3.15 p.m., and Meall Greigh (3,280 ft.) at 4.47 p.m. The descent was made direct to Lawers Burn about  $1\frac{1}{4}$  miles from the road, and then down the burn side, and the hotel was reached at 6 p.m. The climb was taken leisurely and included four halts of about twenty minutes duration each, besides time spent in photography and in compass work, the latter mainly on Ben Lawers. There were practically no distant views with the exception of Ben Voirlich and Stuc a Chroin, fourteen miles to the south, which, covered with snow and capped by heavy clouds, looked very fine. The feature of the day was the magnificent sun and cloud effects on the nearby snow-clad summits. The total height climbed was about 4,680 ft., and the distance  $9\frac{1}{2}$  miles.

Monday morning was spent in the vicinity of Loch Tay and at 4 p.m. the climbers regretfully took farewell of their good hostess, who had catered for them bountifully, the Aberfeldy bus being boarded at the hotel door and Aberdeen reached about 8.45 p.m.

MAY HOLIDAY EXCURSION, 1929—BROAD CAIRN.

THE May Holiday Excursion took place to Broad Cairn (3,268 ft.). The weather was fine at the start, but broke down later and became very cold and boisterous. The party which numbered thirty-nine,



including guests, assembled at Ballater Station, and through the courtesy of Major MacKenzie, the King's Commissioner at Balmoral, were able to motor up the private road to the Glassallt Shiel. From there they set out at 10.45. The route was by the Corrie Chash path to the moor between Sandy Hillock and Broad Cairn, where the party struck off to the right towards their objective. About noon some of the climbers saw a golden eagle in full flight in the corries at the head of Glen Clova. At 12.15 a thick mist came down, accompanied by driving snow. The top was reached by the main party at 12.45, and lunch was taken there in very unpleasant conditions, though there was some shelter on the lee side of the cairn. After lunch the party split, the smaller section, under J. A. Nicol, making for Cairn Bannoch (3,314 ft.), from which they descended to the head of the Dubh Loch, arriving at Glassallt Shiel at 3.30. The larger section, with the President as guide, proceeded to the edge of the cliffs above the Dubh Loch, intending to skirt these and descend at the head of the loch. This, however, was not found very feasible as the fresh snow was making the loose stones rather treacherous, and one of the party suffered from a mild collapse due to the cold and had to be helped along for a bit. It was decided, therefore, to return along the north side of the hill and descend between the Dubh Loch and Loch Muick. The going was rather slow and scrambling, but the journey was safely accomplished, the Glassallt Shiel being reached about four o'clock. A smaller section consisting of Roy Symmers and N. Bruce went from the Glassallt direct to the Dubh Loch crags with the object of trying one of the unclimbed buttresses; but as the conditions were hopeless, not to say highly dangerous, they had to relinquish the attempt. Although the weather conditions above 2,000 ft. were about as bad as they well could be the day's outing was thoroughly enjoyed, and the members, of the various parties reached Ballater in time for tea before taking the train back to Aberdeen.

E. W. M. W.

## SATURDAY AFTERNOON EXCURSIONS.

### JUNE 1—GARVOCK HILL AND ST. CYRUS.

EIGHT members and one guest left the train at Laurencekirk station about 2 o'clock and proceeded at a leisurely pace to the golf course on the lower slope of the hill. The afternoon was sunny and pleasantly warm; the way through the village was bordered by neat cottages with gardens of massed flowers of glowing colour. In half-an-hour the road was left and the party was treading the



fine soft turf of the golf course. Passing the golf house, ten minutes' easy walking led to the top of the north ridge. Thence, sauntering along the ridge of volcanic rock southwards, Johnstone Tower, a structure surmounting the summit of the hill (915 ft.), was reached about 3 o'clock. The tower, a fanciful erection, with four wings and parapet on the top, bears no inscription to tell of its origin or purpose. A weather-beaten door apparently guards a stairway leading to the top: it resisted all lawful attempts to open it. From the summit the Howe o' the Mearns, with expanses of its red soil showing through the green fields and vividly contrasting with them, and its white-washed cottages scattered here and there formed a rich, colourful picture. The hills from Cairmonearn to Hill o' Wirran were gently defined in the sunlight. From this point the appearance of Clachnaben was somewhat unfamiliar. A mist veiled the south: only a glimmer of the North Esk could be caught now and then. To the east little more than the tower of St. Cyrus Church was clearly visible.

Descending along the ridge southwards for a little distance, a pleasant green path, to the left of Griggie Farm (there is actually a farm in the hollow of the hill), was followed as it wound eastwards through fields, woodlands, and woodland paths until a road was found leading through the fields and woods to St. Cyrus. At St. Cyrus Hotel an excellent meal was served and appreciated. Thereafter, strolling through the trim village, the party went down to the fine sandy beach. The return to Aberdeen was made by motor bus. The party consisted of the Misses Mavor, Messrs. W. Garden, W. Malcolm, Macqueen, George Smith, Duncan Ritchie and A. Taylor, and Miss Smith (guest).  
A. T.



## NOTES.

THE indicator on Ben Lomond, provided by the *Daily Record*, was formally handed over, on Monday, April 1, by Mr. BEN LOMOND H. S. Stewart, for the use and benefit of the general INDICATOR. public for all time. About two thousand persons climbed the mountain to witness the ceremony.

THE alpine hut on Ben Nevis, gifted to the Scottish Mountaineering Club by Dr. W. Inglis Clark and Mrs. Inglis Clark, Edinburgh, in memory of their son, Captain Charles Inglis BEN NEVIS HUT. Clark, who fell whilst fighting for his country in Mesopotamia, was formally handed over to the Club on Monday, April 1. The hut, erected on Coire Leis, on the 2,050 contour line, is constructed of local stone, lined with wood, from the design of Mr. C. D. Carus-Wilson, F.R.I.B.A., Edinburgh.

THE Deeside District Committee have, with one dissentient, decided to take the opinion of counsel in regard to the Glen Tanar right-of-way. It was stated that, if the claims put forward GLEN TANAR RIGHT-OF-WAY. were to be maintained, it would be essential for the proprietors to take all steps necessary to protect their interests, and that they had no wish to depart from the arrangements made, without prejudice, by Lord Glentinar as recently as 1926 with the Scottish Rights-of-Way Recreation Society.

A MASS meeting was held by the affiliated clubs of the Federation of Rambling Clubs at Box Hill, Surrey, on Saturday, March 1, and the following resolution was carried unanimously:— RIGHTS-OF-WAY BILL. "This meeting of delegates and members of London rambling clubs calls upon the Government to afford early facilities in the new Parliament for the passage of the Public Rights-of-Way Bill." The measure provides that a footpath, which has been used for twenty years on property not



entailed, shall be deemed to be a public right-of-way. In the case of entailed property the "user" is extended to forty years. It has not, so far, got beyond second reading in the House of Commons.

PETER BAUMANN, the oldest of the Grindelwald guides, died at Lauterbrunnen in January, at the age of 87. He had climbed all the highest peaks of the Alps and made several first ascents and was a great favourite among British climbers.

A YOUNG German, last year, lost his life on the Matterhorn and the sequel was a sentence of six months' imprisonment upon a "guide" for negligence. Commenting on this, Mr. G. S. Hutchison, of the Swiss Alpine Club, says—

A "GUIDE'S" NEGLIGENCE. "The fact is that this person was in no sense of the term an Alpine guide. Every climber knows that, even for the most skilled, an attempt to scale the Matterhorn without ropes and proper equipment would be a monstrous risk to life. When it is realised that this person was in charge of a party of boys, the criminal negligence of his act can be understood. No Swiss guide could even have contemplated so foolhardy an enterprise. They are obliged to pass strict tests before they are permitted to act as guides, and these have entailed apprenticeship without remuneration, or for small pay as porters. It is not on record that any Swiss guide has ever been found guilty of negligence, and the corps of guides which has developed during the last half century, largely under the tutelage of and in the companionship of the pioneer British climbers, guards its badge and prestige with the utmost jealousy."

AT a lecture on "Rock Climbing in the English Lake District," which was given by Mr. J. E. B. Wright, chief of the Lakeland Mountain Guides, at a meeting of the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, Lord Ullswater, who presided, said that the Lakeland Mountain Guides assisted the society in the capacity of bird-watchers.

BIRD-WATCHING. The work of the society was difficult. To attract public assistance it was necessary to show the results of the work done by the society in protecting bird-life. This could only be done by bringing the public into closer touch with bird-life, and would, to a large extent, defeat the objects of the society. Mr. Wright said that bird-life in the Lake District was in need of protection. The professional guides, if they chose to do so, would be able to make a considerable income by satisfying the wants of collectors who visited the district. They did not help those collectors because they were in sympathy with the bird-protection movement.



A STRONG protest was made in March by the general secretary of the Ramblers' Federation against the proposal to erect power poles in the famous beauty spot of Whinlatter Pass.

PRESERVING "While the question of cost," it was stated, "is of  
A great importance, we do maintain that the beauties-  
BEAUTY SPOT. of such places should be most vigilantly guarded even though greater cost may be incurred. It is to be deplored that in these days finance is scarcely ever used as a means of bringing back beauty to a despoiled area, and hence we trust that some means may be devised to avoid the spoliation of natural beauty which commercialism can never create." It has since been announced that, as the result of a conference between members of the society for safe-guarding the natural beauty of the Lake District, representatives of the Central Electricity Board, and members of the Cumberland County Council, a new route for the overhead wire has been arranged. It will start at Threlkeld, and, instead of going over Whinlatter Pass, will be laid *via* Braithwaite, Beck, Wythop, Wythop Valley, and Embleton School, to a point about two miles outside Cockermouth. Thence it will be carried to Egremont and West Cumberland. This new route has been approved by Cockermouth Rural District Council, in whose district Whinlatter Pass is situated.

#### BOOKS RECEIVED.

WE have received the following :—

*The Alpine Journal*, Vol. XLI., No. 238.

*The Scottish Mountaineering Club Journal*, Vol. XVIII., No. 107.

*The Yorkshire Ramblers' Club Journal*, Vol. V., No. 18.



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